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Foreword

By Asian EFL Journal Associate Production and Copy Editors

This particular edition of **Asian EFL Journal** touches upon a number of topics, which are relevant to the field of English language teaching and learning, and applied linguistics. With article topics ranging from language acquisition in children, self assessment with language learners, factors affecting test-takers, and advances in CALL to studies on the teaching and learning of writing, reading and listening comprehension, as well as the context of English in higher education in Bangladesh, this installment includes authors from a number of countries. We expect it will be of great interest to English language professionals across Asia and beyond.

In *English as a Medium of Instruction in Bangladesh's Higher Education: Empowering or Disadvantaging Students*, author Shaila Sultana explores the problems that first-year Bangladeshi students from public schools face when they enter English medium universities. The study used questionnaire and interviews to gauge students' perceptions of university life. Students from public schools felt that they were at a disadvantage because they had inferior language skills. This impacted their participation in class and made them feel inferior to those who attended private schools. This article would be of interest to researchers who are interested in the context of English, as well as instructors who teach English in non-native environments.

In *Asian Undergraduate Students' Apprenticeship in Research Paper Writing: Academic Interactions and Researchers' Responsibilities*, Yi-Huey Guo discusses the

fact that although undergraduates are often required to submit research papers to their professors, there are many in the academic community who consider it unnecessary that under-graduates should have to write them at all, since they will never be published. The author suggests otherwise, stating that because under-graduates are often un-accustomed to writing such papers, they tend to fall back on previous essay writing techniques to compensate for their lack of experience. Because this happens, it is more important that these students learn to write research papers at under-graduate level, not less so, since if they master this skill early on in their academic career, they will not waste time struggling with the issue after they become graduate students.

In *Acquisition of English Morphology by a Japanese School-aged Child: A Longitudinal Study*, Yumiko Yamaguchi and Satoni Kawaguchi explore the English second language acquisition of a five year old Japanese girl who had recently moved to Australia, over a period of two years. Their research begins when Kana was five years old and focuses on the sequential development of her verbal and nominal morphology in terms of both emergent production and levels of accuracy. Her spontaneous English speech elicited in a naturalistic setting through the use of games and storytelling was analyzed using the theoretical framework of Processability Theory heralded by Manfred Pienemann. Kana's language development was found to be compatible with its hierarchical stages. Consequently, the authors stress the need for second language teachers to be conversant with the natural acquisition path of second language learning so that their teaching and syllabi can be better calibrated to match learner readiness. They also call for further longitudinal research on this issue.

In *Knowing the Test Takers: Investigating Chinese and Indian EFL/ESL Students Performance on PTE Academic*, Ying Zheng and Wei Wei investigate numerous affective factors, specifically motivation, anxiety and linguistic confidence, which

help explain differences in the results on standardized testing between students in Indian and China. The study showed that while the differences were smaller in a practice test, during the live test, Indian test takers outstripped Chinese test takers. A survey was also given to students to help understand the results. The results from the PTE tests can partially be explained by the context of the test takers (i.e., ESL vs. EFL) and the students' perception of the test itself (diagnostic information from test vs. final score). As a result of the study, the authors suggest that more care needs to be taken to understand the test takers context when interpreting test scores and that similar attention needs to be used when developing second language curricula and teaching materials.

Limei Zhang in *A Structural Equation Modeling Approach to Investigating Test Takers' Strategy Use and Reading Test Performance* considers the impact of EFL learners reading strategies on their test results. Data was gathered from their performance on a College of English reading test and their answers to a reading strategies survey. Through analysis using structural equation modeling, it was concluded that it was metacognitive strategies that had the greatest positive impact on learners' reading test success, while planning and support strategies influenced performance negatively.

In *An Applied Phenomenological Interview Approach to the Exploration of Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Language Labs*, Barry Lee Reynolds details a phenomenological investigation of teachers' perceptions of two language labs at a national research university's language center in Taiwan. The researcher focuses on finding out how a group of language teachers feel about the pedagogical set up and technologies employed in the laboratories; he uses a phenomenological approach through in-depth interviews. He contrasts his findings about how teachers

feel with his discussions with a focus group, whose aim it is to evaluate the current use of the language labs and select new technologies.

In *Investigating Iranian EFL Writing Problems and Examining Back Transfer*, Farzaneh Khodabandeh, Dr. Manochehre Jafarigohar, Dr. Hassan Soleimani, and Dr. Fatemeh Hemmati, provide a comparative analysis of students' L2 and L1 argumentative essays using Toulmin's argumentation framework. Specifically, the analysis of the difficulties Iranian EFL university students have in writing argumentative essays focused on the similarities and differences in English and Persian essay structure demonstrated by 79 selected students randomly placed in one of three groups receiving explicit, implicit and no-formal instruction on the framework in question. Quantitative analysis of the post-argumentative essays revealed that the group receiving explicit instruction on the elements of Toulmin's model outperformed the implicit and no-formal instruction groups. The results also indicated the transfer of specific rhetorical patterns in L2 to L1 compositions.

Bin Li and Congchao Hua in *Effects of Visual Cues on Perception of Non-native Consonant Contrasts by Chinese EFL Learners* examine the effectiveness of visual cues in assisting in the distinction between /l/ and /n/ for EFL learners from Southern China. The production of these consonants though emanating from the same articulation point, are a problem for EFL speakers from this region. Experiments to analyze native English speaker's production of /l/ and /n/ and test the perception of EFL Cantonese speakers via audio-visual, audio only and visual only conditions provide the basis for this investigation. The study suggests that when visual cues coincide with audio information there is a positive effect on the L2 learner's ability to differentiate between these two non-native consonant contrasts.

In *Using an Analytical Rubric to Improve the Writing of EFL College Students*, Hui-Chuan Liao and Lina Hsu conducted a year-long study in a college English writing class in Taiwan to determine the value of having students utilize to a rubric to analyze their own writing. The writings covered paragraphs only in 5 different text styles. At the end of the year, 50 students were asked to determine whether the rubric helped them to write better. Overall, the students agreed following the rubric was useful; however, the study also showed that while organizational ability increased, less improvement was seen in word use and syntactic accuracy thus showing the need to have more class practice in lexical and syntactic items. In the end, by using the rubric students' awareness was raised and they showed a decidedly positive outlook to continue learning and writing in English.

In *Oral Reading Rate, Reading Comprehension, and Listening Comprehension in Learners of EFL*, Dr. Kusumi Vasantha Dhanapala and Dr. Jun Yamada explore the relationship between oral reading rates, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. Results unexpectedly showed that the correlations between two rates and two modes of comprehension were low or non-significant, which are in marked contrast to high correlations reported for English-speaking children. In addition, the EFL readers exhibited only small incremental or even decremental changes from habitual to maximum rate. These results are discussed in terms of English language teaching/learning practice and the possible effects of Japanese speech and orthography.

English as a Medium of Instruction in Bangladesh's Higher Education: Empowering or Disadvantaging Students?

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Shaila Sultana, Associate Professor, Department of English, IML, DU, is a doctoral candidate at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia. She completed her BA (Hons) and MA in English from Jahangirnagar University (Dhaka). She also did a Post Graduate Diploma in TESOL (Monash University, Melbourne) and an MA in ELT and Applied Linguistics (King's College London). Her research interests include the post-structuralist approach to language, sociology and geography, sociocultural theories on identity, and significance of English in post-colonial countries.

Abstract

This paper reports on a mixed-method study that explored the effect of English as a medium of instruction. It specifically focuses on the academic discourse and socialisation experiences of 1st year students in universities of Bangladesh. A questionnaire survey of 115 students and interviews with students from three private and two public universities were conducted. The data illustrated that the language of instruction led some of them to perceive themselves as being deficient. They felt that they were systematically excluded from the classroom discussions and activities. Thus English severely impeded their possibilities of learning and the development of identity. In other words, English exacerbated inequalities between them. The paper implies the need for a more balanced English language policy in higher education in Bangladesh.

Keywords: English as a medium of instruction, higher education, learning and identity, Bangladesh

Introduction

English is “a sort of unstoppable linguistic juggernaut” (Demont-Heinrich, 2005, p. 80) which has widespread social, cultural, educational and political effects (Phillipson, 1992, 1998, 2004). It is the language of science and technology, globalisation, modernisation, internationalisation, and transnationalisation, which are features identified by Tsuda (1994) as the characteristics of the ‘diffusion-of-English’ paradigm in language policy. Hence, it has been adopted as a medium of instruction in education institutes in different countries around the world. However, “English has remained a source of failure, frustration, and low self-esteem” for many students (Tsui, 1996, p. 246). It is also a key cause of tension and social division between elite and ‘Englishless masses’ in Philippines (Tollefson, 2000), Nigeria, Tanzania, and Kenya (Bangbose, 2003; Bisong, 1995), South Africa (Kamwangamalu, 2007), India (Annamalai, 2005; Bhatt, 2005), Hong Kong (Li, 2002), and so on. Bhatt (2005, p. 27), for example, mentions that the colonial legacy of English in India has formed a “social-linguistic apartheid, i.e., legalised segregation ... [and] sociolinguistically-based inequality”. The inequality is “pervasive and unalterable” (ibid.). In Asia Pacific countries, such as Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, English, as a medium of education, is creating division and discrimination between the “haves and have-nots and city and rural area dwellers” (Nunan, 2003, p. 605).

Decisions related to any language policy are ideological. These decisions are neither apolitical nor ahistorical. For example, in a critical-historical analysis of the medium-of-instruction policies in the USA, McCarty (2004) demonstrates that the Government manipulated the policies to obtain geographical and political control over the ethno-linguistic minorities, i.e., the Indians. In Hong Kong, the majority of school had to

use Chinese as a medium of instruction, when China took control over it from Britain (Evans, 2002). In other words, language policies reflect which language speakers are socially more esteemed. Pennycook (2001) also suggests that language policies involve people in constant struggles for political and economic participation. An analysis of British colonial policy in Basutoland shows that mother-tongue education was ensured only to serve varied economic opportunities to people (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). In Malaysia, for example, the Only-Malay policy marginalised the Chinese- and Tamil-speakers in the education system (David & Govindasamy, 2005). A similar ideological role of language policy is found in Singapore. The government allocated English for technological and economic domains and the mother tongue for social and cultural domains (Wee, 2006). However, interestingly, Mandarin received importance as an official language, but other languages, such as Malay or Tamil, were marginalised. In other words, decisions in relation to language policies are not always taken on the basis of pragmatic and pedagogic efficiency of a language. By contrast, decisions are taken “to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, as cited in Phillipson, 1998, p. 103). Note that the medium of instruction can also be a vehicle of emancipation. For example, the introduction of Welsh-medium education and bilingual education in Wales ensured the recognition of Welsh when it came under threat with the increased dominance of English at the end of the 20th century (Jones & Martin-Jones, 2004). In New Zealand, through inclusive medium-of-instruction policy, the indigenous language Maori was saved from extinction (May, 2004).

In Bangladesh, a South Asian country, Bengali or Bangla is the *de facto* and *de jure* national language (Banu & Sussex, 2001). It is the functional language in all the

significant domains of the society including government, education, law, administration, everyday communication, the media, as well as entertainment (Imam, 2005). It is the medium of instruction in the primary (Year 1-5), secondary (Year 6-10) and higher secondary (Year 11-12) education of the Bangla-medium schools. However, universities, specifically the private ones, have started to emphasise on English. These universities have strict rules about the enforcement of English and also offer remedial English courses for the weaker students. Nevertheless, the initiative is perhaps not so rewarding for all the students. Many of the students take a long time to adjust with the English-only environment of the university. They struggle to pass all the prerequisite English courses. They also do not perform well in the courses in which they need to read and write in English. As a university teacher, I observed students' constant sufferings and emotional turmoil in the English-only environment of universities. The experiences of these students indicate a dissonance between the pedagogic practices of these universities and the students' linguistic competence. In addition, there has not been much work on the role of English in the higher education in Bangladesh except for work by Hamid, Jahan & Monjural (2013). A thorough scrutiny of the three prestigious journals on ELT and Applied Linguistics in Bangladesh, i.e., *Dhaka University Studies*, *The Journal of the Institute of Modern Languages*, and *Harvest: The Journal of English Language and Literature* show that the most research has been done on English language skills and teacher education.

Research on the effect of the medium of instruction in higher education in Bangladesh is therefore timely and important. The paper identifies to what extent the English-only language policy in higher education advantage or disadvantage students. The attention is specifically focused on the experiences of students from a Bangla-medium educational background, a background that is often coupled with a lower

economic condition. There are some exclusive private Bangla-medium schools in cosmopolitan cities which are equally as good as their English-medium counterparts. However, the number of these schools is few. They are also far more expensive than the public ones. In the following section, the role of English in the education system of Bangladesh will be described, so that the necessity and appropriacy of the research can become clearer.

English in Education: Bangladesh in Focus

English is available in two forms in the education system in Bangladesh (Banu & Sussex, 2001; Sultana, 2003, 2004): as a content-based subject in government and non-government Bangla medium schools and colleges (BMSC) and as the only language of academic discourses in the elite English medium schools (EMSC).

English in BMSC

Bangladesh has one of the largest centralised systems of primary education in the world (Imam, 2005). The majority of students attend BMSC, both the government and private ones, which have comparatively lower tuition fees. They learn all the subjects in Bangla, including English. Public schools struggle to provide decent education to a huge number of students with their limited budget. Because of the inadequate number of teachers, classes are not held regularly. The numbers of classes are in fact fewer and alarmingly low. Students of Year 1 and 2 usually complete only 444 hours of classes per year in total (ibid.). The standard of education in public schools is also unsatisfactory. 28% and 44% of the students achieved the minimum level of competence in written Bangla and mathematics respectively after five years of basic education (World Bank, 2000).

The standard of English education in Bangla-medium schools has also been decreasing. Khatun and Begum (2000, as cited in Imam, 2005) did a survey on 200 students in Year 11 and 12 in Dhaka city. They expected that the urban dwelling students would be good at English. Many of them, in fact, scored zero and less than one in five students scored well. Several donor assisted ELT reform projects have been launched in Bangladesh in the last fifteen years. There has not been any noticeable development observed in students' communicative competence (A. Rahman, 2007; Siddique, 2004). This is also confirmed by the fact that every year the Institute of Modern Languages needs to run a significant number of pre-intermediate English language courses for the students of Dhaka University (Quader, 2001). Many of them do not know how to speak or write even a single sentence correctly.

English in EMSC

The EMSC may be considered as replicas of English private schools in the UK. They have high tuition fees and hence, only the rich parents can afford them. Only 10% of the student population attends EMSC (Hossain & Tollefson, 2007). Most of the EMSC have highly proficient and qualified teachers and some of them are native speakers of English. The schools are located in upmarket areas and provide all the amenities necessary for effective teaching and learning. The schools follow the curriculum and the syllabuses developed by the Cambridge International Examination Board, an examination board in the UK, and the exams (O' level and A' level) are administered by the British Council, Bangladesh. The scripts are marked by registered examiners in the UK. The textbooks for all the courses (except Bangla and Religious Studies) are published in the UK (Hossain & Tollefson, 2007; Imam, 2005).

Social Consequences of a Disparate Education System

The English education, as showed above, is not accessible to the poor and rural population and hence, it has naturally developed an ‘assumption nexus’. As defined by Ramanathan (2005), an ‘assumption nexus’ is a complete set of social beliefs and practices that make people believe in the superiority of a specific language speaking population. It also allows people to put them in a privileged position, relegating the speakers of other languages or indigenous languages in a subordinate social position. The social dynamics legitimise the mythical values of English. Most Bangladeshis have positive attitudes towards English and English speaking Bangladeshis. Elite English-educated Bangladeshis prefer to show off their linguistic skills. English represents status, culture, education, and intelligence (S. Rahman, 2005, 2009). English has also become an instrument for economic advantages. Private companies prefer to employ university graduates with a higher level of proficiency in English. Universities consequently tend to give more emphasis to English. However, the majority of students come to the higher education from Bangla-medium education background. The only experience they have of English is as a content-based subject in school and college. Hence, their experiences about English as a medium of instruction in higher education must be scrutinised. Therefore, I thought it fit to propose the research question given below:

What implications did English as a medium of instruction in the university have for students from different education backgrounds in relation to chances of learning and identity?

Language, Identity, and Learning

In the following sections, the intricate and intertwined relationship between language, power, identity and learning will be elaborated. The socially situated nature of these notions will also be revealed.

Bourdieu's notion of linguistic capital

Bourdieu (1992) wrote extensively on the relationship of language and power and the role that language plays in positioning people in different social hierarchies. According to him, language or linguistic encounters are instruments for the reproduction of social structures. Certain linguistic repertoire, i.e., 'linguistic capital', has higher values in the society (Bourdieu, 1992). For example, individuals may indicate that they belong to the upper echelon of the society when they use the language of the dominant social class. Bourdieu (1992, p. 82), hence, states, linguistic capital helps individuals to develop a *sense of their own social worth* and more generally, their stance in the social world. They are capable of more spontaneous interaction and obtain symbolic benefits than those who are less rich in linguistic capital (ibid.). In a formal educational institution, for example, students' knowledge, life experience, and other language resources may get unrecognised and underappreciated, if they do not have competence in the target language (Auerbach, 1995). Consequently, their self-esteem and self-confidence may become fragile. They may also suffer from a sense of powerlessness and feel physically excluded from classroom discourses.

The efficacy of linguistic capital, moreover, depends on extra-linguistic resources which designate individuals to different locations of the social space. These factors are intangible, but durable as they determine who tells in what situations. Bourdieu (1992) identifies varied kinds of capitals: economic capital, i.e., material wealth in the forms of money or properties; cultural capital, i.e., knowledge, skills, and educational or technical qualifications; and symbolic capital, i.e., accumulated prestige or honour, and so on. Nevertheless, linguistic capital is powerful, as interactions demonstrate and reproduce social structures. In other words, when people are engaged in conversation,

they are engaged in a potential “act of power” (Bourdieu, 1992, as cited in Roberts & Sarangi, 2001, p. 174). They act according to the asymmetric position they hold in the society. For example, a conversation shows what linguistic repertoire interlocutors possess, what social class they belong to, who holds the superior position amongst them and who has greater control over the conversation. Hence, with reference to Africa, Soyinka (1993) argues that social class is somewhat less dehumanising and dangerous than language as a boundary.

Identity and learning in the community of practice (COP)

Language is closely intertwined with individual’s identity and learning (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008; Mantero, 2007). One of the significant ways individuals present themselves to the world is through language. Hence, identity is “a dimension of linguistic enquiry” (Omoniyi & White, 2006, p. 1). Individuals also tend to regulate their group affiliation through language (Kamwangamalu, 2007, p. 263). Thus both language and identity are socially constructed. West (1992) also argues that individuals’ concept of self-identity is closely tied with their desire of recognition, desire of affiliation, and desire of security and safety.

The necessity of understanding the social nature of identity and learning has also been addressed in the framework of community of practice (COP). It was propounded by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998a, b) in their anthropological research and later on, adapted by applied linguists. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992, p. 464) define a COP as “an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour”. In COP, mutual engagement in an endeavour creates “ways of doing things, ways of thinking, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short practice (ibid.). Thus, COP focuses on the role of social

participation in the emergence of group affiliation. In addition, Wenger (1998a, b, 2000) identifies learning as a socially situated process. He postulates that individuals require ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ in a community in order to learn. The more they participate peripherally and legitimately in practices in the COP, the more they learn. This also tallies with the sociocultural theory of second language acquisition (Lantolf, 2000). According to the theory, individuals’ learning is affected by the objects in their environment and by others around them (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Thus learning is neither an independent process, nor a cognitive process, but an interdependent process. Therefore, absence of learning is not always resulted in by unintelligence, demotivation, or insincerity on the part of learners (Norton & Toohey, 2002). It may also happen because of “plain minimalist” uninvolvement (Wenger, 1990, p. 84). Idealistically, learning in fact only occurs when individuals are socially engaged with their immediate environment. In other words, they need legitimacy in the COP in order to learn.

However, even the legitimate peripheral participation in the COP is complex. The nature of participation is determined by the hidden implicit power relations underlying the social structures of the COP. Hence, a new comer in the COP may not have access to all the resources necessary for claiming agency. The power organisation of COP either opens or debars the individual’s participation (Hodges, 1998). Morita (2004, p. 577) observes the socialisation experience of a group of international graduate students in Canada and argues, “It is likely to involve struggles over access to resources, conflicts, and negotiations between differing viewpoints arising from differing degrees of experience and expertise and transformations of a given academic community’s practices as well as of the participants’ identities”. Therefore, participating in the discourse community of the academia is not simplistic, i.e., it is

not only developing knowledge and skills. The COP needs to be populated by the ‘rule of the game’.

In summary, identity and learning are not always individualistic, but socially determined (Price, 1996). Individuals are socially constructed and constrained and consequently, participation in COP is vital both for learning and identity. This social notion of language, identity, and learning will be illuminating for unravelling the role of English in the COP of the university.

Research Design

A mixed-method approach was adapted for this specific research study. I believe that mixed-method approach is better than any single method, per se, quantitative or qualitative. It straddles both the quantitative and qualitative methods under one umbrella. Quantitative method on its own, for example, is criticised for being too “simplistic, decontextualised, and reductionist”, failing to draw in ‘lived’ experience of participants (Dornyei, 2007, p. 45). On the other hand, qualitative method is avoided by the perfectionist because of its context specific and unrepresentative samples (ibid.). Thus the mixed-method approach to research is considered as “hybrid vigour” which can be used for supporting and informing both the paradigm, i.e., the qualitative and quantitative inquiry (Dornyei, 2007). In other words, mixed-method approach is more inclusive than either qualitative or quantitative approach. For example, in this research study, a questionnaire survey gathered information about the role of English in higher education from a greater number of students in several universities in Bangladesh. The in-depth individual interviews of fewer students revealed specific personal experiences of participants in relation to English as the medium of instruction. Thus the mixed-method approach ensured ‘multi-level

analysis' for the research (ibid.). In addition, questions for the interview were developed for further in-depth analysis based on the factual information derived from the questionnaire survey.

In developing the questionnaire, Shaaban and Ghaith (2002) and Yihong et al. (2005) were consulted. Shaaban and Ghaith (2002) report university students' perception of the objective and subjective vitality of Arabic, French, and English in Lebanon. A language's vitality is:

The social, cultural, and educational factors that define the continued existence and prosperity of a language in heterogeneous communities. Heterogeneity may be based on ethnic diversity only, but it could be defined by diversity of belief systems, perceptions, and aspirations ... objective vitality is usually measured by objective data as facts and information about the domains of use of the language and the number of speakers and their economic, social, and political power. Subjective vitality, on the other hand, refers to the perceptions of group members of the language vitality of their group in relation to outgroups (Shaaban & Ghaith, 2002, pp. 558-560).

Yihong et al. (2005) report students' self-identity change in relation to learning English. These research studies were relevant to the one reported here for three specific reasons: 1. It is intended to understand to what extent students needed English in the university, i.e., the objective vitality of English on campus; 2. It is intended to reveal students' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions about English and to what extent their experiences differ because of their education, socioeconomic, and linguistic background, i.e., the subjective vitality of English on campus; and 3. It is intended to explore what implications English might have for their group affiliation. Therefore, the questionnaire had four parts (*See Appendix A*). The first part elicited data about the degree of necessity of English in the university. The second part elicited students' subjective perception and attitude about English on campus, specifically in relation to class participation, group affiliation, intergroup relations,

and intergroup particularities. The second section also drew information on students' self-identity changes in relation to English. The third section had two open-ended questions which intended to find out students' specific experiences in the use of English. The last section elicited information about participants' socioeconomic and education background. This section drew data to measure any possible co-relation between demographic economic, educational factors and perceived linguistic vitality of English as a medium of instruction. I hasten to mention here that questions regarding salary or monthly income are not considered personal or confidential in the context of Bangladesh.

Interviews were conducted in order to gain deeper understanding about the authentic experiences of the participants on campus. They were asked about their experiences in relation to English as a medium of instruction, possible group affiliation based on their competence in English, and social experiences in relation to English within the university. It was expected that their answers might reveal the nature of significance of English for their identity and chances of learning. They were also asked about their personal opinions about the findings drawn from the questionnaire survey (*See Appendix B*). The findings of the interviews were codified according to the major themes that emerged from the data. The interviews sometimes went beyond the semi-structured questionnaire, based on participants' responses. A word-by-word translation, without non-verbal expressions and pauses, are transcribed because detailed transcription as such was not relevant to the research.

Participants

First year students of different universities were informed about the research and 350 questionnaires were distributed. 115 students of 3 private universities and 2 of

government universities returned the filled-in questionnaires. Amongst them 102 were from BMSC and 13 were from EMSC. The participation in the research was voluntary and hence, equal participation of students from BMSC and EMSC could not be ensured. It also perhaps showed that students from BMSC were more willing to participate in the research because they, perhaps, wanted to make their voice heard. The six participants in the interviews were selected from the responses of the questionnaires. They had answered ‘strongly agree’ in section 2A of the questionnaire, demonstrating that they had had difficulties in English.

The following table summarises the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information about the Participants

Type of Universities	%	Type of School	%	Location of School and Colleges	%
Private	76.5	Bangla-medium	88.7	Capital	41.2
Government	23.5	English-medium	11.3	Not in the Capital City	57.0
				Abroad	1.8

Data Analysis of the Questionnaire

The answers given by participants in the questionnaire were measured by a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly agree; 5= strongly disagree). Section 1, 2, and 5 of the questionnaire were analysed on SPSS 15.0.

Two categories of descriptive statistics were used: measures of central tendency and the measures of variability (Dornyei, 2007). They summarised the findings and identified the general tendencies in the data. The ‘mean’ of the data, i.e., the average of the scores, revealed the measure of central tendency. The ‘standard deviation’,

which indicates the standard distance of the scores from the ‘mean’ indicated the measure of variability. The standard deviation thus identified whether the participants varied extremely in their responses.

The ‘independent-samples t-test’ would compare the responses of the participants from BMSC and EMSC in the questionnaire. It would identify the magnitude of the differences in the means and measure the statistical significance of the differences. However, the number of EMSC students was fewer and hence, the assumptions of ‘independent-sample t-test could not be met. For parametric technique, such as independent-sample t-test, the general assumption is that the sample size will have to be 30+ (Pallant, 2007). The following section presents some of the salient findings of the research.

Impact of linguistic ideology

The data shows that both the students of the private and government universities needed to use English extensively for understanding class lectures, answering questions in class, writing answers in examinations, and talking to teachers. Participants, however, coming from BMSC seemed to face problems in the university because of the immense importance given to English. On a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly agree; 5= strongly disagree), the mean differences between the responses of the BMSC and EMSC were significantly different. This indicates that BMSC participants had greater difficulties when they had to participate in discussions in English inside and outside the class. Item 1 has the highest mean for both the BMSC and EMSC participants, showing that BMSC participants had greater difficulties. Table 2 shows the mean differences and standard deviation between the responses of the participants.

Table 2*Descriptive Statistics for the Difficulties Participants Faced in the Use of English*

Serial No.	Items	Types of Schools	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation
1.	I find it difficult to participate in class discussions in English.	Bangla-medium	2.65	1.248
		English-medium	4.31	.855
2.	I find it difficult to participate in any discussions or debates in English in the university.	Bangla-medium	2.40	1.137
		English-medium	4.23	.927
3.	I struggle when I require to interact with English-speaking students.	Bangla-medium	2.31	1.271
		English-medium	4.15	1.068
4.	When I have difficulties in English learning, I doubt my own ability.	Bangla-medium	2.39	1.325
		English-medium	3.62	1.121

When 22.5% and 40.2% participants from BMSC strongly agreed and agreed that they found it difficult to participate in any discussion or debates in English, 38.5% and 46.2% from English-medium background disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Similarly, 31.7% and 35% from BMSC strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they struggled when they are required to interact with English-speaking students. However, 53.8% and 38.5% participants from EMSC strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively in this regard. Figure 1 shows the differences in a bar chart.

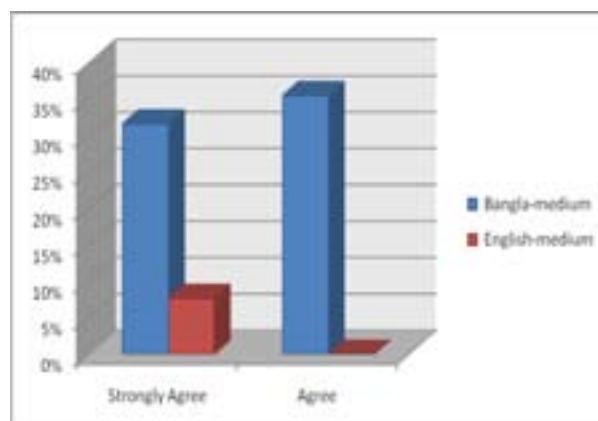


Figure 1. Responses of Participants in Item 3: I struggle when I am required to interact with English-speaking students

This indicates that participants from BMSC had problems not only inside the classroom, but also in their interaction with students who preferred to interact in English rather than in Bangla.

Location of participants' schools and colleges

A close relationship between the location of the school and the problems participants faced in the universities was found in the descriptive analysis. For example, participants with the education outside the capitals responded that they had difficulties to participate in class discussion or any discussion in English. They also stated that they struggled when they were required to interact with English-speaking students. Table 3 shows the stark differences between the responses of the participants.

Table 3

Demographic Location of the Schools and Participants' Difficulties in English

	Item in the Questionnaire	Location of the school	Strongly Agree	Agree
1.	I find it difficult to participate in class discussions in English.	Capital cities	4.3%	6.4%
		Semi-urban and rural	29.2%	43.1%
2.	I find it difficult to participate in any discussions or debates in English.	Capital	12.8%	8.5%
		Semi-urban and rural	26.2%	56.9%
3.	I struggle when I am required to interact with English-speaking students.	Capital	19.6%	15.2%
		Semi-urban and rural	35.4%	44.6%
4.	When I have difficulties in English learning, I doubt my own ability.	Capital	17.4%	30.4%
		Semi-urban and rural	32.8%	37.5%

Participants' social image

English also plays a significant role in their social recognition in the university. Both the participants from BMSC and EMSC strongly agreed that better competence in English would help them to get more attention from their teachers and from their

friends. In this instance, 63.2% of the participants strongly agreed and 28.9% agreed that with better English, they would have better access to teachers. On the other hand, 42.1% strongly agreed and 36.8% agreed that better English would help them to get more attention from friends.

There is a significant difference in the responses of the students coming from the BMSC and EMSC in the item: a better command of English will help me to have more friends. This indicates that participants from BMSC perhaps needed English for making friends, which their counterparts did not. Figure 2 shows the percentage of their choices on the item.

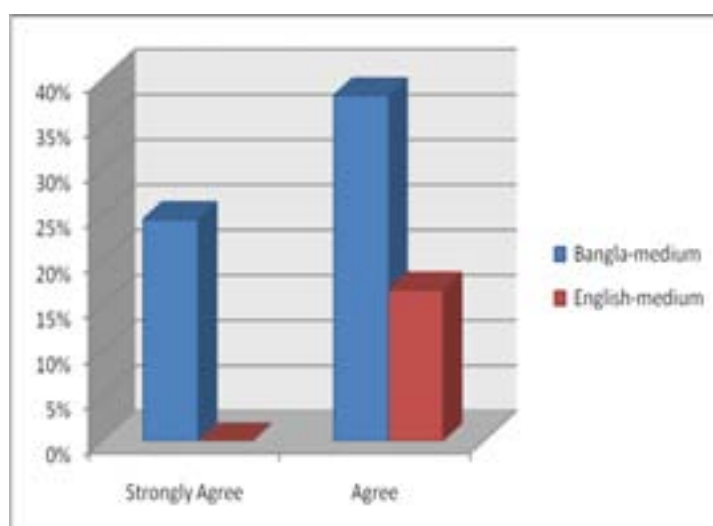


Figure 2. Responses of Participants in Item: A better command will help me to have more friends

Participants did not have the confidence that affluence could buy and hence, they longed for immaterial goods or resources, such as friendship, teachers' attention, and access to university clubs.

Regardless of their education background, all the participants considered English important for their self-image, i.e., for their confidence and sophistication. 83.3% of the participants strongly agreed that English would help them to be more confident

and 35.7% strongly agreed and 34.8% agreed that better competence in English would help them to be more sophisticated.

Participants' identity in the university

English played a significant role in marginalising the students who did not have adequate competence in English. Weaker students were not noticed by teachers, i.e., these students did not have chances to participate in-class discussions, whereas EMSC had better access to teachers. According to the research, 22.3% participants strongly agreed and 42% participants agreed that they remained unnoticed by their teachers. In other words, being fluent in English was necessary if participants wanted to participate in any class discussion. In addition, the responses also indicated fluency in English is mandatory if participants wanted to participate in extra-curricular activities in the university. For example, 35.4% participants strongly agreed and 36.3% participants agreed that students fluent in English had better access to university clubs. In other words, their participation in the COP of the university was determined, to a great extent, by their 'linguistic capital'.

The data revealed a significant trend on the following items which intended to identify participants' group affiliation based on their competence in English. A significant number of participants decided to give 'no opinion'. Here it should be mentioned that in other items of the questionnaire, fewer participants opted for the 'no opinion' option. This shows that participants were, perhaps, uncomfortable in answering this question.

Table 4*Percentages of Choices in the Role of English in Friendship*

Item in the questionnaire	Types of Schools	Strongly Agree	Agree	Have No Opinion
English-speaking students usually have their own groups of friends.	Bangla-medium	32.7%	30.7%	20.8%
	English-medium	7.7%	23.1%	30.8%
Students weak in English usually have their own group of friends.	Bangla-medium	23.0%	35.0%	20.0%
	English-medium	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%

There is no doubt that this issue is complex and hence, the data from the interview given in the following section can shed more light on it.

Data Analysis from the Interview

The data in the interview, in fact, was revealing in the sense that they uncovered to what extent English affected participants' socialisation on campus, self-image, identity, and chances of learning. The six participants (all referred to using pseudonyms herein) are from BMSC, in general, shared same kind of experiences in relation to English in the university. Their experiences indicated that the medium of instruction had turned the classroom into a place of tension and struggle for them. They did not have the access to the COP of the university. The content of the participants' responses had been analysed in terms of the themes that emerged out of the data: images of 'us' and 'them', symbolic capital and struggles of power, academic socialisation experiences and identity, reduced chances of learning, acceptance of discrimination, and changes in self-perception.

‘Symbolic capital’: ‘Us’ vs. ‘them’

Students in the universities seemed segregated in groups based on their ‘linguistic and symbolic capitals’. Bably, one of the participants mentioned that the students who were good in English interacted in English amongst themselves and had their own world. She did not belong to it.

*They greet us when they see us, but at the same time, they are very **cold and indifferent towards us. There is a gap. I can feel that.***

*They have their own circle. They do everything together. We have little communication with them. I cannot explain exactly how it happens. I feel that they get bored after one or two lines of conversations with me. **I also feel uncomfortable to be with them for long. Sometimes they act strangely. They have certain attitude that makes me conscious about myself** and my background. I can’t explain it to you precisely how they do it ... **I just feel that we belong to two different worlds ... I have already accepted it that I can never be a part of their world***
(Bably; Interview 2; emphasis added).

Bably’s metaphoric use of two different worlds, perhaps, appears to represent what Bourdieu defined as *habitus*. Bourdieu (1992) introduces the notion of *habitus*. *Habitus* makes speakers speak according to the society to which they belong to. The dispositions which form *habitus* become structured in them by the social condition i.e., the social milieu in which speakers acquire them. The notion of *habitus* is important to understand the feeling of one’s being an ‘insider’ and an ‘outsider’. Individuals with appropriate *habitus* have “a practical sense or ‘feel’ for the game” (Thompson, 1992, p. 17), and without the feel, they will be ‘outsiders’. In other word, *habitus* develops in speakers *le sens pratique*, i.e., the sense that tells speakers how to act and respond in certain situation of the daily life. As she did not have the *habitus* of the English-medium students, she felt like an ‘outsider’.

The separation, is moreover, not only caused by her lack of linguistic competence in English, but also caused by the amount and nature of ‘symbolic capital’. Bably seemed to know exactly why she would not be able to converse at the same level with those students:

I know that I can't socialise with them. We, especially who come from the village, are always treated as separate bodies. They have high status. They don't have to face any problems for money. I have to face them. Even if I consider this issue, we are not same. How can I be a part of them? These issues always make me feel separate. Even when I want to talk to them, I feel uneasy. I feel strange. I can't carry on a conversation with them (Bably; Interview 2; emphasis added).

Bably failed to perceive herself as the equal member of the same community. She was way too much conscious about the differences in the education background and socio-economic condition. Students with their embodied ‘symbolic capital’ made her to retreat to a different world. This appears to have affected her identity as she could not relate herself with the powerful social group or network of the class. Bably’s feeling of being in a different world was so ingrained that it was difficult for her to ignore it. Her repeated use of ‘they’/ ‘them’ shows the clear separation between the groups. They made Bably feel ‘strange’, ‘uncomfortable’ and ‘conscious’. Moreover, participants revealed their collective feeling about the issue by their constant use of ‘we’ instead of ‘I’. Bably, for example, aligned herself with a group of other students and folded others’ voice in her single voice with her ‘we-ness’. In other words, this is not only her individual voice (Bakhtin, 1981). This is the voice of others.

When Bably shared what happened to her at the emotional level, Koyel mentioned how students divided even the physical space of the classroom:

They ignore us. They never treat us as equals. As they speak English fluently, they think themselves bigger than us ... Even in the class, we sit in two groups... at one side who are good ... on the other side ...we

... who are not so good at English (Koyel; Interview 4; emphasis added).

Thus participants were relegated to separate positions even in the classroom. This was, in fact, a physical manifestation of their mental segregation, i.e., ‘us’ and ‘them’.

Academic socialisation experiences and identity

All the interviews appear to have demonstrated one thread in common: participants were afraid of speaking in front of their classmates and teachers. All the participants shared their feeling of embarrassment, fear of making mistakes, and feeling of inferiority during the interviews. Naushad (Interview 5) narrated how he was laughed at by his teacher when he could not give directions to British Council. The teacher taunted him in front of the class, telling that he would never reach the destination if he followed his direction. Participants were so conscious about their linguistic inability in the ‘legitimate language’ that they questioned their legitimacy in the university. For example, Arafat (interview 1) mentioned about an event when one of his classmates told him off,

You can’t speak English properly. Why did you come to study in a private university? You should have studied in a national college (Arafat, Interview 1).

Thus participants were afraid of voicing their responses in the class. They did not feel safe and secured in the classroom. Consequently, they failed to have academic socialisation experiences. In fact, they remained silent, unnoticed by both teachers and other students. They did not have the opportunity to construct their knowledge because of their silence. When these participants became passive or silent in the class, they themselves accepted and sustained the power of language. Thus power is realised in participants in two ways: the way they saw themselves and endorsed an identity

and the way how they thought the students from EMSC and their teachers recognised them. They were in constant struggles considering what those students and teachers thought of them. There is no doubt that this realisation would have strong impact on the collective psyche and emotional well-being of the participants.

Medium of instruction and chances of learning

Participants did not understand the class lectures which were all conducted in English. They had problems in teachers' pronunciation, fluency, and coinage of vocabulary. Even the content of the lessons remained beyond participants' comprehension. Arafat mentioned the reason why it was difficult for him to understand and respond in the class.

They [teachers] speak fast and we cannot distinguish one word from the other. We have troubles in these classes. We cannot understand the lectures of these teachers at all. How can we then respond in the class?
(Arafat; Interview, 1; emphasis added)

The data also shows that participants failed to verbalise what they had understood in the class because of their low linguistic competence. Koyel, a participant in the interview stated that the major challenge she faced in the university was not being able to contribute to class discussion.

All the classes are in English. No one uses Bangla in the class as our teachers in school and college used to do. Most of us feel so helpless. We understand and yet we feel we haven't understood anything. We can never verbalise what we have understood or what we haven't understood. (Koyel; Interview, 4; emphasis added)

The vulnerability of Koyel becomes clear when she stated that she could not verbalise what she understood or had not understood, as if she was *gagged*. She was denied from 'legitimate peripheral participation' in the COP (Wenger, 2000). The

participants could not did not actively engage in classroom interaction or ask questions on the subjects taught because of the ‘silencing by English’. They were suffering from alienation and deprived of the full participation in the COP. Thus English as the medium of instruction was detrimental for students like Koyel and Arafat. They were failing to engage in the learning process and develop critical understanding of the knowledge. Hence, the medium of instruction in the universities, were, in fact serving the interests of the privileged participants who had the perfect combination of linguistic, economic, cultural, and symbolic capitals, not the mass who had little access to them. It also demonstrates that the university authorities were reinforcing the English hegemony.

Acceptance of discrimination as natural

Another trend that came out of the data is the fact that participants learned to accept the subordination and subjugation by their English-speaking counterparts and teachers. Naushad and Arafat considered this process of subjugation and subordination as ‘natural’. They did not question why they would be subordinated in the class when their linguistic competence did not represent their intellectual capacity.

While commenting on the groupings in class, Naushad stated,

*We come from sub-urban towns. We also come from Bangla-medium schools. We are weak in English. We sit separately in the class. Those who come from Dhaka, have their own houses in Dhaka [i.e., economical capital] and they are from English-medium schools. **They prefer to sit separately with other students from English-medium schools.** In their circle, they have interaction amongst themselves in English. We cannot be member of this group. We speak in Bangla. **We have separate groups. These differences exist. We naturally accept it.*** (Naushad, Interview 5; emphasis added)

This is the social and cultural reproduction and participants appear to have actively complied with the process of the linguistic hegemony. They also seem to have accepted the nonchalant and non-involved role of the teacher in the process. Thus they categorised themselves into groups, using BMSC synonymous to an education system that prepares linguistically crippled students. As stated in Norton (1997, p. 424), “The namer isolates the named, explains them, contains them, and controls them”. However, here the participants from BMSC named themselves. More tragic is the fact that they did not realise that they were not only being named, but they were naming themselves.

Participants themselves also believed the rationalisation or justification of the legitimacy of English and supremacy of the students from EMSC. They supported the necessity of learning English and showed their endorsement towards it. In the process, they unfortunately accepted themselves inadequate. This is ‘normalisation through consent’ (Giroux, 1981b) and ‘warping of mind’ caused by linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1998).

Arafat shared his opinions about the result of the questionnaire survey showing teachers’ preferences for English-speaking students. He mentioned that teachers tended to give more marks to them and quite rhetorically compared them to native speakers of English.

*Even in the exams, they [students from EMSC] perform better as they perform better in the class, right? **Teachers tend to give more marks to those students who participate in the class discussion.** As native English speakers have satisfying conversation only with native speakers, they [teachers who converse in English] get satisfaction from talking to English speaking students. Hence, they give more importance to those students (Arafat, Interview 1; emphasis added).*

There is a sense of ‘essentialism’ built in the process in which some students are predestined to be appreciated and rewarded, when others not. Nevertheless,

participants accepted it without questioning. They considered English as the *only* yardstick to judge their own academic potentiality. In other words, the ‘new colonisers’, the elitist universities, teachers, and students successfully ‘colonised’ the participants and controlled their perception, cognition, and preferences. This is the covert manifestation of linguistic ideology.

Participants’ self-esteem

Participants’ self-perception seemed to go through a rapid change with their entrance to universities. They became unsure of their general ability.

For example, Bably stated:

I was a good student in the school and college. When I started my classes in the university, I realised right away that I am not a good student as I thought I was. I also realised that I wouldn’t be able to compete those students who are from English-medium schools. There are also students from Viqarunnisa and Notre Dame [considered to be the best Bangla-medium educational institutions in Dhaka] who speak English so fluently that I get upset. I know that I can never speak like them. Even if I try, I know, I can never be like them. (Bably; Interview 2; emphasis added).

This excerpt shows that Bably’s self-confidence was shattered. It shows her ambivalent feelings about her limited English abilities. In fact, her emotional condition was the consequence of the linguistic hegemony and ideology propounded by the university. The hegemonic ideology made her think that her linguistic capacity was synonymous to her general intellectual ability. Participants also seemed to lose interest in their studies and they seemed disoriented when they talked about their future.

Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be confirmed that English is creating a complex web of relations among students in the higher education in Bangladesh. This research, within a small scale, has problematised the ironical role of English in the universities. It is affecting students' participation in classroom activities, power negotiation, identity, and in other words, their legitimate peripheral participation in the COP. The symbolic valorisation of English is making language-based discrimination acceptable (Giroux, 1981a) in the universities in Bangladesh. It is also benefitting only those students who have competence in English. This is reminiscent of what is called "politics of representation" (Mehan, 1996, as cited in Blommaert, 1999, p. 9). Students and teachers with adequate competence in English appear to exert control over the politics of representation, while the others who are not so competent in English are constrained to accept it. Thus universities have become the sites of social and cultural reproduction. Universities are, in fact, "a kind of microcosm of the broader social order" (Auerbach, 1995, p: 9) and that students' role, behaviour, and identity, to a great extent, are decided by the dynamics of power and inequality enforced on them (Bourdieu, 1992). Both students and teachers perpetuate and effectuate the social, political, and ideological relations. Consequently, these students appear to develop an 'ascribed identity' based on their experiences in the classroom and their sense of what teachers and other students may perceive them to be. They learn to accept that they are somewhat deficient and eventually, they complete the perpetuation of the hegemony (Li, 2002). This also appears to support the view and belief that identity is something fluid, constructed and situated in the COP. It is not only biologically determined.

There is a commonality in the way students negotiate their participation in the

academia: silence. With their silence, they become invisible and position themselves in the “intermediate regions of the social space” (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 62). They do not participate in “meaning making” practices (Davies, 2005, p. 53) in the COP and miss out on better learning opportunities. Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 5) consider social participation not an “adjunct to learning process but the vehicle for learning itself”. These students unfortunately do not participate or own knowledge through participation, as Wenger mentions (1998b, p. 5), “knowledge is created, shared, organised, revised, and passed on within and among these communities”. Knowledge becomes a part of the process of knowing when learners interact, communicate, and use the knowledge for the negotiation of meaning.

The finding of this specific piece of research may not sound as something new. It somewhat revalidates the intuitive knowledge that linguistic and symbolic capitals privilege some, and marginalise and alienate others in society. Nevertheless, the extent to which English as a medium of instruction silences students can be revealed. Freire (1970) states that any education system that makes students silent in the class fails to ensure effective learning. Therefore, there is no doubt that the higher education in Bangladesh robs some students of their rights to knowledge. It is working as an undemocratic force, dissocialising and alienating linguistically weaker students.

Limitations

There were two limitations in the research. The main limitation, which was beyond my control, was the disparity of number of participants from both EMSC and BMSC. The participation in the research was voluntary and equal number of students from EMSC did not participate in the research. Moreover, 13 participants from the EMSC

and 102 from BMSC, perhaps, do not represent the entire student population of the universities in Bangladesh. Hence, it is not possible to state in more definitive terms the sort of conclusions that this research can make for the purpose of generalisability. However, this small-scale research can provide an informed ‘feel’ about the experiences of students in relation to English-medium education in the universities of Bangladesh.

Second, varied research tools could not be used in the research because of the time frame. An ethnographic study with other research tools, such as diary writing, focus group discussion, weekly interviews, and classroom observation would draw in more data on participants’ learning and socialisation experiences both inside and outside the university. A questionnaire survey and interviews were, perhaps, decontextualised and hence, may fail to adequately bring out the situated character of learning and identity.

Future Research

This research nevertheless can indicate possibilities for further investigation at three levels: policy level, pedagogic level, and conceptual level.

There has not been much research on policy formation and implementation in relation to medium of instruction at the tertiary level of education in Bangladesh. The present practice, i.e., keeping students in the Bangla-only environment for the first three levels of education and immersing them into English-only environment at the fourth level, demonstrates its limitation. The present practice seems even more unrealistic because it disregards the linguistic, social, and economic realities in students’ life. Hence, the research indicates the necessity of intervening into the activities of the universities and formulating a transparent medium-of instruction policy for all the levels of education: primary, secondary, higher secondary, and

tertiary. Therefore, only an effective language policy will ensure students' smooth transition from one level of education to the next. In addition, there should be a way to incorporate Bangla in the higher education, instead of considering it as "the poor cousin of English medium education, or the 'concubine' of English-medium education" (Tsui, 1996, p. 247).

On a more practical/ pedagogic level, the research shows the necessity of indigenous pedagogic intervention: a pedagogic practice that encourages students to identify the 'counter-hegemonic elements' in the education system (Giroux, 1981b). Students need to be aware of how the elite universities ensure "the perpetuation and legitimation of social hierarchies" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. xi). Only then, students may challenge the established hegemony of English. They can become 'critical co-investigators in dialogues' (Freire, 1970) if they reflect, participate in dialogues and ask questions. Only by learning to question, students may resist the inequality existing in the education system and gain control over their learning and identity.

On a conceptual level, this research demonstrated that classroom is not a neutral site of pedagogical transactions. Even a silence of a student may convey meaning worth of thousand words. Hence, there is a necessity of conducting ethnographic studies for drawing in students' voices and actions. This sort of investigation on a greater and equal number of students from different education backgrounds may reveal the dissonance and contradiction in academic practices.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Direction: Put a tick mark (✓) in the box that says what you want to say. You may use either English, Bangla or both for answering the questions.

1) A. Please indicate to what extent you need English for the following situations in your university:

a) Understanding class lectures

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

b) Answering questions in class

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

c) Writing answers in examinations

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

d) Talking to teachers

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

e) Talking to friends

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

f) Participating in university clubs

☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%

2. For each of the following questions decide whether you strongly agree (1), agree (2), have no opinion (3), disagree (4), or strongly disagree (5) and check the appropriate box with a tick mark (✓). Read each item carefully.

A.		1	2	3	4	5
	I find it difficult to participate in class discussions in English.					
	I find it difficult to participate in any discussions or debates in English.					
	I struggle when I require to interact with English-speaking students.					
	I feel embarrassed when I make grammatical mistakes in front of English-speaking students.					
	When I have difficulties in learning English, I begin to doubt my own ability.					
	I feel great when I find my command of English is better than that of others.					

- 2) Please indicate the percentages to what extent you talk to your family members in English:
- ☐ 100% - 75% ☐ 75% - 50% ☐ 50-25% ☐ 25% - 0%
- 3) Estimated monthly family income:
- ☐ Less than 10,000 taka
☐ Less than 20,000 taka
☐ Less than 30,000 taka
☐ More than 30,000 taka
- 4) Which school did you go? _____ Location

- 5) What type of school was it? ☐ Bangla-medium ☐ English medium
- 6) Which college did you go? _____ Location

- 7) What type of college was it? ☐ Bangla-medium ☐ English medium?
- 8) How many of your close friends in your university are from English-medium schools? _____%
- 9) If you are willing to be interviewed by me, please give your telephone number in the blank given below.
- Phone Number _____

Appendix B

Semi-structured Questionnaire for the Interview

1. What role does English play in your life in the university? How do you feel about it?
2. Do you face any specific problems for that? What sort of problems do you face?
3. Do all the students face same level and same kind of problems?
4. 22.3% participants strongly agreed and 42% participants agreed that students weak in English remained unnoticed by their teachers. Have you personally observed any such discrimination?
5. 35.4% students strongly agreed and 36.3% students agreed that English-medium students have better access to university clubs. Do you agree to it?

Asian Undergraduate Students' Apprenticeship in Research Paper Writing: Academic Interactions and Researchers' Responsibilities

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Abstract

Although research paper writing is a very common course assignment for undergraduates, some academic professionals consider it an unnecessary genre practice for this group of writers since they do not write for an authentic audience and are not taught reliable research design. This study validates the need for such genre practice by investigating the research paper drafting processes of four Taiwanese sophomores who were faced with first-time English research paper writing. It holds that the ways the students perceive their need for writing and transform it into a research paper reflects their interactional patterns in this academic literacy practice. The results show that the participants had the tendency to draw on pre-existing socio-cultural norms for the formation of new norms: they relied on pleasure reading or career interest for research ideas and direct quotations or personal statements/examples for supporting details. The study discusses the implied meaning of their underdeveloped academic interactions, validates undergraduates' need for research paper writing genre practice, and concludes the need for conceptualizing and reifying undergraduate researchers' responsibilities in their instruction.

Keywords: Genre analysis, college student writers, research paper writing, textual organization

The Background of the Study

A Neglected Practice: Undergraduates' Research Paper Writing

With increased attention being paid to the EAP (English for Academic Purposes) curriculum in Asian tertiary institutions, more research efforts have also been devoted to this area. However, undergraduate-level academic writing, compared with graduate-level academic writing, receives less attention. According to Wu (2007), this may be caused by some academic professionals' stereotype that undergraduates' academic writing is "writing without an authentic audience" (p.330) and thus is not a hot research topic among Asian EAP researchers. Although undergraduates' research paper writing practice is rarely aimed at publishing, research papers are very common assignments which undergraduate students receive from course instructors (Cooper & Bikowski, 2007, p.209). However, some academic professionals in English-language education related disciplines in Taiwan hold that research paper writing is not a necessary genre practice for undergraduates, but is necessary only for graduate students who need to write master's theses. One possible reason for this is that these professionals' definition of research paper writing is limited to full-length research articles, as seen in most published academic journals; other forms of research-oriented college writing are often excluded. To give readers a better understanding of the so-called "research paper," this study employs the definition from *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (2009). It divided the types of academic research into two: primary research and secondary research. Most academic professionals' defined research is primary research, which requires "the first-hand investigation, such as analyzing a literary or historical text, a film, or a performance; conducting a survey or an interview; or carrying out a laboratory experiment" (p.3). In contrast to primary research, secondary research refers to "the examination of studies that other

researchers have made of a subject” (p.3). Most undergraduates’ research papers fall in this category, mainly a critical review of literature. One reason that many college instructors like to have their undergraduates practice this type of research is that most undergraduates have little domain-specific knowledge, let alone being officially taught the use of reliable research tools and valid research design for first-hand investigation. A practice of critical literature review provides them with the chance to build domain-specific knowledge.

Some academic professionals’ unsupported attitude toward undergraduates’ research paper genre practice contradicts the fact that research paper writing is common and pivotal in undergraduates’ academic literacy practices. The problem ensues after some of them progress to graduate study and find research paper writing a challenging task. According to Cooper & Bikowski (2007), many undergraduate students feel the writing of research papers to be difficult because it requires a search of library information and an analysis of empirical/experimental studies (p.209). They face a change of author role from “consumers” of disciplinary knowledge to “creators” (Hood, 2008, p. 351). This is a very different writing experience for many of them. Students of NNE (Non-Native English) writing background even face the problem of using the English language academically in addition to their lack of familiarity with genre and register (Hood, 2010). In viewing prior studies on Asian EFL undergraduates’ research-oriented writing, the foci were on students’ perception of research paper writing as a genre (Huang, 2007; Yeh, 2009), their task representation ability (Cheng, 2009), or their form-based knowledge (e.g., the style, grammar, cohesion, vocabularies) (Evans & Green, 2007; Lee & Chen, 2009). These analyses, in Hyland’s words (2007), are methodologically “dematerialized,” in which the researchers “dematerialize” participating students’ texts into “packages of linguistics

features” for analysis (p.133). In light of this, this study “rematerializes texts” into “a series of real, situated encounters” for analysis (Hyland, 2007, p.133) by adopting an ethnographic case study. It examines particular writers’ academic interactions in both the pre-writing and drafting stages of research paper writing practice. In other words, it observes the ways the research participants interact contextually for the acquisition of research ideas in the prewriting stage, and for textual organization in the drafting stage.

The purpose of the study is to validate the participants’ need for research paper genre practice through the exploration of their academic interactions. The research participants are four English major Taiwanese sophomore students engaged in their first-time English research paper writing. The use of an ethnographic case study approach is bi-directional. Methodologically, it is “rich with the sense of human encounter” (Hyland, 2007, p.133), through which a fuller understanding of Asian EFL undergraduates’ growth from knowing nothing about scholarly writing to demonstrating minimal ability to conduct academic research individually is built. It also contributes pedagogically to the development of undergraduate EAP curriculum in Asian EFL tertiary institutions. As stated by Flower (1987), that “writing starts with a rhetorical situation that poses a need to write” (p.7), the ways in which the participants perceive their need to write and transform it into foreign language texts in their first-time encounter with the research paper genre reflects their interactional patterns in this academic literacy practice.

Undergraduate Writers’ Academic Interactions

Academic individuals write research papers to express their knowledge claim, therefore research paper writing is not merely persuasive, but also knowledge-creating

per se. A research paper includes the following elements: a novel idea, a convincing contention, an acknowledgement of prior researchers' work, legitimate warrants that meet "adequacy conditions" and "acceptability conditions," and the showing of a "disciplinary ethos" (Hyland, 2007, pp.12-13). The way it is written is thus very different from personal essays. The writer relies on other academic texts for the posing of an argument. Such a textual referencing act, in Hyland's (2007) eyes, implies "the collaborative construction of new knowledge between writers and readers" (p.21) and is termed by him "academic interaction" (p.20).

Although undergraduates engage less than graduate students in research paper writing, many of their course assignments are analogous to research papers in that they ask the students to provide an analytical evaluation of knowledge about a certain topic for the establishment of a disciplinary argument (Wu, 2007, p.255). We can still catch a glimpse of this group of writers' interaction patterns in research-oriented genre practices. Among relevant studies reviewed, students' textual borrowing behaviour in source-based academic writing is a frequently studied topic, since it is an explicit form of interaction reified in the texts. These prior findings support the ideas that many undergraduates are not skilled enough in organizing multiple source texts into a coordinated and cohesive form of knowledge transformation (Buranen, 2009; Klompier, 2001; Yeh, 2009). In such a task, the students are expected to cite the source texts for evaluation purposes (Petric, 2007), that is, using "evaluative expressions" to "problematize" the studied phenomenon, to "negotiate" the contrasting viewpoints, and to present the proposed knowledge as "a product of contrast" (Wu, 2007, p. 256). Although situating the proposed claim in a disciplinary context through literature review is necessary in the research-oriented writing task, a gap often exists between the students' ideas in mind and their actual writing (Cheng,

2009). For example, in Cheng's (2009) investigation of three Taiwanese undergraduates' task conceptualization ability in source-based English essay writing, she found that participating students failed to employ multiple source texts for "a fuller range of rhetorical moves" (p. 15). They adopted a "low-investment" strategy, mainly selecting and reiterating some of the original authors' stated points or terminology in support of their claims as a way of showing academic interaction. The selected/cited points were rarely used for the posing of a disciplinary argument. Cheng concluded that this was not successful academic production even though it saved the writer time in developing rhetorical moves (p. 17). Such groups of students cite source texts mainly for attribution purposes (Petric, 2007) and present knowledge as a "product of generalization" (Wu, 2007, p. 256).

The Study

Context and Participants

The study followed "purposeful sampling" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p.73) by selecting NNE writers engaged in first English research paper writing during their course of study. Four former students of the researcher agreed to voluntarily participate in this study. They were sophomore students majoring in English language and literature at one private Taiwanese university during their course of study and took the same section of the research methods course offered by their department. The department offered six sections of the research methods course to its sophomore students and grouped the students in the same section based on their English proficiency levels. Therefore, these four participating students were of similar English proficiency levels: 'Frank' is an Asian-European of native German writing background; Brian, Kay and Emily are Taiwanese of native Chinese writing

background. To secure the confidentiality of the research participants' private information, pseudonyms were used.

Their research methods course was a two-semester-long required course. It was the one among other department-offered undergraduate courses that emphasized research paper genre practice. Though the students practiced research paper writing in the class, they were not taught to write for publishing. The department's objective was to have the students familiarize themselves with the diverse forms of academic communications through such genre practice. The course featured small-size class teaching (less than 20 students) and the use of the English language as the medium of instruction. Students learned to use library databases, practiced proper citation, reviewed literature within their field of study (either on English literature or on TEFL research), defined the research gap in the reviewed literature, formulated a research question, and composed a 5-10 page paper following the MLA style. The research paper practiced in this course falls into the category of secondary research, in which every student critically reviewed a topic on literature or TEFL based on his/her searched/collected source materials. Technically speaking, it is a critical literature review paper, not a full-length original research paper, for the students were not taught the use of research instruments for the collection/analysis of empirical data. In the first semester class, the students learned basic academic writing skills such as summarizing, paraphrasing, citation, and writing an annotated bibliography. In the second semester class, each student decided his/her own research topic and concentrated on the writing process independently. Meanwhile the course instructor acted as an interested reader responding to the student's contentions in the writing conferences. Prior to taking this research methods class, none of the participants had experience in writing research papers. Most of their writing assignments were short

essays or response papers grounded on personal opinions and not on conventionally-proven academic texts.

Data Collection

This researcher collected the following qualitative data sources from the research participants: (1) their written assignments including their reading lists, proposals, outlines, and two drafts of final papers; (2) their one-on-one writing conferences with the course instructor; (3) two semi-structured interviews with each participant. It took the researcher one year to follow the research participants for data collection.

With respect to the writing conferences data, writing conferences were conducted in the second semester where each student met with the course instructor twice, after submitting the research proposal and after presenting the outline of his/her research paper. The writing conferences were conducted in English and were documented in the observation fieldnotes. Regarding the interview data, two semi-structured interviews with each participant were conducted. The focus was on their idea development and writing strategies. The first interview emphasized their composing processes, including how they positioned their researcher roles, developed research interest, and finalized their topics. The second interview highlighted the content and rhetorical structures of their papers. Depending on their preference of language medium, some of their interviews were conducted in English and some were in Chinese. Interviews conducted in Chinese were translated into English. All interview data were transcribed verbatim. For the two drafts of their research papers, the first draft was a very rough piece in which they drafted only three to five pages showing their preliminary act of composition; the second draft was the final draft they submitted in the final exam week. No writing conferences were held in-between. Soon

after the students submitted the first draft, they started oral presentation of their research and the instructor commented orally on their oral presentation and first draft. The students did not receive further comments from the course instructor about the second draft because it was submitted in the final week as the final exam.

Data Analysis

This study follows a case study research (Yin, 1981). It compared and contrasted the participants' research idea development and textual organization by using cross-case analysis. The data are analyzed qualitatively as a qualitative analysis draws on "a case by case basis" (Huckin, 2004, p. 15) that allows the researcher to maximize the findings out of cross-case comparison. The researcher follows Bogdan & Biklen's (2007) "coding system" by classifying the data into core "coding families" (e.g., the following codes; topic, research question, background, story, citation, example, solution, comparison/contrast, situation, word number, etc.), and sub-codes for pattern establishment of the participants' rhetorical structures.

The analysis is enhanced and framed by Hyland's (2007) social approach to scholarly writing that academic writers' posing of disciplinary arguments, use of methodological design, interpretation of findings, and development of writing styles all reflect the "intellectual climate" within which they are situated (p.6). Their scholarly production is an interactional process; their acts of composition cannot be isolated from the research communities in which they are engaged. In the research site, the participants spent one semester taking the course and one semester drafting the paper, during which they were engaged in a series of textual practices including "selecting text," "inscribing text," "reading/rereading text," and "revising text" (Prior, 2004, p. 171). Their development of research topics and textual organization reflected

the intellectual climate within which they were embedded.

The study is guided by the following research questions. First, how do the research participants interact with the situated contexts for the development of research ideas? Second, what drafting strategies do they use as academic responses to the proposed disciplinary claims? Third, how do their academic interactions reflect their need for research paper genre practice?

Results

Prewriting: Interacting with Socio-Cultural Sources

According to the interview data, the participants' instructor originally expected them to recall interesting topics discussed in their other courses for the gains of research ideas (e.g., Greek mythology, Western civilization, American literature, British literature, children's literature, or TEFL methodology). However, they acquired research ideas mainly out of "socio-cultural knowledge" (Kellogg, 1994), i.e., "basic beliefs shared with members of one's family, community, ethnic group, and national culture" (p. 71) rather than "domain-specific knowledge" acquired from their courses. Their socio-cultural ties are particularly related to their pleasure reading or career interest. This advanced the establishment of further research plans even if it was not the instructor's original expectation. For example, Frank chose the topic related to his Asian-European identity. As an Asian-European, he had perceived Europeans' stereotypical attitude toward Asians since his childhood. Owing to this, he personally read a number of Amy Tan's novels and developed a framework about Westerners' stereotypes on Asians. When he learned that he needed to produce a research paper highlighting his research interest, he soon decided to investigate how Asian-American novelists portrayed Asians in their literary work. He selected one of Amy Tan's

novels, *The Joy Luck Club*, as an example to illustrate the stereotypes that Asian-Americans received in Anglo-American society.

Similarly, in the case of Brian, he also chose the topic pertinent to his pleasure reading. His particular interest in *Sherlock Holmes* motivated him to explore Conan Doyle's rhetorical styles. He enjoyed reading Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* series as his pleasure reading in spite of having read only the translated version in Chinese. He began with the search of academic journal articles commenting on *Sherlock Holmes* and found an article by Van der Linde's particularly interesting. That piece argued that all of *Sherlock Holmes* stories followed the same rhetorical pattern. Brian used it to scaffold his research plan: he selected two Sherlock Holmes stories (i.e., *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of Four*) to illustrate Van der Linde's viewpoints. Technically speaking, Brian did not pose any disciplinary arguments. Although he stated in the outline that he attempted to give "reasons that caused Conan Doyle to copy his plots," he was merely reiterating Van der Linde's points. In the writing conference, he admitted to his teacher that he had difficulty in discovering Conan Doyle's rhetorical styles in *Sherlock Holmes* since he had only read the stories in Chinese and not in English.

In the case of Kay, her development of research ideas was full of twists and turns in spite of her close connection with socio-cultural sources. She was personally interested in children's literature, so her initial idea was to find and analyze books motivating young children's reading interest. However, she later found that such an interest was too vague to be a research plan. She then changed her topic the day before her research proposal was due. The new topic was to investigate the literary value of best-selling children books. She formulated this into a question: "Among so many children's books, do the books from the best-seller lists have literary value?"

She considered it researchable and manageable. However, one month later, she told the instructor that she had had difficulty in finding relevant source texts. She negotiated with the teacher for a topic change again. After her teacher permitted her topic change, she chose to investigate the story of *Cinderella* because it was one of the most well-known Brothers Grimm fairy tales. She proposed that the Brothers Grimm's stereotypical portrait of female characters in *Cinderella* (e.g., fragile, weak, and in need of men's help) implied serious societal hierarchy and gender discrimination problems in 19th century Europe.

The above three students' research ideas revolved around personal reading interest. In contrast to them, Emily was the only one working on TEFL research; however, her case also reflected socio-cultural influence on a novice researcher's development of research interest. Emily linked her research to her future career. As an English major student, she planned to be an English teacher. Seeing the increasing number of NE (native English) speakers going to NNE speaking countries to teach English, she wondered whether NNE teachers teach less effectively than NE ones. She held that English teachers of NNE backgrounds, owing to their past EFL learning experiences, must know EFL learners' needs better than the NE ones and are able to assist students with their L2 learning. To test out her hypothesis, she began with the search of relevant literature and found one organization named TESOL. This organization aroused her interest because she understood, mistakenly, that it was an academic degree program admitting and training prospective students to be TEFL specialists. Emily's initial topic was "the effects of TESOL's teacher education program on NNE teachers' instruction and pedagogy." However, due to her misunderstanding of the nature of this organization, she failed to find source texts discussing the instructional quality of the TESOL Association. It eventually became a bottleneck in her research

process. Based on the writing conference data, her teacher corrected her erroneous understanding of the TESOL Association. She finalized the new topic in a question form: “Are teachers of NNES background not suitable for being English instructors?”

Overall, in their prewriting stage, their socio-cultural ties played a great role in the development of their research ideas. They interacted with socio-cultural norms that tied them personally to the disciplinary context, among which their pleasure reading and career interest were the most influential ones.

Drafting: Interacting through Quotations

In the drafting stage, the students had a tendency to use direct quotations and personal statements as academic responses to the proposed disciplinary claims. These two acts of composition indicate their need to gain awareness of researcher responsibilities in scholarly writing practices. They knew the significance of following academic conventions in research paper writing yet developed drafting strategies different from experienced writers for academic interactions. Their use of quotations and personal statements are divided into separate sections for discussion.

First, the four participants tended to use direct quotations in drafting; however, their use of quotation was mainly to avoid the violation of academic integrity and to meet the instructor’s required page limit. Excessive quotations eventually caused them the problem of over-quotation. At the beginning of the class, they were informed of the academic integrity policy by the instructor and knew the penalty they would receive if plagiarism was found in any drafts of their assignments. To promote their research paper writing skills, the instructor taught them paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting according to the MLA style and also showed them examples of plagiarism and proper citation. Nevertheless, over-quotation still appeared in their drafts. Their

over-quotation can be divided into frequent use of quotes and the use of long quotes, meaning that the source texts were directly borrowed by them in their writing. The following example which appeared in the first paragraph of Emily's paper showed such a long-quote writing style. In the following examples, quotations are highlighted in bold.

Example 1

"I experienced the full impact of the term non-native speaker, and all the accompanying social, psychological, and economic program in TESOL in the mid-1980s. By then, I had 14 years experience teaching English. Needing to supplement my partial scholarship, I applied for a tutor position at the university's language center and was turned down almost instantly. Instead, some native speakers who had no teaching experience were employed. Although not stated explicitly, the message was clear: non-native speakers need not apply." (Geroge Braine, chapter 2, From the periphery to the center: One Teacher's Journey) (Data source 1, second draft of the final paper)

All the research participants were aware of the need to paraphrase but they admitted the difficulty of striking a balance between paraphrasing and maintaining content accuracy. Two of them (i.e., Brian and Emily) were warned by the instructor about the overuse of quotations in the first draft yet they still considered it the solution to the paraphrasing problem. Example 2 is excerpted from one paragraph of Brian's first draft. He used three authority quotes to scaffold Conan Doyle's claims. He used quotes for different rhetorical purposes: the first quote served as the lead-in, the second quote as the argument, and the third quote as the support of the second quote. Long quotes (i.e., of more than four-line-long) that should be indented and placed separately as block quotes appeared a lot in his writing.

Example 2

John Robert Moore stated **“In the order literatures, from the Greeks to Shakespeare and a good deal of later, plots were common property, to be reworked by successive writers with whatever skill they possessed.”**

This tells us that how important the plot is. Plot is the soul of the novel. But some critics found out that Conan Doyle have the similar formula of writing the detective novel. According to Gerhard van der Linde **“The 56 short stories which Conan Doyle wrote about Holmes all follow the same basic pattern: the problem to be solved is explained to the detective, usually by a client. In the course of the investigation, he identifies vital clues and constructs hypotheses concerning the solution of the problem, The other characters are almost always unable to follow his reasoning or draw the correct inferences from the data presented to them.”** Here is a similar comment about Conan Doyle’s writing style. Christopher Metress stated that **“The stories begin in Baker Street; in the middle they move out into London or the English countryside; in the end they return to Baker Street.”** These two quotations tell us that Conan Doyle indeed have the writing formula used in his writing. Why he had this kind of formula? Was he affected by someone’s writing style? Or he had limited life circle? Most of them just found his problem; they didn’t further explain why Conan Doyle uses writing formula to write the detective story. (Data source 1, first draft of the final paper)

Brian learned from the class that quotes should be used selectively and that over-quotation may cause one’s writing to be “not original” and “not skillful” (MLA, 2009, p. 92). However, because he was not confident of the content accuracy of his paraphrased sentences, he chose “quoting the whole thing” to lessen any chances of misinterpretation. He explained as follows:

To paraphrase is not easy. We were shown examples of plagiarism in the class and learned that changed texts can still be recognized as plagiarism. This makes me feel that no matter how I try to paraphrase, my paraphrase may still be considered plagiarism. Additionally, my writing tends to be verbose. My paraphrased text always looks wordy, not as concise as the original text. The quality is already far from the original one. What is worse, if any part of my text is recognized by the teacher as

plagiarism, I will even fail in this course. I am still not clear to what extent my paraphrase is considered proper paraphrase and to what extent it is considered plagiarism. (Data source 3, second interview)

Direct quotation played a pivotal role in the participants' writing because it saved them time and effort in developing the arguments, explanations, and supporting details. They regarded citation as a decisive element separating research-oriented writing from non-research work. They held that non-research oriented writing was based on the use of personal examples, meanwhile research-oriented writing was grounded on academically-proven evidence so that academic citation was essential. Quoting directly was an explicit means of knowledge presentation to them and could be extended to other uses, in addition to the avoidance of poor paraphrase. Take Frank for example; he used direct quotation for the following purposes. "I did not really know how to conclude and what to say at the end of the paper so I used the quotation to help me conclude and make the concluding paragraph look longer." The following excerpt shows such use.

Example 3

After analyzing selected characters and scenes from the novel, the existence of stereotypes in *The Joy Luck Club* is undeniable. The popular clichés of Asian Americans being successful, Asian women being weak and easily attracted by white men, and Asian males being chauvinistic are all at least shown by two examples from the novel in this paper. To conclude, Ghymn has pointed out that **"For ... Tan the right image is not necessarily a realistic one, but one that fits into the moral of their stories and provides the right perspective"** (11). The creation of a beautiful image is a crucial principle for Tan. **"It's the images that are so important to me. That's where the mystery of the writing and the beauty of the story is"** (13). (Data source 1, second draft of the final paper)

Frank's challenge in writing the conclusion turned him to seek authority quotes as a solution. He explained how authority quotes helped him to reinforce his author voice and to shape his research direction:

I think Ghymn's quotation says something significant about Tan that I wanted my readers to remember when they finish this paper...I quoted Ghymn because I think Tan is aware of the fact that there are stereotypes in the book, but she does not really care about reinforcing stereotypes or not, but rather focuses on the creation of a powerful and beautiful story.
(Data source 3, second interview)

Drafting: Interacting through Personal Sources

In addition to over-quotation, another drafting strategy often used by the participants was the application of essay writing habits to research paper writing, which can be found in their use of personal statements as supporting details. This shows their socio-cultural ties with prior writing behavior. Nonetheless, compared with their use of over-quotation, their use of personal statements appeared less often. They used personal statements as supporting details when they lacked directly-relevant literature to cite, implying that such textual sources were treated as an alternative only when conventional sources were not available to them. They attributed such use to the paucity of relevant literature as if their research topics were so brand new that no one had ever studied them before. The use of personal statements eventually made their papers look like essays and less like academic research papers.

Their claims of reference paucity seemed to imply their poor reference search skills; nevertheless, they considered themselves good at academic reference search. Based on the course syllabus and the interviews, their instructor spent four weeks teaching them the use of online academic databases and the evaluation of the sources. The class was held in the computer laboratory so every student had access to a computer. In the class, the instructor showed them the school library's electronic databases and

introduced them to some commonly-used ones. The participants preferred to use the MLA International Bibliography, JSTOR (Journal Storage), ERIC (Education Information Research Center), and ERC (Education Research Complete) for reference search. Emily was the only one conducting TEFL research among the four, so she personally used ERIC and ERC for reference search. The other three participants used MLA and JSTOR interchangeably: they used the MLA International Bibliography for abstract searches at first and then turned to JSTOR for full-text reading. To ensure that the students' reference searches met their needs, the instructor walked around the room to check those searches. Despite that, a gap emerged between their earlier claims that they were familiar with academic reference research and later claims that there were no related sources found. To mitigate the distance underlying their searched references and actual writing, personal examples/statements were adopted.

Take Emily for instance, she proposed that English teachers of Asian heritage receiving TESOL degrees from Western countries should not apply Western pedagogies to their teaching in Asia. She argued that "Western style teaching" may not be suitable for Asian students since there are a lot of cultural differences between these two groups. The following example was excerpted from one paragraph of her paper.

Example 4

What is more, English teachers in Asia are not like an instructor who let you to discover the interests in learning English like Western style of teaching. Instead, these Asian teachers try to be totally authorized in their students learning. And this is the cultural difference between Asia and Western. However, instructors in Asia countries are basically received the native style of teaching. So, there is most of the time that these non-native teachers have problems to teach when they came back to teach in their countries after accepting the Western style of learning. In order to solve this problem, this present study doesn't give any

solution to do. Instead, the present study suggests that for the purpose of solving the cultural differences, the teaching associations should add more cultural-related classes for teacher-trainers to take because the best way to understand a culture is always trying to immerse in it first. (Data source 1, second draft of the final paper)

As shown above, Emily did not use any academic citations to support her claims.

When she was asked about this, she explained as follows:

Some of my points came from my observation and personal experiences. Before I entered college for study, I was never taught by Taiwanese teachers receiving education in America. I know that our teachers wanted us to act like American college students, so they also tried to adopt American teaching pedagogies in their instruction. However what I want to say is: teachers might overestimate us. They paid particular attention to those who liked to speak in class and yet ignored those who were silent. As time went by, we might not be motivated for learning. I feel that our teachers should stand in our shoes, not just blindly follow American instruction and pedagogies. Otherwise, we have no ideas what to do. (Data source 3, second interview)

Take Kay for another instance. She claimed in her paper that Cinderella's fragile and weak personality was a proof of gender discrimination in 19th century Europe. The following example was excerpted from one paragraph of her paper.

Example 5

Males at that time considered that females are not capable to attend and deal with this kind of things. Besides, they even deemed females as their properties. Likewise, Cinderella was portrayed as a dependent girl by the author in the story. Therefore, the readers can assume that the plot is related to the history background from the example, that is, males don't believe that females can be independent. (Data source 1, second draft of the final paper)

According to Kay, her claims were grounded on personal opinions, not on external sources. In contrast to Emily's acknowledgement of personal statement use, Kay

attributed such use to a novice's difficulty in organizing academic texts comprehensively.

I had hard time to analyze my source texts. What I could do is to summarize them or to generalize scattered materials into a slightly organized form. Other than that, I did not know what angle to cut in for a critical discussion of my source texts. Even if I read and re-read them, it was still hard for me to define the research direction. Therefore, I eventually used personal statements to support my claims. (Data source 3, second interview)

Owing to this, she held that it was the Brothers Grimm's growing up background which affected their portrayal of female characters in *Cinderella*, since 19th century Europe, their time period, had gender inequality problems. She explained her way of shaping the direction of research:

When I wrote my paper, I didn't think about any ideologies or implications. It is hard for a sophomore student like me to think about these. My knowledge and understanding is limited. I read little and wrote my paper in limited time frame. I could only tell my readers that a writer's production of any stories or tales is more or less inspired by his/her personal background. (Data source 3, first interview)

Overall, the participants relied on direct quotations and personal statements for textual organization in drafting. Depending on the usability and availability of reference texts, they varied their ways of textual organization. When directly-relevant reference texts were usable to them, they tended to cite them directly for attribution or for meeting their word limit. When directly-relevant reference texts were not available to them, they tended to use personal statements to support their disciplinary claims.

Discussion

The participants' first English research paper writing experiences accord with prior

researchers' findings that organizing source texts in academically acceptable ways is a challenging task to college students (Petric, 2007, p. 239). The participants' adherence to socio-cultural knowledge for the gains of research topics in pre-writing and for the support of proposed disciplinary claims in drafting showed the greater influence of personally-driven sources than academically-driven ones in a novice's research genre practice. Some academic professionals may claim that the participants' drafting processes reflect their inability to interact with disciplinary contexts in academically-accepted ways. They may attribute the occurrence of undergraduates' poor research quality to their poor academic writing skills, lack of domain-specific knowledge, or lack of research interest, and conclude that research paper writing is thus not an appropriate genre practice for undergraduate-level students. However, this study holds that their underdeveloped patterns of academic interactions, in fact, validate their need for research paper genre practice.

In detail, their worry of being unable to meet the teacher's required word limit caused them to place their priority on completing the paper merely as an assignment, not on acknowledging their knowledge claims. This is opposed to experienced writers' use of citations for the defining of "a specific context of knowledge or problem to which the current work is a contribution" (Hyland, 2007, p. 22). Nonetheless, some of their acts of composition, such as quoting directly in order to avoid inaccurate paraphrasing or plagiarism, and the use of personal statements as backup sources imply their intent to interact with academic readers and the budding of researcher responsibilities. Even though they were unable to present the research output with sophistication, they did not let existing essay writing habits completely dominate their research paper writing. They distinguished research paper writing from essay writing.

Following these premises, the input they need in research paper writing instruction

is clearer: Undergraduates' researcher responsibilities should be conceptualized and then reified. The use of reliable measures and the critical review of references should be highlighted in their learning of researcher responsibilities. To begin with, undergraduates' researcher responsibilities should be separated from those of graduate students or academic professionals. Many academic professionals consider originality as a main criterion for the assessment of research value. The value of undergraduates' research papers like the participants' ones are thus easily undermined since their proposed claims are often based on echoing experts' prior claims. However, Hilberg (2010) argued that this type of evaluation criterion should not be applied to undergraduates' research; the aim should be on having them "grapple with leading scholarship and assess it critically" instead (p.59). In other words, being able to search references, review them critically, and re-organize them in academically-acceptable ways should be the core concern of an undergraduate's research paper genre practice. With this aim getting clear, abiding by research reliability and validity is the first responsibility they should learn. Take Brian for instance, who used the Chinese translation of *Sherlock Holmes* to investigate Conan Doyle's rhetorical styles in English, he should be taught that it was an invalid research instrument and might cause reliability and validity problems in his research. Another example was the participants' use of personal statements/examples as data for the scaffolding of writing plans. These data sources are "unconventional" (Radia & Stapleton, 2009), for they fail to meet the rigid standards of academic research and may result in research reliability/validity problems. Correct data use for research reliability/validity should thus be reinforced in the instruction. A better understanding of these misconceptions makes them become more responsible researchers, which will lessen their misuse of essay writing skills in research paper writing.

In addition to the need for reliable measures for research reliability/validity, the next researcher responsibility they should undertake is the avoidance of over-quotation. The misconception that over-quotation is not plagiarism should be rectified. Quotes are still the words of others and the ideas of others. Failure to rephrase the read texts in one's own words means that the researcher has failed to comprehend the text. The ways in which one paraphrases reflect the extent to which one comprehends the texts (Kelly, 1991). One's rephrasing ability and awareness of the rhetorical purposes of paraphrasing affects the quality of one's paraphrasing (Shi, 2010). An intensive paraphrasing practice in the instruction shall help the participants' over-quotation problem as one's ability to read reference texts comprehensively, to paraphrase effectively, and to quote properly are causally correlated. The writer as a researcher should know that he/she writes not merely to convey information but also to persuade readers to accept his/her knowledge claims. The participants' reliance on overt quoting for the attainment of article length or for academic attribution undermines the persuasiveness of their knowledge claims and researcher role. Their paraphrasing skills were almost limited to the use of synonyms or the change of passive/active voice; they rarely paraphrased by starting the original sentences in different structural forms. Paraphrasing activities with the emphasis on "analytic examination," "thematic unity," and "reader response" (Gosden, 1995, p.54) as core competencies need to be reinforced in the instruction. In Patch's (2010) words, the students "need more practice in thinking critically about the evidence they choose to use in their academic arguments" (p.278). Developing their rephrasing ability is the first step to solving their over-quotation problem.

Conclusion

This study has investigated the research paper writing processes of four English major undergraduates in Taiwan to highlight the significance of research paper genre practice for undergraduate students. It has provided rationales for separating undergraduates' research paper writing from that of graduate or academic professionals from the viewpoints of task nature, research value, and researcher responsibilities. With the rationales being clearly explained, college instructors and academic professionals have a better understanding of the specific type of research paper suitable for, and needed by, undergraduates. This also helps us to interpret undergraduates' academic interactions.

Having undergraduate students practice research paper writing is important as such practice facilitates their progression into disciplinary communities: they can learn to explore a research interest and find ways to display disciplinary membership. Even though many of their acts of composition may fail to qualify under the rigid standards of academic research and are discarded by some academic professionals, this study holds that these acts indeed reflect their intent to interact with the academic community. In contrast to academic professionals' academic interaction patterns, the participants had a tendency to integrate academic elements into preexisting socio-cultural norms for the formation of new norms. Such forms of academic interactions are underdeveloped but should not be regarded as undeveloped. Hence, this study proposes the need to teach undergraduate students some researcher responsibilities. The researcher responsibilities needed by this group of students are also specified and discussed in this study.

As a case study research, there are some limitations. First, the results of this study are not generalizable. Researchers who are concerned about generalizability may draw

on other studies to establish representativeness. Second, this study puts aside the participants' English writing proficiency as an influencing factor in the discussion, but emphasizes their novice status as the influencing factor. This is because EFL college writers' NNE writing ability as an influence on their academic writing in English has been widely studied by prior researchers. Thus the author deemphasizes the analysis of their NNE writing proficiency. For future research, this study suggests that researchers collect students' other research papers composed in different courses for a thorough comparison. This will help us better understand their growth of disciplinary membership in research paper writing.

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Appendix I

The participants' first writing conference data in which the instructor discussed with each about his/her research proposal.

Brian	<p>Instructor: I have read your research proposal, but before I tell you how I think about your research, would you like to give me some more explanation?</p> <p>Brian: I like Conan Doyle's novels, so I raised one research question, that is, "in Conan Doyle's work, were his plots all written by himself?"</p> <p>Instructor: That sounds interesting. But this question sounds less academic in its form. You need to rephrase it. Let me give you an example, "an analysis of Conan Doyle's writing or rhetorical style." This is just an example. You should think about your topic by yourself.</p> <p>Brian: OK.</p> <p>Instructor: How do you plan to approach to this topic?</p> <p>Brian: I will introduce Conan Doyle's personal background.</p> <p>Instructor: I read this part of discussion in your proposal. You provided Conan Doyle's biography such as what his mom and father did. But I think you should approach to the topic more directly. You need not introduce Conan Doyle's biography in detail. Rather, you should provide more specific information about who questioned Conan Doyle's writing. I mean, give an example, who are the critics that claimed that Doyle's writing was not written by himself? What did they comment exactly?</p> <p>Brian: I see. My idea comes from one source. In that source, the author claims that Conan Doyle's writing was a copying style. That's why I want to discuss why some people said that he copied other's plots. My assumption is, even good writers sometimes lack inspirations to write the book, he may read other writers' books and use other writes' plots in his own stories.</p> <p>Instructor: I see. Since you claim so, my suggestion for you is that you should provide some examples here, for example, which of his novels was blamed most for the copy of others' plots? What plots were particularly criticized as plagiarized plots?</p> <p>Brian: I see. My point is, did Conan Doyle know that he had a formula to write the novel? That is something I am curious about, but I cannot find any papers talking about it. So, I want to search more information.</p> <p>Instructor: Ok. I see what you attempt to explore. Before you start your</p>
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	<p>analysis, you had better discuss his writing and rhetorical style, and among his writing styles, you had better emphasize which part of his writing is mostly criticized so that he is easily regarded as copying others' plots.</p> <p>Brian: I got it.</p> <p>Instructor: All right. If you have no other questions, we will end our conference talk here. Good luck to your research and writing.</p> <p>Brian: Thank you.</p>
Emily	<p>Instructor: I read your proposal and learn that you want to study the effects of TESOL teacher education program. What does that mean? Can you give me more explanation?</p> <p>Emily: Based on my information search, I found one program called TESOL Association.</p> <p>Instructor: Yes, it is a very famous one.</p> <p>Emily: I want to discuss the effects of TESOL Association. Some non-native English speakers may have studied there, got their TESOL degree, and then went back their countries to be English teachers. I wonder whether the pedagogies they learn from the TESOL Association are helpful for their ESL students' English learning. I formulate my research question into "do non-native English teachers' non-native English backgrounds affect the quality of their English teaching?"</p> <p>Instructor: I am confused. I think you may misunderstand the meaning of TESOL program. How much do you know about this TESOL Association?</p> <p>Emily: It is an association training the students to be English teachers from all around the world.</p> <p>Instructor: It seems that you are talking about a degree-offered program. But, TESOL Association is more like an association for people to join the membership, rather than an institution training the students to get the certificate or diploma.</p> <p>Emily: Oh.</p> <p>Instructor: TESOL is different from the TESOL Association. You may need to rework your research topic.</p> <p>Emily: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: In your first paragraph of the proposal, you mentioned that "some people in the world have the incorrect thought that native speakers' teaching abilities are better than non-native speakers." Is this coming from a cited source or a personal opinion?</p> <p>Emily: It is from my personal opinion, my observation and personal experience.</p> <p>Instructor: Since you are writing a research paper. You had better avoid making statements based on personal opinion.</p> <p>Emily: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: I am also confused about the end of your first paragraph where you said that "so I choose another source here to research the students' part because I think learning is a kind of thing that needs to consider both teachers and students. And the source here is <i>From Their Own Perspectives: The Impact of Nonnative Professionals on Their Students</i>." Based on this part of information, it is not related to your earlier discussion of the TESOL Association. I suggest that you search</p>

	<p>for references discussing nonnative English teachers' teaching and native English teachers' teaching. You can compare and contrast them. Then you can add these sources to your discussion. That will make your paper more focused. Originally, you also told me that you personally don't think that nonnative English teachers teach less effectively than native ones, right?</p> <p>Emily: Ok, I see. I am also a little bit confused about my research plan. I think it is somehow two-folded. I need to focus on one.</p> <p>Instructor: Right. Then, let's move on to your discussion of the research gap. You said that there were no journal articles talking about nonnative English teachers' teaching after they receive the TESOL degree so that you see it as a gap, right?</p> <p>Emily: Yes. I cannot find references talking about this.</p> <p>Instructor: You may try other keywords for your reference research. I think you should be able to find some. I think the topic you want to study should have been researched by other scholars. It is not a completely new topic. The thing is, since this assignment is to write a critical literature review paper, which means a secondary research, it is better that your topic is not an almost-nobody-study one. Otherwise, I worry that you will have difficulty to write your paper. Remember to make your research direction very focused. You do not need to discuss a huge topic. You only need to write a 5 to 10 pages paper, not a master or PhD thesis.</p> <p>Emily: Ok. I will try.</p> <p>Instructor: Good. So, do you have any other questions?</p> <p>Emily: No.</p> <p>Instructor: Then good luck to your research paper writing.</p> <p>Emily: Thank you.</p>
Frank	<p>Instructor: So, this is your topic, right? "The use of Asian American literature in class: A transformation of stereotypes"?</p> <p>Frank: Yes. I want to know how American teachers' use of Asian American Literature in their classroom discussion contributes to or changes the American society's viewpoint of Asian American people.</p> <p>Instructor: I suggest you make it more focused by revising it to "how does Asian American literature contribute to the development of multicultural education in America." Your original use of "classroom discussion" is a bit vague to me. If you want to focus on "classroom discussion," please specify it. Instead of saying classroom discussion, you can say something like multicultural education or language arts or teacher-student social interaction, something like that.</p> <p>Frank: Yes.</p> <p>Instructor: Then let's move on to look at your discussion of the research background.</p> <p>Frank [read aloud his proposal]: Many Asian Americans, especially the young people feel they don't have an identity and struggle with fitting or avoiding stereotypes. Therefore it is crucial to change the position of both, Asian American people and their literature as they need to be heard. Asian American literature is more than Amy Tan's bestseller <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>.</p>

	<p>Instructor [pointing to Frank's research proposal]: Was this made on the basis of your personal opinion or Wong's research finding? If it is from Wong's study, please add something like "Wong pointed out that many Asian Americans, bla bla bla." Avoid making statement on the basis of personal opinion, OK?</p> <p>Frank: Yes, I will.</p> <p>Instructor: By reading the background part of your proposal, I think you provide very impressive background information. You have been doing a good job in terms of synthesizing and summarizing others' research findings.</p> <p>Frank: Thank you.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing to Frank's research proposal]: Then, in reading your discussion of the research gap, I also think you provided good points. The only concern is that your sentences tend to be too long. You should try to break your long sentences into shorter ones. Remember that one key to research paper writing is to use language that is easy-to-understand.</p> <p>Frank: Ok, I see.</p> <p>Instructor: Let's move on to the discussion of your plan of action.</p> <p>Frank: As you can see in my research proposal, I described that I have emotional and rational views about stereotypes from my sources. I will compare and contrast different views about stereotypes from the sources of teaching Asian American literature first. Then I will develop the ideas with the help of the rest of the sources, since they focus on different aspects such as feelings of being a foreigner or effects of stereotypes on Asian Americans.</p> <p>Instructor: Good. You have a clear idea about what you plan to do. I think your research direction is shaped well. Good luck with your further analysis.</p> <p>Frank: Thank you.</p>
Kay	<p>Instructor: Let's take a look at your research proposal. You want to study the best-selling children's books, right?</p> <p>Kay: Yes, I want to know among so many children's books, do the books from the best-seller lists have literary value?</p> <p>Instructor: That sounds a good research question. I suggest you reframe your research question into a more academic form, for example, you can say "what are the literary values of best-selling children's literature books?"</p> <p>Kay: OK.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing to Kay's proposal and read aloud]: Here, in your background, you said that "parents nowadays take the children's education more seriously since the trend of having fewer children, therefore, parents usually invest more money in buying children's books. However, how do the parents choose good books for their children? That is an important issue for everyone as a father or a mother. Most of the time, these parents will simply take the experts' suggestions, which means they refer to some best-seller lists, since they do not have any chances to read the so-called children's literature when they were young." Well, where is this statement coming from? Did you make this statement based on your personal thought? If not, you should add the</p>

	<p>citation information.</p> <p>Kay: Yes, it is based on my personal feelings and thought.</p> <p>Instructor: Remember that you are not writing a personal story or essay. You cannot make subjective statements based on your personal thought. Try to make your claims grounded on some sources, OK?</p> <p>Kay: OK.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing to Kay's proposal]: Then, look at here, also your discussion of the background. You said that "in my point of view, the children's books should also have some literary value instead of focusing more on the commercial benefits. Therefore, I would like to find out whether the books putting on the best-seller lists have literary value or not." OK. I see your point. But since this is your point, you should explain why you think that commercially-based children books may not have literary value. Also, you should consider other things like your definition of literary value, your ways of evaluating a books' literary value. You should think about your evaluation criteria. Have you ever thought about these?</p> <p>Kay: Not really.</p> <p>Instructor: Your research idea is good, yet your research plan is vague. Make sure that you can get access to some evaluative criteria, OK?</p> <p>Kay: Yes.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing to Kay's research proposal]: Then, let's move on to your research gap section. You said here that "finding out the ways of recognizing whether the children's books have literary value by using some tips may help the parents more to choose not only attractive but also good books with some literary value." Well, my concern is, since you think that children's books with literary value are more valuable, then you should provide some research findings related to this, I mean, the advantages of having children read books of higher literary value. Anyway, you need to provide research findings to support your assumption and also need to have an established evaluation criterion that allows you to assess the literary value of children's books. How do you think?</p> <p>Kay: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: So, would you like to explain to me your plan of action?</p> <p>Kay: I will find some children's books to read and see to make sure some of them really do not have literary value. And then I will find more sources from the EBSCOhost to help with my research. Besides, I will also use Google to find more information to answer my question.</p> <p>Instructor: I think your research plan is weak. If you plan to select some children's books and then assess their literary value by yourself, you are conducting a primary research. In that case, you need to follow the research methodological procedure. For example, you should explain why these books are chosen. You may also need to conduct interviews on parents and children. All these may take you too much time and efforts to finish. I recommend you to reshape your research direction. You need not conduct a primary research in this class. You are not a master student. Just reviewing the literature critically and then drawing some conclusions will be enough. How do you think?</p> <p>Kay: OK, I will try.</p>
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	Instructor: All right. If you have no other questions, I think we will end our conference talk here. Good luck to your research.
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Appendix II

The participants' second writing conference data in which the instructor discussed with each about his/her outline.

Brian	<p>Instructor: After I read your outline, I have some suggestions for you. Brian [nodded his head.] Instructor: First, let's take a look at your title. Your title is <i>Why Conan Doyle copied his plots</i>. I suggest that you revise it to <i>A myth of Conan Dolye's writing: A copy of plots</i>. How do you think? Brian: That sounds better. Instructor: Good. Then I don't know what you mean here. In your introduction, you stated that Conan Doyle copied his plots because he was a lazy bone or it is Vitcotiran writing style or because of his life style. What made you claim so? What do you mean by life style? Conan Doyle's life style? Brian: This is from the reference I got. "Life style" means he was from a reserved society and he had little source to write. Instructor: Try not to use the term lazy bone. That does not sound academic. Why did you think that he was lazy? Maybe he was not lazy; his writing was just affected by others' writing style. Brian: Maybe. In fact, I also don't know exactly. The source I got mentioned that there're rarely new plots in his stories and his writing generally followed a formula. Instructor: I see. Then, in terms of his writing being affected by the Victorian style of writing, are you going to give some examples? Brian: well, that may be difficult, because I only read the Chinese translation of the stories. I did not read English version. Instructor: Well, in such case, that will affect a lot of your analysis. I worry how you are going to provide supporting evidence. Since the paper will be due soon, I don't think you will have time to read Conan Doyle's stories in English, right? Brian: No. I don't have time to read them in English. Instructor: In such case, maybe you can also consider another direction. You can discuss the influence of his copying style of writing on readers in contemporary society and in Victorian society. How do you think? Brian: I see. I will think. Instructor: Another direction is to select some of Conan Doyle's Holmes stories with which you are most familiar as supporting examples. Since you are a fan of his novels, I guess there should be some of his novels</p>
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	<p>that attract you most. Right? This way may sound easier for you to complete your writing.</p> <p>Brian: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: All right. I think we will end today's talk here. If you have any other questions, feel free to email me or let me know.</p> <p>Brian: Thank you.</p>
Emily	<p>Instructor: OK, I have read your research outline and have some questions here. First, I found that you still try to have a brief introduction about the association, TESOL. Again, TESOL is not a degree-offered program. Please remove this part of description from your paper.</p> <p>Emily: OK, I see.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing to Emily's outline]: Then, let's move on to your research questions here. I saw you list two questions. The first one is, "Do nonnative English teachers' nonnative English backgrounds affect the quality of their English language teaching?" The second one is, "Do native English teachers' teaching really better than nonnative English teachers?" I think this one has some grammatical errors. It should be "Is native English teachers' teaching more effective than that of non English teachers?" But, anyway, you do not need two research questions. You only need to have one. I think the first one is better. And you should have this one frame your whole research. Just go with the first one, OK?</p> <p>Emily: OK.</p> <p>Instructor: Then I see in the body part, you plan to divide into three subparts for discussion. You will discuss "to be a nonnative English in TESOL" and "to train nonnative English students in the teacher education" and "the impact on nonnative English professionals on their students." Again, these are different issues. If you plan to discuss these issues, you will need to spend very long time to finish writing. You are not writing a book or a dissertation. Please narrow down and shape it in one research direction.</p> <p>Emily: I see. I do not need to discuss that much?</p> <p>Instructor: No, otherwise I am afraid that you will have difficulty to finish your writing in time.</p> <p>Emily: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: OK, any other questions that you are still unclear?</p> <p>Emily [shook her head].</p> <p>Instructor: If you have any other questions during writing, let me know. Anyway, try to make it more focused by only discussing one issue, OK?</p> <p>Emily: OK.</p>
Frank	<p>Instructor: Ok, I have read your outline and found some differences from your research proposal.</p> <p>Frank: Right. The reason is that I found no references discussing American teachers' use of Asian literature in their classrooms.</p> <p>Instructor: That's also what I guess. I think, except Asian American communities, American language arts teachers may not really consider to include teaching Asian American literature in their language arts courses.</p> <p>Frank: Right, therefore I have decided to concentrate on Amy Tan's bestseller <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>, I mean, I will discuss how her work shows the stereotypes of Asian Americans.</p>

	<p>Instructor: That's good. I think that is more manageable for you. The research direction is also more focused. Based on your outline, you plan to discuss the author instead of the story <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>?</p> <p>Frank: I will introduce both. I see a need to introduce Amy Tan's background as she is also an Asian American. This allows us to know whether Amy Tan recognized the problem of Americans' stereotypes on Asian Americans.</p> <p>Instructor: Ok, I got it. Good. You are very clear about what you want to do.</p> <p>Frank: Then, in the body part, I will discuss the stereotypes of Asian Americans. First, I will provide a definition of the term <i>stereotypes</i> and I will list the popular Americans' stereotypes on Asian Americans such as "the successful Asian American," "The Chinese doll," "The white guy and Asian woman," "Asian men and Chauvinism."</p> <p>Instructor: That sounds very clear.</p> <p>Frank: Then based on these stereotypes, I will discuss the characters from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>. I will discuss the character of the mother, the daughter, the husband, and the boyfriend.</p> <p>Instructor: Do you think Amy Tan's novels tend to stick to these stereotypes even if she is an Asian American?</p> <p>Frank: Yes.</p> <p>Instructor: I see. Overall, I think your research direction is shaped well. Just make sure that your conclusion answers your research question, because you stated in the conclusion part that you will discuss the critical selection of works taught in classes. This seems to go against your outline.</p> <p>Frank: I see. I will change it.</p> <p>Instructor: Good. All right, I think you should be able to finish your research successfully, because your research direction is very clear. Good job.</p> <p>Frank: Thanks.</p>
Kay	<p>Instructor: Is the new topic more manageable for you? Able to find more references?</p> <p>Kay: Yes.</p> <p>Instructor: That's good. Your new topic - what are the reasons why the Cinderella gives specific gender stereotypes to the young children - is still kind of awkward in terms of meaning and grammar. You need to rephrase it to make it easier-to-understand.</p> <p>Kay: So, what should I change?</p> <p>Instructor: Well, this is just an example that comes to my mind now, I mean, if I were you, I may write something like "an analysis of the stereotypical gender roles in the Cinderella." This is just an example. You can think some other ways to make your topic more readable.</p> <p>Kay: I see.</p> <p>Instructor: I saw in your outline, I mean the introduction part, you will provide a definition of the so-called stereotypical princess. What stereotypes do you plan to discuss?</p> <p>Kay: I mean in the story, the female is usually portrayed as weak and fragile. The only way that Cinderella can change her life is through the prince's help. I think these are the stereotypical description of the</p>

	<p>females at that time.</p> <p>Instructor: Ok, I see. So you stated in the outline that you will figure out the reasons that the Cinderella was set as a stereotypical princess. Do you know these reasons? Are you able to get the answer through the references?</p> <p>Kay: Yes, I think so</p> <p>Instructor: Then, let's move on to look at your body part. You plan to discuss the low social status of women in European countries, right? So, make it clear which century of Europe. Then you will need to find references discussing that century's Europe.</p> <p>Kay: OK.</p> <p>Instructor: You will also discuss the industrial revolution, right?</p> <p>Kay: Right.</p> <p>Instructor: Make sure that you can discuss the relationship between the industrial revolution and the women's status that reflects the story of Cinderella, OK?</p> <p>Kay: OK.</p> <p>Instructor [pointing the outline to Kay]: In the conclusion section of your outline, you mentioned that "Though it is too difficult to find out what are the actual reasons why the Cinderella was regarded as a stereotypical princess, we can get some ideas through the backgrounds of European 18th Century." What ideas did you get?</p> <p>Kay [kept silent and showed an embarrassing smile.]</p> <p>Instructor: Also, is this your main research finding? You cannot conclude your research like that, otherwise it looks like you are going back to the starting point again.</p> <p>Kay: I see. In such case, what should I write?</p> <p>Instructor: Well, that's your job. I mean, you should not conclude your research by saying that "it is too difficult to find out the reasons why The Cinderella was regarded as a stereotypical princess." You should come up with some answers. That's your job as a researcher. OK?</p> <p>Kay: OK.</p> <p>Instructor: All right. I hope that you are able to fix with this topic and can find some findings for it. Good luck to your research.</p> <p>Kay: Thank you.</p>
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Acquisition of English Morphology by a Japanese School-aged Child: A Longitudinal Study

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Bio Data:

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Abstract

This study investigates longitudinally how a Japanese school-aged child develops English second language (L2) morphology in a naturalistic environment in Australia within the framework of Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann, Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2005). Development is a longitudinal process, yet longitudinal studies looking at L2 development are rare (cf. Doughty & Long, 2003), so this study offers an opportunity for verification on longitudinal data of PT's hypothesis for English morphological development, which is still based primarily on two cross-sectional studies, that is, Johnston (1985) and Pienemann and Mackey (1993). The present study also addresses controversial issues recently raised by Charters, Jansen & Dao (2011) based, again, on a cross-sectional study of Vietnamese L1 primary school children learning English whose findings contradict the progression predicted by PT on the specific path learners follow in the acquisition of L2 morphological plural markers. The current longitudinal study of a Japanese L1 child looks at this issue in the context of a detailed description of developmental sequences and accuracy changes of verbal and nominal morphology over two years. Utilising language games and storytelling tasks, the child's spontaneous English speech production was audio recorded at regular intervals over two years from age 5 years 8 months to 7 years 8 months. Results show that the child acquired morphological structures compatible with PT stages (Pienemann, et al, 2005; Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2012) starting at 50% or lower accuracy at emergence point and attaining high accuracy for all morphemes by the end of the longitudinal study. This is unlike Jia and Fuse's (2007) findings whose informants, after five years, attained an

80% accuracy rate with all morphemes except for past tense marker *-ed*. The accuracy of all morphemes investigated in this study improved over time, albeit with different patterns of improvement for different morphemes, indicating that it is appropriate to differentiate emergence point from native-like behaviour.

Keywords: Longitudinal study, English L2 morphology, plural *-s* order, Processability Theory, Japanese children

Introduction

This study investigates longitudinally the acquisition of nominal and verbal morphology in English as a second language (ESL) in a Japanese primary school child within the framework of Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann et al., 2005). It aims to describe a precise acquisitional path and progress towards more native-like use of morphology. It has been argued that there is a common order in the acquisition of English morphology based on early Morpheme studies (e.g., Dulay & Burt, 1973; 1974). However, "longitudinal studies of children...are distressingly rare; the vast majority of SLA studies are cross-sectional, with serious resulting limitations on the conclusions that can be drawn on some important issues" (Doughty & Long, 2003, p.3). Although the acquisition of individual morphemes, such as plural *-s* and past *-ed*, has been examined in later longitudinal studies (e.g., Jia, 2003; Lee, 2001; Sato, 1990), few studies have investigated the overall morphological development in a naturalistic ESL setting/environment.

One of the exceptional studies on this issue is Jia and Fuse's (2007) five-year longitudinal study on the acquisition of six English grammatical morphemes by 10 native Mandarin-speaking children and adolescents who arrived in the United States aged between 5 and 16 years. They found that the younger arrivals (aged 5 to 8) in America produced third person singular *-s* with 80% accuracy after a year and a half or later, while none of the 10 learners in their study acquired past *-ed* by the end of the study when 'acquisition' is defined as over 80% accuracy across three consecutive sessions. They found that tense-related morphemes were harder for the children to acquire in comparison to non-tense related morphemes such as *-ing*.

While most previous studies analyse the morphological development based on accuracy, PT applies emergence criterion to determine when L2 learners start using grammatical morphemes productively and systematically. Pienemann (1998) argues that the acquisition point of morphology cannot be determined based on accuracy since even 80 to 90% accurate use across some consecutive sessions does not

guarantee that use at the same or higher level of accuracy will continue in the subsequent learner's speech production. Acquisition criterion based on accuracy percentages creates arbitrariness that could lead researchers to draw a different conclusion from the same database. For example, Hatch and Faraday (1982) showed that different acquisitional sequences would be established when acquisition criterion is set at 60% and 80% respectively. Jansen (2002) also points out conflicting claims made on acquisition of subject-verb agreement and verb-second in L2 German by various scholars (e.g., Pienemann, 1998) who worked on a same database from the ZISA project (e.g., Meisel, Clahsen & Pienemann, 1981). Also, setting acquisition criteria at high levels may indicate 'mastery' and rank order of accuracy percentages cannot be equated acquisitional order. Instead, Pienemann (1998) adopts 'emergence' as a criterion to establish developmental order and states "(f)rom a speech processing point of view, emergence can be understood as the point in time at which certain skills have, in principle, been attained or at which certain operations can, in principle, be carried out. From a descriptive viewpoint one can say that this is *the beginning of an acquisition process*" (p. 138, emphasis added). 'Emergence' is a valid and reliable indicator of interlanguage development, as "emergence of a structure seems to be a more constant and less arbitrary landmark with respect to accuracy levels" (Pallotti, 2007, p. 362).

Although 'emergence' is a useful concept to describe language development, questions still remain as to what happens after the emergence of a particular grammar structure. Developmental stages in PT are defined by the kind of procedural skills required for processing morphological and syntactic components in L2 speech production. Pienemann (2002), in a study of German L2 learners, confirms that "(t)he task of acquiring a second language is based on the acquisition of the *procedural skills* needed for the processing of the language" (p43 original emphasis) because, once automated, the procedural routines are similar in native and non-native speakers. In that paper, Pienemann shows that those German L2 learners who had acquired the skills to handle subject-verb agreement perform in a similar way (i.e., similar reaction time) as German native speakers in deploying that same skill. The experiment, however, did not involve any speech production task. Kawaguchi and Di Biase (2012), on the other hand, claim that emergence does not indicate automatization of a given procedural skill based on their findings of different performances of production of

passive constructions by Japanese L2 learners belonging to the same PT stage. This includes a varying degree of accuracy of grammar with passive constructions. They explain that learners at the same PT stage may have developed a varying degree of automaticity with a procedural skill. Therefore, tracing the accuracy rate after the emergence point informs us that a growth of procedural skill has occurred. For this reason, we examine both emergence of a structure and progress of accuracy. Few longitudinal studies have been conducted to investigate how the accuracy of different English morphemes develops across time in naturalistic L2 acquisition.

The developmental stages of English morphology predicted in PT have been supported by much empirical evidence such as Dyson (2009), Johnston (1985), Keßler (2008), Pienemann (1998), Pienemann & Mackey (1993), and Zhang & Widyastuti (2010). However, there remain unresolved issues regarding PT stages. In particular, few studies have examined verb phrasal morphology in any detail and it is not clear whether verb phrasal agreement is actually acquired after noun phrasal agreement as predicted in PT. Zhang and Widyastuti (2010), a study that examined the occurrences of verb phrasal agreement in speech production by three members of an Indonesian family staying in Australia for a year. But as two of the family members hardly used verb phrasal morphology, sufficient data for verb phrasal agreement was not obtained.

Another recent PT study conducted by Charters, Dao, and Jansen (2011) showed results concerning the developmental sequence of plural marking with/without agreement in conflict with PT predictions. Their study is based on cross-sectional data of 36 Vietnamese learners of English. The plural -s marker was found to be acquired with numeral quantifiers earlier than that without quantifiers in their cross-sectional study, which is inconsistent with the prediction in PT. The present study, on the other hand, investigates longitudinally the developmental sequence of plural marking according to three specific linguistic contexts, that is, without quantifiers, with numeral quantifiers and with other quantifiers.

In broaching the range of morphological issues examined so far, and the emergence-accuracy relationship this study focuses on the following research questions:

- 1) Developmental sequence: Does the longitudinal data produced by a school-aged child acquiring English L2 in a naturalistic environment confirm the morphological developmental sequence predicted by PT with a typologically distant L1 such as Japanese?

This question includes the following sub-questions:

- a. Does the child acquire all morphemes belonging to the same PT stage around the same time?
 - b. Is plural -s without quantifiers acquired earlier than plural -s with quantifiers?
 - c. Is NP morphology acquired earlier than VP morphology?
- 2) Accuracy: what is the relationship between development and accuracy? Does accuracy progress in a uniform way across morphemes after the emergence point?

Processability Theory

PT is a SLA theory based on the architecture of human language processing. PT adopts Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) (Bresnan, 2001) as a formal, non-derivational representation of linguistic knowledge, and Levelt's (1989 and later) speech model as a psychological foundation for language generation. On these bases, PT hypothesizes a universal hierarchy of processing resources that can be related to language-specific processing requirements. Because of its psychological and typological plausibility, PT has been used for describing, predicting, and accounting for the development of L2 syntax and morphology in speech of typologically different second languages (e.g., Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2002; Mansouri, 2005; Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann & Håkansson, 1999; Zhang, 2005). In cases of young child learners of English, PT has been used to examine early L2 syntax (Yamaguchi, 2008) and bilingual L1 acquisition (Itani-Adams, 2011). PT postulates independently motivated stages of morphological and syntactic acquisition.

Pienemann (1998) proposes a universal hierarchy for the acquisition of specific procedural skills needed for processing the target language as in (1). This hierarchy parallels a universal hierarchy of activation of the grammatical encoding in the speech formulator (Kempen & Hoenkamp, 1987).

- (1) 1. lemma,
2. the category procedure (lexical category of the lemma),
3. the phrasal procedure (instigated by the category of the head),
4. the sentence-procedure procedure,
5. the subordinate clause procedure—if applicable.

This hierarchy forms an implicational relationship, meaning that each lower level is a

prerequisite for the functioning of the higher level. Based on this hierarchy, Pienemann (1998) hypothesises that acquisition of L2 morphology follows in this order: invariant form > lexical morphemes > phrasal morphemes > inter-phrasal morphemes. PT assumes that L2 learners need to process exchanges of grammatical information to produce L2 morphological structures. The notion of ‘feature unification’ in LFG clearly captures this process: in order to construct a grammatical sentence, the information contained in constituents of a sentence should not be conflicting. A well-formedness condition in LFG states that the value attributes of a constituent must not conflict (Kaplan and Bresnan, 1982). When all the information is compatible, then the features are ‘unified’. PT stages in L2 morphology are defined according to the type of ‘Feature unification’ which the L2 learner needs to handle as illustrated below.

Word / lemma: invariant form

The L2 learner has not developed any language-specific procedures at this first stage and, therefore, cannot access syntactic/morphological information. Consequently, possible outcomes of this stage are L2 single words of invariant form that do not require any morphological procedure or information exchange.

The category procedure: lexical morphology

The L2 learner becomes able to produce lexical morphemes when he/she acquires category procedure. Lexical morphology requires no information exchange. Diacritic features such as NUMBER and TENSE are listed in the lexical entries of words. Therefore, insertion of the affix *-ed* on the verb for indicating PAST can be achieved directly from conceptualisation as long as the speaker knows the category of the word (verb in this case). As for nominal morphology, Plural *-s* marking on noun without agreement, as in *I miss my friends*, represents lexical morphology.

The phrasal procedure: instigated by the category of the head

NP agreement

PT predicts that Plural *-s*, which requires agreement between the head noun and its modifier, as in *many dogs*, is acquired after lexical morphology as it involves phrasal procedure. C(onstituent)-structure of *many dogs* with lexical entry for each word is

illustrated in Figure 1.

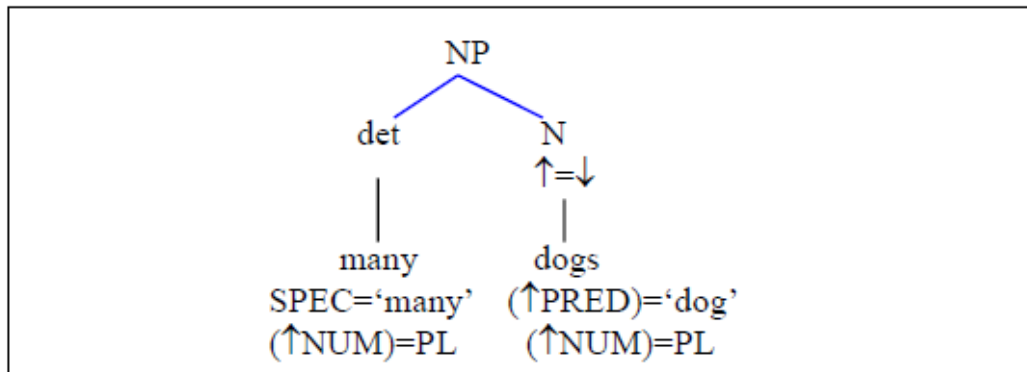


Figure 1. C-structure of *many dogs* with lexical entry.

Note: LFG uses the symbols of ‘↑’ and ‘↓’ (up- and down-arrows) in order to explicitly show the flow of grammatical information.

In order to form a well-formed phrase, the two sources of NUMBER information, the head noun (i.e., dogs) and its modifier (i.e., many), should be compatible. Therefore, the phrase involves phrasal unification between two elements in the same phrase (i.e., noun phrase agreement).

VP: Morphological dependents

In English each auxiliary requires the following verb to have a particular form (e.g., *is eating* vs. *has eaten*). Butt, King, Niño and Segond (1999) propose m(orphosyntactic)-structure which is a hierarchical projection showing a dependent relationship of auxiliary verb and the main verb. Following Butt et al. (1999), VP, *will drive*, as in the sentence *she will drive a new car* has c-structure, m-structure and lexical entry of the auxiliary verb *will* as follows [Note: The symbol ‘mM*’ refers to the m-structure of the mother node and ‘m*’ refers to the current node]. M-structure in (2.a) states that VP takes FIN(ITE) form and it requires a dependent element (DEP), V, which should be a base form. Thus m-structure of VP requires information unification within VP in terms of VFORM (verb form).

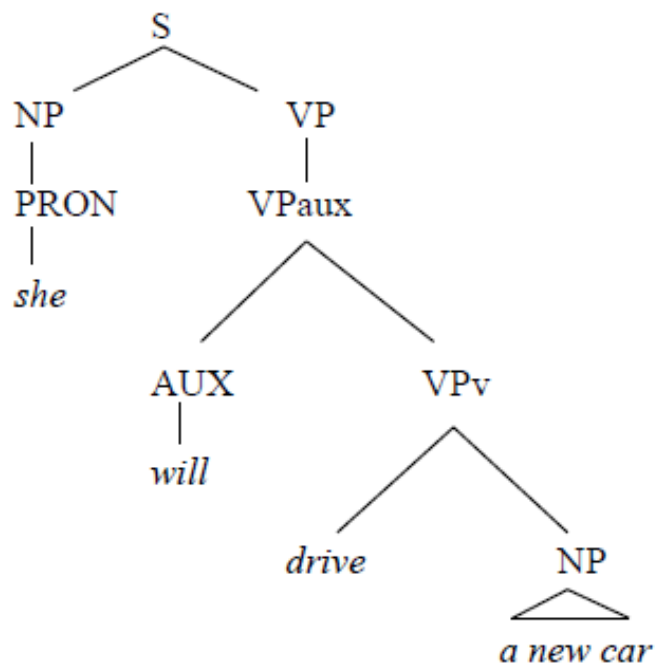


Figure 2. C-structure of *She will drive a new car*

(2) a. Morphological structure of *will drive*

FIN	+	
DEP	[VFORM BASE]

b. Phrase structure rule of VP_{aux}

$$\begin{aligned}
 VP_{aux} &\rightarrow \quad AUX: \uparrow=\downarrow \\
 &\quad mM^* = m^* \\
 &\quad VP_{aux}: \uparrow=\downarrow \\
 &\quad (mM^* \text{ DEP}) = m^*
 \end{aligned}$$

c. Lexical entry of *will* and *drive*

$$\text{will} \quad AUX \quad (\uparrow TNS-ASP \text{ TENSE}) = FUT$$

$$(mM^* \text{ DEP VFORM}) = {}_c \text{ BASE}$$

$$(mM^* \text{ FIN}) = +$$

$$\text{drive} \quad V \quad (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = \text{'drive <SUBJ, OBJ>'}$$

$$(mM^* \text{ VFORM}) = \text{BASE}$$

Strictly speaking, this agreement is across two phrases (i.e., the auxiliary and the lexical verb), where the English L2 learner must learn to select the auxiliary according to a range of aspectual, tense or modal motivations, and unify these features with the relevant ones in the lexical verb.

The sentence-procedure procedure: Inter-phrasal morphology

SV agreement in English involves inter-phrasal procedure. The c-structure of the sentence *Mary pats a dog* with lexical entry is presented in Figure 5. The morpheme *-s* on the verb indicates the subject's information of 'NUM=SG' and 'PERSON=3' in the sentence. In this case, the subject of the sentence is *Mary* and the lexical entry states that 'NUM=SG' and 'PERSON=3'. Information coming from NP_{SUBJ} *Mary* and the verb *pats* is compatible in terms of NUM and PERSON, and therefore unification is possible. This requires an inter-phrasal procedure because the two elements *Mary* and *pats* belong to different phrases, and unification happens across phrase boundary at the S-node. PT predicts that this type of morphology appears after phrasal morphology. Table 1 summarises the PT stages of acquisition of English L2 morphology.

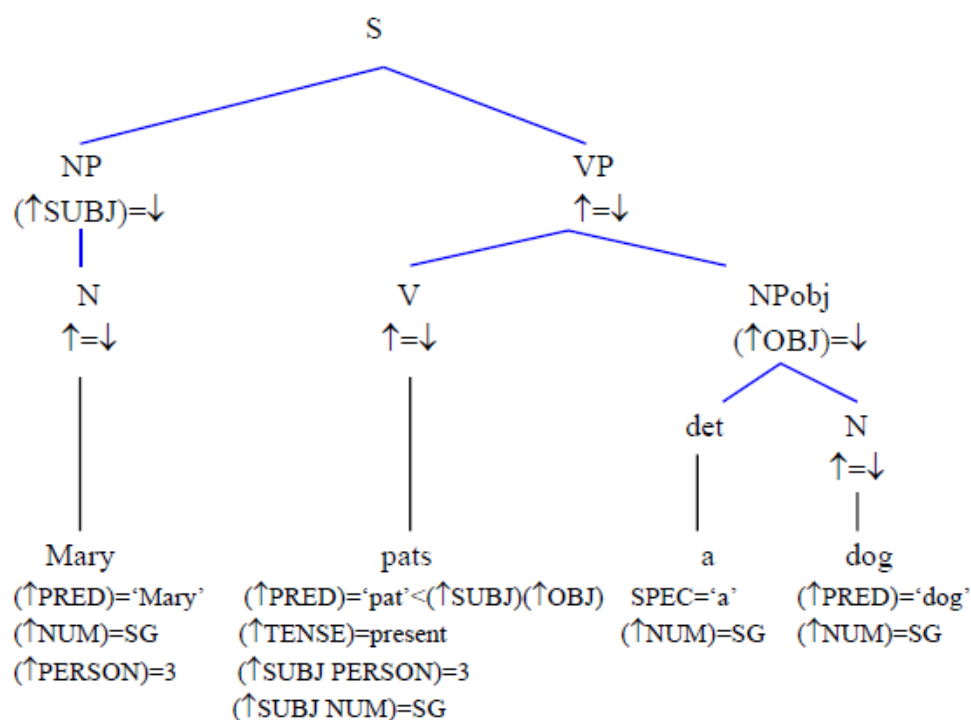


Figure 3. C-structure with lexical entry for *Peter pats a dog*.

Table 1

Developmental stages for English morphology (after Pienemann, 2005)

STAGE / PROCEDURE	MORPHOLOGICAL OUTCOME	STRUCTURE	EXAMPLE
4. S-PROCEDURE	INTER-PHRASAL MORPHOLOGY	3rd person singular –s	<i>Peter loves rice</i>
3. PHRASAL PROCEDURE	VP MORPHOLOGY	AUX + V: <i>have</i> + V–ed MOD + V <i>be</i> + V–ing	<i>they have walked you can go I am going</i>
	NP MORPHOLOGY	phrasal plural marking (with agreement)	<i>these girls many dogs three black cats</i>
2. CATEGORY PROCEDURE	LEXICAL MORPHOLOGY	past –ed verb –ing plural –s (without agreement)	<i>Mary jumped he working I miss my friends</i>

1. LEMMA ACCESS	INVARIANT FORMS	Invariant forms	<i>station, here my name is Pim</i>
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Method

Type of Data

In order to investigate the development of English L2 morphology in detail, a two-year longitudinal study of a Japanese primary school child learning English in Australia was conducted. While cross-sectional studies may provide ‘accuracy orders’, they may not reflect ‘developmental sequences’. In fact, lack of longitudinal data was one of the main criticisms of, for instance, Dulay and Burt’s (1974) Morpheme Studies which relied solely on cross-sectional data (e.g., Rosansky, 1976). Instead ‘developmental sequence’ can be found by looking at a learner at different points of language acquisition in longitudinal studies. Thus longitudinal studies give researchers “the ability to observe change in real time” (Rasinger, 2010, p. 58). Duff (2008) views the primary advantage of longitudinal studies as “the richness of description and detailed contextualization possible with the study of just one or a small number of cases” (p.59). Also, Mackey and Gass (2005) claim that case studies “allow the researcher to focus on the individual in a way that is rarely possible in group research” (p.172).

Longitudinal case studies are common in L1 acquisition (e.g., Brown, 1973; Fletcher, 1985; Halliday, 1975; Roy, Frank & Roy, 2012 among many others), such studies have been utilised to find out ‘normative’ development (Wray and Bloomer, 2012). In the field of ESL, longitudinal studies on one or a small number of cases (e.g., Butterworth & Hatch, 1978; Hakuta, 1976; Huebner, 1983; Sato, 1990) also have contributed to providing valuable data on L2 acquisition processes. Yet, longitudinal studies of the morphological development in child ESL, particularly those over a period of two years, are unfortunately very rare (e.g., Doughty & Long, 2003). In order to identify more precise developmental stages, it is crucial to accumulate longitudinal data from detailed case studies.

Informant

The informant in the present study, Kana (code name), is the second daughter of middle-class Japanese native speaker parents, who were born and brought up in Japan.

She was raised in Japan until she was 5 years and 7 months old. However, she participated in an English activity program for 2 hours per week from the age 4 years 10 months to 5 years 6 months (i.e., for 32 weeks). At the same time, she watched children's TV shows in English at home for several hours per week. However, she never received formal English instruction and had few opportunities to speak English in Japan.

When Kana was 5 years 7 months old, she moved to Australia with her family and started attending local primary school where all subjects were taught in English. However, the language of communication at home was always Japanese. While she showed age appropriate fluency in her Japanese L1, she was able to produce only basic words and formulaic sentences in English (e.g., '*thank you*', '*I don't know*') at the time when she started attending the local primary school. According to PT (Pienemann, 1998), such formulae or chunks require no procedural skills. Thus, she was assumed to be at stage 1 in her ESL acquisition when her exposure to English started in Australia. She was chosen as the informant in this study as she was a beginning ESL learner who planned to stay in Australia long enough to participate in a two-year longitudinal study.

Data Collection

As language acquisition studies which rely on free conversations often fail to obtain sufficient data for the target structures, much recent SLA research has utilized various communication tasks to facilitate interaction and to provide contexts for linguistic features (e.g., Duff, 2008; Gass & Selinker, 2008). Hence, the present study utilized a range of tasks, such as semi-structured interviews, narratives, and communication games, which have been widely used in child ESL/EFL research (e.g., Berman & Slobin, 1994; Chiang & Lin, 2010; Rocca, 2007). In order to maintain consistency of data sets across interview sessions, similar tasks were used for each session. Tasks were performed in Kana's home with native or near native English speakers, including adults and children, who had a close social relationship with her.

In semi-structured interviews, Kana was asked to talk about various topics (e.g., what happened in her school, what she did in her holidays, daily routines of people around her). For narratives, the wordless picture book called '*Frog, where are you?*' (Mayer, 1969) and cartoon strips were used. In one of the communication games,

Riddles, she was asked to preview a sheet with 16 pictures of common things, then to provide some hints about one picture until her interlocutor could work out which picture she was describing. In another communication game, Spot the difference, Kana and her peer were asked to take turns to ask and answer questions to find out the differences between two pictures. In order to avoid practice effects, the Frog story was recycled with some variants (e.g., different characters and creatures) following previous child SLA research (e.g., Iwasaki, 2004). Also, three different stories for cartoon strips, four different sheets for Riddles, and six different sets of pictures for Spot the difference were used.

Data collection started four weeks after Kana started attending local primary school and continued over two years. Her spontaneous speech production in English was audio-recorded regularly over two years from the time when she was 5 years 8 months old (at t1) until 7 years and 8 months old (t14). Table 2 summarizes the duration of her exposure to English in Australia in weeks before each session (t1, t2...). Each session, which lasted from a minimum of 20 to about 40 minutes according to the motivation of the child, was audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcription was done by one of the authors and checked by trained native or near native speakers of English.

Table 2
Exposure to English, in weeks, before each session

time	t1	t2	t3	t4	t5	t6	t7	t8	t9	t10	t11	t12	t13	t14
Exposure to English (weeks)	4	6	8	10	12	20	28	36	44	52	64	76	88	100

Data size

The data size of each interview was calculated with the aid of the linguistic computer software, Key word in context (KWIC). This software creates a concordance, in which all the words appearing in the interview are ordered alphabetically with some contexts before and after each word.

Table 3 summarizes the data size of Kana's longitudinal study. In the table, the first column marks the time of the data collection session, the second column her age, and the third column the total number of turns. Kana's ages are shown in the format 'year: month, day'. The fourth and fifth columns show the number of words (i.e., tokens)

and the number of different words (i.e., types) produced by the child. The last column shows the type/token ratio at each data collection session.

Table 3

Summary of the data size in Kana's longitudinal study

Time	Kana's age	Total number of turns	Total number of words (tokens) (Discounting <i>ums</i> , <i>ers</i> , fragments and other non-words)	Total number of different words (types) (Discounting <i>ums</i> , <i>ers</i> , fragments and other non-words)	Type/Token ratio
t1	5;8,15	25	176	52	0.30
t2	5;9,0	322	1307	321	0.25
t3	5;9,15	123	289	112	0.39
t4	5;10,0	191	682	221	0.32
t5	5;10,14	129	500	167	0.33
t6	6;0,15	190	957	268	0.28
t7	6;2,13	153	654	221	0.34
t8	6;4,15	100	482	177	0.37
t9	6;6,15	156	1108	322	0.29
t10	6;8,13	124	1060	345	0.33
t11	6;11,15	112	957	300	0.31
t12	7;2,12	122	793	256	0.32
t13	7;5,13	214	1203	359	0.30
t14	7;8,15	190	1783	504	0.28
(Total)		2151	11951	3625	0.31

Data Analysis

The data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively by carrying out a distributional analysis for each morphological structure listed in PT stages. The total number of the child's suppliance of targeted morphemes, including *-ing* in contexts without auxiliaries, past *-ed*, plural *-s* with and without quantifiers, auxiliary-verb agreement, and subject-verb agreement (i.e., third person singular *-s*), were counted and the ratio between the suppliance and the obligatory contexts was calculated. The occurrences of morphemes in non-obligatory contexts were coded as over-suppliance. Regarding *V-ing* without AUX, the total number of the suppliance at each point in time was simply counted. For example, (3) and (4) show the sample instances of the suppliance of third person singular *-s* in the obligatory context and the over-suppliance in the non-obligatory context respectively.

(3) t9 *sometimes he goes from a window*

(4) t10 *they all comes out*

As for plural marking, the contexts for routine uses (e.g., the names of cartoon

characters, names of places, nations, school subjects) were excluded from the analysis, following Jia (2003). Modals in negative forms (e.g., *can't*) were also excluded since negators are followed by the base forms of lexical verbs. Note that this study focuses on the occurrences of English morphemes in declaratives, as the development of morphology in interrogatives may be more complex and related to syntactic development than that in declaratives.

Based on the emergence criterion in PT (Pienemann, 1998), a morphological structure was determined to have been acquired when the first productive use appeared. Following other PT-based studies (e.g., Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2002), echoic expressions were first excluded and then checked to see whether the morpheme was supplied with lexical variation (*played-walked*) as well as morphological variation (*walking-walked*) in the same or any previous session. Then the developmental sequence of English morphology found in the child's English L2 acquisition was compared with the sequence predicted in PT. This study also examined how the accuracy in the child's production of English morphology changed over two years. The accuracy rate was calculated by working out the ratio between the suppliance and the obligatory context of each morpheme.

Results

Table 4 presents the child's morphological development compared to the prediction in PT. The first row shows the different points in time (t1, t2...) in the corpus, while the left column indicates each structure examined. The total number of the morpheme suppliance and the obligatory contexts is shown before and after the slash respectively at each point in time. The number in brackets shows the ratio between the suppliance and the obligatory contexts. The total number of over-suppliance is shown after the sign '>'. Shaded numbers indicate that the structure reaches the acquisition criterion in PT.

Table 4 *Kana's morphological development*

structure /time	t1	t2	t3	t4	t5	t6	t7	t8	t9	t10	t11	t12	t13	t14
Inter- phrasal: 3sg -s	>2	0/2 (.00)	/	0/1 (.00)	0/1 (.00)	1/2 (.50)	1/2 (.50)	0/2 (.00)	8/9 (.89) >1	3/3 (1.0)	2/3 (.67)	2/2 (1.0)	4/5 (.80)	35/42 (.83)
VP:	0/2 (.00)	1/2 (.50)	2/3 (.66)	2/6 (.33)	8/10 (.80)	5/5 (1.0)	11/12 (.92)	10/10 (1.0)	9/9 (1.0)	6/6 (1.0)	8/8 (1.0)	12/12 (1.0)	9/9 (1.0)	19/19 (1.0)
<i>have</i> + V- <i>ed</i>	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Modal + V	/	/	1/1 (1.0)	/	/	/	0/1 (.00)	/	2/2 (1.0)	1/1 (1.0)	4/4 (1.0)	6/6 (1.0)	3/3 (1.0)	12/12 (1.0)
<i>be</i> + V- <i>ing</i>	0/2 (.00)	1/2 (.50)	1/2 (.50)	2/6 (.33)	8/10 (.80)	5/5 (1.0)	11/11 (1.0)	10/10 (1.0)	7/7 (1.0)	5/5 (1.0)	4/4 (1.0)	6/6 (1.0)	6/6 (1.0)	7/7 (1.0)
NP:	/	0/4 (.00)	0/5 (.00)	/	1/2 (.50)	/	2/4 (.50)	1/3 (.33)	4/9 (.44)	10/18 (.56)	4/5 (.80)	7/8 (.88)	6/9 (.67)	13/13 (1.0)
plural -s + other quantifiers	/	/	/	/	0/1 (.00)	/	0/1 (.00)	/	3/5 (.60)	5/7 (.71)	1/1 (1.0)	5/6 (.83)	6/8 (.75)	9/9 (1.0)
plural -s + numeric quantifiers	/	0/4 (.00)	0/5 (.00)	/	1/1 (1.0)	/	2/3 (.66)	1/3 (.33)	1/4 (.25)	5/11 (.45)	3/4 (.75)	2/2 (1.0)	0/1 (.00)	4/4 (1.0)
Lexical: plural -s	0/4 (.00)	0/5 (.00) >1	1/7 (.14) >1	2/5 (.40)	2/6 (.33)	6/8 (.75) >7	2/6 (.33)	2/4 (.50)	8/14 (.57)	9/11 (.82)	5/7 (.71)	9/10 (.90)	9/15 (.60)	29/32 (.90)
past - <i>ed</i>	/	1/8 (.13)	0/2 (.00)	0/5 (.00)	0/3 (.00)	0/2 (.00)	1/4 (.25)	0/2 (.00)	5/9 (.56) >3	4/5 (.80) >1	20/20 (1.0) >2	5/7 (.71)	19/20 (.95) >1	21/21 (1.0)
V- <i>ing</i>	+1	+5	+5	+5	0	+2>1	+7	0	+5	+1	+3	+1	+1	+5

Notes: 2/6 = 2 out of 6 contexts, > = over-suppliance, / = no context, Shaded numbers = acquired

Lexical morphology on verbs

V-ing emerged at t1 (*running*) and then appeared with lexical (*falling-climbing*) and morphological variation (*fall-falling*) at t2. Hence, it is regarded the child acquired V-ing based on the acquisition criterion in PT.

Regarding past -ed, it emerged on a verb at t2 (*finished*). However, it didn't appear with other lexical verbs. Although the child continued to fail to supply -ed on verbs in the past tense contexts from t3 to t6, both lexical (*finished-happened*) and morphological (*finish-finished*) variation for past -ed were observed at the point of t7. Hence, it can be considered that past -ed was acquired at t7.

Note that the accuracy of past -ed developed rapidly after t9 when the suppliance became more frequent. At the same time, over-suppliance appeared (e.g., *felled, camed*). This suggests that the use of past tense marker became more extensive from t10. Other studies (e.g., Marcus et al., 1992) also found that overall error rate in inflectional morphology decreases as soon as children learn competing irregular forms.

Although the child in this study started producing both -ing and -ed on verbs early as predicted in PT, she acquired past -ed 22 weeks later than V-ing. It is argued that morphological marking is rather redundant when past-time concept can be expressed by time adverbials (e.g., Hakuta, 1976; Sato, 1990). In fact, Kana used time adverbials to express past-time reference instead of supplying past -ed on verbs in early sessions. This is compatible with the findings in previous studies (e.g., Lee, 2001; Meisel, 1987; Sato, 1990).

Lexical and phrasal plural -s*

Plural -s emerged without quantifiers at t3 (e.g., *books*), with numeric quantifiers at t5 (*eight babies*), and with other quantifiers at t9 (e.g., *a lot of girls*). According to the acquisition criterion in PT, the child acquired plural -s without quantifiers at t4, with numeric quantifiers at t7, and with other quantifiers at t9. This suggests that lexical plural -s was acquired earlier than phrasal plural -s, supporting PT.

It is found that the accuracy of lexical plural -s gradually but steadily developed over two years. On the other hand, the child frequently omitted -s on nouns with quantifiers, in particular with numeric quantifiers, even in later sessions. This suggests that the learner may regard morphological marking as redundant when the concept is clearly shown with other linguistic devices, such as numerals.

With regard to the developmental sequence of lexical and phrasal plural -s, Charters,

Dao, and Jansen (2011) argue plural *-s* with numeric quantifiers is acquired earlier than without quantifiers based on their cross-sectional data on EFL acquisition by Vietnamese learners, as mentioned above. They claim that the transfer of L1 conceptual system occurs at early L2 acquisition and that Vietnamese learners have difficulty activating the concept of plurality in the contexts without quantifiers as nouns cannot be quantified without classifiers in their L1. They assume that the production of plural marking without quantifiers and that with numeric quantifiers require the same procedural skill based on Levelt's (1989) Theory of Speaking modelled in Weaver ++ (see Levelt, Roelofs, & Meyer, 1999) and that the later emergence of lexical plural than phrasal plural may happen to "learners whose L1 has inflectional classifiers attached to quantifiers, for example Japanese" (p.526). Their claim contradicts PT's prediction according to which lexical plural is acquired earlier than phrasal plural. Relative acquisition order of two types of plural marking should be checked through longitudinal studies. Cross-sectional studies can only 'confirm' sequences established in longitudinal studies.

However, the results in this study of a Japanese child contradict Charter et al.'s (2011) claim as our longitudinal data shows that lexical plural *-s* was acquired 18 weeks earlier than phrasal plural *-s* with numeric quantifiers. It should be noted that the child never supplied *-s* on nouns in the contexts with numeric quantifiers at t2 (e.g., *two light*) and t3 (e.g., *three tree*) before she acquired plural *-s* without quantifiers at t4 (e.g., *daddy climb the rocks*). This suggests that phrasal plural marking was not activated by numerals before lexical plural marking was in place. Instead, this finding indicates that the child may regard morphological marking as redundant when the concept of plurality is clearly indicated with numerals, which is similar to the fact that she did not supply past *-ed* on verbs when she expressed past-time reference with time adverbials in early sessions. In other recent PT studies (e.g., Dyson, 2009; Zhang & Widyastuti, 2010) of ESL learners, lexical plural *-s* was also found to be acquired earlier than phrasal plural *-s*. As Charters et al.(2011) used different tasks to elicit lexical plural and phrasal plural (i.e., a memory task and a picture-description task respectively), it is quite possible that the early emergence of phrasal plural was affected by their data collection method.

*Note: An early version of the results from this part of the analysis is presented in Yamaguchi (2009).

VP morphology

The results show that one type of VP morphology, *be + V-ing*, emerged, as in ‘*bird egg is falling down*’, at t2 and there was morphological variation (*fall*) at the same session. However, no lexical variation was observed. Although another type of VP morphology, *Modal + V*, emerged, as in ‘*everyone can read this*’, at t3, there was no morphological variation. As both lexical and morphological variation for *be + V-ing* were observed at the point of t4, it can be considered that the child acquired VP morphology at t4.

As for *have + V-ed*, AUX *have* appeared with only irregular perfective forms (*got, done*) in the child’s corpus. Previous PT-based research (Zhang & Widyastuti, 2010) also showed that there were very few contexts for *have + V-ed* in their interview sessions with three members of an Indonesian family (parents and their 5-year-old daughter) working and studying in Australia. This suggests that more effective elicitation tasks need to be developed in order to examine the acquisition of VP morphology more precisely.

Regarding accuracy, Kana started producing *be + V-ing* with great accuracy after t4, in particular, with 100 % after t6. *Modal + V* was also used accurately. Kana was able to select an appropriate verb form when VP included a modal as in ‘*everyone can read this*’ at t3. Only at t7, the child did not use the base verb form with a modal, as in ‘*they can thinking*’.

Third person singular -s (3sg -s)

Kana supplied -s on a verb in two identical sentences, as in ‘*bee comes out*’, in different turns at t1. However, as she described the picture of many bees in those instances, they were considered as over-suppliance of 3sg -s in plural contexts.

At t6, 3sg -s emerged in the obligatory contexts. However, only morphological variation (*goes-go*) was observed at this time. Then 3sg -s was supplied on a different lexical verb in the obligatory context, as in ‘*the one rabbit comes*’ at t7. Hence, it is considered that the child acquired inter-phrasal morphology at t7.

According to the results, both occurrences and accuracy developed at t9 and then 100% accuracy was observed at t10, t12, and t13. However, the accuracy rate fell at t14 when there were a large number of contexts. This suggests that the accuracy did not become consistent even after the learner started using 3sg -s frequently.

Discussion

After discussing the morphological developmental sequence and broaching the accuracy issues this section will also consider practical implications of this study for EFL teaching and learning.

Overall sequence of morphological development

The results of Kana's longitudinal study demonstrate that English morphology developed in the sequence: lexical (t2) > phrasal (t4) > inter-phrasal (t7). This finding is compatible with the prediction in PT. In particular, this study clearly shows that lexical plural -s is acquired before phrasal plural -s, while a recent cross-sectional PT study (Charters, Dao, & Jansen, 2011) found a reversed order. This suggests that cross-sectional data may not reflect linguistic development and hence, that it is crucial to investigate L2 development longitudinally. Also, most studies on the acquisition of plural marking -s (e.g., Dulay and Burt 1973, Krashen 1982) did not examine the different linguistic contexts in which the morpheme is called for. Our study crucially finds that the English plural marker -s emerges at different points in different linguistic contexts.

On the other hand, as the child acquired VP agreement at t4 and NP agreement at t7, our data did not support that NP is acquired before VP in English. Also, this study showed that morphemes belonging to the same stage were not always acquired at the same time. In particular, past -ed was acquired much later (i.e., 22 weeks) than V -ing without AUX, although both verbal morphemes are predicted to emerge at stage 2. A possible explanation for the later acquisition of past -ed is that morphological marking seems rather redundant when past-time concept can be expressed by time adverbials, as mentioned above. Researchers in previous studies (e.g., Hakuta, 1976; Sato, 1990) which showed similar findings, argue that it seems difficult for L2 learners, whose L1s do not have words ending with a stop such as Japanese, to perceive and produce past -ed.

Changes of accuracy rate

In Figure 4 and 5, changes in accuracy rate are marked with a line while Kana's developmental stages are presented with bars according to nominal/verbal morphology. As for VP procedure, accuracy rates of total of VP morphological dependants at each point of time (i.e., be + V-ing and Modal + V) are presented here.

Note that no value is entered in the graph when there is no occurrence of a particular morpheme at an interview (e.g., no production of phrasal plural -s in t4).

Overall, Kana achieved high accuracy rates with all morphological markings, over 80%, by the end of the longitudinal study. Patterns of accuracy changes, however, are not uniform across morphemes.

Nominal morphology: Both lexical and phrasal plural markings were not produced in the plural contexts up to t2 and t4 respectively. Accuracy rates of both lexical and phrasal plural were 0% or close to 0% when Kana started to produce them. Then accuracy rates for lexical plural improved dramatically at t6 (75%) but dropped once at t7 (33%) before gradual improvement achieving 90% at t14. Phrasal plural showed a similar tendency: accuracy rate jumped to 50% at t5 and then dropped to 33% at t8 before the gradual improvement achieving 100% at t14. Accuracy rates of phrasal plural -s tended to be lower than that of lexical plural -s up to t10 but it caught up and overtook lexical plural -s after t11. Overall, except for t13, two types of nominal morphology (i.e., lexical and phrasal plural markings) showed constant improvement after Kana achieved Stage 3 (i.e., phrasal procedure).

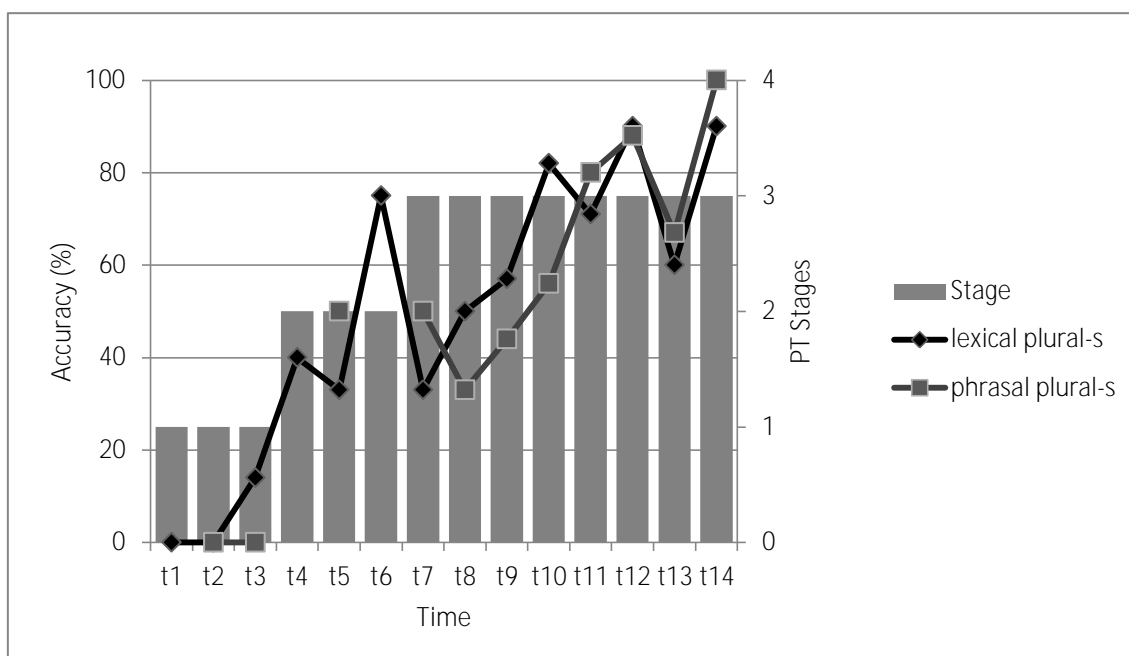


Figure 4. Accuracy of nominal morphology

Verbal morphology: All three types of verbal morphology (lexical, phrasal and inter-phrasal morphology) appeared early in either t1 or t2 but showed different patterns of accuracy rates change. Past -ed (lexical morpheme) showed 0% accuracy up to t8 except t2 (13%) and t7 (25%). Then accuracy increased dramatically in t9 (56%), t10

(80%) and t11 (100%). Kana maintained high accuracy of Past *-ed* afterwards. VP agreement, on the other hand, progressed much quicker comparing to Past *-ed*. Kana attained 100% of VP agreement at t6 and remained at 100% accuracy, except t7 (92%), until t14. Note that VP agreement produced by Kana regularly up to t6 was only *be + V-ing*: Kana produced Modal + V only after T9 regularly: She did not produce have + V-ed at all throughout the longitudinal study.

3sg *-s* (inter-phrasal morpheme) first appeared at t1 twice (over-suppliance for both cases) and accuracy rates continued to be very low up to t5. After the rate shot well past 50% at t9, Kana attained stable performance. Over the period of the study, she constantly showed higher accuracy rates with VP, especially auxiliary *be + V-ing*, than 3sg *-s*. This result is consistent with Pine, et al.'s (2008) longitudinal study of English as a first language who found that auxiliary *be + V-ing* showed higher accuracy rates over time than 3sg *-s* with minor individual differences across children.

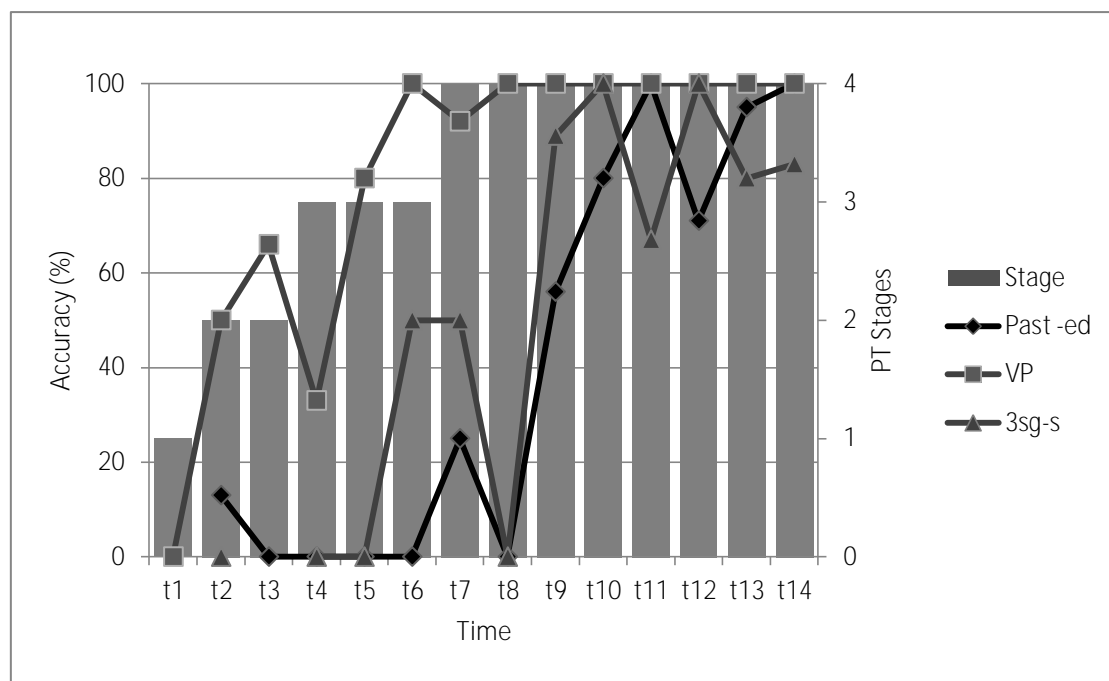


Figure 5. Accuracy of verbal morphology

As described above, accuracy rates of all morphemes investigated in this study dropped before they showed steady increase. Thus, L2 learner's performance is inconsistent in the early phases of language acquisition. Some scholars may call this phenomenon U-shaped learning (Carlucci and Case, 2012; Lightbown, 1983). However, we noticed that accuracy rates fluctuated greatly when the occurrence of a particular morpheme is infrequent. Thus the U-shaped pattern is inevitable because

the impact on accuracy of single instances over a very small number of occurrences rate is very high (e.g., phrasal *-s* at t7 scored 0% with 0/1 while at t11 100% with 1/1). On the other hand, it is important to notice that Kana's L2 stages and accuracy rates for morphemes at lower stages improve as higher stages are achieved. Kana's accuracy rates show improvement as her PT stage progressed. In PT, a first productive use of a particular morpheme is considered to be the acquisition point of that particular procedure. When we look at the accuracy rates at acquisition points of the five morphemes, they are all 50% or below: 40% with lexical plural *-s* (t4), 50% with phrasal plural (t7), 25% with past *-ed* (t7), 33% with VP agreement (t4) and 50% with S-V agreement (t7). Also, accuracy rates fluctuate just after a morpheme 'emerges'. The accuracy of all morphemes was very high (i.e., 80% or above) by the end of the longitudinal study, as we saw above. Given the gradual increase of accuracy over time, it is not plausible to assume that L2 acquisition is governed by parameter setting. Also, it is not reasonable to assume that emergence of a morpheme equals correct and automatic use of it. From a theoretical point of view, PT needs to consider looking further into the uncertain area between 'emergence' of a rule and its automatization (i.e., emergence is different from automatization). L2 learners' performance fluctuates between production, overproduction and non-production before he/she attains automatic use of procedural skill (Kawaguchi and D Biase, 2012).

Figure 6 summarizes the occurrence and accuracy of all the morphemes examined in this study at three points in time (i.e., t2, t7, and t14): t2 was when the child started using various morphological structures, while t7 was when she acquired inter-phrasal morphology. t14 was the last session in this study. It is found that the occurrences and accuracy of morphological marking consistently developed in a parallel manner over time. In particular, the child used morphology with 92% accuracy at t14. This suggests that it took her about two years to achieve greater accuracy in using English morphology, so that it may be said that accuracy is a function of the number of occurrences in production as can be seen from Figure 6.

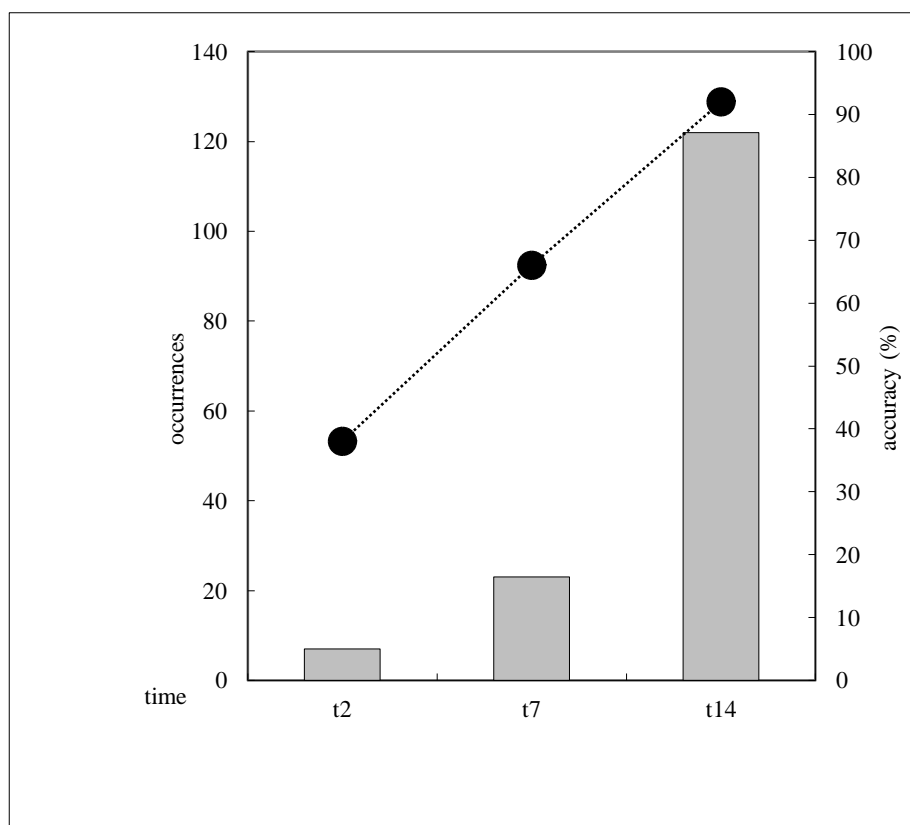


Figure 6. Occurrences and accuracy of morphology at t2, t7, & t14

Practical implications

This longitudinal case study in ESL, representing a ‘natural’ sequence, has practical implications for effective teaching and learning in EFL. PT hypothesized and found that there is a fixed developmental sequence in syntax and morphology in every language studied, which is not influenced by a learner’s age, L1 background, learning environment, learning syllabus, and so forth. Here we provided empirical evidence from a longitudinal study broadly supporting PT’s developmental stages in English L2. It is widely accepted that L2 teaching can help the learner if it follows the natural learning sequence rather than go against it (Corder, 1967). PT’s position is that language is ‘teachable’ when the timing is right. The Teachability Hypothesis (Pienemann, 1984) (and assumed as part of PT in 1998) concerns the influence of formal instruction on L2 acquisition, i.e., What to teach When.

In PT, stages are implicationally arranged and their sequential order cannot be altered, not even through instruction. Based on this central concept, Pienemann claims that grammar teaching assists acquisition if the learner is developmentally ready. The Teachability Hypothesis is particularly important for teachers because it enables them

to predict which form/s the learner is ready to learn. For example, we showed that acquisition of plural marking *-s* depends on its context: lexical plural marking is acquired before phrasal plural marking. Within phrasal plural however, we show further that plural *-s* with numeric quantifiers emerges earlier than plural *-s* with other quantifiers. Once the learner becomes able to produce lexical plural, he/she is ready to learn phrasal plural and having reached phrasal plural with numerical quantifiers then the learner is ready to explore other contexts for plural marking. EFL teachers should consciously provide such linguistic contexts to promote more frequent application in a range of linguistic contexts. Thus, EFL teachers can help accelerate the process if they understand where the learner is at and what the next developmental step may be.

Conclusion

This longitudinal study of the acquisition of morphology by a Japanese primary school-aged child, learning English in a naturalistic environment, lends support to PT's morphological development hypothesis for English L2. More specifically, the answer to the first research question was found to be compatible with the PT hierarchy: Lexical > Phrasal > Inter-phrasal. In particular, longitudinal data in this study provided strong support for lexical before phrasal developmental sequence of plural *-s*. This progression has been challenged by Charters et al. (2011) but we show that their claim is unfounded. We also claim that at the phrasal stage there is an internal sequence moving from contexts requiring agreement with numerical quantifiers to contexts requiring other quantifiers and plural demonstratives. Concerning the assumed order within phrasal morphology, our data did not support the notion that NP agreement is acquired before VP agreement.

Also, we show that morphemes belonging to the same stage are not necessarily acquired at the same time. For instance, the past *-ed* morpheme, which is a 'lexical' morpheme in PT (i.e., stage 2) is acquired considerably later than other lexical morphemes, indeed it coincides with phrasal NP agreement and inter-phrasal 3sg *-s*.

Regarding the second research question on the relationship between development and accuracy, it was found that the accuracy rate of each morphological item at the emergence point was 50% or below but it improved in parallel with progress in PT stages. A very high accuracy rate was attained by the end of the two-year longitudinal study; however, accuracy did not progress in a uniform way across morphemes.

As it has been claimed that L2 teaching cannot be effective if the learner is not

developmentally ready (Pienemann, 1984; 1989) and that processability constrains the effect of teaching (Pienemann, 1989), it seems crucial for language teachers to know what the natural acquisitional path of L2 is in order to design and deliver a teaching syllabus in a developmentally moderated way (Di Biase, 2002; 2008). In Japan in particular, the issues surrounding what is an effective teaching methodology in EFL classrooms have been controversial over many years. Furthermore, there has been much debate about EFL education in primary schools in recent years (e.g., Otsu, 2009). This study may be able to provide valuable information for EFL syllabus construction particularly for Japanese primary school children, by showing a detailed natural developmental progression for English. However, as this study examined a single Japanese child learning English in Australia, other longitudinal studies of children learning English in other English-speaking environments need to be conducted in order to establish more precise developmental stages. The generalizability of particular findings obtained from longitudinal studies should be checked against samples from larger cross-sectional studies. Further research is also required to develop more effective tasks to elicit specific linguistic features (e.g., VP morphology), which have not been sufficiently investigated to date.

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Knowing the Test Takers: Investigating Chinese and Indian EFL/ESL Students' Performance on PTE Academic

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Abstract

The study investigated Chinese and Indian test takers' performance on the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) and their motivation and anxiety-related factors and linguistic confidence. The association between the affective variables investigated and test performance was compared between test takers from these two countries that have the highest number of English as second language (ESL) and English as foreign language (EFL) students. The results indicated that: a) Chinese and Indian students differ in their PTE Academic performance; b) observed score differences between test takers from the two countries can be partially explained by the variance in their affective factors in English learning and testing. The study suggests that a score profile which contains not only overall scores but also communicative scores and enabling scores can provide additional relevant information for diagnostic and placement purposes. EFL and ESL teachers need to take affective factors into consideration when understanding their students and placing them in different teaching groups and designing their tailored classroom activities.

Keywords: PTE Academic, Global Scale of English (GSE), affective factors, Chinese and Indian test takers, motivation, anxiety, diagnostic implications

Introduction

The English language is well established as a major international language, and the number of bilingual users of English will far surpass the number of its native speakers

in this century (McKay, 2002). To assess the language ability of users of English as a second language or foreign language (ESL/EFL), a wide range of language tests have been developed and are used internationally. These language tests have become a pervasive phenomenon in educational systems and frequently play a crucial role in political, educational and social contexts (Shohamy, 2007). The increasing demands for English learning and the growing number of test takers have resulted in the expansion of the English testing industry and of English language training schools.

The power of language tests provides a rationale for enquiries into the factors that may potentially influence test performance (Zheng, 2010). Success in learning a second language varies considerably, and individual test taker characteristics can contribute to the explanation of differential learning success (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Although the relationship between test takers' individual characteristics and their performances on tests has been investigated in numerous studies over the years, its pedagogical implications have rarely been mentioned (Bachman, 1990). Due to the increasing numbers of international students and the rising demand for better language courses, designing a language test that can provide better feedback on test takers' strengths and weaknesses and inform the development of customized courses for learners has become an objective that deserves to be pursued.

As mentioned, a number of studies have been carried out to examine the influence of test taker characteristics on language test performance (e.g., Bachman, 1990; Kunnan, 1995; Purpura, 1999; Zheng, 2010). Kunnan (1995) studied the influence of test takers' characteristics from the perspective of cultural background. Zheng (2010) examined motivation, anxiety, global awareness and linguistic confidence, and their relation to language test performance within the context of Chinese university students taking the College English Test Band 4 in China. Using a mixed methods approach, through survey and interview enquiries, the findings of this study demonstrated that the selected psychological factors contributed in different ways to students' CET performance.

These studies have provided ample empirical evidence to support the claim that many of these characteristics have a significant impact on differential language test performance. Investigating test takers' characteristics can, in this respect, contribute to the field of language testing in theoretical, methodological and practical ways (Kunnan, 1995). Moreover, test takers' affective variables, such as motivation and anxiety, can influence their success or failure in second/foreign language tests (Cohen

& Dörnyei, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2001) and determine how well a student will do in his/her language learning process (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2003).

In high-stakes testing situations in particular, test takers' motivation and anxiety are found to be two major psychological factors associated with their performance (Gardner, 1985; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 2002; Zheng, 2008). Previous research has examined these two constructs extensively in achievement contexts; however, the research findings are inconsistent as to the relationships between motivation, anxiety and second/foreign language achievement in different language contexts. For example, although the fundamental influence of the socio-educational model of motivation in the field of second language education is widely acknowledged, researchers have challenged the proposed primacy of integrative motivation and the generalizability of this theory (e.g., Au, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994). Specifically, controversies exist around how to interpret the roles played by integrative and instrumental orientations of learning a second language, and whether or not this model of motivation can be applied in a similar way in different contexts. Dörnyei (1994) suggested that instrumental motivation might be more important than integrative motivation for foreign language learners. This contention led to the underlying language learning differences triggered by environmental differences, among which the fundamental difference is whether it is a second language context or a foreign language context. Meanwhile, linguistic confidence has also been identified as an important variable that interacts with motivation and anxiety variables in studies of this nature (Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1994; Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005). The present study, therefore, investigated test takers' motivational variables, anxiety-related variables and linguistic confidence variables.

Chinese and Indian English learners were selected as participants in this study. China and India are the top two sources of international students in the UK (UK Council for International Student Affairs, 2010). Over 200 million Chinese students enrolled in programmes teaching English as a foreign language in the early 1990s (Yong & Campbell, 1995). With China becoming more actively involved in the global economy in the twenty-first century, and with the increased commercial, technological and cultural exchanges with Western society, English learning in China has grown significantly (Gan, Humphreys & Hamp-Lyons, 2004). In 2008, Crystal (2008) estimated that "half of its population" would be capable of speaking English at "a basic level of conversational competence" by the end of the year, which put the

number of English learners in China at over 600 million.

In addition, China and India have very distinctive cultures and quite different language learning and teaching methods. British Council (2009) highlighted some key differences between the two contexts. First, the Chinese learn English as a foreign language, while in India English is perceived as an institutionalized additional language and is the second most widely spoken language (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1997; Lotherington, 2004). Secondly, although English proficiency is perceived as necessary for employment in both countries, English is actually used for internal communication in India, especially for business in the rapidly expanding service sector. Meanwhile in China, Chinese is still mainly used for internal communication as business and employers seem reluctant to offer ongoing language support or training opportunities to staff. Moreover, although both India and China teach English as a subject in schools, Indians use English to communicate for everyday purposes (Nayar, 1997), which is clearly not the case in China.

Research Context

This study investigated the relationship of Chinese and Indian test takers between selected affective factors - i.e. motivation, anxiety and linguistic confidence - and their performance in the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic), a relatively new international computer-based academic English test.

PTE Academic is designed to accurately assess the listening, reading, speaking and writing ability of students who want to study at higher educational institutions where English is the principal language of instruction. PTE Academic features 20 item types, reflecting different modes of language use, different response tasks and different response formats. Each item type assesses one language skill or a combination of language skills, representing the range of functions and situations that students will encounter during academic study in an English-speaking environment. PTE Academic reports scores on the Pearson's Global Scale of English (GSE), ranging from 10 to 90.

The PTE Academic score report includes 11 scores on the GSE, these are an Overall Score, four Communicative Skills scores and six Enabling Skills scores. The Overall Score reflects test takers' overall English language ability. The score is based on performance on all items in the test. Scores for Communicative Skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing) are based on all test items (tasks) that assess these skills, either as a single skill or together with other skills. Scores for Enabling Skills

(Grammar, Oral Fluency, Pronunciation, Spelling, Vocabulary, and Written Discourse) are based on test items assessing one or more of these skills. The GSE scores have been empirically designed and developed to align with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages (Pearson, 2010).

Given the fact that university language centres group students based on their overall score, rather than sub-scores in each skill, it is possible that test takers may be at the same level in terms of their overall performance, but actually differ widely in each sub-skill. For example, with a similar overall score, Chinese test takers may generally perform much better or worse than Indian learners in some sub-skills. A test that only reports on overall performance may provide insufficient information to English course providers and thus mislead them. As a result, the test takers may be placed into programmes of inappropriate length and focus. This study investigated performance in the PTE Academic Live Test and the PTE Academic Practice Test of test takers from China and India and their responses to a questionnaire that aimed to measure their motivation and anxiety in relation to English learning. The 11 scores reported on PTE Academic make it possible for a study of this nature to look into test takers' performance not only at the overall performance level, but also at the levels of the four Communicative Skills and six Enabling Skills, and allow it to provide more diagnostic information regarding test takers' English ability. Three research questions were asked:

1. What are the differences in performance between Chinese and Indian test takers in their overall scores and sub-scores in the PTE Academic Live Test and the PTE Academic Practice Test?
2. How do Chinese and Indian test takers differ in the affective factors examined that influence their English learning?
3. How far can the score differences be explained by the affective factors examined?

To collect test takers' academic performance in the PTE Academic Live test and the PTE Academic Practice Test, a random sample of 400 test takers from China and 400 test takers from India was selected from the PTE Academic Live Test database. In addition, 159 Chinese and Indian students took the PTE Academic Practice Test and their responses to a survey were also collected. The questions in the survey were designed to assess the test takers' affective characteristics in order to explain possible differences in overall scores or subscores. In addition to the demographic information,

the survey covered questions in three areas: test takers' motivational variables, anxiety-related variables, and linguistic confidence variables. Three open-ended questions were asked about the test takers' perception of their experience of taking the PTE Academic Practice Test.

Among the students who participated in the PTE Academic Practice Test and the survey study, 121 came from four Chinese universities. These students constituted a representative sample of English learners at university level in China in three respects. First, the sample included students from the most prestigious universities as well as from regular universities. Second, there were students who were studying English as a major and those who were majoring in other subjects. Third, the study included universities located in socio-economically developed areas and some in relatively underdeveloped areas. Four universities agreed to run the experiment, either in their computer labs or at Internet-linked instruction centres. Participants who completed both test and survey were offered a small incentive. There were 38 Indian participants and most of them were at university level, and only four of them came from international high schools. Although none of them claimed that they were English majors, one third of them indicated that most people at their schools spoke English.

To answer the first research question, participants' scores from the Practice Test or Live test, including Overall score, four Communicative Skills scores and six Enabling Skills scores, were plotted against the Pearson's Global Scale of English (10-90) and analyzed using Independent Sample T-tests. Similar analysis was conducted on a random sample of 400 test takers from China and 400 test takers from India. To answer the second research question, descriptive statistics were obtained for all the variables measured from the Practice Test participants, and then Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to examine the

underlying motivational factors. To answer the third research question, multiple regression analysis was performed to examine what factors significantly impact on the performance of Chinese and Indian test takers in the Practice Test. The survey participants' open-ended responses to their test-taking experiences and their scores were analyzed qualitatively and served as complementary data.

Results

This section comprises four parts. The first part outlines the differences between Chinese and Indian test takers' performance. The second part summarizes the survey findings for test takers' affective variables. The third part presents the results of the analyses conducted to investigate the relationship between test takers' test performance and their affective variables. The last part presents the results from the qualitative investigation of test takers' perception of their test-taking experiences and attitudes towards their scores.

Test performance

Table 1 shows the comparisons of Indian and Chinese test takers' score profiles for the Practice Test, including Overall scores, four Communicative Skill scores and six Enabling Skill scores. Table 2 shows the corresponding comparisons of Indian and Chinese test takers' score profiles for the Live Test.

Table 1

Score Comparison for the Practice Test

		Chinese Test Takers				Indian Test Takers			
		Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Overall score	Overall	13	63	37.64	11.34	10	66	41.74	13.11

Communicative skills scores	Reading	12	74	39.54	12.00	10	69	39.47	15.41
	Listening	10	59	36.62	12.98	10	68	42.63	14.14
	Speaking	10	59	35.56	14.26	10	68	46.21	12.94
	Writing	10	62	36.83	12.05	10	61	36.89	14.09
Enabling skills scores	Oral Fluency	10	57	23.13	14.75	10	83	40.16	19.37
	Pronunciation	10	59	19.97	12.20	10	77	30.58	16.40
	Grammar	10	90	30.31	24.18	10	47	20.32	14.57
	Spelling	10	90	28.79	17.75	19	81	29.16	16.41
	Vocabulary	10	66	23.43	14.25	10	66	27.26	16.67
	Written								
	Discourse	10	90	35.78	22.12	10	79	32.11	20.74

Table 2

Score Comparison for the Live Test

		Chinese Test Takers				Indian Test Takers			
		Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Overall score	Overall	10	83	42.95	12.84	10	90	53.25	12.85
Communicative skills scores	Reading	10	88	37.25	14.48	10	90	45.49	14.21
	Listening	10	85	43.84	13.50	10	90	55.66	13.89
	Speaking	10	90	47.97	14.07	10	90	64.90	15.48
	Writing	10	87	38.10	14.94	10	90	46.75	15.65
Enabling skills scores	Oral Fluency	10	90	35.78	18.61	10	90	60.37	17.87
	Pronunciation	10	90	39.50	21.61	10	90	59.46	20.43
	Grammar	10	90	34.01	21.70	10	90	36.96	22.19
	Spelling	18	90	33.64	18.39	18	90	36.23	19.52
	Vocabulary	10	90	38.63	18.97	10	90	48.25	19.33
	Written Discourse	10	90	43.98	22.45	10	90	46.08	22.48

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the Chinese and Indian test takers displayed distinctive score differences on PTE Academic, with the Indian test takers generally outperforming the Chinese. These differences are clearly displayed in the scatter plot in Figure 1, which is a plot of the score profiles against the Pearson's Global Scale of English (GSE) using the Practice Test data, and Figure 2, which is a plot of the score profiles using the Live Test data.

The results indicate that Chinese and Indian test takers' overall scores in the Practice Test are closer than their individual sub-scores in some Communicative and Enabling Skills, especially in Listening, Speaking, Oral Fluency, Pronunciation and Grammar. There appear to be more differences from the Live Test data among Chinese and Indian test takers on the overall score and the four skill scores than those from the Practice Test. In addition, Chinese and Indian test takers' Grammar scores appeared to be closer in the Live Test than in the Practice Test, but there were more differences in their Vocabulary scores.

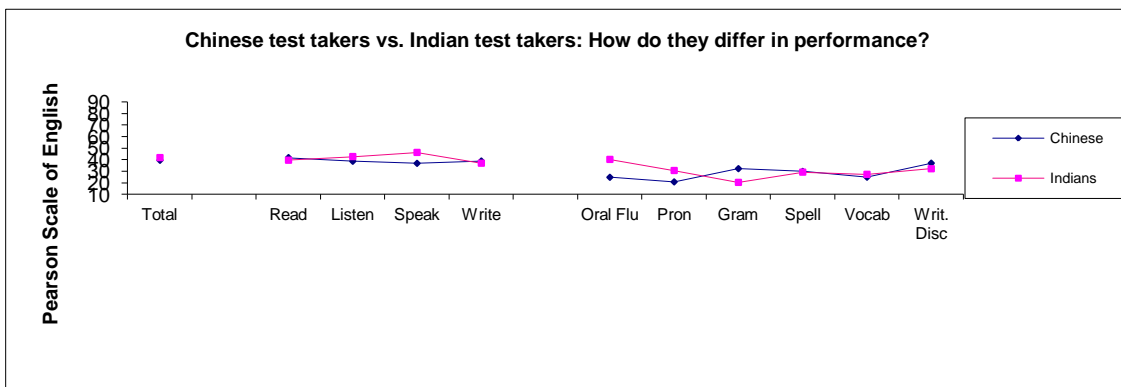


Figure 1. Practice Test Performance Comparison

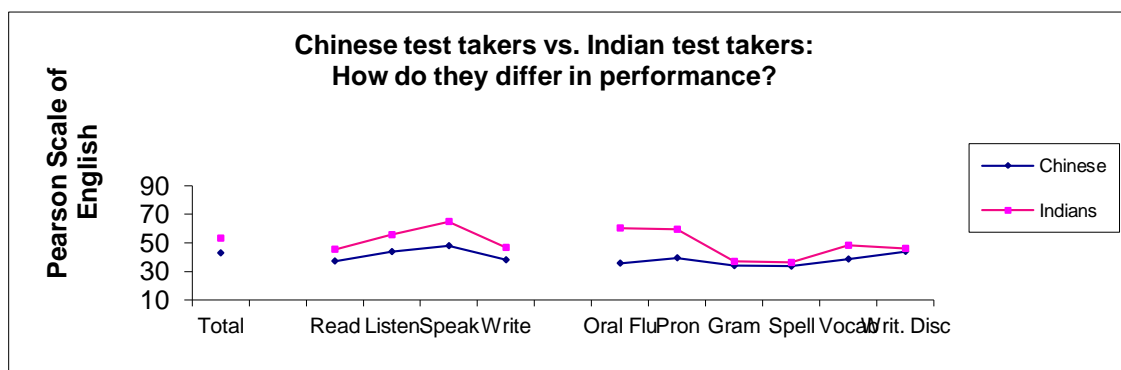


Figure 2. Live Test Performance Comparison

Table 3 shows the results from an Independent Samples T-test. The upper panel contains the results from the Practice Test data. The two groups showed significant score differences in Speaking, Oral Fluency, Pronunciation and Grammar, with Indian test takers scoring higher in the first three skills but lower in Grammar ($p < .05$). The mean score for Speaking is 46.21 for the Indian test takers and 35.56 for the Chinese. The mean score for Oral Fluency is 40.16 for the Indian test takers and 23.13 for the Chinese, and the mean score for Pronunciation is 30.58 for the Indians and 19.97 for the Chinese. On the other hand, the mean score for Grammar is 30.31 for the Chinese and 20.32 for the Indians.

The lower panel in Table 3 shows the results from the Live Test data. The two groups showed significant score differences in all the score profiles, except for the scores in Written Discourse. Indian test takers' mean overall score and mean scores in other skills, i.e. Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing, Oral Fluency, Pronunciation, Grammar, Spelling and Vocabulary, were all significantly higher than those of the Chinese test takers ($p < .05$).

Table 3*Independent Samples T-Tests*

		F	t	df	Sig
Practice Test	Speaking	0.76	-2.89	134	.00
	Oral Fluency	1.49	-4.20	134	.00
	Pronunciation	0.63	-3.20	134	.00
	Grammar	9.91	2.11	134	.04
Live Test	Overall	0.54	-11.85	879	.00
	Reading	0.13	-8.50	879	.00
	Listening	1.54	-12.74	879	.00
	Speaking	13.90	-16.86	879	.00
	Writing	0.38	-8.34	879	.00
	Oral Fluency	1.19	-19.96	879	.00
	Pronunciation	0.42	-14.07	879	.00
	Grammar	1.54	-1.99	879	.05
	Spelling	2.48	-2.02	879	.04
	Vocabulary	0.01	-7.42	879	.00

Survey findings

The students' responses to the survey are summarized in Appendix A. The first 4 columns contain the results from the Chinese test takers. The next 4 columns contain those from the Indian test takers. The survey items were measured on a 5-point scale, with responses ranging from "strongly disagree" (1 point) to "strongly agree" (4 points). There was a fifth option "I have no opinion" (0 points). Variables that were designed to measure students' motivation to learn English were factor analyzed. Maximum Likelihood was used as the extraction method and two rotation methods were attempted: Oblimin with

Kaiser Normalization and the scree plot method. The analyses were performed on the whole dataset.

Table 4 presents a 6-factor solution with the factor loadings based on a rotated structure matrix. Eigenvalues, individual variance explained and accumulated variance explained are presented at the bottom of the table. The items with common factor loadings larger than .4 were used to determine the label for each factor. They are, from factor 1 to factor 6, *external influence*, *integrativeness*, *English as a compulsory course*, *instrumental motivation*, *effort* and *internal interests*. However, within this matrix, there are several items that had cross loadings. Factor correlation is presented in Table 5. As can be seen, these motivational factors are moderately correlated, which helps explain the cross loading of certain items. Items were grouped into factors based on two criteria: 1) interpretability, i.e., whether the factor loading makes theoretical sense; 2) statistical evidence, i.e., whether the factor loading is the highest for the factor assigned. The six factors accounted for 69.57% of the total variance. The amount of variance explained by these factors ranges from 32.61% for factor 1 *external influence* to 4.62% for factor 6 *internal interest*.

Table 4

Factor Loadings

	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
In general, I like my English teacher	.99	.31	.07	.30	.32	.34
In general, I like my English courses	.77	.22	-.07	.26	.41	.61
My English teacher speaks English very well	.71	.34	.28	.28	.06	.26

As a current Indian university student, it is my responsibility to learn English well	.48	.33	.42	.37	.33	.21
Nowadays, to develop good English skills is an important way of becoming involved in the world	.25	.91	.15	.31	.21	.25
Studying English is important because I will be able to communicate more easily with speakers of English	.37	.72	.13	.61	.32	.24
Learning English is important because English is a global communicative tool	.46	.64	.10	.34	.34	.44
I would like to know more native English speakers	.37	.63	.04	.42	.23	.48
My parents expect me to learn English well	.26	.51	.14	.42	.23	.10
I would like to speak English well so that I can travel abroad	.34	.43	.13	.42	.19	.05
I have to learn English because English is a compulsory course	.11	.09	.91	.17	-.08	-.07
I learn English because I need to pass the English course	.06	.12	.79	.17	-.08	-.13
I study hard in English because I need a good mark	.26	.23	.62	.57	-.01	-.00
I read English books only if I have to	-.01	.08	.52	.23	-.37	-.40
Everybody else around me is spending a lot of time learning English, so I have to work hard too	.18	.13	.47	.27	.20	-.08
I learn English because it can help me get a good job	.30	.38	.31	.88	.21	-.00
I learn English because it can help me get a promotion	.29	.42	.13	.84	.35	.17
I learn English because I want to do a graduate degree in an English-speaking country in the future	.34	.41	.27	.55	.31	.16
I usually spend more time learning English than my classmates	.22	.30	.09	.37	.81	.16
I usually work hard to learn English	.50	.51	.01	.32	.68	.54
I enjoy watching English films	.42	.50	-.08	.31	.55	.37

I think learning English is interesting	.43	.62	.02	.29	.25	.81
I enjoy learning English	.56	.36	-.13	.37	.36	.67
I often read English newspapers	.43	.18	.05	.10	.36	.55
Eigenvalue	7.82	3.29	1.83	1.38	1.26	1.11
Variance explained (%)	32.61	13.72	7.63	5.74	5.25	4.62
Accumulated variance explained (%)	32.61	46.34	53.96	59.71	64.95	69.57

Table 5

Factor Correlation Matrix

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1.00	.35	.16	.35	.30	.39
2		1.00	.15	.46	.24	.27
3			1.00	.28	-.04	-.15
4				1.00	.26	.07
5					1.00	.29
6						1.00

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Affective factors and test performance

The relationship between affective factors and PTE Academic test performance was examined in two steps. First, eight items that measured students' anxiety levels were regressed on the 11 PTE Academic scores for the Chinese group and Indian group separately. Secondly, factor scores from Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) were generated, and these motivational factors, together with the factor scores for anxiety and linguistic confidence, were used as independent variables, with the 11 PTE Academic scores as the dependent variables. **The factor scores for anxiety and linguistic confidence were the sum of all scores that measured anxiety and linguistic confidence.** The analyses were carried out separately for the Chinese group and the Indian group.

Two survey items, designed to measure test takers' comfort levels when taking a computer-based test, were recoded to be consistent with the coding of other anxiety items. These were: 1) "I am comfortable taking the test using a computer"; 2) "I am comfortable doing the speaking test using a computer". The results show that none of the anxiety variables were significant in predicting any of the scores for the Indian test takers. For the Chinese participants, on the other hand, *classroom anxiety* was a significant predictor for Overall ($\beta = -.18, p < .05$), Reading ($\beta = -.26, p < .05$), Writing ($\beta = -.21, p < .05$), Pronunciation ($\beta = -.35, p < .05$) and Spelling scores ($\beta = -.27, p < .05$). Moreover, *speaking anxiety* was a significant negative predictor for Oral Fluency ($\beta = -.30, p < .05$) and Speaking scores ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$).

The results suggest that an increase of one SD in classroom anxiety for Chinese test takers will lead to an overall score difference of $-.18 \times \text{SD}$ ($-.18 \times 11.34$). A similar interpretation can be made for speaking anxiety, e.g., an increase of one SD in speaking anxiety for Chinese test takers will lead to an Oral Fluency score difference of $-.30 \times \text{SD}$ ($-.30 \times 14.75$). This seems to suggest that some traditionally perceived characteristics of Chinese learners (e.g., lack of communication in the classroom and teacher-centred instruction) and a very widespread teaching methodology (e.g., giving priority to vocabulary and grammar instruction) may cause classroom anxiety and, to some extent, lead to relatively low scores in some sub-skills. In the presence of classroom anxiety and speaking anxiety, other anxiety variables, including the anxiety of taking a computer-based test, listening to materials only once and skill-specific anxieties, were not significant predictors for the Chinese test takers (see Table 6 for excluded variables).

Table 6

Regression Coefficients of Anxiety Variables in PTE Academic Scores for Chinese Test Takers

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Classroom anxiety	Overall	-2.10	1.43	-.18	-2.10	.04
	Reading	-4.88	1.58	-.26	-3.10	.00
	Writing	-3.96	1.99	-.21	-2.00	.05
	Pronunciation	-6.86	1.92	-.35	-3.57	.00
	Spelling	-7.71	2.82	-.27	-2.74	.01
Speaking anxiety	Oral Fluency	-6.15	2.08	-.30	-2.95	.00
	Speaking	-4.94	2.28	-.22	-2.17	.03

Excluded Variables

I got nervous because I could only hear the listening sections once.

I got nervous on the reading section of the test.

This computer-based Practice Test made me more nervous than a paper-based test.

I am comfortable taking the test using a computer.

I am comfortable doing the speaking test using a computer.

I often get anxious when speaking English.

I get very nervous when I have to write in English.

Table 7 shows the results from the factors that significantly predicted PTE Academic performance. For the Chinese test takers, *anxiety in English classrooms* was a significant negative predictor for the Overall and Speaking scores ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .05$; $\beta = -.36$, $p < .05$), and *effort* made in learning English was a significant positive predictor for the Listening scores. For the Indian test takers, *effort* in learning English was, however, a significant negative predictor of students' scores in Reading ($\beta = -.69$, $p < .05$), but *internal interest* in learning English had a positive association ($\beta = .49$, $p < .05$). In predicting Indian test takers' Writing scores, *effort* was negatively associated with the

Writing scores ($\beta = -.83$, $p < .05$) and *linguistic confidence* was a significant positive predictor ($\beta = .47$, $p < .05$). The results suggest that a one SD increase in classroom anxiety for Chinese test takers will lead to an Overall score difference of $-.28 \times \text{SD}$ ($-.28 \times 11.34$). Similarly, a one SD increase in effort will lead to a Speaking score difference of $.28 \times \text{SD}$ ($.28 \times 14.26$). The Indian test takers' scores in Reading and Writing can be interpreted in a similar way.

Table 7

Significant Factors Predicting PTE Academic Test Performance

	Chinese Test Takers	Indian Test Takers
Overall score	Classroom anxiety ($\beta = -.28$)	n/a
Listening	Effort ($\beta = .28$)	n/a
Speaking	Classroom anxiety ($\beta = -.36$)	n/a
Reading	n/a	Effort ($\beta = -.69$); Internal interest ($\beta = .49$)
Writing	n/a	Effort ($\beta = -.83$); Linguistic confidence ($\beta = .47$)

Qualitative investigation of test takers' perception of the test

This section provides further evidence for the differences identified between the Chinese and Indian test takers. Although both groups (55% agree and 9% strongly agree) suggested they had a good testing experience, the Indian and Chinese test takers in this study commented on their experiences from different perspectives. Most Indian participants tended to emphasize the diagnostic function of the test, while most Chinese participants expressed their excitement at the computerized test and innovative oral tasks.

For example:

It is really very nice. I came to know how much I know and where I'm lacking. Now I will work more on those things in which I'm lacking (Indian test taker # 013)

It gives me a confidence that I can do it. And it also measures my preparation (Indian test taker #028)

Helpful in training listening skills (Indian test taker #121)

It is a very useful test for knowing about my English learning (Indian test taker #230)

Compared with the traditional test, this test gives more emphasis on the use of English (Chinese test taker # 290)

I felt less stressful and anxious in completing oral tasks on this computer-based test, comparing to my previous testing experiences in oral tasks (# Chinese test taker #570)

Oral tasks in this computer-based test was quite straightforward, I can organize my words freely and with less pressure (Chinese test taker #706)

These differences indicate the different attitudes towards the English test held by Chinese and Indian test takers. In this study, Indian test takers were more likely to treat the English test as an opportunity to measure and identify their own strengths and weaknesses of their English, while Chinese test takers seemed to take this as a chance to experience a test with a new format and content. Interestingly, in line with the findings of the quantitative analysis, anxiety seems to be perceived as the biggest barrier to Chinese candidates speaking English. Their different attitudes towards the test suggested that the Indian test takers tended to take an English test as part of their learning experience, in other words, they were looking for areas in which their language needed further development, while Chinese test takers were unlikely to appreciate the diagnostic function of the test and how the test could inform their further or future English learning. They seemed to be more worried about the final results.

When commenting on the negative aspects of the test, some Indian test takers complained about its format, suggesting that they believed it might not reflect their language proficiency properly, while Chinese test takers tended to highlight anxieties caused by their unfamiliarity with the computerized test, which might have a negative impact on their scores. For example:

I feel the topics in listening and reading passage are too academic, which contains too many technical terms. I would like to read and hear more daily topics (Chinese test taker #624)

The listening recordings have a variety of accents and I am not used to it. (Chinese test taker #698)

I think the time length of writing tasks is too short. I cannot type words in the computer while I was organizing my thoughts. For the test takers who were unable to type English words fast enough, they might feel stressful, and then they were likely to write a good passage. (Chinese test taker #761)

To summarize, Indian and Chinese test takers in this study seemed to hold different attitudes towards the test, which can probably be explained by their respective expectations of an English test. Moreover, anxiety during speaking tasks seemed to be perceived as one significant factor, which might influence Chinese candidates' performance in the speaking test.

Discussion

This study took a close look at the English learning and testing behaviors of two groups of Asian students, namely, Chinese and Indian students. To be specific, this study examined the association between the affective variables investigated and test performance on PTE Academic, comparing test takers from China, the country from

which comes the highest number of ESL students, and those from India, the country from which comes the highest number of EFL students. The results of this study demonstrate that Chinese and Indian test takers had score differences for their PTE Academic performance, with Indian students scoring higher in Speaking and Listening, as well as some of the Enabling skills, such as Oral Fluency and Pronunciation, but with less difference in reading and writing skills. This can partly be explained by the fact that English is a foreign language in China, but an institutionalized additional language in India.

Researchers have found Asian students present different learning behaviors from Western students in terms of classroom participation or discussion (Jones, 1999) and learner or learning autonomy (Littlewood, 1999). Asian learners seem to be less aware of the cultural difference between Western and Asian education systems. In general, Asians are pictured as silent note-takers, reluctant to answer questions and participate in classroom discussions, and there is a lack of communication between teachers and students. Jones (1999) maintained that Asian students are not inclined to challenge teacher's authority; rather they are considered to be a group of students who are quiet and respectful of knowledge owing to their cultural backgrounds and previous learning experiences.

Oxford (1999) noted that "behaviors vary across cultures, and what might seem like anxious behavior in one culture might be normal behavior in another culture" (p. 64). Chinese and Indian test takers from this study demonstrated differences in the affective factors examined, especially in anxiety-related variables, where classroom anxiety and speaking anxiety were identified as two significant predictors for the Chinese. This result is in line with Zheng's (2010) investigation into the association between anxiety and

Chinese test takers' College English test performance, where she found anxiety was the best predictor of Chinese university students' linguistic confidence and also the best predictor of language achievement. Zheng's (2010) study also indicated that her participants expressed strong anxiety toward oral English in the classroom. None of the anxiety-related variables, however, was a significant predictor for the Indian test takers' performance.

These results further confirmed earlier findings that students from different ethnic groups perceive their target language(s) and purpose of acquiring a foreign language differently (Dewaele, 2005), and would therefore be influenced by different affective factors. Rueda and Cheng (2005) also pointed out that test takers' idiosyncrasies, such as motivational constructs, are influenced by cultural factors. Chamorrow –Premuzic and Furnham's (2003) study provides evidence that, among other variables investigated, personality traits can predict academic performance to a certain extent. Furthermore, second language acquisition literature suggests that the development of second/foreign language proficiency may differ in important ways in relation to differences in exposure to the target language and in second language instruction (Kunnan, 1995).

Chinese and Indian test takers in this study also differed in impact that effort had on their performance. Effort is a significant positive predictor for the Chinese. For the Indian test takers, however, effort is a significant negative predictor, while internal interest and linguistic confidence can positively predict their performance in the PTE Academic Practice Test. These observed differences can probably be accounted for by the different social influences in the two countries. In China, the long-term influence of Confucianism and the civil service examination have helped to shape teaching and learning. Ma (2005) examined motivation and attribution based on a nationwide study in China. She

incorporated the effort element from attribution theory with motivation, and she found that learning effort among Chinese English learners directly affected foreign language achievement, whereas motivation only exerted its influence via effort. Her argument was grounded on a Confucian doctrine in China, which states there is little one can achieve by simply thinking about doing it without concrete actions and efforts. Chinese learners, the majority of whom are part of the Confucian-heritage culture (CHC) group, possess orientations in their cognitive learning which are remarkably different from the Western ones. For example, rote learning may have been negatively documented in Western settings, but may be effective or meaningful learning for Chinese students. Work ethics or effort expenditures are more emphasized among CHC learners than among Western learners (Watkins & Biggs, 1996). Chinese learners either implicitly or explicitly contend that a weak-willed person who makes no effort is doomed to failure (On, 1996).

However, it has also been noticed that along with the publication of the new national teaching curriculum and the availability of modern educational hardware, new educational concepts (e.g., communicative language teaching) and new teacher-student relationships have started to influence instructional practices in the classrooms in China (Hu, 2005). Researchers (e.g., Hu, 2003; Nunan, 2003) have indicated that teachers from more developed areas have begun to implement English-medium instruction in schools and placed more emphasis on the communicative function of language. Although the traditional teaching methods and beliefs can still be observed in the teachers' classroom teaching, it is evident that some germs of official promoted methodology and teachers' attempts at implementing the new methods can be observed in these English classes (Zheng & Adamson, 2003). Some economically developed regions have started to use video, multimedia systems, and Internet to teach English and facilitate classroom

discussion. These measures will, however, take years or decades to have a positive impact on teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the society as a whole (Jin & Martin, 2002).

In India, however, although officially the medium of instruction in schools is the regional language (Tully, 1997) and, historically speaking, classroom teaching methodologies, such as grammar translation, have been fully implemented by Indian teachers (Patel, 1958), English-medium schools have always been supported by learners and their parents. Tully (1997) argued that many Indian people in the younger generation are being deprived of familiarity with their cultural heritage and community language, such as Hindi. Similarly, Gupta (2004) claimed that the liberalization of the Indian economy has called for more fluent English speakers to fill the gaps in the growing English-speaking local job markets; and with the emergence of a new generation who travel, work and study in an English-speaking environment, communicative language teaching methods have gradually become more acceptable to both teachers and learners.

Pedagogical Implications and Conclusion

The implications of the study point to the need for a better understanding of test takers in the context of their social and individual characteristics. The findings provide further empirical evidence that knowing the test takers' background, characteristics and test performance can lead to a better interpretation of test scores, and thus have potentially positive backwash effects on classroom teaching and learning. By comparing Indian and Chinese test takers' performances in PTE Academic and their affective anxiety variables and motivation towards learning English, this study argues that some similarities in overall scores do not necessarily mean that these test takers need similar courses or

classroom activities. To be specific, in view of the score differences displayed by the Chinese and Indian test takers, this study suggests that curriculum designers and textbook writers need to be fully aware of the sociolinguistic differences displayed by EFL and ESL learners, and to develop accordingly divergent syllabus materials for specific contexts.

Taking into account the different predictors examined in the two groups, language teachers need to design and support more communicative tasks for students in China, e.g., they need to spend more time in the classroom organizing pair or group work with Chinese students, and teachers in China also need to be aware that reducing classroom anxiety is a crucial factor in helping Chinese learners improve their oral English. Moreover, it is important to maintain Chinese EFL learners' level of effort and motivation, even outside the classroom. This finding echoes some recent development of the national English teaching curriculum in China, where motivation, interest and confidence have been specifically highlighted as the main learning and teaching objectives (Wang & Lam, 2009). Moreover, some empirical studies have also demonstrated a positive relationship between Chinese EFL learners' increased level of motivation/interest and their progress in developing writing skills (Tang, Zhang, & Dong, 2009) and vocabulary knowledge (Gu, 2003). For example, Tang et al. (2009) found that the genre-based approach in writing classes forced Chinese EFL learners to "stand out" and "be proud of fighting for the whole group" (2009, p. 106).

For Indian students, however, it would be more beneficial for language teachers to focus on promoting an internal interest in learning by analyzing their areas of interest and selecting learning materials focusing on specific topics. Gupta (2004) offered further evidence as to why the content of teaching materials for Indian students needs to be

specifically designed. He argued that there are the two main reasons why the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) syllabus failed to work at the university level in India. One is the ignorance of people's own views of who they are and what they want, and the other is the assumption that "communicative language teaching is the whole and complete solution" (2004, p. 266). In addition, as Murali (2009) explained, because Indian ESL learners and their parents are motivated to learn English for professional purposes (e.g., technical English), the university has "to design the syllabus and adopt methods to test their English language proficiency" to meet learners' needs. Teachers can also guide their students' learning effort by addressing their weaknesses in English development as shown by the PTE Academic score profile. More attention can be given to help improve Indian test takers' language skills in certain areas, for example, grammar, which is the Enabling Skill in which Indian test takers obtain their lowest scores.

Furthermore, curricular developments and textbook writing for different ESL/EFL settings deserve more attention. As researchers (e.g., Breen, 1987; Clarke, 1991; Nation, 2000) have pointed out, curricula and textbooks should reflect or align with "learners' needs into necessities (what the learner has to know to function effectively), lacks (what the learner knows and does not know already), and wants (what the learners think they need)" (Nation, 2000, p. 4). From EFL learners' perspective, previous studies (e.g., Liu, Chang, Yang, & Sun, 2011) demonstrated "discrepancies between the students' perceptions of needs and the actual courses they took" and highlighted the importance of alignment between school language curricula and EFL learners' "complex, multiple, and conflicting" needs (2011, p. 271). The findings of the current study suggest that teaching curricula and textbooks for Chinese students in language programs need to reflect their needs by developing more specific teaching materials and activities in the classrooms,

e.g., priority should be given to offering support in developing their communicative skills, and less time spent on, or fewer tasks involving, grammar instruction and vocabulary explanations.

Regarding the curricula or teaching materials for Indian ESL learners, internal motivation and linguistic confidence are highlighted as the two main affecting factors. This finding is in line with the findings from previous studies. For example, Moghaddas (2011) investigated the effect of students watching a video as a pre-writing activity for Indian ESL learners. He found that background schemata and other linguistic input from video can raise students' linguistic confidence. Nickerson (2008) pointed out that given the increasing demands of English-speaking business people in India, curricula and textbooks for Indian ESL learners need to be tailored to meet their needs from three perspectives: lexical discourse, communicative tasks and cultural content.

At least two limitations should be noted at the end of this paper. First, the numbers of participants in the Practice Test and survey were relatively small, especially the numbers of the Indian test takers. Second, even though the PTE Academic Practice Test has exactly the same test composition and item banking system, it is still different from the PTE Academic Live Test situation in terms of the stakes involved and test takers' motivation to do well in the test; therefore, the conclusions need to be interpreted with caution. To understand test takers better, further studies need to be carried out along the lines of investigating test takers' backgrounds, affective factors and test performances. Moreover, curriculum designers and language teachers should take these characteristics into account when understanding ESL/EFL students' needs, interpreting their test results and designing teaching activities. More studies also need to examine the effects of proper alignment between ESL/EFL curriculum development, language teaching and testing.

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Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics of the Survey Questions

		Chinese Test Takers				Indian Test Takers			
		Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Motivational Variables	I read English books only if I have to	2.21	0.87	0.52	-0.22	2.58	0.93	-0.16	-0.75
	I often read English newspapers	2.44	0.66	-0.03	-0.19	3.27	0.70	-0.43	-0.86
	In general, I like my English courses	2.84	0.66	-0.07	-0.16	3.44	0.50	0.24	-2.02
	In general, I like my English teacher	2.90	0.68	-0.54	0.82	3.52	0.58	-0.74	-0.41
	I enjoy learning English	3.05	0.69	-0.70	1.22	3.56	0.50	-0.23	-2.02
	I learn English because it can help me get a good job	2.98	0.67	0.02	-0.70	3.15	0.85	-0.71	-0.22
	I learn English because it can help me get a promotion	3.16	0.67	-0.42	0.20	3.14	0.85	-0.68	-0.24
	I study hard in English because I need a good mark	2.88	0.73	-0.16	-0.33	3.13	0.74	-0.22	-1.12
	I would like to speak English well so that I can travel abroad	3.12	0.74	-0.38	-0.45	3.37	0.76	-0.75	-0.86
	I learn English because I want to do a graduate degree in an English-speaking country in the future	2.57	0.81	0.55	-0.65	3.30	0.74	-0.55	-0.98
	I have to learn English because English is a compulsory course	2.19	0.77	0.42	0.05	2.71	1.01	0.14	-1.33
	I learn English because I need to pass the English course	2.34	0.78	0.04	-0.39	2.65	1.03	0.12	-1.27
	Many of my friends speak English better than I do	2.94	0.74	-0.42	0.10	2.63	0.77	0.15	-0.43
	Everybody else around me is spending a lot of time learning English, so I have to work hard too	2.48	0.82	0.13	-0.47	2.84	0.77	0.28	-1.23
	My parents expect me to learn English well	3.23	0.70	-0.95	1.69	3.32	0.56	-0.05	-0.59
	Nowadays, to develop good English skills is an important way of becoming involved in the world	3.59	0.50	-0.36	-1.91	3.66	0.48	-0.70	-1.59
	Studying English is important because I will be able to communicate more easily with speakers of English	3.35	0.59	-0.25	-0.66	3.61	0.58	-1.17	0.47

Linguistic Confidence Variables	I think learning English is interesting	3.14	0.64	-0.42	0.60	3.65	0.48	-0.66	-1.64
	I would like to know more native English speakers	3.35	0.67	-0.77	0.48	3.46	0.50	0.18	-2.06
	I usually work hard to learn English	3.08	0.63	-0.34	0.70	3.37	0.65	-0.53	-0.60
	I usually spend more time learning English than my classmates	2.79	0.65	-0.55	0.82	2.88	0.88	-0.21	-0.84
	As a current Indian university student, it is my responsibility to learn English well	2.82	0.68	-0.70	1.01	3.34	0.66	-0.49	-0.64
	I enjoy watching English films	3.36	0.61	-0.67	1.20	3.46	0.59	-0.52	-0.63
	Learning English is important because English is a global communicative tool	3.43	0.50	0.28	-1.97	3.67	0.47	-0.77	-1.48
	I am confident about my English listening ability	2.24	0.74	0.10	-0.29	3.17	0.57	0.02	-0.03
	I am confident about my English speaking ability	2.21	0.72	0.38	0.20	3.17	0.71	-0.26	-0.93
	I am confident about my English reading ability	2.69	0.68	-0.18	-0.01	3.23	0.80	-1.01	0.94
Anxiety Variables	I am confident about my English writing ability	2.43	0.71	-0.05	-0.22	3.09	0.74	-0.87	1.39
	I got nervous because I could only hear the listening section once	2.99	0.57	-0.37	1.46	2.50	0.72	-0.37	-0.15
	I got nervous on the reading section of the test	2.30	0.48	0.60	-0.87	2.24	0.77	0.18	-0.22
	This computer-based Practice Test made me more nervous than a paper-based test	3.04	0.70	-0.26	-0.28	2.43	0.83	-0.03	-0.49
	I am comfortable taking the test using a computer.	3.00	0.73	-0.18	-0.55	3.09	0.71	-0.54	0.56
	I am comfortable doing the speaking test using a computer	2.69	0.75	0.08	-0.47	3.09	0.76	-0.47	-0.10
	I often get anxious when speaking English	2.74	0.70	0.01	-0.30	2.64	0.78	0.75	-0.93
	I usually feel anxious in my English class	2.19	0.62	0.43	0.71	2.46	0.81	0.54	-0.26
	I get very nervous when I have to write in English	2.27	0.63	0.26	0.21	1.89	0.67	1.04	2.87

A Structural Equation Modeling Approach to Investigating Test Takers' Strategy Use and Reading Test Performance

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Abstract

This article investigates the relationships between test takers' reported strategy use and test performance on the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) reading subtest by using structural equation modeling (SEM) as the primary research tool. 228 Chinese college test takers were invited to take the 50-item reading comprehension test and answer a 30-item Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) (Mokhtari, Sheorey, & Reichard, 2008). The results showed that monitoring (GLOB_MON) and evaluating strategies (GLOB_EVA) were related to reading test performance (RTP) positively and significantly, whereas planning (GLOB_PLA) and support strategies (SUP) affected RTP negatively and insignificantly. Problem-solving (PROB) strategies were weakly related to RTP. This suggests that metacognitive strategies played a very important role in the CET-4 reading subtest.

Keywords: Reading strategies; EFL reading; test performance; structural equation modeling

Introduction

The focus of research on teaching methods has shifted to learning processes since the 1970s. This change has led to the investigation of the relationships between learners' strategy use and their language performance (Cohen & Macaro, 2007). Some of these studies focused on students' general learning strategies (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Purpura, 1999; Wen & Johnson, 1997), some on vocabulary learning strategies (e.g., Gu & Johnson, 1996), and some on listening strategies (e.g., Goh, 1997; Vandergrift, 2005). Similarly, reading researchers have also paid increasing attention to investigating what proficient readers typically do while reading, especially through identifying the strategies they employ (e.g., Block, 1992; Macaro & Erler, 2008; Sheorey & Mohktari, 2001). A considerable number of studies show that readers use multiple strategies to facilitate reading comprehension (Brown, 1980; Carrell, 1989; Mokhtari, Sheorey, & Reichard, 2008; Paris, Lipson, & Wixon, 1983; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995; Zhang, 2010).

Plenty of research on reading has led to the consensus view that reading is an interactive process of comprehension in which the reader reconstructs the text information based on his/her word processing knowledge and his/her knowledge about the world or schemata (e.g., Carrell, 1983; Block, 1992; Grabe, 1991; Macaro & Erler, 2008). In this meaning-constructing process of comprehension, metacognition plays the role of the fixer or problem solver which repairs comprehension failure with the toolbox of strategies, enabling and maximizing comprehension of the text (Pearson, 2009).

A similar trend has emerged in language testing since researchers have shown growing interest in the identification and characterization of the individual characteristics that influence performance on language tests in recent years (Kunnan, 1995; Phakiti, 2003;

Purpura, 1999). For example, Bachman and Palmer (2010) argued that two sets of test takers' characteristics affect test performance: focal and peripheral attributes. The focal attribute is test takers' language ability, which comprises language knowledge and strategic competence. Strategic competence is perceived as a set of metacognitive strategies that "provide a management function in language use" (Bachman & Palmer, 2010:48). Peripheral attributes include personal attributes, topical knowledge, affective schemata, and cognitive strategies. The present study was designed to investigate the relationship between test takers' strategy use and their reading test performance on the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) reading subtest.

In recent years, a growing number of studies have been conducted on mainland Chinese English as a foreign language (EFL) learners (e.g., Gu & Johnson, 1996; Wen & Johnson, 1997; Zhang, 2010). With China's further opening policy and its explosive exchange with Western countries in commerce, technology, and culture, there is increasing demand for a large number of competent English users in a variety of professions. Considerable attention has been drawn accordingly to the field of EFL in mainland China. Designed to examine the relationships between college test takers' strategy use and their test performance on the CET-4 reading subtest, the current study will address the following research questions:

1. What types of reading strategy did this group of Chinese college students report using on the CET-4 reading test?
2. What are the relationships between test takers' reported reading strategy use and reading test performance (RTP) on the CET-4 reading subtest?

Factors that influence second language test performance

Bachman (1990) proposed a model for explaining performance on language tests. The four factors of influence are communicative language ability, test method facets, personal characteristics, and random measurement errors. Among these factors, communicative language ability provides the central basis for accounting for the variation of the test score. Test method facets refer to the characteristics of the test instruments that may affect test scores. Test takers' personal characteristics include their age, gender, native language, educational and socio-economic status, attitude, motivation, aptitude, learning strategies, etc. Since we are focusing on the examination of effects of test takers' individual characteristics on test performance in this study, two factors in Bachman's (1990) framework were investigated: language competence (i.e., their reading ability) as measured by the CET-4 reading test and test takers' reported reading strategy use on the test as measured by the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS).

Metacognition and second language reading

Metacognition refers to one's knowledge of his/her own cognitive processes and products (Flavell, 1971), which is the thinking about one's own thought, or cognition about cognition. Flavell (1978) compartmentalized metacognitive knowledge to include learners' knowledge about person, task, and strategy variables. Brown (1978) emphasized its aspects of executive cognition as including planning, monitoring and revising one's thinking. Now the consensus view among researchers is a blend of the twin approaches into two dimensions of metacognition: knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition.

Knowledge of cognition refers to general information that a person has regarding his or her consciousness about strategy use (Phakiti, 2008). Besides Flavell's tripartite concept mentioned above, Paris, Lipson and Wixson (1983) also described metacognitive knowledge in terms of declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge. Declarative knowledge is "propositions about task structure and task goals", which is "knowing *that*" (p. 303); procedural knowledge pertains to information about how to execute various actions (strategies), which is "knowing *how*" (p. 303); and conditional knowledge concerns the application of procedures, which is "knowing *when* and *why*" (p. 303). Regulation of cognition pertains to one's knowledge about his cognitive resources when engaging in academic tasks, which includes three components: planning, monitoring, and evaluating (Brown, 1980; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Paris & Jacobs, 1984; Wenden, 1998). Planning involves selecting particular actions to realize the goals that have been set; evaluating pertains to assessing the tasks and one's personal cognitive abilities; and monitoring refers to checking and regulating one's thinking and performance during the course of completing the cognitive activities in order to reach the desired goals.

The relationship between metacognition and reading comprehension has long been established (see Brown, 1980; Carrell, 1989; Paris & Jacobs, 1984; Phakiti, 2003; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001; Zhang, 2010). For example, Brown (1980) postulated that first language (L1) readers' metacognition is closely related to their reading performance. Paris and Jacobs' (1984) study revealed a significant relationship between children's reading awareness (i.e., metacognition) and comprehension skills. In second language (L2) reading, Carrell's (1989) research showed the close relationships between readers' metacognitive awareness and their reading ability in both their L1 and L2. Zhang (2010) reported that Chinese EFL readers' metacognitive awareness had links to their EFL

reading proficiency. In conclusion, general findings are that expert readers may control their reading processes by utilizing a repertoire of appropriate strategies through their use of metacognitive knowledge and monitoring. In other words, skilled readers are distinguished from the unskilled readers by their conscious awareness of the strategic reading processes and the actual use of reading strategies (Macaro & Erler, 2008).

Research on learner strategy use and language performance

Since Rubin's (1975) first study on good language learners, extensive research has endeavored to define learner strategies, analyze their type and frequency, and devise taxonomies. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (p.1). Oxford's (1990) definition of learner strategies is "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations" (p.8), which suggests consciousness common to all strategy use. In the field of reading research, a recent and widely accepted definition of reading strategies was given by Afflerbach, Pearson and Paris (2008), who postulated that "reading strategies are deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings of text" (p.368).

Based on various definitions and categories of learner strategy, extensive studies have investigated the relationships between strategy use and language performance. A generalized conclusion from these studies is that more advanced or proficient language learners use strategies more frequently, flexibly, and appropriately (e.g., Anderson, 1991; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vann & Abraham, 1990). From the methodological

perspectives, these studies have employed a spectrum of methods, such as observation (Rubin, 1981), verbal report (Anderson, 1989; Cohen, 1984), interviews (Wenden, 1987) and questionnaires (Carrell, 1989; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001; Oxford, 1986; Phakiti, 2003; Purpura, 1999).

In the field of L2 and EFL reading, Carrell (1989), Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), and Phakti (2003) have employed questionnaires to study the relationships between students' reading strategy use and their reading performance. Carrell (1989) used the Metacognitive Awareness Questionnaire (MAQ) to investigate the relationship between participants' metacognitive awareness and their reading ability in both L1 and L2 with 45 Spanish-speaking ESL learners and 75 native English speakers studying Spanish as their second language. Two texts in both L1 and L2 with multiple-choice questions were used as the instrument to gauge subjects' reading ability. The questionnaire used in this study included four subscales: confidence, repair, effective, and difficulty strategies. Confidence strategies provided a measure of readers' confidence in that language; repair strategies measured readers' awareness of repair strategies; effective strategies tapped subjects' perception of effective/efficient strategies; and difficulty strategies examined the aspects of reading which caused readers difficulty in comprehending the texts. Her findings demonstrate that readers' metacognitive awareness was closely related to their reading proficiency.

Sheory and Mokhtari (2001) examined the difference of the reported use of reading strategies by 302 native and non-native students (150 US native English speakers and 152 English as a second language speakers) when reading academic materials. The data collection instrument was the 30-item Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). Grounded in Pressley and Afflerbach's (1995) notable notion of constructively responsive reading,

which is one of the most comprehensive works on reading strategies, SORS has three underlying factors: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and support strategies, which have been updated respectively as global strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support strategies by Mokhtari et al. (2008). Their general findings are that both groups displayed awareness of almost all the strategies in the questionnaire, but the most important category for both groups was cognitive strategies, followed by metacognitive strategies and support strategies.

Phakiti (2003) used a 35-item questionnaire to investigate the relationship between 384 Thai test takers' metacognitive and cognitive strategy use and the EFL reading test performance. This instrument included 35 items similar to Purpura's (1999) questionnaire. More recently, Phakiti (2008) developed another 30-item reading strategy questionnaire to validate Bachman and Palmer's (1996) theory of strategic competence in an EFL reading test.

Despite the fact that an increasing number of studies have been conducted on Chinese EFL learners from mainland China (e.g., Song & Cheng, 2006; Wen & Johnson, 1997; Zhang, 2010), few studies have focused on the high-stakes College English Test Band 4 (CET-4). From June 2005 onwards, the CET-4 has undergone some major revisions in order to "cater to the needs of the country's further reform and opening up policy" (Jin, 2008). To date, there has not been sufficient research to examine the relationships between test takers' strategy use and their test performance on the updated CET-4. In particular, the relationships between college test takers' reading strategy use and their reading proficiency on the new CET-4 reading subtest still remain unexplored. To provide information in this field, this study used Mokhtari et al.'s (2008) questionnaire to

examine the relationships between test takers' reading strategy use and their test performance on the CET-4 reading subtest.

Method

Context of the Study

Launched in 1987, the College English Test (CET) is administered by the National College English Testing Committee (NCETC) on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of Education. The nationwide test is to provide an objective assessment of college students' overall English proficiency and give EFL teaching at the tertiary level a positive impact (Jin, 2008). Despite the fact that the CET is an optional test to measure Chinese college students' English proficiency, it has gained widespread recognition in society as well as among university teachers and students in China. It is "now taken by almost every college and university non-English-major student" and has "become a nationally recognized credential for employment of college and university graduates" (Jin, 2008, p.4). The CET includes two levels of tests: CET-4 and CET-6. To comply with the newly enacted College English Curriculum Requirement (Ministry of Education, 2006), the CET-4 has undergone some major reforms since 2007. For example, "contextualized language use instead of context-free knowledge of language" is given more importance in the new CET-4 (Jin, 2008, p.7). As such, new forms of tasks have been introduced including skimming and scanning, banked cloze, etc. In the current study, one of the published versions of the CET-4 (June -2010 version) was employed as the instrument to measure students' reading performance.

Participants

Participants in the current study are 228 college students aged between 16.17 and 23.33 ($M=19.55$, $SD=1.06$) from two universities (one science- and one art-oriented school) in the northern part of mainland China who specialized in both science and arts subjects. On average, they had 9.51 years of formal English instructions ($SD=2.34$) by the time of the study. There were 120 male (52.6%), 106 female (46.5%), and 2 other students who did not indicate their gender involving in the study (0.9%). None of the participants had practiced the June-2010 version of the CET-4 reading subtest.

Instruments

The instruments used in the study were the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) and the June 2010 version of the CET-4 reading subtest.

The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS).

In the current study, a Chinese version of the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) (Mokhtari et al., 2008) was administered to the participants. There were 30 items in the questionnaire designed on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (I never or almost never do this), 2 (I do this only occasionally), 3 (I sometimes do this), 4 (I usually do this), and 5 (I always or almost always do this). The three subscales in the questionnaire include global reading strategies (GLOB) (13 items), problem-solving strategies (PROB) (9 items), and support strategies (8 items). GLOB are the strategies that learners use intentionally to plan, monitor, or manage their reading; PROB are the procedures taken by readers while “working directly with the text” (Mokhtari et al., 2008, p.51); and SUP are the strategies used to help readers in comprehending the text. In the current study, two items were

deleted from the questionnaire since they don't suit the current use situation. They are item 5 "When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand." and item 13 "I use reference materials (e.g., a dictionary) to help me understand what I read." Therefore, the final version of the *SORS* administered to the students included 28 items (see Appendix B).

The adoption of Mokhtari et al.'s (2008) questionnaire in the current study is based on the consideration that this questionnaire is not only rooted in the recognized theories and empirical studies on reading comprehension research (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Baker & Brown, 1984; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978; Paris & Winograd, 1990; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995), but also has been subjected to vigorous validation processes prior to actual use (see Mokhtari & Reichard, 2004; Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2008).

CET-4 Reading Subtest.

The reading comprehension test used in the current study is a published version of the CET-4 reading subtest (June 2010 version). The CET-4 reading test in this study comprises 50 items, including four sections: 10 skimming and scanning items (SKSM), 10 banked cloze items (BCLZ), 10 items measuring in-depth reading (RID), and 20 multiple choice (MCLZ) cloze items (see Appendix C for the example test items). Test takers are required to complete the test within 55 minutes.

Data Collection, Scoring, and Preparation

The consent form and the questionnaire were all translated into Chinese and followed by the back-translation before being administered to the participants to ensure their accurate

understanding. All 50 test items in the CET-4 reading subtest were scored dichotomously with only one key to each question. The researcher marked and double-checked every answer to ensure all the items were scored accurately. Then the data were input into IBM SPSS Statistics 20 for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

IBM SPSS Statistics 20 was used to examine the descriptive statistics and check the assumption about normality. Mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of the questionnaire and test items were calculated. Values of skewness and kurtosis should be within the range of +2 and -2 for a normal distribution (Bachman, 2004). The internal reliability estimates of the questionnaire and test were estimated. Guttman's split-half procedure was employed for calculating the reliability estimate for the reading comprehension test since the assumption of independence may be violated in the reading comprehension items (Bachman, 1990; Purpura, 1999). Mardia's multivariate coefficient was also checked to ensure the multivariate normality of the data.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

In exploratory factor analysis (EFA), researchers seek to explore and find a model that fits the data both statistically and substantially (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Since the questionnaire was used in a different educational and cultural context, EFA was conducted to examine the response mode of Chinese college students.

SEM Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a powerful statistical technique to test different theoretical models that demonstrates how a set of observed variables define latent variables and the relationships among these variables (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). In language testing, it is most often used to investigate learners' strategy use and test structure (In'name & Koizume, 2011). Following the reviewed theories and empirical studies in the previous part, the researcher postulated a SEM model to examine the relationships between test takers' strategy use and their test performance (see Figure 1). "Item parceling" technique (Bandalos & Finney, 2001; Little et al., 2002), a frequently used method in latent variable analyses, was employed in the analysis at the subscale level of the questionnaire and the subsection level of the test. A parcel is an aggregate-level indicator, comprising the sum or average of two or more items.

Multiple fit indices were calculated to examine the model fit. The non-significant value of chi-square (χ^2) indicates good model fit, but since it is sensitive to the sample size (Kline, 2011), the chi-square to degree of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) is normally calculated and a value less than 3 is indicative of a well-fitting model. The comparative fit index (CFI) is to evaluate the relative improvement in fit of the hypothesized model in comparison with the null model. A value greater than .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) is considered a good model fit. The absolute fit index root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) shows how well a model fits the population and should be less than .06 to indicate good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The narrow interval of the RMSEA 95% confidence interval shows better model fit. The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) is based on residual and estimates the differences between observed and predicted variance. Values of the SRMR less than .05 are considered good model fit (Byrne, 2011).

We used IBM SPSS AMOS computer program Version 20.0 (Arbuckle, 2011) to perform the analysis. The Maximum Likelihood (ML) technique was chosen as the method of parameter estimation.

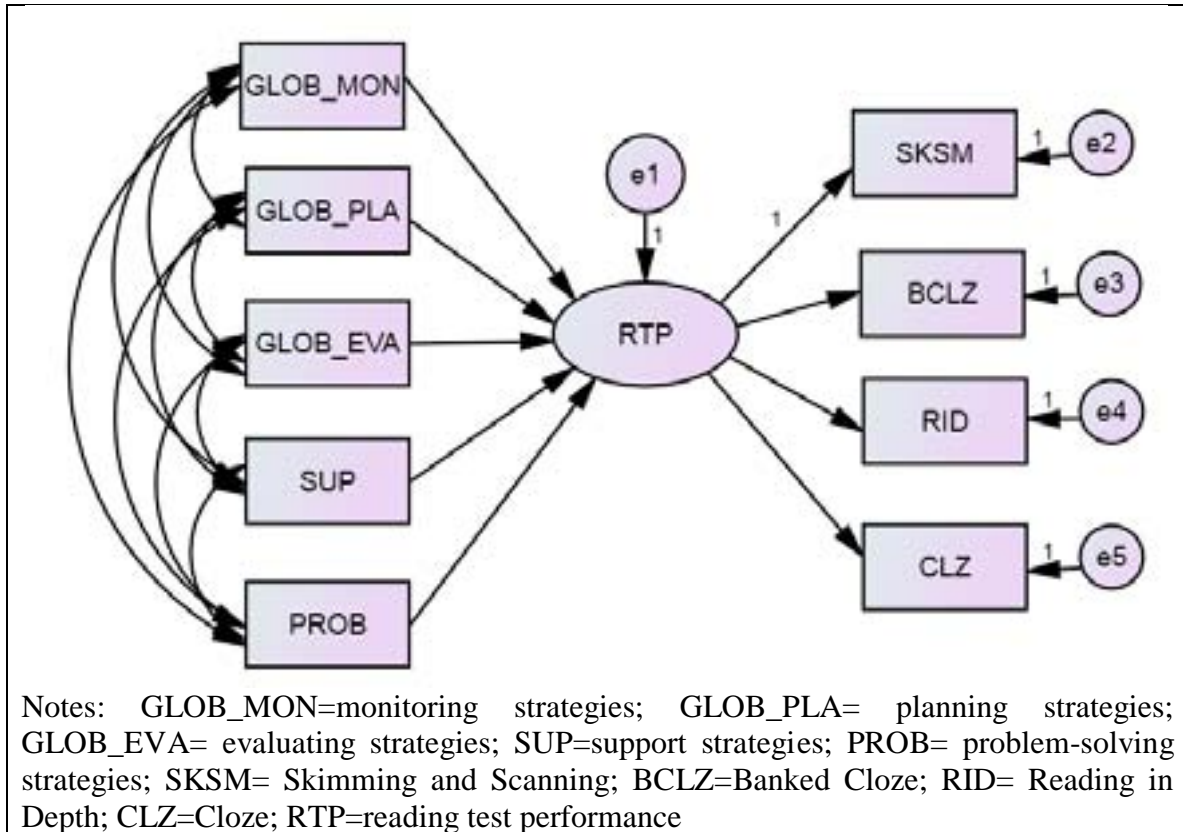


Figure 1 Hypothesized SEM model

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The researcher first examined the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire and test at the item level (see Appendix A). The means of the questionnaire items varied from 2.21 to 4.05 and standard deviation from 1.04 to 1.42. The researcher also estimated the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire and test at the subscale and subsection level (see

Table 1). The skewness and kurtosis values of all questionnaire and test items were within the accepted range of +2 and -2 (Bachman, 2004), which is indicative of normal distribution. Mardia's coefficient for the data was 1.72, which is below 5.0 (Byrne, 2006), indicating multivariate normality. The internal reliability of the questionnaire and the test was also calculated. The reliability estimate for the overall questionnaire was .81. Guttman split-half estimate for the reading comprehension test was .82, indicating that both the questionnaire and the test are reliable measurement tools.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics at the Subsection and Subscale Level

	No. of items	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
SKSM	10	6.28	2.86	-.39	-1.02
BCLZ	10	2.82	1.26	-.24	-.58
RID	10	12.46	4.37	-.53	-.43
CLZ	20	5.46	2.64	-.30	-1.00
Total	50				
LOB_MON	8	3.64	.70	-.26	-.34
LOB_PLA	4	2.69	.78	.22	-.12
LOB_EVA	4	3.17	.79	.20	-.38
SUP	3	2.89	.84	-.01	-.57
PROB	3	2.67	.72	.19	-.30
Total	22				

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA was conducted at the item level of the questionnaire with 28 items. Principal components analysis and Promax were used to extract and rotate the factors since they seemed to maximize interpretation in the current study. In the analysis, four-, five-, and six-factor solutions were tested to compare the results. After examining and comparing

the initial eigenvalues and the items falling into each category, a five-factor solution was accepted since it appeared to provide a maximum interpretation of the data. The items with double loadings were deleted after careful examination. After the Promax rotation, five factors with 22 items accounted for 45.4% of the total variance (see Table 2).

As shown in Table 2, support reading strategies (SUP) loaded on Factor 4 with 3 items while problem-solving reading strategies (PROB) loaded on Factor 5 with 3 items. After examining the items loaded on Factor 1, Factor 2, and Factor 3, the researcher found that they were related to the three dimensions of metacognitive strategies: monitoring, planning, and evaluating (Paris & Winograd, 1990; Wenden, 1998). Since global reading strategies (GLOB) are equivalent to metacognitive strategies (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001), the eight items falling on Factor 1 were labeled as monitoring strategies (GLOB_MON); the four items under Factor 2 were named planning strategies (GLOB_PLA); and the four items under Factor 3 were termed evaluating strategies (GLOB_EVA).

In summary, based on the method of principal components analysis with the five-factor Promax solution, these Chinese students' perception of reading strategies used on the CET-4 reading test mainly fell into five categories: monitoring strategies (GLOB_MON), planning strategies (GLOB_PLA), evaluating strategies (GLOB_EVA), support strategies (SUP), and problem-solving strategies (PROB). This result was used in the further analysis of the data.

Table 2*Pattern Matrix and Total Variance Explained for Strategy Use*

Strategy	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
GLOB_MON1	.706				
GLOB_MON2	.669				
GLOB_MON3	.489				
GLOB_MON4	.544				
GLOB_MON5	.537				
GLOB_MON6	.463				
GLOB_MON7	.492				
GLOB_MON8	.583				
GLOB_PLA9		.360			
GLOB_PLA10		.747			
GLOB_PLA11		.349			
GLOB_PLA12		.736			
GLOB_EVA13			.507		
GLOB_EVA14			.382		
GLOB_EVA15			.750		
GLOB_EVA16			.500		
SUP17				.686	
SUP18				.595	
SUP19				.649	
PROB20					.601
PROB21					.536
PROB22					.625
Percentage of total variance explained	19.1	8.58	6.12	5.99	5.58

SEM Analyses

The SEM model produced good fit indices which are presented in Table 3. The comparative fit index (CFI = .97) was greater than the frequently reported cut-off value .95, indicating that the hypothesized model fit the data well. The absolute fit index, RMSEA (.058), was less than .06, showing less discrepancy between the population and the sample data. The RMSEA 95% confidence interval was narrow. SRMR (.037) indicates that the model explained the data within a small error of .037. χ^2/df (1.78) was less than 3.

Table 3

SEM Model Investigating the Relationship between Test Takers' Strategy Use and Test Performance

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA95% Confidence interval	SRMR
SEM model	30.19*	17	1.78	0.97	0.058	0.055 to 0.061	0.037

Notes: df = degree of freedom; CFI= Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA= Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR= Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

* $p < .05$.

Figure 2 presents the SEM model with estimated coefficients. The paths loading coefficients of reading test performance (RTP) ranged between .36 and .87, with an average of .69, indicating that the latent variable RTP was well-defined by the four measured variables. Monitoring strategies (GLOB_MON) and evaluating strategies

(GLOB_EVA) had direct and significant effects on RTP with coefficients of .36 and .22. However, planning strategies (GLOB_PLA) and support strategies (SUP) were negatively related to RTP. Problem-solving strategies (PROB) had a positive but weak effect (.04) on RTP.

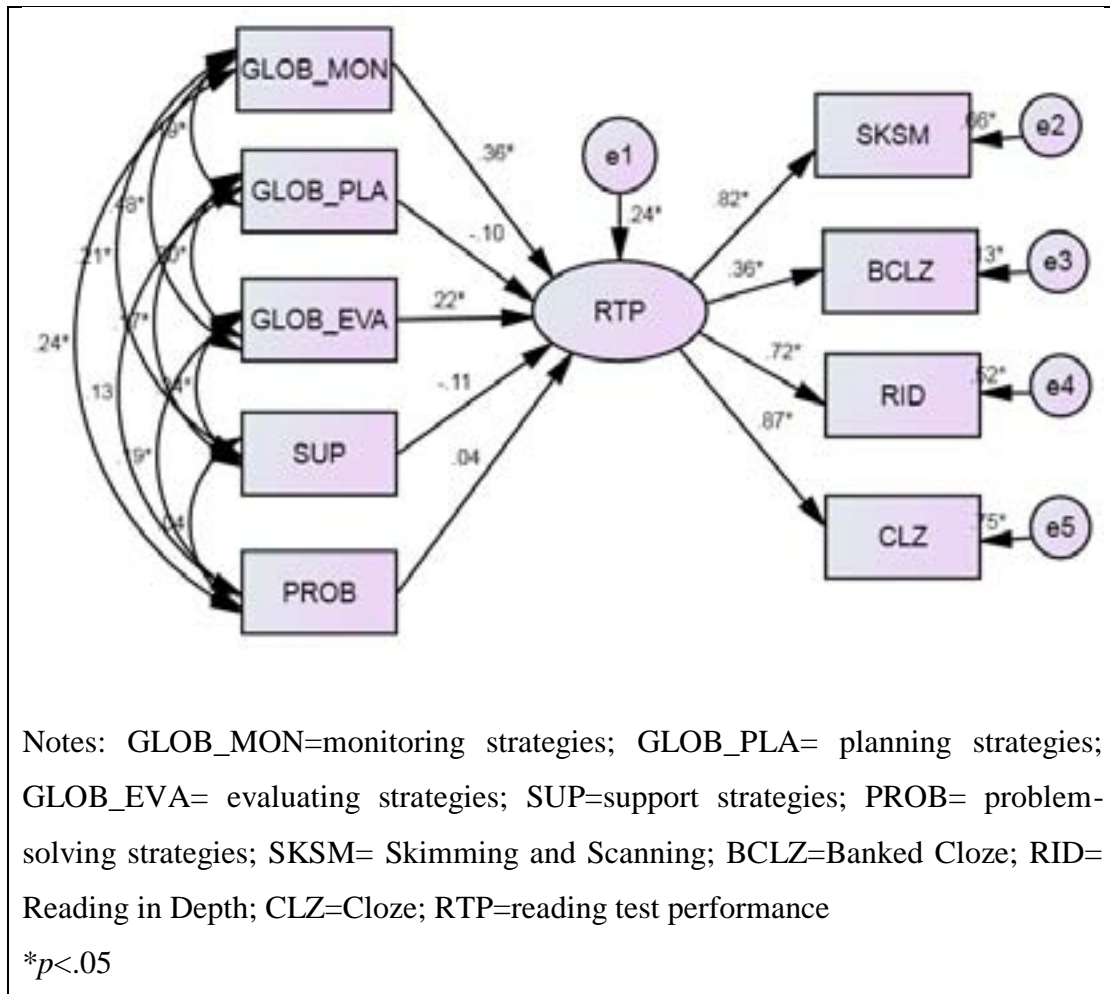


Figure 2. The estimated SEM model

Discussion

Strategy Use in the CET-4 Reading Subtest

In this study the researcher employed Mokhtari et al's (2008) questionnaire to explore 228 Chinese college test-takers' strategy use on a published version of the CET-4 reading subtest. On the basis of the exploratory factor analysis, it was found that the reading strategies used by this group of learners on the CET-4 reading test primarily fell into five categories: monitoring strategies, planning strategies, evaluating strategies, support strategies, and problem-solving strategies. The first three categories (i.e., metacognitive strategies) comprised 16 items which explained 33.81% of total variance of the current data, whereas problem-solving strategies (i.e., cognitive strategies) and support strategies included only 3 items each and collectively accounted for 11.57% of total variance. Therefore, metacognitive strategies appeared to be important for these college test takers. This finding is consistent with Song and Cheng's (2006) conclusion that metacognitive strategies were frequently used by Chinese EFL learners on the CET-4 test. On the other hand, Sheorey and Mokhtari's (2001) study also showed that support strategies were the least reported strategies by both native and ESL students. In addition, Purpura (1999) found that cognitive strategies were weakly related to test takers' test performance.

Underlying Structure of the CET-4 Reading Subtest

The SEM analysis of the study explored the underlying structure of the published version of the CET-4 reading test (June 2010). Based on the relatively high loading coefficients (see Figure 2), the researcher found that CET-4 reading test was well-defined by the four test sections. This could be counted as a piece of evidence to support the validity argument of the CET-4 reading test. Specially, the Cloze (.87), Skimming and Scanning

(.82), and Reading in depth (.71) sections appeared to explain reading test performance better than Banked Cloze (.36) (at least among this group of college test takers). This might suggest that, as a newly adopted test format, students may need more time to familiarize themselves with the contextualized language use practice.

Strategy use and Reading Test Performance

The current study revealed how this group of college test takers' reported that reading strategy use was related to their test performance on the CET-4 reading subtest. As the SEM analysis shows (see Figure 2), metacognitive strategies, specifically monitoring strategies and evaluating strategies, affected RTP positively and significantly. This indicates that to maximize their test performance test takers assessed and regulated their reading processes on the reading comprehension test (Cohen & Upton, 2006). For example, they stopped from time to time, thinking about what they were reading (GLOB_EVA16) and checking the information they came across (GLOB_EVA16). In addition, they tried to get back on track when losing concentration (GLOB_MON1) and adjusted reading speed according to the contents (GLOB_MON3). This seems to suggest that, influenced by time pressure of the test, test takers might apply metacognitive strategies more frequently to ensure that appropriate comprehension occurs and test task demands are properly met. This corroborated Song (2005) who found that monitoring was a strong positive predictor of the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB).

However, as indicated in our analysis, planning strategies and support strategies were negatively related to RTP. This may demonstrate that the strategies used by learners in test and non-test contexts are different. In the test context, students are required to

provide the most accurate responses to the test tasks possible under time constraints. However, in a non-test context, students are not likely to be affected by time pressure and inaccuracy in answering questions (Phakiti, 2003). In the test context, if test takers spend more time setting purpose in mind (GLOB_PLA9) or translating from English to Chinese while reading (SUP19), they might have less time concentrating on comprehending the text and responding to test tasks, which seems not to be conducive to their reading test performance.

In addition, different from the findings in the studies of non-test contexts (e.g., Sheorey & Mohktari, 2001), problem-solving strategies (i.e., cognitive strategies) didn't contribute significantly to RTP. This might again be attributable to the time constraints in the test which seem to prevent test takers from spending too much time on the processes of reading comprehension. On the contrary, the products of reading comprehension (i.e., RTP) are attached more importance. Purpura's (1999) study corresponded with our finding regarding the weak effects of cognitive strategies on test performance. In addition, Paris (2002) also concluded that strategies could have positive, negative or no effects on language performance.

Another finding from the current study is that the reported reading strategies by test takers correlated with one another significantly (except SUP vs. PROB and GLOB_PLA vs. PROB). This shows us that the reported strategies used by the test takers seemed to form a continuum (Purpura, 1999). That is, the different varieties of strategies used by test takers reflected their interactive mental processes involved in comprehending the text on the CET-4 reading test. This suggests the difficulties in trying to distinguish different types of strategy since they work collectively to help learners in tackling specific use demands and tasks (Phakiti, 2003).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current study used the structural equation modeling approach to investigate the relationships between test takers' strategy use and their performance on the CET-4 reading subtest by employing Mokhtari et al.'s (2008) reading questionnaire. In our analysis, test takers reported employing five main types of reading strategies: monitoring, planning, evaluating, support, and problem-solving strategies. Monitoring and evaluating strategies were found to affect RTP positively and significantly. Planning and support strategies were negatively related to RTP and problem-solving strategies affected RTP weakly and insignificantly. In addition, the CET-4 reading test was found to be well defined by the four sections: Skimming and Scanning, Banked Cloze, Reading in Depth, and Cloze.

Purpura (1999) argued that the relationships between strategy use and second language test performance are very complex. To provide a comprehensive description of test takers' strategy use on the reading test, the researcher feels that future research could focus on developing a specific use strategy questionnaire which is grounded in relevant language testing as well reading theories and empirical studies. That way, it could facilitate studies regarding the complicated relationships between strategy use and language test performance.

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Appendix A

Descriptive Statistics of the Test and Questionnaire at the Item Level

	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
item1	.71	.457	-.911	-1.180
item2	.46	.500	.142	-1.998
item3	.51	.501	-.053	-2.015
item4	.71	.455	-.935	-1.137
item5	.68	.466	-.798	-1.376
item6	.69	.464	-.820	-1.339
item7	.68	.466	-.798	-1.376
item8	.55	.498	-.186	-1.978
item9	.55	.499	-.195	-1.979
item10	.71	.452	-.958	-1.091
item11	.66	.475	-.670	-1.565
item12	.79	.412	-1.397	-.048
item13	.39	.489	.453	-1.811
item14	.36	.482	.569	-1.691
item15	.65	.478	-.629	-1.619
item16	.47	.500	.106	-2.006
item17	.53	.500	-.124	-2.002
item18	.54	.500	-.159	-1.992
item19	.54	.500	-.159	-1.992
item20	.69	.464	-.820	-1.339
item21	.31	.462	.842	-1.302
item22	.66	.474	-.691	-1.536
item23	.75	.434	-1.162	-.655
item24	.70	.460	-.865	-1.263
item25	.71	.457	-.911	-1.180
item26	.69	.464	-.820	-1.339
item27	.77	.421	-1.305	-.300
item28	.33	.471	.733	-1.476
item29	.67	.472	-.712	-1.507

item30	.64	.480	-.609	-1.644
item31	.64	.482	-.569	-1.691
item32	.44	.497	.249	-1.955
item33	.60	.491	-.415	-1.844
item34	.55	.498	-.213	-1.972
item35	.56	.498	-.231	-1.964
item36	.64	.481	-.589	-1.668
item37	.39	.490	.434	-1.828
item38	.52	.501	-.071	-2.013
item39	.57	.497	-.267	-1.946
item40	.66	.474	-.691	-1.536
item41	.50	.501	-.018	-2.017
item42	.47	.500	.106	-2.006
item43	.46	.500	.142	-1.998
item44	.60	.492	-.396	-1.860
item45	.68	.466	-.798	-1.376
item46	.47	.500	.124	-2.002
item47	.64	.480	-.609	-1.644
item48	.60	.491	-.415	-1.844
item49	.61	.490	-.434	-1.828
item50	.32	.468	.776	-1.410
<hr/>				
GLOB1	2.92	1.148	.149	-.759
SUP2	2.29	1.390	.863	-.573
GLOB3	3.40	1.215	-.263	-.934
GLOB4	2.82	1.420	.127	-1.331
GLOB6	2.21	1.203	.634	-.658
PROB7	3.29	1.140	-.209	-.744
GLOB8	2.85	1.356	.014	-1.209
PROB9	4.00	1.045	-.882	-.107
SUP10	4.05	1.211	-1.098	.026
PROB11	3.63	1.081	-.495	-.361
GLOB12	2.70	1.275	.242	-1.002
PROB14	3.38	1.241	-.330	-.925
GLOB15	2.89	1.410	.023	-1.324
PROB16	2.91	1.200	.032	-.897
GLOB17	3.77	1.110	-.564	-.596
SUP18	2.55	1.330	.370	-1.017
PROB19	3.17	1.127	-.156	-.712
GLOB20	3.22	1.358	-.258	-1.141
GLOB21	2.23	1.210	.600	-.722

SUP22	2.54	1.198	.300	-.835
GLOB23	3.60	1.178	-.419	-.750
GLOB24	2.44	1.244	.507	-.800
PROB25	3.33	1.220	-.326	-.757
SUP26	2.69	1.282	.296	-.964
GLOB27	3.39	1.186	-.382	-.751
SUP28	3.70	1.102	-.658	-.294
SUP29	2.97	1.257	.018	-.980
SUP30	2.82	1.200	.065	-.940

Appendix B

Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the various strategies you use when you read **school-related academic materials in English** (e.g., reading textbooks for homework or examinations, reading journal articles, etc.). Each statement is followed by five numbers, 1,2,3,4, and 5, and each number means the following:

- 1 means that “I **never or almost never** do this.”
- 2 means that “ I do this **only occasionally**.”
- 3 means that “I **sometimes** do this.” (about **50%** of the time)
- 4 means that “I usually do this.”
- 5 means that “I always or almost always do this.”

After reading each statement, circle the number (1,2,3,4, or 5) which applies to you. Note that there are no right or wrong responses to any of the items on this survey.

Category	Strategy	Never Always				
GLOB	1. I have a purpose in mind when I read.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	2. I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5

GLOB	3. I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	4. I take an overall view of the text to see what it is about before reading it.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	6. I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	7. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	8. I review the text first by noting its characteristics like length and organization.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	9. I try to get back on track when I lost concentration.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	10. I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	11. I adjust my reading speed according to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	12. When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	14. When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	15. I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	16. I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	17. I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	18. I paraphrase (restate in my own words) to better understand what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	19. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	20. I use typographical features like boldface and italics to identify key information.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	21. I critically analyze and evaluate the information	1	2	3	4	5

	presented in the text.					
SUP	22. I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	23. I check my information when I come across new information.	1	2	3	4	5
GLOB	24. I try to guess what the content of the text is about when I read.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	25. When text becomes difficult, I reread it to increase my understanding.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	26. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.	1	2	3	4	5
GOLB	27. I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
PROB	28. When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words and phrases.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	29. When reading, I translate from English into Chinese.	1	2	3	4	5
SUP	30. When reading, I think about information in both English and Chinese.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

Example Items of the College English Test Band 4 Reading Subtest¹

Part I Skimming and Scanning

The website for Orzack's center lists the following among the psychological symptoms of computer addiction:

¹ Due to limited space, only example test items are listed in Appendix C.

- Having a sense of well-being or excitement while at the computer.
- Longing for more and more time at the computer.
- Neglect of family and friends.
- Feeling empty, depressed or irritable when not at the computer.
- Lying to employers and family about activities.
- Inability to stop the activity.
- Problems with school or job.

Physical symptoms listed include dry eyes, backaches, skipping meals, poor personal hygiene and sleep disturbances.

People who struggle with excessive Internet use may be depressed or have other mood disorders, Orzack said. When she discusses Internet habits with her patients, they often report that being online offers a “sense of belonging, an escape, excitement [and] fun,” she said. “Some people say relief... because they find themselves so relaxed.”

1. According to Orzack, people who struggle with heavy reliance on the Internet may feel_____.

- A. depressed B. pressured C. discouraged D. puzzled

Part II Banked Cloze

Fortunately, there are a 1 number of relatively simple changes that can green older homes, from 2 ones like Lincoln’s Cottage to your own postwar home. And efficiently upgrades can save more than just the earth; they can help 3 property owners from rising power costs.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| A) accommodations | I) protect |
| B) clumsy | J) reduced |
| C) doubtfully | K) replace |
| D) exceptions | L) sense |
| E) expand | M) shifted |
| F) historic | N) supplying |
| G) incredibly | O) vast |
| H) powering | |

Part III Reading in Depth

You never see them, but they're with you every time you fly. They record where you're going, how fast you're traveling and whether everything on your airplane is functioning normally. Their ability to withstand almost any disaster makes them seem like something out of a comic book. They are known as the black box.

1. What does the author say about the black box?
 - A) Its ability to ward off disasters is incredible.
 - B) It is an indispensable device on an airplane.
 - C) It ensures the normal functioning of an airplane.
 - D) The idea for its design comes from a comic book.

Part IV Multiple-Choice Cloze

The terms e-commerce refers to all commercial transactions conducted over the Internet, including transactions by consumers and business-to-business transactions. Conceptually, e-commerce does not 1 from well-known commercial offerings such as banking by phone, "mail order" catalogs, or sending a purchase order to a supplier 2 fax. E-commerce follows the same model 3 in other business transactions; the difference 4 in the details.

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. A) distract | B) differ | C) derive | D) descend |
| 2. A) off | B) from | C) via | D) with |
| 3. A) appeared | B) used | C) resorted | D) served |
| 4. A) roots | B) lies | C) locates | D) situates |

An Applied Phenomenological Interview Approach to the Exploration of Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Language Labs

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Abstract

This paper details a four month long phenomenological investigation of teachers' perceptions of two language labs at a national research university's language center in northern Taiwan. A focus group was formed to investigate the current language lab teaching and learning ecology to determine what direction should be taken in the refurbishment of these labs. The qualitative data generated from the interviews of nine teachers was analyzed and compared to the focus group interactions to determine the preferences of language lab teachers. The data suggested that Taiwanese EFL teachers are seeking teacher-centered technologies that are not activity specific but can be tailored to individual teaching practices in as simplistic of a way as possible. Pedagogical suggestions for EFL language labs are discussed.

Keywords: EFL, Language Labs, Learning Ecologies, Speaking, Listening, Phenomenology

Introduction

As the number of technologies steadily grew in the last century, so did the supposed uses in education (Cuban, 1986). Educators and engineers alike have been seeking ways to utilize these technologies for pedagogical purposes, trying to determine which benefits these new technologies have to offer a new generation of students (Chen, Liu, Ou, & Lin, 2001; Roschelle & Pea, 2002; Liang et al., 2005). Teachers, especially language teachers, are constantly seeking efficient methods of incorporating technologies into their classes to reach all learners (Salaberry, 2001). Both hardware and software technologies have been explored. Two well-known examples are Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS) (Chan & Baskin, 1990; Chan, 1996; Chan, Hue, Chou, & Tzeng, 2001) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) (Wible, 2005). Unfortunately, technologies are often introduced into teaching environments without taking into consideration the multitude of factors that are involved. Engineers often develop new technologies without interaction with educators until the process of development ends. Then these technological “toys” are forced to fit into every classroom as a one-for-all solution to educators’ problems. In such situations, due to a lack of collaboration between teachers, programmers, and administrators from initial integration through to implementation, either teachers attempt to use the technologies for only a short period of time or these technological innovations are never used at all (Zhong & Shen, 2002).

Inquiries made by Dunkel (1987) revealed that generations of teachers feel they are in a state of *déjà vu*, in other words, these teachers are experiencing the same phenomenon of failed classroom technology integration again and again. First the radio in the 1920s, then the television in the 1950s, and finally language labs in the 1960s: all were considered technological breakthroughs worthy of classroom integration. Regrettably,

teachers have continuously witnessed new technologies being eagerly pushed into their classrooms only to be dragged out a few months later when the expected gains in language ability was not manifested. Many teachers have become skeptical of any new technologies and continually place more emphasis and value on traditional teaching materials (Ilter, 2009; Ismail, Almekhlafi, & Al-Mekhlafy, 2010). One exemplary effort is that of the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) initiative (2011). Like other One-to-One (Chan et al., 2006) technology initiatives, on the surface the idea seems excellent, but if explored further, one finds that little investigative work is often done in such situations; at the time of writing, the OLPC initiative is in danger of failure (Paul, 2008).

One situation in which language teachers often encounter difficulties with technologies is when required to conduct classes in a language laboratory environment (Zhong & Shen, 2002). When discussing language labs it is helpful to distinguish them from the two other major types of classroom environments and also the self-access/self-study listening and language learning facilities that have become quite popular these days. In this study, the researcher will be referring to the three basic classroom compositions as “traditional classroom,” “one-to-many classroom,” and “language lab.” The researcher operationalized the traditional classroom as a classroom that contains no form of technology, the one-to-many classroom as a type of environment that includes technologies that allow a teacher to simultaneously “broadcast” content whether it is audio or audio/visual through a projector and speakers onto a single large display for all students to experience. Lastly, the researcher broadly defines a language lab as a room where every student has individual access to some type of device that allows, but is not limited to, teacher-controlled interaction between paired or groups of students inside the class. This paper is not concerned with self-access/self-study listening and language

learning facilities, whose purpose is “...to provide an inviting listening center...” and “...offer a wide choice of appealing audio and video materials on a variety of topics and at a range of proficiency levels” for students' self-paced and individual usage (Morley, 2001).

Language lab environments have often caused unwanted frustrations for both teachers and students; moreover, some researchers (Gustave, 1962; Schwartz, 1995) have even claimed they yield worse learning results than traditional language teaching methods. Still, researchers and teachers alike must understand that throughout the history of the language lab, the software and hardware have been undergoing continual additions and refinements. Unfortunately, this has also occurred without much input from the teachers that actually utilize these labs for language instruction. But thankfully, in recent years, researchers in the area of distributed cognition have focused more on the interaction between users and digital tools in varying ecologies (Hutchins, 1994; Hollan, Hutchins, & Kirsh, 2000). This ecological point of view is quite interesting to language teaching professionals and researchers because of the ever-increasing reliance that language learners are placing on computer and Internet technologies (Jarvis, 2005). If the inventors and those that implement these technologies begin to take the time to investigate the feelings of the teachers that actually make use of these technological tools, less frustration and quicker improvements could be the result.

Problem Statement

Consequently, when it was brought to the attention of the director of the Language Center (LC) at a university in northern Taiwan that the administration was requiring their current language labs to be refurbished, it was decided that a more encompassing ecological

approach should be adopted. This was to ensure that the integration of technology into the language classroom serve a practical purpose and not simply be integrated for the sake of integrating technology. Until this point, many teachers that were utilizing the labs for teaching had expressed grievances and, therefore, the director took it upon himself to place the main users of the lab, the language teachers, center stage when deciding how these labs should be refurbished. Taking an ecological view of language learning, specifically in the language labs, at this university was thought to be best accomplished through the exploration of the perceptions of the teachers using these labs for teaching in this particular ecological education environment. As will be described later, in the short amount of time given, the researcher was able to begin to construct a relationship with the teachers that utilize these labs for teaching, while investigating the language labs as a teaching ecology from the teachers' points-of-view.

In order to understand the emotions of these teachers, a phenomenological approach was taken to investigate how the required use of language labs had affected the teachers and their teaching. Unlike previous research that used quantitative questionnaire inquiry to obtain teachers' perceptions of CALL technologies (e.g., Ismail et al., 2010), a phenomenological interviewing approach to data collection was necessary to obtain a first-person perspective of teachers' experiences and feelings. No quantitative questionnaire, regardless of how reliable, can explain the complexities of a teacher's situation within an educational ecology without allowing for a teacher to tell his or her own "story" of distress with all the messiness of emotion that cannot be neatly analyzed by statistical software. Such inquiry may help in bridging the gap that currently exists between university administrators, teachers, and information technology engineers; a better understanding of the emotions of teachers may not only prevent future grievances

at this university but also provide a model for other universities to follow when implementing or upgrading language lab technologies.

Methods and Procedures

In this section, the researcher will first briefly introduce the field of phenomenology followed by its limited use in foreign language research. Following this brief introduction of phenomenology, the subjects involved in the study will be introduced, followed by an explanation of the method of interview item construction and a description of how these items were used during the semi-structured phenomenological interviews.

Methodology

Phenomenology is concerned with the first person experiences of individuals. “Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view” (Smith, 2008). Much of the philosophical phenomenological research centers around the meanings humans place on objects, events, or tools within their world. In other words, phenomenology studies various types of experiences one can have by attempting to understand another human being’s perceptions, thoughts, memories, imagination, emotions, desires, or social activities. Phenomenological interview techniques allow researchers from all areas to connect with research subjects in a way that “cold questionnaire data” does not allow.

Much of the literature surrounding phenomenological research techniques is in the nursing field. Thomas (2005) offers an extensive review of how phenomenology has provided nurses with a better means of connecting with their patients as research subjects.

A phenomenological perspective allows a nurse to understand the network of relations between people, objects, and emotions to be better equipped at pinpointing the root of a patient's problem (Thomas, 2005).

Surprisingly, a review of EFL literature utilizing phenomenological research techniques yielded quite sparse results. However, Perpignan (2003), for example, used phenomenological research techniques to aid in the communication with EFL writers when providing written feedback on students' writing. Such a technique allowed for more time to observe students' behavior qualitatively and to interpret their reactions to the feedback instead of just simply counting and coding grammar errors. Perpignan found such a technique allowed for both the students and the researcher to work out mutual misunderstandings, judgments, emotions, attitudes and behaviors that were not possible with traditional forms of teaching and quantitative research inquiry. Phenomenological face-to-face interviews also provided an opportunity for teaching and learning through feedback that is not often found in traditional written feedback instruction. Caputi, Engelmann, and Stasinopoulos (2006) used phenomenological teaching techniques with non-native English speaking nurses to provide language instruction through conversation circles that provided both sensitive cultural counseling and job specific language instruction. These conversation circles created a bond with the students which both sides appreciated and allowed for discovery of students' needs. Furthermore, it was revealed through this phenomenological technique of conversational sharing of emotions, experiences, and practices that some of the needs provided through the conversation circles would not just be beneficial to non-native English speaking nurses but also their native English speaking colleagues as well. Therefore, in order to gain a first-person understanding of the experiences and emotions of the teachers that had

been using the language labs up until the point that refurbishment became a possibility, a phenomenological inquiry technique involving semi-structured interviewing was determined the best method to uncover teachers' needs in this particular educational ecology.

Subjects

The subjects of this research fall into two distinct groups: a focus group and an interview group (see Table 1). The focus group was initially comprised of the director of the LC, one of his PhD students (the researchers), and three full-time LC English teaching faculty members; midway through the data collection period one member (teaching faculty) dropped out because of personal issues. This person was still kept informed of the progress of the group and was encouraged to participate if time permitted, although he was never able to do so. All eleven full-time English teaching faculty members of the LC were invited to join this focus group through both face-to-face and e-mail invitation; the three positive responses that the director received were the individuals that became involved. The PhD student was given the opportunity to join the group because of his enrollment in the LC director's graduate school course entitled "Investigating Language Learning through Teaching Ecologies"; his motivation to join the group sprung from his experience of teaching in language labs and of wanting to improve language-teaching environments for others. This focus group was instigated by the LC director with the purpose to investigate the language lab ecology and determine what direction the LC should take in the construction or refurbishment of its two current labs.

Table 1*Participant Groups*

	Focus Group	Interview Group	Observed Group
Language Center Director	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
PhD Student	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Full-Time Faculty	3 (11)	4 (11)	1 (11)
Part-Time Faculty	0 (9)	5 (9)	0 (9)
Totals	5 (22)	9 (20)	1 (20)

Note. Totals possible are given in parenthesis. The Director and PhD student did not use the labs for teaching and thus could not be a part of the Interview or Observed Groups.

Technically speaking, the interview group was comprised of the entire LC English teaching faculty (20 teachers: 11 full-time and 9 part-time) but when asked to participate in an interview process with the researcher, only nine teachers agreed (four full-time and five part-time). Therefore, strictly speaking, only the qualitative interview data collected from the nine teachers determined the composition of the interview group. Furthermore, those in the focus group had the option to become a part of this second group as well, but for various reasons, none of them did so.

The focus group was separate from the interview group in order to provide an efficient and timely means for making a final decision regarding the language labs' refurbishment. Although the teachers that comprised part of the focus group could have participated as part of the interview group, their main purpose was to keep the task at hand, i.e. the refurbishment of the language labs, on schedule and on track. After formation of this focus group, it was determined that more investigation of teachers' perceptions was needed and not simply a restatement of previous complaints. The focus group agreed that because not every faculty member joined the focus group, did not necessarily indicate

that they did not join because they felt they would not be affected by the change or did not have any opinion on the matter at hand. This is when the focus group determined that a second group, the interview group, should be formed. The interview group would allow for a qualitative documented history of the experiences of the LC faculty that could be used to aid in the final decision to be made by the focus group on how the labs should be refurbished. The focus group also allowed for those individuals that were strongly motivated to take the initiative to have a say in how their future teaching experience would be influenced by the intended change in the educational ecology.

Interview Construction

Taking an applied phenomenological view on the problematic teaching situations of the LC English teachers when using the current LC language labs, the researcher used the qualitative interview methods outlined in deMarrais & Lapan (2004) as a guide for interview outline construction (see Appendix A). Throughout the interview process, the researcher tried to get as close to the teachers as possible; the researcher attempted to understand their humanistic experience as language teachers in the language lab environment through the use of various methods of probing and follow-up question techniques. For example, if teachers happened to mention relevant issues which were not part of the original interview outline, the researcher would make further inquiry to obtain background information regarding the topic being discussed. The interviews were conducted over a period of two months during which the researcher met with each teacher two times for at least 30 minutes each (see Table 2).

Table 2*Interview Session Times*

Participant	Interview 1	Interview 2
Teacher 1	62:40	29:52
Teacher 2	37:31	33:01
Teacher 3	28:23	33:31
Teacher 4	53:22	37:27
Teacher 5	33:51	33:42
Teacher 6	73:29	35:39
Teacher 7	82:22	32:31
Teacher 8	73:32	33:19
Teacher 9	26:03	92:52
Total	471:13	361:54

Note. Interview times shown in minutes and seconds.

Procedures

This section provides an overview of how the research data was collected. The data collection and analysis that involved the focus group are first described, followed by the details regarding how the phenomenological teacher interviews were conducted and then later analyzed. Finally, details are given regarding how observation of language labs in use by the teachers was carried out.

Focus Group Data Collection and Analysis

The focus group met between one and two hours on sixteen occasions (once a week) within a four-month period; meetings usually took place inside the language labs that were under discussion. A larger number of participants would have been ideal but only four members stayed with the group throughout the four months. As outlined in Kleiber

(2004), each meeting was conducted so that several questions that had surfaced during the last meeting would be discussed in a way that all possible answers would be covered. When present, the director of the LC acted as moderator; otherwise, the researcher took on this role. An agenda of questions or topics was agreed upon beforehand but acted more as a tentative guide rather than a fixed schedule of topics to discuss. Notes were taken at each meeting by the researcher and later distributed through e-mail to all focus group members. Each meeting was considered as a dialogue consisting of turns taken by each member of the focus group. A code was assigned to each basic “turn” unit that included the date and who was speaking (see Figure 1). After initial coding, the meeting notes were archived for final analysis to take place at the end of a four-month period. Later, each turn was then coded based on the themes found during the analysis of the teacher interviews (see section regarding Teacher Interview Data Collection and Analysis). Finally, they were then used as a reference for the writing of this paper. Additionally, all members used e-mail as a tool for discussion and reflection throughout the whole process. At the end of the four-month period the emails were compiled to form a mini e-mail corpus. Word frequencies were generated to determine which topics spawned the most discussion; these topics were then compared to those found to be important to the interviewed teachers.

Unit	Note	Code
5_14_TeacherA	Should we ask the teachers about an Educart?	Physical Space Headsets
5_14_Director	Do we know that Wimba software can be easily incorporated into Blackboard?	Language Center Integration

Figure 1. Example Coding Scheme for Focus Group Meeting Notes

The purpose of the first focus group meeting was to elicit the difficulties that the teachers had when using the language labs. The researcher was introduced to all the functions in the lab, both hardware and software, and then proceeded to ask focus group teachers which devices they utilized for their teaching.

Throughout the four months that the focus group conducted meetings, the LC director assigned several jobs to different individuals and findings would be discussed in subsequent meetings or through e-mail. These tasks included: (1) surveying information technology (IT) companies in Taiwan that specialize in designing and implementing language labs; (2) attending system demonstrations by IT companies; (3) surveying software packages; (4) evaluating the Blackboard courseware used by the university; (5) visiting other university language labs; and (6) visiting experimental technology enriched classrooms. These tasks were assigned to the focus group to aid in the decision-making process regarding the refurbishment of the labs. The LC director wanted to ensure that no stone was left unturned and that any and all discoveries could be shared with the entire teaching faculty. The focus group then decided that the initial interview with teachers should allow for ample time for experience sharing and an additional interview time could be scheduled to make further inquiries regarding any new technological innovations that could possibly be incorporated in the refurbished labs. This would ensure an understanding of the teaching faculty's views of the current labs but also probe them in regards to possible changes that could be made to the labs.

Teacher Interview Data Collection and Analysis

Using the interview questions generated by following qualitative phenomenological

interview techniques exemplified by deMarrais & Lapan (2004), the researcher interviewed nine English listening and speaking teachers from the LC (see Appendix A). These interviews were either conducted inside the current language labs, nearby classrooms, or an on-campus outdoor café. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. During the interviews, the researcher also took notes.

Following the methods exemplified by Bruewer (2000), the researcher analyzed the qualitative data generated by the phenomenological interviews with the LC teachers. The recorded interviews were transcribed in their entirety, with the most poignant views of the subjects highlighted.

After targeting the issues of particular interest to the teachers, the researcher began organizing the interview statements into manageable units of analysis (see Figure 2). The researcher began by taking the transcription regarding a single question from the interview and then organizing notes taken during the actual interviews, as well as the transcriptions, to form subcategories. Then these subcategories were compared to determine if they could be combined into larger more universally related themes. The eight thematic categories were labeled as follows: IT Support; Language Lab Problems; Language Center Integration; After Hours Access; Headsets; Teacher Centered Technologies; Physical Space; and Students' Perceptions. The universal relationship between these themes seemed to center on whether teachers viewed language labs as a hindrance or a help to their teaching. The researcher also made a note of the number of teachers that shared such a view in regard to these categories in order to later be equipped to report these shared views as research findings. Then the researcher formulated qualitative descriptions of the ideas expressed by the teachers. At the same time, the researcher did not ignore negative statements, but instead paid special attention to

instances when the majority of the teachers expressed such an opinion regarding a feature of the language labs, while a minority expressed a counterview.

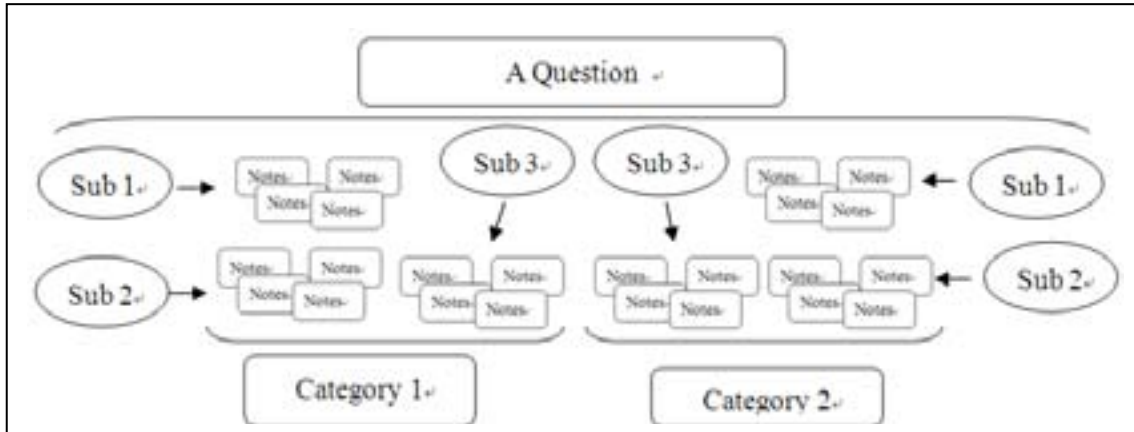


Figure 2. Process for Thematic Category Generation of Interview Data

Language Lab Observation

There was an attempt by the researcher to observe the language labs being used by each of the interviewed teachers at least once, but only one full-time faculty member allowed for observation. Ethnographic observation was used to note the usage of the technology embedded in the classroom as an aid to the teacher's instruction (Brewer, 2000). Immediately after the class was dismissed, the research wrote up an ethnographic description of the class using a "thick description" technique (see Geertz, 1977) including usage of technology, teacher's actions, and students' reactions.

Results

The results are reported in regards to the focus group, teacher interviews, and language lab observation. A contrast of the views of the language labs by the two participant groups is also provided. The majority of discussion is devoted to the focus group and

teacher interviews due to only one faculty member allowing for language lab observation.

Focus Group Results

From the first meeting, it was determined that the focus group did not want to choose some “cookie cutter” style language lab that is available from several commercial IT companies in Taiwan. This is exactly the type of language lab that is currently in place at the university LC. The focus group understood that in order to facilitate teacher acceptance of new labs, the new language labs must function in a way that does not add unnecessary work to teachers while still helping to meet instructional goals. Therefore, the focus of the meetings often centered on discussing and discovering what the LC teachers wanted from a language lab.

The teachers that utilize these labs not only teach the textbook materials that are voted on and approved by the LC, but also incorporate their own teaching materials. Any new lab must be designed in a way that will allow teachers to easily incorporate both digital and paper based resources into their teaching practices. Additionally, while opening up access to teachers, the focus group was also concerned about unnecessary technologies. They felt that in their own teaching practices, very little of the language lab technology was utilized, and stressed that a new lab should contain only those functions that teachers really need. Several concerns about the physical space including the lack of soundproofing, the fixed position of chairs/desks, and general classroom arrangement were discussed.

The focus group felt that very few of the devices and software functions available in the current labs were actually being used because of the difficulty of the teacher control system or the lack of knowledge of the availability of the functions. Some of the focus

group teachers knew about certain functions of the system while others were unaware or were unaware of how to initiate them. This could be due to the fact that the language labs are actually only used by the teachers for half a semester because there are not enough time slots for all teachers to utilize the labs for an entire semester. Many teachers may just begin to get familiar with the system only to forget it when they are forced into traditional classrooms. In order to allow all teachers access to the labs, a sharing system was developed before the current LC director took the position. The system works in the following manner: when half of the teachers are teaching in the language labs, the other teachers teach in traditional classrooms; mid-way through a semester (nine weeks) the two groups of teachers switch.

After four months of focus group meetings, the focus group hoped the labs would be more for general use where teachers have the option of using the lab for not only listening/speaking courses but also for other courses such as reading/writing. If the labs are opened up to those teachers teaching other English language related skills, then those teachers who prefer a traditional classroom may now be given this option. In addition, this is one method of solving the problem of transition from the old labs to the new labs. Focus group members were concerned that teachers would not have enough time to adjust to the new labs if the old labs were taken away so quickly. Alternatives, including keeping one old lab, keeping both old labs and adding new labs, and many other ideas, were also explored. Ultimately, they wished for both of the old labs to be replaced because of the possibility that some teachers would never want to switch to the new labs, even though the benefits of switching outweigh the necessity of learning how to use the functions in the new labs. Still, if teachers have the choice to use a traditional classroom or a language lab, this may alleviate the stress of those teachers that fear using a totally

new type of lab for their teaching. This way, they could use a regular classroom and slowly be introduced to the benefits of the new lab by their colleagues or IT personnel.

Furthermore, teachers in the focus group felt that a lab that is easily converted from an environment that focuses on tightly-controlled listening/production skills to those of a looser nature such as conversation practice would satisfy all teachers. When a final decision is made on the layout of the new lab, this is something that will take high priority. At the time of writing, the focus group was still in disagreement as to whether any current technologies in the lab should be retained or if everything should be removed. The focus group was concerned about the use of the Blackboard system or other software packages that could be integrated into Blackboard to assist in the teaching of listening/speaking courses. If such integration is possible, this may also minimize the burden of learning a new system/lab. Teachers at the university are familiar with and many utilize the Blackboard system to streamline their current teaching practices.

IT support has been a thread throughout all focus group discussions. All members were in agreement that a qualified IT person needs to be on hand in case of breakdowns and should guide teachers in the first few weeks when they begin using the new labs. This too may lower anxiety and offer an easier transition into the new labs.

Surveying the IT companies did not really give much insight because none of them offered any type of real individually tailored packages. However, one member of the focus group was able to discover a university that had hired a company that they believed could be promising. Upon contacting this university, she discovered that they were having similar problems with their language labs; this university is in the process of replacing its current language labs as well. This gave the focus group courage in that they were stepping in the right direction by not utilizing some pre-packaged lab.

Furthermore, through the interviews with the LC English teachers, the researcher discovered that the teachers felt many of the language labs that they had taught in previously were just as cumbersome and troubling as the current language labs. Therefore, the focus group felt that it might be unnecessary to visit other university language labs. At one point the focus group felt that one of the demos scheduled could offer a solution to some of the problems, but after attending, they discovered that the company's language lab paradigm is still more in line with the old fashioned language labs of the 1960s.

After several meetings trying to discover what would be best for the labs, the focus group agreed that the best way to get to the point of what teachers really wanted in a new lab was to actually interview the teachers using the current labs. Based on the general discussions and concerns of the focus group, the researcher generated a set of questions as a guide for conducting qualitative interviews based on deMarrais & Lapan (2004) with all LC English teachers that agreed to be interviewed (see Appendix A). The interview results are discussed in the following section.

Teacher Interview Results

The results of the interviews are discussed in regards to the eight thematic issues found to be of interest to the teachers. The issues discussed include: IT Support; Language Lab Problems; Language Center Integration; After Hours Access; Headsets; Teacher Centered Technologies; Physical Space; and Students' Perceptions.

IT Support

Three of the teachers interviewed stated that they wished to have a full time IT person available to assist them in case of any difficulties encountered with the equipment. These teachers also stated that currently there is another problem, which is that instead of hiring full-time IT staff, the LC has employed students that are unequipped at handling IT problems.

Six of the teachers stressed that they often go into the language labs unaware that certain problems occurred the day before and have not been fixed. They said it is terrible that there is not some type of system that could notify them that the facilities are not going to be available before they enter the language labs. Actually, those teachers stressed that it would be best if an IT person could be available to take care of problems immediately or at least in the evening when no classes are being conducted in the classroom. This way, they felt a teacher would not need to go into a language lab only to experience frustration at not being able to teach the lesson prepared.

Three of the teachers interviewed expressed interest in having the IT staff assist in the conversion of antiquated media to a more modern media. An interesting point mentioned by one teacher was having the IT personnel be present or actually be the one to demonstrate the system interface during semester training sessions. This teacher stressed that it is best to have someone from the inside that understands the teachers' points-of-view to give these workshops instead of someone from a company that does not understand the needs of the English teachers at the LC.

Language Lab Problems

Eight of the teachers interviewed stated that in order to conduct their courses they needed a reliable Internet connection and six of the eight wished for students to also be given

Internet access. However, two of the teachers felt the need to have the ability to turn off the students' Internet access. These two teachers were worried about students abusing their Internet privileges and not paying attention during teacher-centered instruction.

Three of the teachers interviewed also stated that they felt it is better to just have a traditional classroom. Again, the biggest problem for them was technology failure. They said when they entered a traditional classroom they know what to expect; however, when they enter a language lab they are not sure if they will be able to conduct the lesson that they have prepared. One of these three teachers mentioned that she always has a “backup plan”. In other words, she prepares both a technology-enhanced lesson, and one that is more traditional, in case the technologies embedded into the language lab are not functioning properly.

Language Center Integration

Eight of the teachers interviewed stated that they hoped that the new language labs could be integrated into the other facilities that are currently available for LC students.

Two of the eight stated that they would like the new language labs to have some facilities or technologies that could help with integration into the e-portfolio system that would be launched in the following semester. These two also mentioned that they wished for the e-portfolio system to be integrated into the Blackboard system since they are familiar with this environment. They seemed concerned about learning new technologies for both an e-portfolio system as well as a language lab in the same semester.

The same eight teachers suggested that there should be a fixed video camera in the lab that allow for students to be filmed when they perform mini dramas, give speeches, or present orally; video recordings could be automatically sent to the students' computing

devices for simplistic editing. These teachers made it clear that if the editing software did more than merely allow students to crop the video down, then they would not be interested. Four of the eight teachers felt that if MP3 recording software was available, then the same editing features should be made available for sound files as well.

It is noteworthy to mention that one teacher stressed that she would like the language labs to be opened for students to come in during the afternoons or evenings to practice listening and speaking activities. This teacher believed that some students may feel embarrassed to visit other computer labs on campus to access software, especially if non-LC students hear them speaking in English. This teacher felt that students might be less inhibited to practice speaking English if the people surrounding them were doing similar tasks.

After Hours Access

One question asked of the teachers centered on the idea of allowing access to language lab software outside the labs. Currently, there are few software packages being used in the language labs. The researcher described a scenario to the teachers in which students were allowed to meet each other on-line to chat verbally and textually in English while giving teachers access to a log or possibly a video/audio recording of these interactions. The teachers did not agree on whether they thought this was a good feature for language labs or not.

Two teachers stated that if they had access to such software they would simply not use it at all because they had too much for students to do in class and that outside activities were unnecessary. Another stated that she had her own materials uploaded to a website that students downloaded and she felt these materials were adequate for extending in-

class activities. However, this teacher stated that if the capacity to use the software was there, then she would feel encouraged to use computers more in her classroom and probably students would interact more inside the class through computers rather than face-to-face as they currently do. Two additional teachers expressed negative opinions regarding student motivation, saying that even if they forced students to utilize these types of outside features, many students would not use them. Lastly, two other teachers gave apathetic responses stating that they would let students be aware of such facilities but not require students to utilize them. The teachers that held negative opinions regarding after-hours availability of language lab software stated that if it could be more interactive and less artificial than the current system, then they would consider incorporating a few after-class activities in their courses. On the other hand, the remaining two teachers mentioned that if the LC opened up the language labs after hours they would ask their students to go to the labs and do extension activities. These two teachers mentioned that if the software were available on the web, then they would be more than interested in incorporating web-based homework activities into their courses.

Headsets

The teacher-controlled headsets that are a standard in many language labs were the center of most of the teacher interviews. Five of the teachers stated that they disliked using headsets for paired and group activities; in contrast, four of the teachers expressed that they assisted in these activities. For those teachers that stated they enjoyed the headsets, their reasoning included ideas about helping lower level students to gain confidence and the ease that teachers have when monitoring bottom-up skills such as pronunciation or other drill and practice type activities.

All nine teachers expressed difficulties in using the current system, stating that it did not allow free pairing and grouping of students. Currently, the system can only group/pair students to those students that are in close proximity. Teachers stated that students usually sit in the same seats every week, so they seldom have opportunities to speak with different classmates. Also, if a student comes in late, there is no way to “freely group” this student into existing groups. All nine teachers wanted more control of grouping that could take place both before and after activities have been initiated.

The current headsets are also outdated, only allowing recording through antiquated cassette tapes. Seven out of the nine teachers interviewed stated that having an MP3 recording feature that allowed students to record individual, pair, group and class practice would benefit their students. All nine agreed that they would make an effort to use this system to enrich classroom-based activities if MP3 recording was available.

Teacher Centered Technologies

There are many teacher-centered technologies in place in the current labs and teachers made it clear that in the future labs, they would like similar or other teacher-centered technologies to be available. Six out of the nine teachers discussed the difficulty with the teacher control panel. They thought the existing control panel had too many menus or buttons to push. They are seeking a control panel that has a single way to do something and can be done with a minimum of one or two clicks of a mouse.

One teacher also mentioned a quiz function that other university language labs possess. She said that she has the ability to generate, grade and administer quizzes to students and then later provide students with statistical data of their performance on assessments.

Seven teachers mentioned that they would like to keep the large screen and projector

for teacher-centered activities. One additional teacher mentioned that at universities in other countries she taught using a SmartBoard that creates digital slides of anything a teacher would normally write on a regular whiteboard. She thought it might be a good idea to survey the other teachers to see if they would be interested in such a board because it gives students' access to any notes that the teacher writes on the board while also not limiting the teacher to use the SmartBoard for only this feature.

Six teachers also mentioned that they usually use the projector and large screen for playing DVDs or video clips for students. They felt that it is not necessary to have a separate machine for playing DVDs if a computer is capable of doing so, but it should be easy for them to navigate through the program that plays the DVDs. One teacher referenced a program she was using to play DVDs on the computer and how it was deleted preventing her from playing DVDs any longer, even after downloading similar programs. Furthermore, one teacher stressed that since she is an EFL teacher, many of her DVDs were bought in the United Kingdom and the United States. She needs the computer's DVD drive or the DVD player to be region free or she cannot play those DVDs. She said there is not always a way to get around this problem with software, so she feels frustrated at having "wasted all the time and money buying these DVDs without being able to use them in classes."

Three teachers mentioned the camera projector that is located in the current labs. These teachers felt the camera projector is useful for broadcasting book pages or handouts to students. These teachers felt that it would be helpful to them to use this machine if it actually worked properly but currently they felt it was cumbersome to operate and the resolution of the camera was tolerable at best.

When using the camera projector or when displaying a digitalized worksheet for

students to view, four teachers expressed interest in having the option to allow students to view these images on individual displays and not just the large display in front of the class. They felt that for some media such as movies or video clips, a large display is great, but for more detailed work such as reading a handout or viewing a textbook page, it is easier on the students' eyes to be able to view these on individual student devices.

Physical Space

The actual physical space of the classroom was also a topic of interest to the teachers. Four teachers were very direct and said they thought that language labs are useless and that an electronic podium that had a single powerful teacher's computer that could project the teacher's screen onto a large screen for students to view and listen to audio would be enough to satisfy them. Two of these teachers stated that the main reason they disliked the current language labs is that they have to share the labs with other teachers for part of the semester. They would rather have a classroom with an electronic podium the whole semester and let other teachers use the language labs because they do not use the headsets for any of their classroom practices. The reason given for not using the headsets was that headsets are "artificial," giving students the impression that language is isolated and never encounters noise or interference.

Only one out of nine teachers said she liked the language labs in their current state, expressing that she enjoys language labs in general. The main reason she gave was that it allowed her to keep large classes of students (40-60) on task at all times. She said that language labs give opportunities for big classes of students to talk with multiple conversation partners and without the lab facilities this would not be possible. She was also the only teacher that said that she liked the fixed classroom seating whereas two

teachers specifically stated that they “hated the current seating.” The remaining six teachers mentioned that the current seating arrangements do not allow students to move around for group or pair activities and they find this limits the types of activities they can prepare for their classes.

Two teachers expressed difficulties in switching between individual tasks such as giving quizzes and group activities such as information gap exercises. They thought bigger dividers should be placed between students during individual tasks. They also asked if there was a way to have a divider that could easily collapse when not needed.

Teachers had many complaints about the desks. Four of the teachers said that the desks were too small for university students and seven stated that the room was too small for the number of students that are currently “crammed” into the classes. One teacher mentioned that the acoustics in the classroom are not good and another stated that she dislikes the student monitors because they block the students’ faces.

With all the teachers, the researcher made it clear that they did not need to necessarily focus on the technologies that are embedded in the current labs or that could be incorporated in the future labs, but many of them still stuck to technologies. Only one teacher gave some practical recommendations for the future labs including a bigger teacher’s desk, a large working clock, a small stage for student mini dramas, and a large locked cabinet containing all the teaching supplies provided by the LC.

Students’ Perceptions

One of the probing questions was in relation to students’ perceptions of the current language labs. Almost all the teachers stated that students disliked the labs for various reasons including boredom, broken hardware, bad acoustics, small seating, and using

headsets. Interestingly, one teacher suggested that not only teachers should receive training in how to use the lab but students should receive training as well. Only one teacher, the same teacher that enjoys teaching in language labs, stated that students enjoy taking English courses in the current language labs.

Contrasting Views of Participant Groups

One very interesting aspect of the researcher having been a part of both the focus group and interviewing the teachers individually is that sometimes the focus group would make claims about all the teachers in the LC only to have those claims contradicted when the teacher interviews were analyzed. For example, during a focus group meeting the topic of the LC teachers' "love" of the current language labs with the student headsets was discussed. When interviewed individually, every single teacher said she supported having new language labs constructed. Not a single teacher mentioned wanting the current labs to stay exactly the same.

Language Lab Observation Results

Only one full-time teacher of an English for First Year Graduate Students beginner level course allowed for the researcher to observe actual language lab usage. The technology in the class was surprisingly similar to that found by Zhong and Shen (2002), in that the teacher used her station to broadcast a revision activity in which students practiced previously taught content; and there was then the presentation of new content through the use of the teacher's screen being broadcast to individual student screens as well as the being projected on the large classroom screen. Next, students were required to watch a video displayed on the large classroom screen. Students then practiced language content

presented in the video as well as being asked comprehension questions. Finally, homework exercises were assigned using the students' individual screens.

It was surprising that the teacher used a VHS tape to play a video for the students. It was obvious that she had a difficult time rewinding the tape to a section she wished to replay for the students. The teacher later informed me this was because a series of lectures on how to give good presentations were purchased by the university but had never been converted to DVD format. Although the teacher did utilize the students' screens to display content (e.g., comprehension questions), she still used the classroom whiteboard to note important vocabulary or points from the video. It seemed that the technology was used only for content that was prepared beforehand—there was little “spontaneous” use of the technology in the classroom. In other words, technology seemed to play the role of providing a means to distribute content to the students instead of enhancing students' language learning.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the following section, first, the limitations of the study are given, followed the implications of the research results. Lastly, the conclusions, including future work, are reported.

Limitations of the Study

To take a true ecological view of the current language labs would require an exploration of all language lab aspects and all individuals involved in their use. Of course, given the time and the scope of this paper, that was impractical. Still, the researcher has approached this goal by establishing a focus group, trying to understand the point of view

of administrators and students, attempting to observe the language labs in use and interviewing all willing teachers that utilize the language labs for teaching listening and speaking courses. Therefore, to best help the teachers, it was beneficial to take a phenomenological view of their situations in the labs to better understand where their frustrations and difficulties in using the labs surfaced. In this way, those involved in the development of the future labs may lessen their current strife by the introduction of new LC language labs.

It would have been better if the researcher had had the opportunity to interview all the teachers that utilize the language labs for teaching. Unfortunately, because of several issues, this was impossible. Besides, if following the advice of deMarrais and Lapan (2004), it may be beneficial to set up a series of interviews with the teachers to introduce them to ideas or concerns that other teachers had in order to get more input and reactions to these new issues. To an extent, the focus group partially took on this role.

A true ecological view of the LC language labs would have searched out and gathered input from all individuals involved. Unfortunately, this was beyond the researcher's control and thus was limited to only the views of the nine teachers interviewed and those that were part of the focus group. It would be interesting to explore not only the teachers' opinions, but also others, such as the administration, LC director and students. In order to get a more global understanding of the opinions and usage of the current labs, this may be a necessary step in the near future. Furthermore, it may be interesting to see if the perceived views of the students expressed by the teachers are indeed the opinions of the students.

Implications

Taking the data gathered from the teachers, their concerns regarding language labs and their views on the benefits of having a regular classroom instead of a language lab, all seem to be influenced by the problems they have experienced in the current labs. A language lab requires teachers to learn new technologies, often-unreliable technologies, which, if unreliable, waste time and keep teachers from doing their jobs. The intended purpose of a language lab is to increase teaching efficiency and possibly ease the burden placed on teachers, not cause more difficulties. Teachers who are fully-trained and prepared to use a lab will have few problems with the lab if it is reliable. Furthermore, if there are troubles or breakdowns, teachers need to have IT support. Those in the current situation had no one to turn to for advice and this has caused devastating effects—some of the teachers have expressed reluctance to being trained to use new labs. Instead, they would rather just be given traditional classrooms to teach in or they may just end up using the new language labs as traditional classrooms. In their review of CALL in China, Liu and Huo (2007) stress the importance of CALL training in alleviating the anxieties and antagonism of teachers. Now the LC is faced with the problem of convincing the current teachers that new languages labs could offer some hope to their current problems, not just add to those problems.

Furthermore, some of the fears that teachers expressed in moving to a new language lab could be alleviated by giving an IT person the job of converting antiquated media to newer standard format including VHS to DVD, cassettes to MP3/CD, and paper materials to a universal electronic format such as PDF. Many teachers expressed that they are afraid of losing all their valuable hard work that has gone into preparing lessons used with the antiquated facilities in the current labs. If there is a way to slowly help those teachers to upgrade, they may become more accepting to the idea of the new language

labs.

Some of the negative reactions that some teachers expressed towards offering after-class, server-based software to students are probably due to the current unstable Internet connections on campus. Some of the teachers are already preparing dual lessons, so what should they do if they assign homework assignments that students cannot complete because of server problems? Having a reliable server supported by IT staff that can guarantee functionality would solve this problem for teachers. Unfortunately, the LC is still faced with the problem of convincing the current teachers that the Internet connections do not have to be as unstable as they are currently. The LC would need to first alleviate this problem before trying to build new language labs.

Teachers are seeking simplicity and potential power. For example, many of the technologies that teachers want are not task specific. As suggested by Jarvis (2005), many of the LC teachers wish to provide their students with a more task-based syllabus, but language labs are often created with a limited number of assignable language tasks. Teachers that want something like an electronic podium understand that having a powerful desktop computer that allows for individual creation of content would be more beneficial to their teaching than technologies that can only be used for one or two purposes. Incorporating technologies such as these leaves it up to the teachers to decide how to use them, while not wasting the initial funding given for the creation of the labs.

From these observations, the researcher has developed a notion of what language teachers want in a language lab. Teachers want powerful technologies for delivering multimedia content from one-to-many that are not task specific but can be used for a multitude of purposes depending on the individual teacher's needs. A language lab should offer easy transition between individual and group-based tasks; all activities

should be teacher-centered. Teachers should never need to worry about the technologies embedded in the language labs because an IT person should be on hand to deal with technical problems. A one-to-many classroom is most suitable for all teachers except when students are taking part in individual tasks and then a simplistic individual computing device for each student may be appropriate.

Future Work

Currently, the focus group has plans to continue to meet for a few months with hopes of implementing the new labs during the following winter vacation. Now that the focus group has a better understanding of what the teachers need, collaborative efforts with engineers can begin. Expansion of the focus group will occur in the following weeks and include researchers from the fields of Learning and Instruction, Computer Science, Cognitive Neuroscience, and Networked Learning Technologies. This endeavor will encourage research studies that will involve not only the newly-created labs but also the language teachers that will utilize the labs. In addition, the advice gained from these individuals will be valuable in the subsequent decision-making process regarding the technologies that are eventually incorporated into the new language labs. With this approach, the labs will not merely be static classrooms but always evolving, helping improve the teaching practices of all teachers.

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Appendix A

Interview Outline

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

1. Please briefly describe your feelings regarding the current language lab.
2. Are there any technologies in the current lab that you wish to be retained in the future lab? Why?
3. Are there any technologies that are not available in the current lab that you wish to be incorporated into the new lab? Why?
4. How do you think your students feel about the current lab?
5. Do you think your current teaching practices would be affected if students could access course and language lab software outside of the lab?
6. Have you ever taught in any language labs at other universities that you felt were very helpful to your teaching practices?

**Investigating Iranian EFL Writing Problems and
Examining -Back Transfer**

Dr.

**~~Dr. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ENGLISH AND
PERSIAN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS BASED ON TOULMIN'S
ARGUMENTATION FRAMEWORK~~**

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Abstract

Research has indicated that writing argumentative essays is difficult for second language (L2) students of English. The current project intended to examine the difficulties which Iranian EFL students have in writing argumentative essays and also to investigate similarities and/or differences in the way they structure their English and Persian argumentative essays before and after instruction. This study also attempted to portray how students transfer rhetorical patterns in L2 to first language (L1) compositions. This study shed further light into the impact of the explicit and implicit genre-based approaches in comparison with the no-instruction approach on the argumentative genre. After conducting a TOFEL test, 79 subjects were selected. The selected subjects were randomly divided into three groups. All of the three groups did four pre- and post-tests. The results show that the participants used the basic structure of English argumentative papers in both their Persian and English pre-essays; however, they were weak at handling oppositional structures. The quantitative analysis of the post-argumentative essays revealed that the experimental group outperformed the implicit and no-formal instruction groups after receiving models with explicit instruction on the elements of Toulmin's model under study. This research provides evidence for the transfer from L2 to L1 writing through within-subject comparisons. The findings of this study offer L2 teachers the chance to enrich their pedagogy through the new strategies which were employed in the current research.

Keywords: Argumentative writing, back transfer, contrastive rhetoric, models with explicit instruction, models with implicit instruction, Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model.

1. Introduction

Many researchers have claimed that the English essays produced by their students do not match native speakers' expectations in terms of rhetorical elements (Kaplan, 1966, 2005). According to Kaplan, even advanced students who have a good command of the syntactic structure and lexicon of English may still write papers that are considered ineffective and inadequate by native instructors. The non-native students' problems regarding English writing are due not only to the need to generate and organize ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph organization but also to turn such ideas into a readable text (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

-Kaplan (1966, 2005) stated that writers from different cultural and language backgrounds may have different assumptions about preferred rhetorical organization, and accordingly, may structure and develop their compositions differently. Kaplan's theory has inspired numerous discourse contrastive studies which examine differences and similarities in writing across cultures/languages, mostly between English and another language (e.g. Choi, 2005; Hinds, 1987; Indrasuta, 1988; Lee, 2002; Uysal, 2008). The present project follows a similar line of contrastive research and compares English and Persian argumentative writing patterns based on the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) elements in each type of writing.

This study chose the argumentative genre to examine because, first of all, there is a noticeable literature gap as a majority of contrastive research studies have focused on expository and narrative texts and investigation of argumentation remains generally

scarce (Ho, 2011; Lee, 2004). Secondly, argumentation constitutes the core text type in academic writing. Clearly, the mastery of argumentative writing is important because it empowers students, and "it enables them to produce, evaluate, and act on the professional, ethical, and political discourse" (Crammond, 1998, p. 1).

The other aim of the study was to investigate whether the participants of this study (the experimental, the control and the self-study groups) back transfer the argument structure (i.e., *claim, data, counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data*) which has been provided in English into their actual first language (L1) writing essays. This instruction through the L2, defined as transfer of training (Odlin, 1989), may be recognized as a positive facilitator of acquisition. However, so far, most studies have concentrated on how a non-English native language interferes with its speakers' efforts to acquire English rhetorical forms. Very little research has examined how English helps or hinders the EFL learners to write well in their native language (Cho, 2010; Uysal, 2008; 2012). Given the importance of the issue and lack of adequate research on it, this study aimed to investigate the existence and nature of bidirectional transfer further.

The study was intended to address the following research questions:

- [11.1.](#) Are there any similarities and differences between the participants' English and Persian pre- and post- argumentative essays, based on the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model of argument structure (i.e., *claim, data, counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data*)?
- [12.2.](#) Do the participants of the experimental, the control and the self-study groups back transfer English rhetorical patterns based on the adapted Toulmin's model of argument structure into their Persian essays?

-Contrastive Rhetoric Research on L2 Writing

Contrastive studies on L2 writing compare similar texts written in two different languages and examine how their differences would affect the way in which native speakers of one language write in the other (Kaplan, 1966, 2005). The majority of discourse contrastive studies inspired by Kaplan's ideas have compared English and another language. Studies comparing argumentative essays written by students will be presented here, as these are most closely related to the contrastive rhetoric of the present study.

Comparing the overall organization patterns of Japanese and English writing, Hirose (2003) analyzed how Japanese EFL students organized their Japanese and English argumentative essays. It was found that the organizational patterns of Japanese and English argumentative essays were similar, specifically using deductive organization in that a writer's point of view was presented initially in the paper. In a similar study, Choi (2005) conducted a contrastive analysis of argumentative essays written in English by Korean English as Second Language (ESL) students and by native English-speaking students. Both groups of students favoured the use of subcategories of each organization type such as claim, justification, and conclusion.

Similar to Hirose (2003), Kobayashi and Rinnert (2008) analyzed structural features of Japanese and English argumentative essays written on two different topics. The structures of Japanese essays were found to be more complex than the English essays in that the former had more uses of original perspectives and counterarguments than the latter.

Researching writing from a different L1 group, Uysal (2008) examined rhetorical patterns in Turkish and English essays written on two different topics. The participants organized their Turkish essays in a way similar to the English ones; that is, the thesis statements were presented first, followed by explanation and evidence for the argument.

-Yang and Cahill (2008) examined 200 expository essays (50 by American university students writing in English, 50 by Chinese students writing in Chinese, and 100 in English by beginning and advanced Chinese learners of English). They observed that Chinese students, in general, preferred directness both in terms of text organization and paragraph organization.

Similarly, Cheng and Chen (2009) compared argumentative essays written by Taiwanese and US college students. Their findings indicate that both Taiwanese and American students are weak at handling oppositional structures, an essential trait differentiating Chinese and English rhetoric.

Researching writing from a Persian L1 group, Rashidi and Dastkheyr (2009) compared Persian and English organizational patterns in the argumentative writing of Iranian EFL student writers. The results revealed that a majority of students employed deductive type organizational patterns in both L1 and L2.

-Of direct relevance to the present study is a recent contrastive rhetoric study conducted by Qin & Karabacak (2010) who analyzed the structures of argumentative papers written by Chinese university students, based on the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model of argument structure. 133 students wrote argumentative papers in English after reading two preselected English argumentative essays. It was found that an average paper had at least one claim supported by four pieces of data. However, there were far fewer uses of Toulmin's secondary elements in the papers.

This research will contribute to the field of contrastive rhetoric by comparing English and Persian argumentative writing based on Toulmin's elements in each type of writing.

-Bi-directional Transfer

There have been few studies which indicate that the effects of the L2 on the L1 play a central role in L2 settings. For example, Enginarlar (1990) investigated the relationship between writing in Turkish (L1) and English (L2) in terms of writing abilities, processes, and culture rhetorical elements. He analyzed a corpus of 343 expository essays collected from the monolingual and the bilingual groups. The monolingual group wrote only in Turkish and the bilingual group wrote in both Turkish and English. The results revealed that 84% of bilingual English essays followed the pattern (situation + problem + solution + evaluation), which was claimed to be the preferred English pattern. These results pointed out a strong possibility of transfer of L2 writing knowledge and skills to L1 writing.

—Oktar (1991) examined 20 English major and 60 non-English major Turkish university students' expository paragraphs to understand whether coordination was a preferred pattern and whether this pattern would transfer to English writing. English major students wrote in both English and Turkish and non-English major students wrote only in Turkish. The results indicated that the non-English major group's paragraphs included significantly greater occurrences of coordination than the English major students' paragraphs, and English major students used more subordination than non-English majors in both Turkish and English paragraphs. Similar to Enginarlar's (1990) findings, these results also indicated a possibility of transfer of acquired L2 paragraph structure to L1.

—Cho (2010) investigated the direction of the rhetorical transfer occurring in Korean students' essays in Korean (L1) and English (L2). His study investigated not only differences in individuals' L1 and L2 writings but also differences among three groups divided by their writing and learning experiences. These three groups were asked to write

two argumentative essays on the same topic, one in their L1 and another in their L2, with a week interval between the two essays. The analysis of the study was conducted in terms of: (a) location of the main idea, (b) macro level patterns, and (c) text units of organizational patterns. His study argued that Korean L2 writers of English are influenced in their rhetorical choices more by their learning experiences than by negative L1 to L2 transfer.

—Mazloomi (2011) investigated whether the genre-awareness raising in the EFL essay writing classes would affect the EFL learner's L1 essay writing. There were 40 undergraduate junior students in two EFL classes who all attended 8 sessions of treatment to raise their awareness of the genre structure of a 5-paragraph essay in English. The results showed that the EFL learners' essay writing has improved regarding the genre structure of their 5-paragraph essays. He concluded that the genre-awareness writing process in English essay writing significantly influenced the EFL learners' Persian essay writing.

—As bidirectional transfer has not been a common object of inquiry, the present study attempted to fill this gap by examining how bidirectional transfer occurs in the English and Persian writing of Iranian students. Given the importance of the issue and lack of adequate research on it, as Kecskes and Papp (2003) pointed out that more extensive research is needed to investigate on bidirectional transfer in order to draw conclusions about cross linguistic influence, this study aims to investigate the existence and nature of bidirectional transfer further and in more detail.

—*Argumentative Writing*

According to Seyler (1994), an argument consists of evidence presented in support of an assertion or claim that is either stated or implied. Toulmin (1958) noted that good, realistic arguments typically will consist of six parts (claim, data, warrant, qualifier, rebuttal, and backing). He used the following terms to describe the items. *Claim* is defined as the statement being argued (a thesis); *data* as the facts or evidence used to prove the argument; and *warrants* as the general, hypothetical (and often implicit) logical statements that serve as bridges between the claim and the data. *Qualifiers* are defined as statements that limit the strength of the argument or statements that propose the conditions under which the argument is true; *rebuttals* are defined as counter-arguments or statements indicating circumstances when the general argument does not hold true and *backing* is defined as statements that serve to support the warrants.

Some of these elements have been adapted to fit specific teaching situations or to make them more comprehensible to students (Qin, 2009), so every argument is composed of obligatory elements such as *claim* and *data* and secondary elements, such as *counterargument*, and *rebuttal* (Toulmin, 2003; Qin & Karabacak, 2010). These different elements will now be defined. First, a *claim* is an assertion in response to a contentious topic or problem. Second, *data* constitute grounds or evidence to support the *claim*, which can take various forms, such as facts, statistics, anecdotes, and expert opinions. Third, *counterarguments* are possible opposing views that can challenge the validity of a writers' *claim*; it should be noted that a *counterargument* is one form of argument structure, and a complete *counterargument* should also include its own *claim* corroborated by *data*. Finally, *rebuttal* constitutes statements in which the writer responds to the *counterargument* by pointing out the possible weakness in its *claims* and *data*, such as logical fallacies, insufficient support, invalid assumptions, and immoral values

(Ramage & Bean, 1999). Presumably, the use of a *rebuttal* is often associated with the use of a *counterargument* in that the former is used to invalidate the latter. Similar to a *counterargument*, a *rebuttal* is also one form of argument structure that has its own corresponding *claim* and *data* (Qin & Karabacak, 2010). (Guideline for identifying the Toulmin's elements is given in Appendix A)

Instructional Strategies for Improving Students' Argumentative Writing

A number of studies explored the effectiveness of various instructional strategies in the teaching of argumentative writing. Studies dealing with the use of models or reading as instructional strategies will be presented here, as these are most closely related to the instructional unit of the present study.

Crowhurst (1991) compared four instructional treatments, including (a) the use of a persuasive models with writing instruction, (b) the use of a persuasive text model with reading instruction, (c) the writing of book reports after reading novels combined with a single lesson on the persuasive model, and (d) the reading of novels and writing of book reports with no persuasive instruction or models. Crowhurst found that the students in the three treatment groups that received instruction in persuasive writing improved in overall writing quality. The two groups that received writing and reading instruction combined with models scored higher on organization and on all persuasive features than the two groups who read novels and wrote book reports.

In another study, Knudson (1992) compared the effect of three types of treatment (presentation of model argumentative papers, presentation of questions to guide writing, and presentation of both model papers and questions). Students were asked to write three argumentative papers in response to three writing prompts (one pre-study and two post-

study). The results showed that 30% to 45 % of the variance of the overall quality of papers could be explained by the quality ratings of data, claim, warrant, and opposition across the three writing prompts.

Yeh (1998) investigated the effect of two types of instruction on the argumentative writing abilities of American students. The two types of instruction were (a) explicit instruction of the Toulmin model combined with concept-mapping activities and (b) concept-mapping activities only. The study showed significantly greater effectiveness for the former type of instruction rather than the latter in assisting the students to grasp argument knowledge and strategies.

Wollman-Bonilla (2004) found that younger students could successfully use argument strategies after explicit instruction. He found that after a unit comprised of mini-lessons on persuasive writing, which included group brainstorming, teacher modeling and the use of a newspaper article as a model, the students' use of rhetorical moves that showed evidence of audience awareness increased by an average of 2-3 more moves per letter.

More recently, Khodabandeh, Jafarigohar, Soleimani, and Hemmati (2013) analyzed students' English argumentative essays in order to gain insights into the impact of explicit and implicit genre-based approach in comparison with the no-instruction approach on the argumentative genre on the learners' awareness of Toulmin's model of argument structure. Students participated in the following activities: modelling, joint construction of texts; and independent construction of texts. The data were collected from a pre-test and post-test. The findings of their study show that the explicit provision of Toulmin's model increased the opportunity for the learners to be more aware of how the argumentative essay worked in the context of genre.

Methodology

The study employed a quasi- experimental design. The researcher used availability non-random sampling of the subjects, and then, after the administration of the TOEFL test, the non-randomly selected subjects were randomly assigned into the experimental, control, and the self-study groups.

The research included a pre-test of a general proficiency test as well as argumentative writing essays in both L1 and L2, questionnaires eliciting the participants' instructional writing backgrounds and post-tests of two argumentative writing essays. For quantitative data, the scores from the subjects' pre- and post-tests were used to find out whether the subjects improved their writing from the pre- to post-essays. The English and Persian pre- and post-essays of the subjects were analyzed based on the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model of argument structure (i.e., *claim, data, counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data*).

Subjects

There were a total of 103 sophomores at Mobarakeh PNU who enrolled for the composition course during the 2010- 2011 academic year. In order to homogenize the participants of the study regarding their general language proficiency, they were pre-tested through a modified version of a TOEFL test. The test contained 37 multiple choice questions on structure and written expression items, and 13 reading comprehension items. This procedure led to the selection of 79 homogeneous subjects. The subjects were randomly assigned to the experimental group, control group, and self-study groups.

Instrumentation

Model Texts

Because of the lack of argumentative essays based on Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model, the researchers tried their best to handle this limitation by choosing four model texts from the Cambridge IELTS book (Warshawsky, 2006) and adapt them based on Toulmin's model.

The model texts were adapted according to the following rules. First, the argument structures according to Toulmin's model (i.e., *claim, data, counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data*) of texts had to be similar, straightforward, and easily identified. Second, the four texts had to have all the Toulmin's elements and have similar lengths (See an example of an original model with the adaptation in Appendix E).

Administering the Pre- and Post-Essay Writing

In the first session of the eight-day period, the subjects of the three groups wrote two argumentative essays (one in English and another one in Persian) without any prior instruction and an in-class timed argumentative essay (referred to as the pre-test) in which they supported their stand on the issue (see Appendix C). Given that the students were required to compose two essays, in order to avoid collecting unreliable data, writing prompts for two different topics were designed so that students would not respond to the same topic twice. At the end of the writing course, the three groups were asked to write English and Persian essays on the different topics to see the effect of the treatment (Appendix C).

3. *Procedure*

Eight different sessions were scheduled. All took place in June, 2011. Carrying out this experiment was restricted to a two-week period. This was done to make sure that any significant differences in performance could be attributed to the treatment as much as possible.

The study was designed such that prior to the post-test session there were two types of writing sessions: instructional (explicit vs. implicit) and practice. Instructional sessions were only for the experimental and control groups and practice sessions were for all three groups' subjects. All participants in the experimental and control condition attended a total of eight sessions (two instructional, four practice and two pre- and post-test sessions), except for the self-study group who attended the practice and pre/post sessions.

During the first and second sessions of the experimental group, the researcher exposed the subjects to the models of the argumentative essay. In an argumentative sample, the moves were marked in different colors and in various fonts to highlight the structural formula of the essay. The subjects read the model text with the help of the researcher. The researcher explained each move, its function, and the linguistic forms used in it. Following the instructional sessions, participants in the experimental condition were involved in a sequence of 4 practice sessions without any time interval between them. During each practice session, the participants were introduced to a topic and asked to write about it cooperatively. In the last part of the lesson, the subjects were asked to choose a topic and write their own argumentative essay individually. Their essays were read by the researcher and their rhetorical errors were corrected.

The participants in the control group received the same model texts, except that the model texts had not been underlined and marked for the subjects and the moves were not named and explained. The control group did not receive instruction or feedback about

Toulmin's elements. Subjects read samples, discussed them in class, and responded orally to sets of questions provided by the instructor. Answers to each of the questions were provided by the subjects and later shared with the whole class. Following the implicit instructional sessions, participants in the control group were involved in a sequence of 4 practice sessions. During the practice sessions, the researcher and subjects worked together to begin writing an argumentative essay on an assigned issue. The participants orally shared their viewpoints and identified the viewpoints opposed to theirs. They were assigned to write an argumentative essay cooperatively. Their essays were read by the researcher and their rhetorical errors were corrected. Class time was set aside for the subjects to compose independently on a topic so that the researcher could help the subjects.

The self-study group had studied the model texts as homework on their own without any researcher's explicit or implicit instruction. Participants in the self-study group just attended 4 practice sessions. During each of the practice sessions, the participants were introduced to an issue and asked to write about it. The researcher helped the subjects write an argumentative essay cooperatively. The writing-with-the-class stage led the subjects to share their pros and cons of the issue with one another. After this process, the researcher commented on the subjects' views and helped them to develop their ideas into a completed essay. Their writings were evaluated and the researcher provided a feedback on them. Subjects became ready to work independently to produce their own text. A final draft was written.

Results

The data used for the analysis were 304 English and Persian essays produced by the

students in the three groups at the end of the treatment. The writing pieces consisted of the students' pre- and post-tests that they took in class. The texts were copied and any trace of the students' identities was removed from the texts. The words pre-test and post-test did not appear in the tests, either. In this way, the raters were not influenced in their scoring by either access to the students' identities or by the words pre-test and post-test. The texts were randomly assigned to the raters. The texts were not edited.

The raters were two experienced EFL professionals who teach English to undergraduates. The ratings consisted of three sessions. In the first session, the researcher worked with the raters to familiarize them with the Toulmin's elements by showing them definitions and specific examples from the model texts, as presented in Appendix A.

To assure consistency within intra-rater reliability, each rater scored each essay two times on two different occasions and decided the final score. All the final scores assigned by the two raters were collated, resolved for discrepancies, and calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) formula.

The computed Pearson correlation coefficient for coding the six Toulmin's elements, *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim* and *rebuttal data* in the English pre-argumentative essays were .877, .797, .853, .716, .858, and .801 respectively, and inter-rater reliabilities for coding the six Toulmin's elements, *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim* and *rebuttal data* in the English post-argumentative essays were .812, .832, .880, .876, .823, and .816 respectively.

The computed Pearson correlation coefficient for coding the six Toulmin's elements, *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim* and *rebuttal data* in the Persian pre-argumentative essays were .897, .743, .961, .973, .918, and .901

respectively, and inter-rater reliabilities for coding the six Toulmin's elements, *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim* and *rebuttal data* in the Persian post-argumentative essays were .902, .782, .820, .851, .872, and .890 respectively. As the computed Pearson correlation coefficient shows, there is a high positive relationship between the scores rated by rater 1 and rater 2 in both English and Persian pre -and post-argumentative essays.

Scoring Rubric

The identification of Toulmin's elements was based on semantic structures and linguistic elements that typically signal their presence. For instance, to identify *claims*, two linguistic patterns were used: (a) statements such as "*In my opinion*," "*I believe that*", "*I think that*", "*I think if*", "*First thing*", "*I enjoy*", "*my opinion*" and (b) assertions such as "*Iranian government should not censor the news*."

To identify *data*, explicit conjunctions such as "*because*," "*a reason to support this is*" and prepositional phrases such as "*for that reason*" and "*for one thing*", "*for instance*", "*for example*", were used.

A *counterargument* statement and a *rebuttal* statement often went hand in hand. To identify them, certain indicator phrases and words were suggestive, such as "*It is said that...but...*," "*Some people claim that....however...*;" "*although*," "*despite*," and "*even though*", "*unlike*", "*although*", "*conversely*", "*however*", "*still*", "*but*", "*nevertheless*", or "*on the other hand*".

-It should be pointed out that these semantic structures and linguistic elements can only assist the process of identifying the Toulmin's elements. Because writers sometimes only imply their claims, reasons, counterarguments and rebuttals without stating them explicitly, the raters often need to make their own judgments based on their knowledge of reasoning structures, where the Toulmin's elements may not be directly indicated by indicator phrases or words as mentioned above. Therefore, double coding is necessary for a reliable and valid analysis (Qin & Karabacak, 2010).

-The Analysis of Claim

Excerpt 1 from a student paper illustrates the use of *claim* and *data* (See Appendix D). The number of *claims* and *data* were tallied in each pre- and post -essays. The results are presented in Table 1 (see below).

As indicated in Table 1, the three groups used *claim* in both their English and Persian pre- and post-essays. The difference is that the average number of claims used by the experimental group increased from English pre- (1.68) to post-test (1.9) and also from Persian pre- (1.12) to post-essay (2.21) in comparison to the control and the self-study groups.

As shown in Table 2, the *p*-value for the use of *claim* in the English and Persian pre-argumentative essays was greater than 0.05 which means that there is no significant difference between the three groups, but there is a difference between the three groups in the use of *claim* in the Persian post-argumentative essays $0.00 < 0.05$.

Table 1*The Use of 'Claim' in the English and Persian Argumentative Papers, Descriptive Statistics*

Groups		pre test English	post test English	pre test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	<i>Mean</i>	1.6	1.9	1.1	2.21
	<i>SD</i>	1.3	.64	.79	.75
control group	<i>Mean</i>	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.8
	<i>SD</i>	.77	.68	.95	.68
self-study group	<i>Mean</i>	1.0	2.2	1.5	1.0
	<i>SD</i>	.68	.57	1.1	.68
Total	<i>Mean</i>	1.6	1.9	1.3	1.8
	<i>SD</i>	1.0	.65	.95	.82

Table 2*The Use of 'Claim' in the English and Persian Argumentative Papers, ANOVA*

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
pre test English	Between Groups	6.23	2	3.11	2.92	.060
	Within Groups	77.92	73	1.06		
	Total	84.15	75			
post test English	Between Groups	1.55	2	.77	1.86	.163
	Within Groups	30.39	73	.41		
	Total	31.94	75			
pre test Persian	Between Groups	3.75	2	1.87	2.13	.125
	Within Groups	64.17	73	.87		
	Total	67.93	75			
post test Persian	Between Groups	14.32	2	7.16	14.09	.000(*)
	Within Groups	37.08	73	.50		
	Total	51.40	75			

The Analysis of Data

As indicated in Table 3, all the three groups used *data* in both their English and Persian pre- and post- argumentative essays. As the results show, the three groups' mean scores of the use of *data* on the English post-tests are higher than those on the English pre-tests.

In Table 4, the *p*-value for the use of *data* in the English post-argumentative essays was $.039 < 0.05$ which means that there is a significant difference between the three groups in the use of *data* in the English post-argumentative essays.

Table 3

Use of data in the English and Persian papers, Descriptive statistics

Groups		per test English	post test English	per test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	<i>Mean</i>	5.0	5.2	4.2	5.1
	<i>SD</i>	3.1	2.0	3.5	2.7
control group	<i>Mean</i>	3.7	3.7	4.9	5.2
	<i>SD</i>	2.4	2.4	3.2	2.8
self-study group	<i>Mean</i>	3.7	4.9	5.6	5.3
	<i>SD</i>	2.8	2.5	4.5	3.0
Total	<i>Mean</i>	4.3	4.6	4.7	5.2
	<i>SD</i>	2.8	2.3	3.6	2.8

The Analysis of Counterargument Claim

Excerpt 2 from a student paper illustrates *counterargument claim* and *counterargument data*. (Appendix D). As is shown in Table 5 (below), *counterargument claim* was not used in both English and Persian pre-argumentative essays. Contrary to the pre-tests

results, the participants of the experimental and the control groups used *counterargument claim* in both English and Persian post- essays. As the results show, the experimental group had their best mean score on the use of *counterargument claim* in the English and Persian post essays, which was much higher than the other two groups' mean scores, after receiving explicit instruction with models. On the other hand, the control group also had their best means of the test after receiving the implicit instruction, though the differences were not very considerable. Moreover, in comparing the overall performance of the three groups after receiving all three types of instruction, the self-study group with no instruction seemed to show no use of *counterargument claim*.

Table 5

Use of Counterargument Claims in the English and Persian Papers, Descriptive Statistics

groups		pre test English	post test English	pre test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	<i>Mean</i>	.00	1.0	.031	.65
	<i>SD</i>	.00	.00	.176	.48
control group	<i>Mean</i>	.14	.25	.07	.32
	<i>SD</i>	.35	.44	.26	.47
self-study group	<i>Mean</i>	.062	.25	.00	.06
	<i>SD</i>	.250	.44	.00	.25
Total	<i>Mean</i>	.06	.56	.03	.40
	<i>SD</i>	.24	.49	.19	.49

The Analysis of Counterargument Data

As seen in Table 7 (below), the number of *counterargument data* in the English and Persian pre -argumentative papers of the experimental, the control and the self-study

groups was .0, .14, and .06 respectively. It shows that the three groups were not familiar with how to use this move in their essays. Regarding the English and Persian post-argumentative essays, the use of *counterargument data* was common in the experimental and the control groups but not in the self-study group. The results show that the mean score of the subjects who received explicit instruction was higher than the means of the subjects who received implicit instruction and those who received no instruction.

Table 7

The analysis of counterargument data in the Persian and English argumentative essays, Descriptive Statistics

Groups		pre test English	post test English	pre test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	Mean	.00	1.28	.00	.87
	SD	.00	.456	.00	.75
control group	Mean	.14	.25	.07	.32
	SD	.35	.44	.26	.47
self-study group	Mean	.06	.25	.00	.06
	SD	.250	.44	.00	.25
Total	Mean	.06	.68	.02	.50
	SD	.24	.67	.16	.66

—The Analysis of Rebuttal Claim

Excerpt 3 from a student paper illustrates *rebuttal claim* and *rebuttal data*. (Appendix D). As seen in Table 9 (see below), the number of *rebuttal claims* in both English and Persian pre-argumentative papers of the experimental, the control and the self-study groups was

.00. The average number of *rebuttal claim* per English post -argumentative paper across the three groups was .68, .14, and .00 respectively and the average number of *rebuttal claim* per Persian post- argumentative paper across the experimental, the control and the self-study groups was .53, .17, and. 00 respectively.

Table 10 (see below) shows that there is not a difference between the three groups in the use of *rebuttal claim* in the English pre-argumentative essays ($p > 0.05$) but there is significant difference between the three groups in the post-test ($0.000 < 0.05$). Since the number of *rebuttal claim* in the Persian pre-argumentative papers of the three groups was .0, ANOVA could not be calculated.

Table 9

The analysis of rebuttal claim in the Persian and English argumentative essays, Descriptive Statistics

Groups		pre test English	post test English	pre test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	Mean	.00	.68	.00	.53
	SD	.00	.47	.00	.50
control group	Mean	.07	.14	.00	.17
	SD	.26	.35	.00	.39
self-study group	Mean	.00	.00	.00	.00
	SD	.00	.00	.00	.00
Total	Mean	.02	.34	.00	.28
	SD	.16	.47	.00	.45

Table 10

The Use of 'Rebuttal Claim' in the English and Persian Argumentative Papers, ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
pre test English	Between Groups	.090	2	.045	1.7	177
	Within Groups	1.8	73	.025		
	Total	1.9	75			

post test English	Between Groups	6.8	2	3.401	24.0	000(*)
	Within Groups	10.3	73	.141		
	Total	17.1	75			
pre test Persian	Between Groups	.000	2	.000		
	Within Groups	.0	73	.000		
	Total	.0	75			
post test Persian	Between Groups	3.5	2	.778	10.7	000(*)
	Within Groups	12.0	73	.165		
	Total	15.6	75			

The Analysis of Rebuttal data

As seen in Table 11 (below), the number of *rebuttal data* in the English and Persian pre-argumentative papers of the three groups was .00 and the average number of *rebuttal data* per English post- argumentative paper across the three groups was .87, .14, and .00 respectively. The average number of *rebuttal data* per Persian post-argumentative paper across the three groups was 1.1, .57, and .00 respectively. As the results show, the use of *rebuttal data* on the English and Persian post-test mean scores of the experimental group is higher than those of the control and the self-study groups. The results reveal that the experimental group had the best overall performances among the three groups.

In Table 12, the *p*-value for the use of *rebuttal data* in the English and Persian post-argumentative essays were $.00 < 0.05$ which means that there is a significant difference between the three groups. Since the number of *rebuttal data* in the Persian pre-argumentative papers of the experimental, the control and the self-study groups was .0, ANOVA could not be calculated, as shown in Table 12.

Table 11

The Analysis of Rebuttal Data in the Persian and English Argumentative Essays, Descriptive

Statistics

Groups		pre test English	post test English	pre test Persian	post test Persian
experimental group	Mean	.00	.87	.00	1.12
	SD	.00	.60	.00	1.58
control group	Mean	.07	.14	.00	.57
	SD	.26	.35	.00	1.50
self-study group	Mean	.00	.00	.00	.00
	SD	.00	.00	.00	.00
Total	Mean	.02	.42	.00	.68
	SD	.16	.59	.00	1.42

Table 12

The Analysis of Rebuttal Data in the Persian and English Argumentative Essays, ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
pre test English	Between Groups	.09	2	.045	1.773	.177
	Within Groups	1.8	73	.025		
	Total	1.9	75			
post test English	Between Groups	11.5	2	5.7	28.356	.000(*)
	Within Groups	14.9	73	.205		
	Total	26.5	75			
pre test Persian	Between Groups	.00	2	.00	.	.
	Within Groups	.00	73	.00		
	Total	.00	75			
post test Persian	Between Groups	14.0	2	7.03	3.710	.029(*)
	Within Groups	138.3	73	1.89		
	Total	152.4	75			

Discussion

This study intended to investigate the application of the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model (i.e., *claim, data, counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data*) in students' L1 and L2 argumentative essays in order to uncover to what extent the two languages were compatible in these domains.

As the results of the students' English and Persian pre-argumentative essays show, the participants of all three groups used the basic structure of English argumentative papers that is, *claims* and *data* in both their Persian and English essays, which support the findings of Qin (2009) and Crammond (1998). However, the secondary Toulmin's elements were not used in the English and Persian pre-argumentative essays of the subjects which confirms Cheng and Chen (2009)'s findings that students are weak at handling oppositional structures. It clearly shows that the use of *counterarguments* and *rebuttals* is considered to be cognitively complex, and thus late-developing (Crammond, 1998; McCann, 1989).

The participants' tendency not to consider secondary elements in their English and Persian pre-argumentative essays is attributable to their lack of experience and familiarity in argumentative writing. According to participants' responses to the questionnaires, most of them had not taken any English or Persian composition classes in high school.

Regarding the participants' English and Persian post results, the three groups used *claim* in their texts which shows that majority of students of the three groups employed deductive type organizational patterns in both English and Persian pre- and post-argumentative essays; that is, they presented their point of view at the beginning of the papers. This finding is in line with Hirose (2003), who found that the organizational patterns of Japanese and English argumentative essays were similar in using deductive organization.

The quantitative analysis of the post-argumentative essays revealed that the participants of the experimental group outperformed the participants of the control and the self-study groups in the use of *counterarguments* and *rebuttals*. This result reveals the potential of

model texts combined with explicit instruction for the experimental group participants' writing improvement. Although the control group was not exposed to the explicit instruction, results show that Toulmin's secondary elements were also found in their compositions, and it proves that the implicit genre-based teaching method was better than the no-formal-instruction method.

As the results of the self-study group show, they did not improve from English and Persian pre- to post-argumentative essays. The result of the self-study group partly supports Hyland (2007) who notes that, L2 writers typically are not aware of the “patterns and possibilities of variation” across genres (p. 19); as such, they are unlikely to benefit from models alone that do not include consciousness-raising activities to draw learners' attention to the target rhetorical features. The finding of this part of the research is in line with Smagorinsky's (1992) conclusion that “reading models alone is insufficient to improve writing” (p. 173).

Considering the second goal of the study, it was found that the experimental, and the control groups back transfer English rhetorical patterns based on the adapted Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model of argument structure (i.e., *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim*, and *rebuttal data*) into their Persian essays. The experimental group receiving explicit teaching of argumentative genre outperformed the control and the self-study groups in their writing performance of English and Persian post-argumentative essays on the use of *claim*, *data*, *counterargument claim*, *counterargument data*, *rebuttal claim*, and *rebuttal data*. This research provides evidence for the transfer from L2 to L1 writing through within-subject comparisons and implies the existence of transfer by examining and comparing EFL essays.

It should be mentioned that students' lack of knowledge about English argumentation prevents their transference of these rhetorical elements to their Persian writing before treatment. L2 to L1 transfer is the dominant pattern of the experimental and control participants' writing after the treatment. Without going into details, both the English and Persian essays written by the experimental and control participants showed up *counterargument claim, counterargument data, rebuttal claim, and rebuttal data* in their Persian essays. Intensive experience in L1 writing instruction or training from L2 writing classes, or both of these, may cause L2 to L1 transfer (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2008). Yoon (2008) referred to this as "L2-L1 transfer vs. learned L1 rhetoric" (p. 26). The experimental and the control participants who only had been given explicit and implicit instructions respectively regarding Toulmin's model of argument structure transferred their knowledge to their L1.

The findings are partly in line with Enginarlar (1990) and Oktar (1991) who indicated a possibility of transfer from L2 to L1 even greater than the transfer from L1 to L2. In a similar vein, Mazlomi (2011) states that genre awareness and, possibly, any kind of awareness at the higher supra-sentential levels is transferable from one language to another language, organizing and influencing the L1 speakers' thoughts, ideas and world views.

It is important to recall that genre-based pedagogies are based on an assumption that writing instruction will be successful if students are aware of what target discourses look like (Nordin & Mohammad, 2006). Collaboration between teacher and learner with the teacher taking on an authoritative role similar to that of an expert supporting an apprentice can help learner achieve genre knowledge and skills to perform independently.

The theory underpinning of this pedagogy is provided by Vygotsky (1978, as cited in Hyland, 2003).

-Familiarizing learners with genre helps them to transfer their awareness of genre to other situations. The students' ability to transfer their awareness of the Toulmin's secondary elements to the writing of the post-tests of the Persian essays in this study indicates the possibility of learning transfer or transferability of second language to first language. On this view, Hyon (2001) reports that genre-based reading instruction is transferable to writing abilities as it provides students with frameworks for composing their own written work which is partly an illustration of the experimental group who applied their L2 knowledge of argumentative writing to that of their L1 writing. As is seen, there is an apparent difference between the performance of all of the groups on English and Persian pre- and post-tests which is compatible with Kecskes and Papp (2003) who mentioned that L1 performance could be affected by the L2 if "exposure to the target language is intensive" (p. 248).

Conclusion

Regarding L2 argumentative writing instruction, first, the findings of the pre-test suggest that although most of the L2 university students presented a basic argument structure including *claims* and *data* in their argumentative papers, they failed to present the elements of *counterarguments* and *rebuttals*. The results of students' responses to the questionnaires show that high school students do not receive any formal L1 and L2

argumentative or academic writing instruction in Iranian education. It follows that it is the writing teachers' responsibility to introduce, explain and teach the Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model explicitly to students, give students practice in using it and thereby enhance students' awareness of Toulmin's elements.

Considering the type of treatment, the post-test results showed that explicit instruction assisted the experimental group to outperform the other groups. Results of this study revealed several implications for educators in developing appropriate argumentative essay instruction.

The results of the study justify the claim that the explicit teaching of genre develops students' writing abilities and genre awareness. By being taught explicitly, students can gain control over genres and as there is a lack of Persian rhetorical instruction in schools, writing instruction in a second language may compensate for this gap; thus, transfer from L2 to L1 would be a desired positive fact.

The study concludes by suggesting that writing teachers might benefit from utilizing models with explicit instruction in their teaching, with an emphasis on "moves" analysis, a factor that was not featured prominently in the teaching methodologies taken in the control and the self-study group classes. It is worth noting that writing skill in English is developed almost exclusively within the classroom instruction in Iran; therefore, it is necessary to make explicit the purpose of the genre so that the students gain tools to use to shape the text appropriately for content and knowledge and, ultimately, to be independent of the teacher.

-Pedagogical Implications

Contrasting English and Persian argumentative essays has a lot to offer to teachers and students. Firstly, it explains patterns of essay writing in both English and Persian languages. Purves (1988) emphasizes that the understanding of the rhetorical deviations among languages “would bridge the gap between cultural encoding and decoding” (p. 19). He suggests that instructors should be aware that, in essence, “differences among rhetorical patterns do not represent differences in cognitive ability, but differences in cognitive style” (p. 19). Contrasting English and Persian essay writing helps teachers make students aware of different writing styles and different audience expectations when writing in other languages.

The most obvious application of the findings of contrastive rhetoric is that it can help teachers and learners identify the cultural model of writing of a given speech community. This is of great importance to improve the writing and the reading skills (Brookes & Grundy, 1990). It is in line with Kaplan’s (1988) prediction when he claimed that contrastive rhetoric could serve to make teachers aware that different composing conventions do exist in different cultures and that these different conventions need to be addressed in teaching to make students aware of the existence of a set of conventions that the student is expected to follow. Therefore, there is an element of cultural awareness necessary both for teachers and students, and contrastive rhetoric can help to bring it to the front.

Secondly, the findings of the present study offer L2 teachers the chance to enrich their pedagogy both through the new strategies which were employed in the current research and through an understanding of their learners' background experience of essay writing in both L1 and L2.

These implications are also in line with suggestions made by other researchers of

contrastive rhetoric, who recommended that teachers and students raise their awareness of cultural differences in writing conventions (Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1988; Leki, 1991). Contrastive rhetoric researchers have offered such suggestions based on the assumption that cultural uniqueness exists in written text conventions.

Limitations of the Study

This study, featuring within-subject comparison, only compared EFL intermediate learners. Future investigations are expected to focus on comparison of L1 and L2 writing performance of students at various levels such as those with higher or lower L2 proficiency levels. Another limitation of the present research was the lack of argumentative essays based on Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model. It is also important to confirm the results with different topics or other kinds of essay writing other than argumentative writing, such as narrative, descriptive, etc., in a short period of time.

Toulmin's model, chosen for the present study, represents only one approach to argumentation, and other models, such as Reid's (1988) model, also exist. In future studies, it would be interesting to compare instruction in Toulmin's model of argument with instruction in Reid's model to see which model of argumentative writing would be more effective in increasing overall success in students' writing.

During the scoring of the papers, the raters also noticed the difference between English and Persian essays in the use of organizational patterns, namely introduction-body-conclusion which needs to be examined and compared in both L1 and L2. Moreover, the raters noticed that the subjects used different kinds of data to support their claim such as poems, religious quotes, anecdotes, etc. Future study is expected to analyze which types

of data have been used in the English and Persian argumentative papers. Additional information is also needed regarding the quality of students' given reasons.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

A model text which is used as a guideline.

Some people believe that smoking is a bad habit and should be abandoned completely worldwide. Others believe that smoking has positive effects on people. What do you think?

Smoking should be banned (claim) because it has been shown to be dangerous to health (data). Heart disease, bronchitis and lung cancer have all been linked (data). Both first-hand and second-hand smokers are affected by cigarette smoke (data). A further issue is that smoking costs governments millions of pounds because of the large number of people who need treatment in hospitals for smoking related problems (data). There is also concern today about passive smoking. Recent research has shown that non-smokers can suffer health problems if they spend long periods of time among people who do smoke (data).

However, despite these points, some agree that smoking should not be banned (counterargument claim) because there are positive sides of smoking. First, smoking undoubtedly helps many people to relax. For some, it even improves concentration. Many people like to smoke before exams or when they are relaxing with friends (counterargument data). A further point is that governments throughout the world make huge profits from levying taxes on cigarettes. This provides funds which are used for building schools, hospitals and other public amenities. The tobacco industry also employs tens of thousands of people throughout the world, particularly in poorer countries like Zimbabwe or India. Without cigarettes, these people would have no jobs (counterargument data).

While it can be said that not all people who smoke are always causing harm to themselves and others, it remains a fact that smoking per se is a cause of health problems (rebuttal claim). It is not enough to say that the size of affected people are relatively just a small fraction; plenty or few, one person put at risk is more than enough (rebuttal data). It is only the case that smoking, therefore, should be banned.

Appendix B

An English questionnaire was given to the participants mainly to obtain information about their experience of English writing and to establish a context for the statement of the problem and explanation of findings. The questionnaire was prepared by adjusting and combining the questionnaires used in the Choi, (2005); and Qin and Karabacak, (2010).

The same questionnaire (with a few changes) was translated and given to the students in order to get information about their Persian writing classes.

Directions: Fill in the following questionnaire by writing the information requested or marking an X by the appropriate answer.

1. Age:.....
2. Sex: Male..... Female.....
3. Educational level:
4. Intended major:

5. What is your last Paragraph writing score?When did you take it?

6. How long have you been studying English? Years.... Months.....

7. Have you ever been to any English-speaking countries? Yes ... No.....

If yes, which country (ies)? ; For how long? Years..... months.....

8. Have you received any essay writing instruction in English?

9. Mark the type(s) of writing you wrote as part of your writing instruction in

English from the following list.

....story

....argumentative writing

....reports

....writing freely about a certain topic/event

....journals/diaries/letters

....short answers in examinations

....short answers to comprehension questions

....summaries/ reflections or assigned readings

....others (specify)

10. Were you given assigned topics?

Always

usually

sometimes

never

11. Please estimate the amount of required writing that you did in high school?

about one paragraph

more than one paragraph

at a full-length essay level

12. During your educational experience, what features of writing did your English

language writing teachers generally emphasize?

....grammatical correctness

....mechanics and spelling

-clarity of main idea
-topic sentence in each paragraph
- Thesis statement
-using beautiful language
-expressing your true feelings honestly
-persuasiveness
-organization of ideas
-length of paper
-neatness and beautiful handwriting
-originality and imagination
-quoting experts, important names and using other sources
-truth of your ideas
-using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas
-content
-coherence at paragraph level
-title
-other (specify)

Appendix C

Writing Prompt for the English pre-Argumentative Task

Name:

Class number:

Student number:

Date:

Time 45 minutes

"There are two ways of marriage in Iran: traditional and modern one. Some argue that parents should choose their son's or daughter's spouse (in a traditional way); however, there are strong arguments against it. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position. "

On the afternoon of the pre-test day, all the three groups were asked to write a Persian essay. The prompt given to the students in Persian was as follows:

"Some argue that the university entrance exam should be omitted; however, there are strong arguments against it. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position. "

Writing Prompt for the English post-Argumentative Task

"Some argue that the students should have a part time job; however, there are strong arguments against it. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position."

On the afternoon of the pre-test day, all the three groups were asked to write a Persian essay. The prompt given to the students in Persian was as follows:

The prompt given to the students in Persian was as follows:

"Some argue that News should be censored in Iran; however, there are strong arguments against it. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position."

Appendix D

The following excerpts from student papers illustrate the use of Toulmin's elements in English papers. (Note: In the following excerpts, the sentences that represent Toulmin's elements are underlined; their classification then appears in brackets immediately following.)

Example 1. *From an English pre-test paper (Topic: marriage)*

Marriage is one of the most stages of life for any person. Nowadays because of many problems marriage age has been rised. There are 2 way to get married: modern marriage and traditional marriage. In modern way first boy and girl find each other by different way such as : phone, internet, in university and so on, then speak about their manner, their behavior their family and all thing which exist in their life, at last they inform to their family and become familiar to each other. In traditional way girl introduce to boy's family then they go to girl's house for proposal, after that they become familiar in family space. At last if they could dial with together they would be married with each other. In my opinion, modern marriage is better (claim), because the girl and boy can know each other very better than traditional way (data), second, they love each other before marriage(data), third, they do not have any more differences before marriage(data), fourth, they do not let the parents interfere in their life(data), As a result I believe that modern marriage because of better cognition of boy and girl from each other is the best way(data).

Example 2: *Topic (part-time job)*

I agree with part time job (claim) because we have opportunity that we can test ourselves (data). I have a friend that she work meanwhile she study and this act help her that she progress whether in job or study (data). Part time job has many advantage such as gain money, progress in your field (data). A few student claim that part time job is not good (counterargument claim) it causes you left behind education and it capture our mind and ability (counterargument data).

Example 3: *an English post paper: Topic (Part time job)*

University student shouldn't work at all (claim). Job or part time job can force students that more work and don't study very well. When students work, they don't study

and they don't become successful (data). Many people believe that students should study and focus their attention in study. But some other believe that students should work when they study (counterargument claim), because they should earn money for their education (counterargument data). But I think students should study and don't work (rebuttal claim) because each country need with good students and science for country progress (rebuttal data).

Example 4: a Persian post paper: Topic (censorship)

سانسور یعنی حذف کردن قسمتی از فیلم یا اخبار. در مورد اخبار نظر موافق با سانسور ندارم به نظر من افراد یک جامعه باید از آن چه در جامعه رخ میدهد بدون هیچ کم و کاستی باخبر شوند (data) چرا که عدم اطلاع یا داشتن اطلاعات نادرست مشکلاتی را برای افراد به وجود می آورد و حتی در بعضی موارد افراد جامعه دچار سو، ظن یا بد بینی نسبت به مسئولین می کند (data). وقتی مواردی از اخبار در شبکه های کشور حذف میشود و در شبکه های کشورهای دیگر بیان می شود اعتماد افراد نسبت به مسئولین مربوطه کم میشود و این خود باعث نوعی هرج و مرج میشود (data). بعضی افراد نیز با سانسور خبری موافق هستند (counterargument claim) چون فکر می کنند اگر خبری نا مناسب پخش شود جامعه دچار هرج و مرج میشود (counterargument data) ولی به عقیده من اینکه خبری پنهان بماند و بعد از مدتی توسط افراد دیگر بیان شود بیشتر جامعه را به هم می زند (rebuttal claim) چون شاهد چنین پنهان کاری هایی توسط دولت بوده ایم و آثار زیان بار را هم تجربه کرده ایم (rebuttal data) طبق نظر من سانسور در اخبار به نظر مفید و سودمند نمی آید.

Appendix E

Here is the model text with the adaptations which are shown in bold style.

In many places today, children start primary school at around the age of six or seven. However, because it is more likely now that both parents work, there is little opportunity for children to stay in their own home up to that age. Instead, they will probably go to nursery school when they are much younger. There are many advantages to having school experience at a young age.

Firstly, a child will learn to interact with a lot of different people and some children learn to communicate very early because of this. They are generally more confident and independent than children who stay at home with their parents and who are not used to strangers or new situations. Such children find their first day at school at the age of six very frightening and this may have a negative effect on how they learn.

Another advantage of going to school at an early age is that children develop faster socially. They make friends and learn how to get on with other children of a similar age. This is often not possible at home because they are the only child, or because their brothers or sisters are older or younger.

On the other side, some people are against attending the school from an early age. Firstly, the cost of a quality preschool program for children can put a hole in parents' bank accounts -- which is why some opt to leave their jobs to stay at home with their children. Secondly, early childhood programs don't give kids the one-on-one attention that some may require to thrive, as they are designed to meet the needs of children as a group -- and not as individuals, and finally, children in preschools are exposed to illnesses on a regular basis. They play with sick children, sit next to them in class, and share toys with them. As a result, they tend to become ill more often than kids who stay at home or are cared for by friends and relatives.

While the advantages and disadvantages of early childhood programs are clear, overall, I believe that, attending school from a young age is good for most children because children's independence will improve as they are mixing with other children and being more socially involved. And finally, they still spend plenty of time at home with their parents, so they can benefit from both environments.

Effects of Visual Cues on Perception of Non-native Consonant Contrasts by Chinese EFL Learners

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Abstract

Visual cues in articulation are generally considered helpful in the perception and learning of L2 consonant contrasts. Our study investigated whether there is any visual cue to the distinction of the English consonant contrast /l/ and /n/, which shares the same place of articulation and is reported as a problem to EFL learners speaking southern Chinese dialects. We then examined whether a visual cue can facilitate EFL learners' perceptual processing of the contrast. To serve these ends, we carried out two experiments. In the first experiment, we video-recorded and analyzed two native English speakers' production of the two sounds. In the second experiment, 90 Cantonese-speaking EFL learners participated in a perception test in three conditions: audiovisual, audio-only and visual-only. Results of Experiment I revealed a visible articulatory difference between [l] and [n] in the advancement of tongue tips. Results of the perception experiment showed

that the Cantonese-speaking EFL learners performed much better in the audiovisual condition than in the audio-only condition but did poorly in the visual-only condition. These results suggest that visual cues synchronic with audio information may exert a positive effect on L2 learner's perception of nonnative consonant contrasts. The pedagogical implication drawn is that training on visual cues and can be incorporated into L2 pronunciation teaching.

Keywords: Nonnative consonant contrast, visual cue in articulation, Cantonese-speaking EFL learners, perception, L2 pronunciation teaching

Introduction

Success in second language (L2) speech learning is affected by a variety of factors including the learner's first language (L1), age, and learning environments (Flege, 1995; Piske, MacKay & Flege, 2001; Shively, 2008). A crucial factor is the relationship between L1 and L2 sound systems. In other words, the phonology and phonetics of L1 influence L2 speech learning (Iverson, Kuhl, Akahane-Yamada, Diesch, Tohkura, Kettermann & Siebert, 2003; Rasier & Hiligsmann, 2007). Moreover, the onset age of L2 learning also seems to play a determinant role in the process, that is, the older a learner is when starting learning an L2, the more difficult it is for him to set up new phonological categories and the more likely he will speak with a "foreign accent" (Flege, 1984; MacKay, Flege & Imai, 2006). Despite the fact that age may have a negative effect on L2 speech learning, Bunta (2005) found that perceptual accuracy has an even stronger, positive impact on L2 speech production. Fortunately, both Best and Strange (1992) and Flege (1995) claimed that perceptual mechanisms remain malleable in adulthood. This idea has gained empirical evidence in studies reporting that audio training is effective in

increasing the perceptual ability to distinguish non-native speech contrasts (Li, 2006; Wayland & Li, 2008; Aliaga-García & Mora, 2009).

In face-to-face communication, people not only rely on audio signals but also automatically and unconsciously integrate visual information in the perception of speech. In as early as 1976, McGurk and MacDonald discovered that learners thought they heard [da] when the audio of [ba] was played simultaneously with the video of a face producing [ga]. This shows that perception under a single mode is different from that under the function of two modes and that face-to-face communication involves visual information (the visible articulatory features) apart from audio information. More studies afterwards (e.g., Massaro, 1984; Green & Kuhl, 1989; Rosenblum, Schmuckler & Johnson, 1997; Burnham & Dodd, 2004) confirmed the “McGurk Effect” in child speech perception. For example, Rosenblum et al. (1997) and Burnham and Dodd (2004) both found that a 5-month old infant may stare at a talking face longer if sounds are in synchrony with the visual movement of the face than if sounds are not synchronic with the face. Such preference to the harmony between sounds and visual movements was even discovered in 2-month old infants (Kuhl & Meltzoff, 1982; Patterson & Werker, 2003). Moreover, it has been reported that the sensitivity to visual information enhances with age (Massaro, 1984) and that the sensitivity to visual cues in L2 is also influenced by other factors such as the learner’s L1 background and the presence of visible contrasts in L1 phonemes (Sekiyama & Tohkura, 1991, 1993; Hardison, 2003). In addition, studies (e.g., Hazan, Sennema, Faulkner, Ortega-Llebaria, Iba & Chung, 2006) have also shown that the increase of L2 auditory proficiency is closely related to the improvement of the ability to deploy visual cues. In general, visual information plays an important role in both L1 and L2 speech acquisition.

The role of visual cues is salient to the perception of L2 consonant contrasts that differ in place of articulation, such as /b/, /p/ and /v/ (Hazan et al., 2006), and /m/ and /n/ (Kluge, Reis, Nobre-Oliveira & Bettoni-Techio, 2009). Green and Kuhl (1989) discovered that voicing distinction is also affected by visual cues. Regarding manner distinction, the most extensively studied is the contrast between the English /r/ and /l/. Ever since Miyawaki and colleagues (1975) reported that Japanese learners of English are not able to tell these two sounds apart, this pair of approximants has attracted a great deal of research attention, including that on the improvement of perception of the two sounds through audio training (Iverson & Kuhl, 1996; Ingram & Park, 1998). As /r/ involves lip rounding in articulation whereas /l/ does not, researchers (e.g., Sekiyama & Tohkura, 1991, 1993; Akahane-Yamada, Bradlow, Pisoni & Tohkura, 1997; Hardison, 2003; Massaro & Light, 2003; Hazan, Sennema, Iba & Faulkner, 2005) have also evaluated if such visual cues would be facilitative in the learning process. Their findings were generally positive: both Japanese and Korean EFL learners are able to distinguish between /r/ and /l/ more correctly after receiving visual training.

Compared with the pair of /r/ and /l/, other nonnative consonant contrasts have received little research, though the distinction between them may also be problematic to EFL learners. For example, Chinese-speaking EFL learners, the largest EFL learner group in the world, are generally reported to have problem distinguishing between several English consonant contrasts. Apart from /r/ and /l/, a fairly large proportion of them tend to confuse /l/-/n/, /v/-/w/, /θ/-/s/, /θ/-/f/, /ð/-/z/, and /ð/-/l/ (Chang, 1990; Meng, Lo, Wang & Lau, 2007; Rau, Zhang & Tarone, 2009; Xiao & Zhang, 2011). Among these contrasts, the most prevalent and difficult is /l/ and /n/, which has been reported confusing to EFL learners whose L1s are southern Chinese dialects such as Southwestern Mandarin,

Jianghuai Mandarin and Cantonese (Schmidt, 1996; Schmidt, Kaminsky & Chung, 1999; Li, 2006). These learners have been found to have difficulty in both perception and production of /l/ and /n/ in English and Standard Chinese (Mandarin), both of which have the two sounds as separate phonemes. Li (2006) reported that EFL learners from the three dialect regions of China could only correctly identify 61% of the stimuli even though they had learned English for many years. Their difficulty can be generally attributed to the lack, or different presentations, of the contrast in their native sound systems (Chao, 1948; Yuan, 1960; Chan, 2010). However, Li (2006) also found that their identification of the two sounds could be improved through intensive short-term audio training, although the increase was moderate at 5.8% on average. The /l/-/n/ pair shares the same place of articulation, thus it has been assumed that the visually noticeable difference is minimal. However, this assumption has not yet been verified.

As visual cues have been shown to be facilitative in the perception of the /b,p/-/v/, /m/-/n/ and /r/-/l/ contrasts, such facilitation may also be present in the distinction of the /l/-/n/ pair and other consonant contrasts. In light of this, we first tested the assumption by examining the production of [l] and [n] by native speakers of English and then investigated whether visual cues would influence EFL learners' identification of the /l/-/n/ contrast.

Study Design

This study focused on investigating the visible differences in the articulation of English /l/ and /n/ and evaluating the effect of visual cues on EFL learners' perception of this consonant contrast. For these ends, we designed two experiments. The first experiment examined the production of the /l/-/n/ contrast by native speakers of American English,

while the second experiment assessed the Cantonese-speaking ESL learners' perception of the contrast in three conditions: audiovisual, audio-only and visual-only.

Experiment I

Materials

The material was a list of 10 pairs of English monosyllabic words contrasting /l/ and /n/ syllable-initially, except in words starting with /s/. They were: *nine/line*, *knee/Lee*, *sneak/sleek*, *Nash/lash*, *noose/loose*, *nag/lag*, *noon/loon*, *night/light*, *snow/slow*, *slap/snap*.

Speakers

The speakers were two female native speakers of American English in their early 20s. Both were residents of the state of Florida.

Procedure

All words were put in a sentence carrier, "I will say _____ this time". The speakers were asked to speak naturally and clearly. The recording list contained a random 3-time repetition of all 10 pairs of words. To collect audio and visual signals at the same time, the recording took place in a sound-proof booth. The speakers' production was recorded using a head-mounted microphone attached to a cassette recorder and an HD camcorder. Only the lower part of the speakers' faces was captured in the video. The speech signal was then digitized in Praat (Boersma, 2001). Videos were converted as QuickTime clips using iMovie.

All recordings were evaluated by another two native speakers of American English and regarded as accurate and natural.

Results and Discussion for Experiment I

Altogether 120 video clips were extracted from the camcorder recording. 60 of them, including the production by both speakers, contained /l/ or /n/ syllable-initially and showed visible characteristics in articulation. In the production of [l], both speakers' tongue tips were in touch with the back of the upper alveolar ridge, whereas when producing [n], they used the front of the tongue to touch the alveolar ridge. In other words, the tongue tip was pointed more forward and downward in the articulation of [n] than in that of [l]. Consequently, the tongue tip was visible in between the teeth for [n] and then quickly withdrawn. This feature is salient in the articulation of words containing a non-lip-rounding vowel (e.g., *knee, nag, night*), but not observable in the production of those with a rounded vowel (e.g., *noon, noose*).

[l] and [n] differ in manner of articulation with one being a lateral approximant and the other a nasal stop, but they are both categorized as alveolar according to the place of articulation. Therefore, in theory, there should be no visible difference in production. However, our examination of the two female speakers' production show that there is a significant observable difference between the two sounds, which seems hard to explain.

Why is the difference in manner realized as that in place of articulation? Or is there any relationship between these two dimensions? The changes in the position of the tongue tip are indeed mentioned in previous literature (e.g., Catford, 1994; Lin & Wang, 1997). Catford (1994) pointed out that stops with a place of articulation at the alveolar ridge may be pronounced with the most forward tip, or the part that is slightly behind the tip (about

1 cm to 1.5 cm back away from the very tip of the tongue along the central line), and that such changes may result in a slight difference in the perception of /t/. Lin and Wang (1997) made a similar statement describing sounds whose articulation involves the tongue tip and the alveolar ridge, for example, [n]: “the tongue tip can touch the back of the upper teeth, or even that of both the upper and lower teeth at the same time. It does not cause much difference in perception” (p.62). Although /l/ and /n/ are both alveolar sounds in phonological categorization, in real articulation, the actual position of the tongue tip is flexible.

As far as our speakers are concerned, their [n]s are produced with the back of the tongue tip touching the alveolar ridge and the back of the upper teeth. So their tongue tips, observed from the front, were forward and somewhat visible between the teeth. As both speakers were young female adults from the same region, it is hypothesized that their articulation may be a regional characteristic rather than representative of a larger population. To verify this hypothesis, another four speakers (two male, two female) were recruited, all of whom were native speakers of American English in their early 20s. The two male speakers were from the same region as the first two female speakers. The second pair of female speakers was from different regions. The same wordlist was used to elicit production of /l/ and /n/. An examination of the video recording revealed that the second pair of female speakers also showed their tongue tips between the upper and lower teeth when they produced [n], but for [l] their tongue tips were not visible. The two male speakers, however, did not show any visible difference in their articulation of the two sounds. Therefore, the difference concerning the position of the tongue tip may be a gender difference. Besides, as all speakers were in their early 20s, this difference may

also be age-related. Thus, the visible characteristic in the articulation of [n] may be a linguistic feature in the speech of young female speakers of American English.

In summary, the first experiment found a visible articulatory difference between /l/ and /n/ in the position of tongue tip. Syllable-initial /n/ is produced more like a dental sound, with some of the tongue tip visible between the upper and lower teeth. This is more conspicuous when /n/ is followed by an unrounded vowel than by a rounded vowel. An explanation for this may be that the articulation of a rounded vowel involves protruding of the lips, which blocks the view from the front. On the other hand, there is no visible characteristic in the articulation of [l]. This difference between the two sounds provides ground for a follow-up experiment on sound perception.

Experiment II

The second experiment examined the role of visual cues in speech perception, that is, whether the different positions of the tongue tip can facilitate the perception of non-native contrasts. More specifically, it aimed at evaluating how Cantonese-speaking EFL learners identify English /l/ and /n/ in the audiovisual, audio-only and visual-only conditions.

As reviewed above, these studies have strongly supported the idea of a positive effect of visual cues on the perception of L2 consonant contrasts and the effectiveness of audio training in improving EFL learners' distinction of the /l/-/n/ pair. Therefore, we hypothesized that listeners would perform better with the help of salient visual cues than when they rely on the audio mode only.

Stimuli

The stimuli were video clips obtained in Experiment I. Eight of the ten minimal pairs were selected: *nine/line*, *knee/Lee*, *sneak/sleek*, *Nash/lash*, *noose/loose*, *nag/lag*, *noon/loon*, *night/light*. Two repetitions from each of the first two female speakers were included, totalling 64 trials.

Listeners

90 Cantonese-speaking EFL learners and 15 Mandarin-speaking EFL learners were recruited as listeners. They were all university students from non-language-related majors, with normal eye sight and hearing. The Cantonese-speaking EFL learners' self-reported English scores in the standard test were mostly C or D, with only three exceptions at E (A is highest and E lowest), while those of the Mandarin-speaking EFL learners were average .

Task

A forced-choice identification task was used in which listeners were asked to decide whether the first sound in each word they heard was /l/ or /n/.

Procedure

Before the perception test, all listeners completed a questionnaire on their familiarity with the words in the stimuli.

Then the Cantonese-speaking listeners were randomly assigned to three 30-person groups: Group A&V, Group A and Group V. All groups participated in the identification of /l/ and /n/, but under different conditions. Group A&V watched normal video clips of sound production, that is, they watched and listened at the same time, and Group A listened to the

clips without seeing the video signals, while Group V watched the muted video clips. The Mandarin-speaking listeners were also divided into three groups in the same fashion.

All stimuli were randomized with an inter-stimulus interval at 1500ms and played through computers. Listeners wore earphones during the test.

Listeners were asked to pay attention to the initial sound in each word, and then decide whether it was /l/ or /n/. They could replay a stimulus if needed, but could not change their choice once it was selected. All listeners received a brief training with five trials before taking the test. The Cantonese-speaking Group V and Group A&V were both instructed to pay attention to the mouth of the speakers, while the Mandarin-speaking listeners were not given such instructions.

When the test was completed, listeners in the audiovisual and visual-only groups took an unstructured interview to elicit comments on the visual cue.

Results and Discussion for Experiment II

Results from the questionnaire on word familiarity suggest that the listeners knew most of the words well, except *Nash* and *noose*. They felt familiar with the two words but were unsure of their meanings. Thus, the perceptual results should not be much influenced by word familiarity.

Mean percentage of correct identification was calculated for each word and then compared across listener groups. Among the Mandarin-speaking EFL learners ($M=83.27$, $SD=19.32$), the audiovisual and audio groups both achieved a correctness percentage over 97% (A&V: $SD=2.1$; A: $SD=1.4$) of all stimuli. By contrast, the visual-only group only correctly perceived 54.81% ($SD=10.38$) of all stimuli. Similarly, among the Cantonese-speaking EFL learners ($M=67.60$, $SD=21.26$), Group A&V achieved an average

correctness percentage at 76.28% ($SD=17.11$), Group A at 77.91% ($SD=17.0$), and Group V at 49.16% ($SD=19.47$). A one-way ANOVA with listening conditions as the between-group factor reveals a main effect of the types of stimuli on successful distinction between /l/ and /n/, $F(1,47)=13.14$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.30$. A post hoc analysis shows that Group A&V did much better than Group V, $p<0.001$. Group A was also much better than Group V, $p<0.001$.

More specifically, for both /l/ and /n/, the type of stimuli affected perception significantly at the 0.05 level: for /l/: $F(2,23)=6.35$, $p=.007$, $\eta^2=0.71$; for /n/: $F(2,23)=8.17$, $p=0.002$, $\eta^2=0.81$. Thus, perceptual cues of different types, namely, audio alone, visual alone, and the synchronization of audio and visual, significantly influenced perceptual performance. A post-hoc test reveals that differences across groups also vary. Groups A&V and A performed better than Group V. The mean correct identification of /l/ was the highest in Group A&V and the lowest in Group V. The mean difference was significant between Group A&V and Group V, $p=0.037$, as well as between Group A and Group V, $p=0.009$. A post-hoc test reveals that the mean correct identification of /n/ showed a similar pattern as that of /l/: Group A&V was the highest, followed by Group A, and Group V was the lowest. The mean difference between Group A&V and Group V was significant, $p=0.002$, and so was that between Group A and Group V, $p=0.030$.

Another one-way ANOVA with /l/ and /n/ as the within-group factors finds differences between the perception of /l/ and /n/. In Group A, perceptual accuracy of /l/ and /n/ differ from each other significantly at the 0.05 level, $F(1,15)=4.843$, $p=0.038$, $\eta^2=0.18$, whereas in the other two groups no significance is found (for Group A&V: $F(1,15)=1.904$, $p=0.189$, $\eta^2=0.12$; for Group V: $F(1,15)=0.037$, $p=0.851$, $\eta^2=0.01$). This suggests that the extent to which different types of stimuli can influence consonant identification may vary.

The statistics suggest that the Cantonese-speaking EFL learners had difficulty in distinguishing between /l/ and /n/, while the Mandarin-speaking EFL learners could identify the two sounds with just the audio stimuli and at a much higher accuracy rate. This is due to the fact that Mandarin contains a similar contrast of /l/ and /n/ as in English while Cantonese does not. In Cantonese, these two sounds have been shown merging into one category in recent years: /n/ has gradually merged into /l/, or becomes a free variant of /l/ (Chan, 2010). This may account for the difficulty encountered by the Cantonese EFL learners in the perception test. Besides, the role of the native phonemic inventory in speech learning can also be seen in the asymmetrical performance of the Cantonese EFL learners, that is, /l/ was better identified than /n/ in all three conditions. The explanation may be that /l/ is more clearly defined in the Cantonese sound system than /n/, thus the perception of its non-native counterpart is relatively easy. This advantage is most salient under the audio-only condition, where the difference between the perception of /l/ and /n/ reaches significance. However, the introduction of visual characteristics greatly improved the perception of /n/, thus narrowing down the difference in the perception of the two.

For both the Cantonese-speaking and Mandarin-speaking EFL learners, the three different types of stimuli resulted in different accuracy rates of speech perception. When the Cantonese-speaking EFL learners could rely on the audiovisual stimuli for identification, their perception was the most accurate. When they could only listen to the stimuli, their perception was not as good as in the audiovisual condition, but the difference was not significant. However, when listeners had only visual stimuli as input, they could only guess for an answer at their best (according to the listeners' own explanation in the interview). Even Mandarin-speaking EFL learners lost the advantage

from their native sound system when they depended on visual information, and thus could not distinguish between /l/ and /n/ successfully. Therefore, the results suggest that visual cues facilitate the perception of non-native speech contrasts when in synchrony with audio cues, but visual cues alone seem not effective in facilitating speech perception as the accuracy rates of both Cantonese-speaking and Mandarin-speaking listeners were very low in the visual-only condition. This discrepancy prompts more cautious evaluation of effects of visual cues such as the visible articulatory characteristics of /n/ in speech perception.

Moreover, visual cues had little effect on the Mandarin-speaking EFL learners' perception of the two sounds. There was very little difference in performance between the Mandarin-speaking audiovisual and audio-only groups, as both had almost no difficulty in identifying /l/ and /n/. Our interview with the Mandarin-speaking listeners in the audiovisual group after the data had been collected revealed that some of them did not watch the video at all because they could tell what sound it was by just listening to it. Some said that as the video was available they did watch it before answering. Others said that they stopped watching the video and focused on the sounds only after about a dozen trials, as they found no point in watching and listening at the same time. As Mandarin-speaking listeners did not receive instruction, our results indicate that they did not pay much attention to visual information or could not notice the usefulness of visual cues due to the fact that their native sound system provides sufficient phonetic information. This is also confirmed by the performance of those Mandarin-speaking listeners under the visual-only condition where they did not seem to notice the visibly different articulation of the two sounds, and therefore could not incorporate such information in speech perception.

In comparison, the Cantonese-speaking listeners' perception was also poor in the visual-only condition even though they had received instruction beforehand to pay attention to the speakers' mouth and tongue wherever applicable. The reason why Cantonese-speaking listeners failed to make use of the visual information may be that they could not connect the visual cues with the corresponding phonemic category in such a short time or set up a visual category for the sound involved. In short, the two listener groups had equally poor perception, but the causes of their failure in identifying with visual cues do not appear to be the same.

To sum up, it seems that visual cues alone cannot effectively improve perception of non-native contrasts. Only when visual cues are played synchronically with audio stimuli will such facilitative effect be obvious. This echoes with a large body of research studies (e.g., Sekiyama & Tokhura, 1993; Hazan et. al., 2006; Wang, Behne & Jiang, 2008; Kluge et al., 2009) confirming the "audiovisual benefit". In addition, the role of visual cues in L2 speech perception can be explained in relation to the learner's native language. When the native sound system encodes sufficient audio cues for sound distinction, related visual information (if there is any) may be safely ignored, for visual cues only provide compensatory information when audio cues fail. The key in this process is the integration of the two types of cues, which may be automatic and unconscious in first language but requires conscious training in a second language.

Pedagogical Implications

Our research reveals that visual information plays a role in L2 consonant perception. However, L2 learners are generally unaware of such visual cues, let alone apply them in speech perception and production. This justifies the need to explicitly direct L2 learners'

attention to such visual cues that may facilitate speech perception. Fortunately, our research also suggests that L2 learners' ability to incorporate visual cues in speech perception is trainable, which means that it is possible and may be more effective to integrate visual training into pronunciation teaching. These points are elaborated in the following.

Firstly, there is the ability to use visual cues to be trained. For the EFL learners in our study, audio cues were by far the major source for the distinction of /l/ and /n/, which implies that they were not able to automatically take full advantage of the visual information. As reviewed previously, the facilitative effects of visual cues are constrained by many variables, of which the first and foremost is the learner's native language. If their native sounds do not involve a visual distinction, then learners may not be able to automatically extract valuable visual information, and even if they could detect a visual cue in the non-native contrast, they may not be able to establish a connection between the visual and audio cues. This may explain some Chinese EFL learners' difficulty in discriminating /l/ and /n/ as well as other contrasts such as /l/-/r/, /v/-/w/, /θ/-/s/, /θ/-/f/, /ð/-/z/ and /ð/-/l/.

Thus, our results warrant training targeted at directing L2 learners' attention to visual cues relevant to L2 phonemic contrasts, as noticing is the prerequisite for L2 learning (Schmidt, 2001). In other words, the correlation between audio and visual cues in L2 speech has to be explicitly taught and learnt. Learners need be trained in noticing the visible articulatory gestures before they can integrate such visual cues to L2 speech perception. In addition, our findings also suggest that perception of visual cues exclusively, or lip-reading, in an L2 is extremely difficult, if not impossible, and may require special training, which, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

Secondly, the ability to use visual cues can be trained. In our study, the Cantonese-speaking EFL learners only received brief training on the visual cues. As a result, they benefited from the visual cues in the audio-visual listening condition, and performed much better than in the audio-only condition. This training, though short, had brought the EFL learners' attention to the visual difference between the /l/-/n/ contrast that they had never paid attention to, and thus helped reduce the influence of negative L1 transfer (i.e., negligence of visual cues absent in L1). Based on this finding, it seems safe to say that even brief training can enable L2 learners to integrate visual cues into audio information for more effective L2 speech perception. Apart from our study, research focusing exclusively on the effect of visual training (e.g., Flege, 1988; Hazan et al., 2005) has also reported its positive impact on L2 speech learning. Since visual training can improve Japanese and Cantonese EFL learners' pronunciation of the /r/-/l/ and /n/-/l/ contrasts, it is reasonable to believe that such training may also help correct other EFL learners' mispronunciations of these two contrasts or even other contrasts such as the above-mentioned pairs confusing to some Chinese EFL learners. Moreover, it may also be an effective teaching method to compare the visible articulatory differences between L1 and L2 consonants that are confusing to language learners so as to use the differences to correct their mispronunciations.

Lastly, concerning how to train learners' ability to integrate visual cues in speech perception and production, practitioners could design practical activities and make full use of modern technology. Activities should aim at helping L2 learners develop the habit of observing articulatory gestures in the hope that they will gradually start treating visual cues as a second channel of information during L2 communication. To achieve this goal, practitioners should first be equipped with knowledge on the major differences between

L1 and L2 phonetics and phonology. Then they need to apply such knowledge to pinpoint the most problematic L2 speech sounds through comparative analysis. Once these sounds have been identified, language teachers should conduct training on phonemes as well as on “visemes”, that is, the “visual categories that are identifiable using speechreading alone” (Hazan et al., 2006: 1740). In other words, when teaching L2 learners to listen for audio differences, language teachers should also instruct the learners to discern any visual difference between the problematic nonnative contrasts, and between the easily confusing L1 and L2 phonemes. Modern technology may also be adopted to facilitate such instruction. While raising learners’ L2 phonemic awareness, teachers may display positions and movements of speech organs during the articulation of certain speech sounds. They may also introduce CAPT (computer-assisted pronunciation training) systems or other interactive software into the teaching process to allow learners to observe articulation repetitively at their own pace. Besides, learners can also exploit such systems and software to correct their own mispronunciation through comparing their articulatory movements with a native speaker’s. As reported by previous studies, this type of visual feedback is generally facilitative to L2 speech learning (Iribe, Mori, Katsurada & Nita, 2010; Levitt & Katz, 2010). However, there is a caveat that teachers should be aware of: visual cues are a means, not an end. Visual cues alone are not a perfect solution to the problem of low efficiency in L2 pronunciation teaching and learning, as visual training takes time and its result depends largely on the joint efforts of the teacher and learners (Ruellot, 2011).

Conclusion

Different from the previous assumption that /l/ and /n/ should be the same regarding their observable articulatory gestures, our study finds that the two sounds can be distinguished by a visible characteristic of /n/. The position of the tongue tip in the articulation of /n/ is different from that of /l/ under certain vowel contexts and this visible difference can function as an effective perceptual cue for EFL learners. Our study also confirms the positive effect of visual cues on the perception of L2 phonemic contrasts. This finding lends empirical support to the idea that phonemic awareness is significantly affected when visual cues are combined with audio information and provides some insights into L2 pronunciation teaching.

Our study is not exempt from limitations. Considering the small size of the native speaker sample, the visual characteristic of /n/ may be a regional feature, or a feature related with gender and age. Therefore, the findings do not represent the whole population of American English. However, despite this limitation, the current study does provide a new perspective to the teaching and learning of L2 speech sounds. Future research should include a larger pool of speakers and a greater variety of speech stimuli, or extend into a longitudinal study on whether the improvement in perception of certain L2 contrasts can be generalized to other sounds or even transferred to improvement in speech production.

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Using an Analytical Rubric to Improve the Writing of EFL College Students

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Abstract

To examine the effect of integrating an analytical rubric with writing instruction on paragraph composition, we conducted a research study with a 1-year longitudinal time-series design. One college English writing class in Taiwan participated in the study. The analytical rubric was used as both the writing guide and the scoring criteria. In addition to writing instruction, the participants also received error feedback and written comments. Six specific research issues guided the study: an investigation of the perceived instructional effects of the writing program, whether the rubric raised learner awareness of organization, word use, and grammar, whether the rubric affected learner behavior in writing, learner evaluation of the scoring rubric, their motivation toward English writing, and, whether the integrated writing program improved the writing of the learners.

Data were collected using a self-reported questionnaire and pre-, mid-, and post-test writing. The data were analyzed with one-way repeated measures ANOVAs with subsequent protected *t* tests in addition to descriptive statistics. The results show that using the analytical rubric with writing instruction raised structure awareness, improved

writing organization, and alerted students to lexical usage and grammar. Believing that the rubric had helped them identify their writing weaknesses, students showed a highly-positive attitude toward using the rubric. Strong motivation for learning writing was also discerned. Writing performances of the participants confirmed the questionnaire findings. Pedagogical implications and recommendations for future research are addressed.

Keywords: Analytical rubric, assessment-for-learning, writing, writing assessment, writing instruction

Introduction

Writing is a complex process involving textural structure, cognitive processing, and social contexts (Elander, Harrington, Norton, Robinson, & Reddy, 2006; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Hayes, 1996). Since the development of second language (L2) writing into a distinctive academic repertoire in the 1980s, various guiding concepts in L2 writing instruction have evolved, including the structural, functional, thematic, expressive, process, content, and genre approaches. Based on these guiding concepts, the focus of writing instruction and research has also shifted from language structure and text functions to themes, creative expression, composing process, and genre (e.g., Alagozlu, 2007; Cheng, 2008; Hyland, 2003). However, awareness of the development does not mean that teachers should adopt only one or the latest orientation (Hyland, 2003; Min, 2009). Hyland (2003) cautioned against seeing each approach as one growing out of and substituting the other; instead, they are complementary instructional options, each situating L2 writing instruction with a different emphasis depending on the distinct target students and the particular teaching and learning context. This viewpoint is shared by Richards and Rodgers (2001), who argued for “a careful consideration of the context in which teaching and learning occurs” (p. 248). In instructional settings, Hyland asserted

that teachers should decide which issues require more attention and set priorities on what they want students to achieve. Similarly, Min (2009) contended the necessity of using eclectic writing pedagogies to address the specific needs of the target students.

Although certain linguists since the 1980s have focused on the writing process to surpass the textual product, the textual product still has significant meaning for EFL students, particularly those with a strong extrinsic, but weak intrinsic motivation, and who often value products over processes because products have a direct bearing on course grades and the manifestation of English competence (Dornyei, 2001). Teachers must sharpen students' skills for writing a readable text to manage term papers and standardized English proficiency tests (Cumming, 2002; Hinkel, 2003), and to meet the workplace demands (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

Tertiary education in Taiwan today particularly emphasizes workplace demand. Thus, college English writing instruction should not only help students develop writing skills, but also stress enhanced textual organization and linguistic abilities. However, how can teachers help EFL students organize their ideas following proper paragraph organizational structures? How can students use vocabulary more correctly and properly in writing while expressing their ideas fluently? How can grammatical errors in student compositions be reduced effectively? We therefore employed an eclectic pedagogy integrating structural, functional, and process approaches (Hyland, 2003) of paragraph writing instruction and designed and used a scoring rubric for paragraph writing as a tool for teaching and learning paragraph composition. Integrating a rubric into the teaching and learning cycle is expected to be beneficial because it explicitly shows student writers the aspects that are valued in paragraph writing and the guidelines scoring decisions follow (Hyland, 2003).

Six research questions guided the study:

1. What are the perceived instructional effects of the writing program?
2. Does the paragraph scoring rubric raise learner awareness of organization, word use, and grammar?
3. Does the paragraph scoring rubric affect writing behaviors?
4. What is learner evaluation of the scoring rubric?
5. What is learner motivation toward English writing after using the rubric for 1 year?
6. Do learners make writing progress in organization, word use, and grammar following 1 year of instruction and use of the scoring rubric?

Significance of the Study

Although a large body of literature exists on teaching and learning English writing for non-native English speakers, studies using rubrics for the dual purposes of instruction and assessment are scant. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by conducting a 1-year longitudinal study to explore student perceptions and their writing performances.

Literature Review

In the EFL context, instructors may find that structural and linguistic factors play an important role in writing instructions (Hinkel, 2003). For instance, they often face difficulties helping students realize textual organization essential for effective communication (Flower, 1994). The organizations, or text functions, include not only elements of form (e.g., topic sentences and supporting sentences), but also organizational patterns such as narration, description, and exposition (Hyland, 2003). Furthermore, the texts L2 students produce often perplex teachers with repetitive lexical or grammatical errors (Hinkel, 2003).

Hyland (2003) asserted that writing for L2 students with intermediate or lower English

proficiency involves learning not only thinking and expressing, but also language use. L2 learners “often carry the burden of learning to write and learning English at the same time” (p. 34). Based on a similar view that non-native English learners acquire language and composing skills simultaneously, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) proposed that effective instruction in L2 writing intentionally raises writer awareness of reader expectations, rhetorical structures, grammatical and lexical variances, and formal accuracy. Lexical and grammatical accuracy and text organization are among the important issues tackled in EFL writing classrooms.

Lexicon

A major orientation in the writing-instruction categorization by Hyland (2003) is the structural approach, which accentuates the accurate use of lexical and syntactic forms in creating texts. Proper use of the lexicon is important for EFL learners because words are the writing medium and word selection is crucial for effective communication (Chen, 2009). A writer must use precise, accurate language to convey his or her message (Johnson, 2000). However, EFL students are typically confronted with the problem of a small lexis, which constrains their text production (Hinkel, 2003; Nation, 2001). Students who lack language control or discourse knowledge may use words incorrectly or inappropriately. In a study examining the written output of L2 writers, Hinkel (2003) identified limited vocabulary and a lack of distinction between oral and written discourses as two major factors of unsatisfactory performances.

Cumming, Kantor, Powers, Santos, and Taylor (2000) and Read (2000) asserted that lexical richness and appropriateness have a significant effect on reader judgment of the quality of essay written by L2 writers. Therefore, instruction on lexical usage and variety

should be an integral part of writing instruction. Yeh, Liou, and Li (2007) found that online materials and concordances help improve student lexical ability. Another study contended that lexical fluency training helped students use words more fluently in writing than those receiving no such lessons (van Gelderen, Oostdam, & van Schooten, 2011).

Grammar

Grammar presents another challenge for EFL writers (Hinkel, 2003). Because EFL students learn writing and language simultaneously (Hyland, 2003), errors are inevitable in the writing process. To pursue formal accuracy, instructors may resort to error correction, which meets learner expectation and seems to be effective. Williams (2005) indicated that L2 students desire this type of feedback and believe it to be beneficial. If error correction is not offered, L2 learners can feel tremendously uncomfortable or gain the wrong impression that their text production is linguistically correct. Hyland and Hyland (2006) expressed a similar concern in stating that students from cultures where teaching styles are highly directive generally welcome and expect teachers to notice and comment on their errors. The theorists further indicated that students must achieve formal accuracy in their writing to prepare them for an academic or business career. This issue preoccupies numerous EFL teachers in Taiwan.

Prior studies have indicated positive effects of corrective feedback on writing performance of not only subsequent revisions (Ferris, 2006; Truscott & Hsu, 2008) but also new texts (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008). El-Koumy (2000) and Ferris (2002) showed that selective correction works better in improving the writing of EFL students than overall or no error correction, and that errors should not be left uncorrected in the hope that they will correct themselves naturally.

In addition to error feedback, several other approaches can be employed to enhance formal accuracy. Salmani-Nodoushan (2007) proposed that remedial instruction is more effective in error treatment than the red-pen method in increasing writing accuracy. To avoid errors, Muncie (2002) proposed numerous guidelines for including grammar in composition classes specifically intended for the EFL context. Williams (2005) argued that teachers should teach editing strategies and provide editing practice as an effective means for error treatment. In a similar vein, Ong (2011), Crompton (2011), and Shokrpour and Fallahzadeh (2007) urged composition teachers to identify the most frequent types of errors by their target students and tailor their instruction accordingly.

Text Organization

Although appropriate lexical use and syntactic accuracy are important, they are not the only features of effective writing. Vocabulary and grammar are considered local writing features. Composition teachers are urged to pay equal (Min, 2005) or more (Leki, 1990) attention to global features, including meaning and organization, when responding to student writing. Writing must fulfill communicative functions. To become meaningful, sentences must be organized in certain ways and follow specific conventions (Flower, 1994). Particular language *forms* perform certain communicative *functions* (Hyland, 2003). By creating a proper topic sentence, supporting sentences, and transitional words, students learn to develop their ideas for different purposes. For EFL students, such instruction on organization is essential because communication is culturally bound. Theorists have indicated that the schemata of L2 students differ from those of L1 learners in how they organize ideas, and these cultural preconceptions may hinder effective communication (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Hyland, 2003; Kaplan, 2000). In the Jensen

(1988) study, English and Chinese L1 writers varied in their level of directness when writing in their native languages. In Taiwan, EFL learners tend to have more difficulty at the discourse level (i.e., overall organization and audience) than at the sentence level in English writing (Feng, 1995; Min, 2005). EFL instructors, therefore, may choose to adopt the functional-oriented approach to teaching writing if they perceive text organization as the major area to emphasize at the current developmental stage of L2 learners (Hyland, 2003).

Text Types of Various Linguistic and Cognitive Complexities

Based on linguistic variation, texts and discourses have been classified into categories that vary in linguistic signals of both syntax and lexis. The advantage of such categorizations in the writing repertoire is that they facilitate writers to “construct, mediate, maintain, or alter contexts and cultures through discourse practices” (Virtanen, 2010, p. 53). Among various typological models proposed by linguists, the Werlich (1976) typology includes five text types that vary in cognitive properties: narration, description, exposition, argumentation, and instruction. Virtanen (2010) asserted that narration is a basic text type, whereas argumentation requires considerable linguistic signaling. Virtanen further placed instruction (i.e., procedure) near the narrative end of the continuum because the text type exhibits temporal text structuring. In contrast, exposition was placed near the argumentative end of the continuum because of the cognitive process of addition, elaboration, and contrast. Whereas description and narration tend to be based on facts and experiences (Dorgeloh, 1997; Virtanen, 2010), exposition requires analysis and synthesis, and argumentation entails evaluation (Trosborg, 1997). Based on the Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) taxonomy of cognitive

processes, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation require higher cognitive levels, with evaluation being higher than analysis and synthesis. We therefore infer that, among the five text types, writing the text type of argumentation requires the highest order of thinking, followed by exposition. The text types of various linguistic and cognitive complexities are summarized with the continuum in Figure 1.

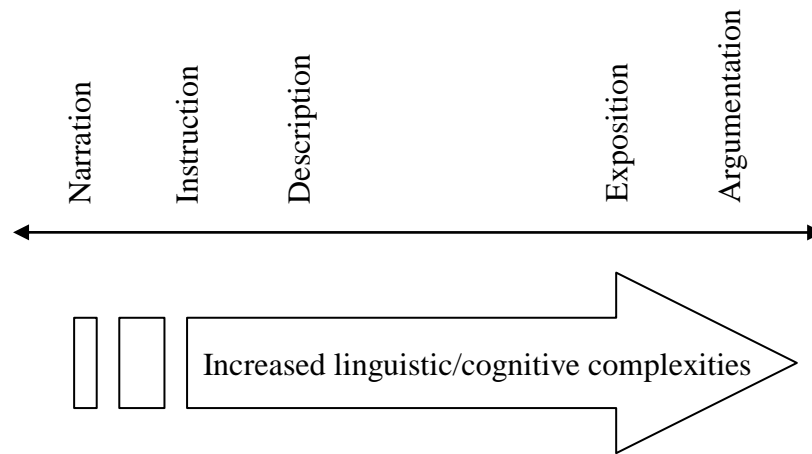


Figure 1. Text types of various linguistic and cognitive complexities.

The Use of an Analytical Rubric under the Assessment-for-learning Paradigm

There are three types of rubrics used as rating scales: the primary trait scale, the holistic scale, and the analytical scale (Weigle, 2002). The holistic scale provides one score, whereas the analytical rubric has more clearly defined criteria and well-articulated levels. Weigle (2002) argued that the analytical scale provides useful diagnostic information on student writing abilities, particularly for L2 learners, who might be good at developing

ideas but have numerous grammatical errors or write good sentences with no substantial content. Designing a rubric requires the consideration of the users, the stressed writing aspects, the scoring levels, and the reporting.

Analytical rubrics can be discussed in terms of assessment-of-learning (i.e., summative assessment) and assessment-for-learning (i.e., formative assessment). For summative assessment purposes, critical issues are rater concordance, rater training, and scoring validity and reliability. For formative assessment purposes, a rubric is used as an instructional and learning tool to guide, to respond to students' language output, and to diagnose their problems (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & William, 2003; Hughes, 2009). Before writing an assignment, if students are informed of the scoring items, they may focus more on those aspects when writing. Rubrics, as a response to writing, "are useful in making grading decisions explicit and showing what the teacher values in a particular piece of writing" (Hyland, 2003, p. 181). Learners who are given clear guidance are able to take responsibility for their writing and learning process (Reid & Kroll, 1995). Finally, the rubric also serves a diagnostic purpose (Weigle, 2002). Students see clearly the weaknesses in their writing through analytical scores and realize how to improve their next assignment.

Culture is another reason for employing rubrics in a writing class. That cultural factors have a considerable impact on writing has been pointed out by Lantolf (1999) and Zamel (1997), who argued that rhetorical heterogeneity and variability are present in different cultures. Zamel (1997) further asserted that, despite the difference between various discourses, such as Chinese rhetoric and Western rhetoric, "with ongoing and sustained instruction that is responsive," L2 students can "become conversant in a variety of discourses, writing movingly" (p. 347). Similarly, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) and Swales

(1990) proposed that L2 writing instruction accounts for the influence from students' various L1 life and cultural experiences, helps learners gain a conscious awareness of the discourse conventions of the target reader community, and guides them through the transaction from writer-based to reader-based prose. In the writing process, a rubric serves as a guideline for L2 novice writers (Hughes, 2009). Furthermore, Asians tend to be more extrinsically motivated than their Western counterparts (Gupta & House, 2004). Because of the conventional practice in education, Asian students are generally more concerned with scores than their Western peers. Rubric scores may serve as a driving force to improve their writing.

In addition to extrinsic motivation, the use of a rubric can also enhance self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation in writing. Bandura (1986) argued that providing learners with “standards against which to evaluate ongoing performance” (p. 467) facilitates goal setting and self-evaluation, and the process helps learners to be more self-assured of their ability to achieve a particular level of task performance. In the context of writing instruction and learning, Covill (2012) further indicated that scoring rubrics offer writers explicit criteria that are essential for success. Clear descriptions of what success looks like help boost learners' self-confidence in succeeding in a writing task.

A writing teacher must consider numerous factors in helping students improve their writing. If students' language proficiency level is not sufficiently high, teachers must simultaneously stress language structure (i.e., the structural approach of writing instruction) and paragraph organization (i.e., the functional approach) at the early writing stage, and using a scoring rubric in the teaching and learning process (i.e., the process approach) functions both as a scaffolding device and a motivator. The following diagram depicts the conceptual framework that guided the study.

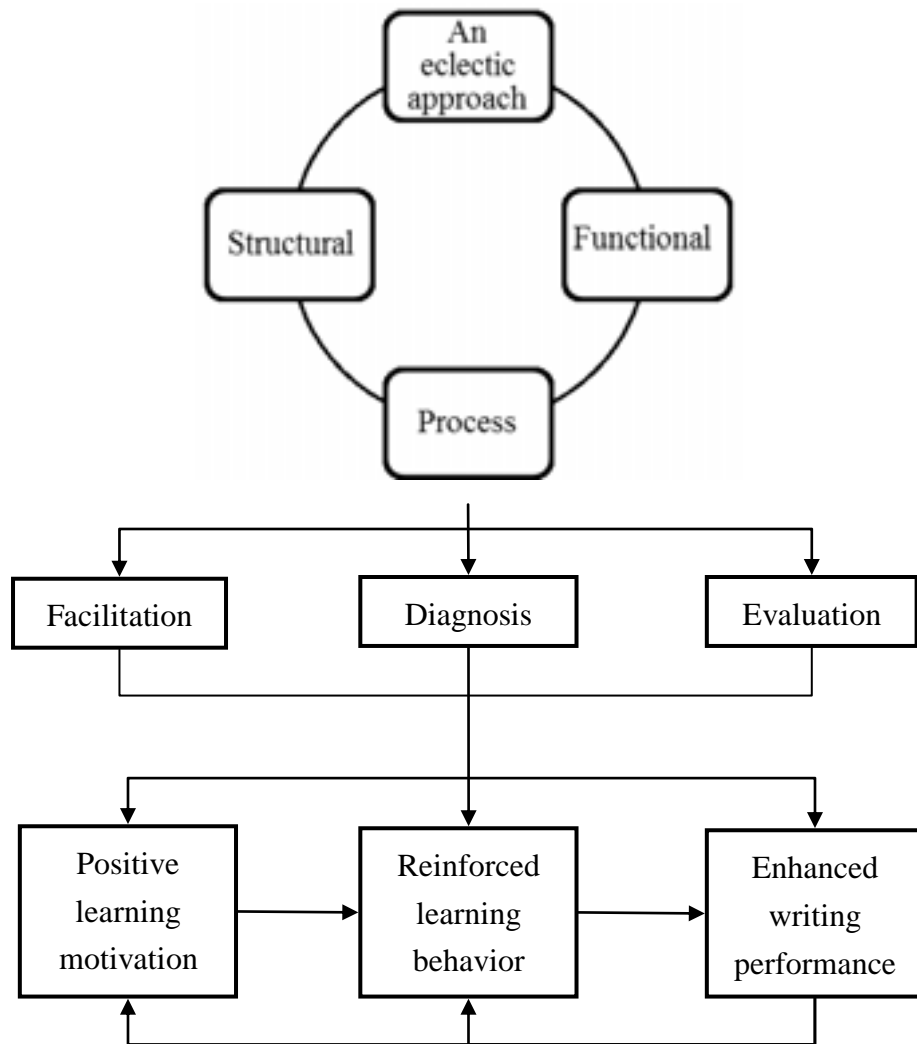


Figure 2. An eclectic approach of writing instruction under the assessment-for-learning paradigm.

Methodology

In this study, we adopted an analytical rubric to guide, respond to, and assess writing assignments. Using the rubric with writing instruction, error feedback, and written

comments, the instructor was expected to alert students to organization, word use, and avoiding errors. We surveyed EFL learners following a 1-year instructional and learning cycle to examine the effectiveness of integrating the rubric into the writing program to guide EFL learners in organizing paragraphs, using proper words, and avoiding grammatical mistakes. We also analyzed student assignments to examine if their writing had improved in the three designated aspects.

Participants

The participants of this study were 50 students from a freshman English composition class of the Applied Foreign Languages Department at a science and technology university in Southern Taiwan. The participants possessed an intermediate level of English proficiency, with an average score of 568 on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Among the participants, 43 were female and seven were male.

Instruments

Two instruments were utilized to answer the six research questions. First, to gauge participant perceptions of the writing instruction and the scoring rubric, we developed a self-reporting questionnaire containing three sections. Section I contained 13 questions that investigated the perceived instructional effects of the writing program, and it was designed to answer Research Question (RQ) 1. Section II consisted of 13 questions, which examined whether the scoring rubric raised participant awareness and affected their writing behaviors and their rubric evaluation. This section was intended to answer RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4. Item 28 was negatively worded; the item score must therefore be reversed in the data analysis phase. Section III was constructed to answer RQ5 by

exploring participant motivation toward English writing with five questionnaire items. These questionnaire items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with all response alternatives anchored from *strongly agree* (5), *agree* (4), *neutral* (3), *disagree* (2), to *strongly disagree* (1). One open-ended question from Sections I and II was also included to draw written comments and suggestions on the instruction and the rubric. The last section recorded respondents' gender and scores in English proficiency tests, including the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) and TOEIC. The beginning, intermediate, and high-intermediate levels of GEPT certificates were converted into TOEIC scores.

The second instrument in this study was an analytical rubric (see Appendix) that was intended to be used to assess student writing performances to answer RQ6. Analytical scoring was employed over holistic scoring because, as Weigle (2002) suggested, analytical scoring contains clearly defined criteria, is more reliable than holistic scoring, and is particularly useful for L2 learners to detect their writing weaknesses. This rubric, therefore, functioned both for teaching and researching purposes. The rubric was used in class to guide students, diagnose their problems, and help them self-assess their performances. As a research instrument, the rubric helped provide analysis scores. The results obtained through the scoring rubric were also intended to help validate those of the questionnaire.

The rubric categories were similar to those on the Jacobs et al. (1981) scoring profile: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The score percentages were modified to meet the teaching objectives. Because students used the rubric for guiding and diagnosis more than for assessment purposes, the criteria description was largely simplified and achievement levels (excellent, good, and so on) were omitted to facilitate student comprehension (Hughes, 2009; Popham, 1997). The categories evaluated in the

rubric included content (20%), organization (35%), vocabulary (20%), grammar (15 %), mechanics (5%), and format (5%). This study focused on three of the categories with scoring criteria as follows:

1. Organization: Students were expected to develop a topic sentence that contained a topic and a controlling idea, supporting sentences that explained or supported the topic sentence, and a concluding sentence that appropriately ended the paragraph.

2. Vocabulary: Lexical accuracy and lexical richness were two scoring dimensions in this category. Lexical richness was further divided into lexical variety and use of higher-level words. Each semantically misused word or an unclear expression resulted in a 1-point deduction; lack of variety (i.e., repeating a word more than 3 times) and lack of higher-level words also resulted in 1- to 4-point deductions. Higher-level words were based on the Academic Word List developed by Coxhead (2000).

3. Grammar: Syntactic accuracy was the area of concern in this category. A fragment or a comma splice cost 2 points. Other mistakes cost 1 point.

The content category was not discussed in this paper because scoring this part tends to be subjective and should be addressed in a separate study. Mechanics and format were excluded as minor writing issues.

Procedure and Data Collection

Writing instruction

English Writing I and II were a series of 1-year required courses for college freshman English majors. The teaching objective was to enhance paragraph writing abilities. The class met 2 hours per week for 18 weeks in the first semester, followed by a 1-month winter vacation. The class continued for another 18 weeks in the second semester. *Great Paragraphs* (Folse, Muchmore-Vokoun, & Solomon, 2009) was used as the textbook, and the courses were taught by one of the researchers. As suggested by Hyland (2003), few teachers adopt only one writing instruction orientation. The needs of the target

situations and target students should be examined and used as a basis for instructional design. The instruction in this study, therefore, followed an eclectic pedagogy (Min, 2009) incorporating structural, functional, and process approaches (Hyland, 2003) of paragraph writing. The class instruction included exercises and activities to help students realize the writing process, learn text organization and different types of paragraphs, and review collocations and grammar. The text types covered in the instruction included narration, instruction, exposition, and argumentation.

Use of the paragraph scoring rubric

In the third week of the first semester, the participants received a writing assignment that required them to write a paragraph of eight to ten sentences. Each participant chose a topic from the textbook. The instructor then showed the paragraph scoring rubric to the students and explained each item, informing them that their paragraph would be graded based on the rubric criteria. At this point, the rubric served a formative assessment function, providing guidelines to focus student attention on specific writing aspects and urging them to perform self-correction before submitting the assignment (Hughes, 2009; Hyland, 2003).

The instructor corrected mistakes on submitted assignments, wrote comments on form and content, and graded the writing on the rubric chart as a cover sheet. A copy of the students' writing and analytical scores was retained for subsequent data analysis. The assignments were then returned with the rubric, and a short conference was conducted between the instructor and each student. At this stage, the rubric fulfilled the diagnostic function (Weigle, 2002) by showing students their weaknesses in text organization and language features and indicated the direction for improvement in the next assignment.

Those who lost many grammar points were advised to engage more self- or peer editing.

Using this process, students turned in four paragraphs in the first semester and another four in the second semester, of narrative, instructional (i.e., procedural), expository, and argumentative types of texts. At completion of the school year, the instructor-researcher passed the first (i.e., narration), the fourth (i.e., exposition), and the last (i.e., argumentation) assignments and scores to the other researcher, who served as the second rater. The two raters then conducted discussions to reach an agreement on the scores. The three assignments were considered the pre-test, mid-test, and post-test on students' paragraph writing competence.

Survey administration

During the last class of the second semester, students were invited to complete the questionnaire to examine their own learning and to give opinions on the instruction and the scoring rubric. Fifty questionnaires were distributed and all were returned.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires were processed with SPSS 18. To answer RQ1 to RQ5, the results were presented in descriptive statistics to show participant perceptions and attitudes toward the writing instruction, the use of the scoring rubric, and English writing. To answer RQ6, learner improvement in writing was evaluated by analyzing the scores of the pre-test, mid-test, and post-test assignments using a one-way repeated measures ANOVA with subsequent protected dependent *t* tests. The purpose was to examine if significant differences existed between the scores in organization, word use, and grammar. Repeated measures ANOVA and subsequent protected dependent *t* tests

were selected over individual paired-samples t tests to prevent inflation of the Type I error rate (Cronk, 2004).

Results

Fifty valid questionnaire responses were collected, and data analysis indicated satisfactory levels of reliability. The reliability coefficients for the 31 Likert-scale items are presented in Table 1. According to Sax (1989), a reliability coefficient of more than .60 is required for a self-designed test or survey. The perceived effects of the writing instruction (Section I) achieved an alpha of .83. The alpha for Section II, the perception and evaluation of the scoring rubric, and Section III, the motivation scale, reached .74. and .69 respectively. The subsequent sections present the results of the six research questions of this study.

Table 1

Reliability Estimation for the Questionnaire Items

Categories	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Writing instruction effects	13 (#1-13)	.83
Scoring rubric effects	13 (#14-26)	.74
Learning motivation	5 (#27-31)	.69
Total	31	.85

RQ1: What are the perceived instructional effects of the writing program?

As shown in Table 2, the overall perceived instructional effect of the writing program was positive ($M = 4.01$). The subjects reported most favorably on learning the writing process ($M = 4.26$), on using collocations ($M = 4.16$), and on writing topic sentences ($M =$

4.12). In contrast, they were least assured on discussing with classmates ($M = 3.74$), on conducting self-correction ($M = 3.82$), and on using higher-level words ($M = 3.82$), although the mean scores still indicated positive learning effects in these aspects.

Table 2

Perceptions of the Instructional Effects of the Writing Program

Items	Mean	SD
In this writing program, I learned to . . .		
1. Write different types of paragraphs.	4.10	.65
2. Follow the writing process.	4.26	.49
3. Choose a proper topic for my paragraph.	4.02	.59
4. Generate ideas for my paragraph.	4.10	.51
5. Write a clear and proper topic sentence.	4.12	.63
6. Write supporting sentences.	4.04	.57
7. Avoid using the same words repeatedly.	3.84	.93
8. Use higher-level, precise words.	3.82	.73
9. Think about using proper words.	4.06	.71
10. Think about using proper collocations.	4.16	.62
11. Be more attentive to grammar and punctuation.	4.08	.70
12. Conduct more self-correcting.	3.82	.77
13. Conduct more discussion with classmates.	3.74	.76
Overall perceived instructional effect	4.01	.39

The written comments shown in Table 3 affirm the instructional effects in various areas, including content and idea development (see comments a and b), paragraph organization (comments c and d), and enhanced writing proficiency (comments e, f, g, and h). The comments seem to indicate that the instruction raised learner awareness of the writing

process and the complex nature of composing a quality piece of writing. Learners became aware of the writing process as requiring multiple knowledge and skills (comment i), and that it sometimes requires collective beyond individual efforts (comment j).

Table 3

Written Comments on Instructional Effects of the Writing Program

Comments	N	Coding
a. I learned to develop my ideas step by step.	1	CI
b. The content of my writing has become richer.	1	CI
c. I gained a clear idea of paragraph organization.	1	PO
d. I learned to organize my writing.	1	PO
e. My writing ability has been significantly upgraded.	1	WP
f. I can write more fluently.	1	WP
g. I have learned much about writing.	1	WP
h. I have made progress in writing skills.	4	WP
i. Producing a good piece of writing is not easy.	1	MS
j. We learned to generate ideas through peer discussion.	1	CE

Note. CI denotes content and idea development; PO denotes paragraph organization; WP denotes enhanced writing proficiency; MS denotes multiple knowledge and skills; and CE denotes collective efforts.

RQ2: Does the paragraph scoring rubric raise learner awareness of organization, word use, and grammar?

As shown in Table 4, the participants believed that the analytical rubric drew their attention to paragraph organization ($M = 3.96$), grammar ($M = 3.64$), and word use ($M = 3.88$) when they composed. The questionnaire results also indicated that the scoring rubric served well as a reminder ($M = 3.94$). The students showed a satisfactory level of

understanding the rubric criteria ($M = 3.88$), and a slightly lower, although still positive, mean score of remembering the items ($M = 3.62$). Cross-examination of these three mean scores helped depict how students used the rubric and their good understanding of the rubric items. Although they did not completely remember each item, they were able to refer to the hard copy of the rubric and use it as a general guideline and reminder of quality writing in the composition process.

Table 4

Perceived Effects of the Scoring Rubric

Items	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
14. I remember every item in the scoring rubric.	3.62	.75
15. I understand every item in the scoring rubric.	3.88	.75
16. The scoring rubric functioned as a reminder as I wrote.	3.94	.71
17. The rubric helped me focus on paragraph organization.	3.96	.57
18. The rubric enhanced my awareness of grammatical errors when I wrote.	3.64	.72
19. The rubric helped me focus on word use.	3.88	.59
Overall perceived effect of the rubric	3.82	.43

RQ3: Does the paragraph scoring rubric affect writing behaviors?

Table 5 shows learners' perceived effects of the rubric on writing behaviors. When using the rubric as a guideline, participants reported attempting to meet the criteria ($M = 4.12$). They also reported making substantial efforts to overcome their weaknesses after receiving rubric scores on the previous assignment ($M = 4.20$).

Table 5*Perceived Effects of the Rubric on Writing Behaviors*

Items	Mean	SD
With the use of the scoring rubric,		
20. I tried to meet the criteria while writing.	4.12	.63
21. I tried to overcome my weaknesses based on the rubric after I received the scores from a writing assignment.	4.20	.53
Overall effects of the rubric on participant behaviors	4.16	.47

RQ4: What is learner evaluation of the scoring rubric?

As shown in Table 6, participants held a highly-positive attitude toward the scoring rubric ($M = 4.11$). They believed the rubric facilitated self-diagnosis ($M = 4.36$), and they were glad to use it ($M = 4.24$). They also evaluated the rubric favorably for being specific ($M = 4.20$) and objective ($M = 4.18$). As indicated in the Instruments section, Item 26 was negatively worded; hence, the score of this item was reversed. The reversed mean score ($M = 3.57$) indicated that the students believed they could become better writers by following the rubric guidelines.

Table 6*Learner Evaluation of the Scoring Rubric*

Items	Mean	SD
22. The scoring rubric made me realize my weaknesses.	4.36	.53
23. The scoring rubric made grading more specific.	4.20	.61
24. The scoring rubric made grading more objective.	4.18	.66
25. I am in favor of using the rubric.	4.24	.74
26. Using or not using the rubric made no difference. (Reverse)	3.57	.91
Overall evaluation of the scoring rubric	4.11	.50

The written comments shown in Table 7 affirm the results in Table 6. Both the qualitative and quantitative results indicated that the greatest benefit of the rubric, as perceived by the learners, was its diagnostic function (see Item 22 in Table 6 and comment a in Table 7). Using the rubric in the writing process helped students become conscious of their weak areas in paragraph writing. The number of positive feedback in Table 7 (comment b) echoed the positive mean score of Item 25 and the overall mean score in Table 6. However, the negative input (comments c and d in Table 7) also elucidated the expanding values of the standard deviations for Items 25 and 26 in Table 6.

Table 7

Written Comments on the Paragraph Scoring Rubric

Comments	N
a. It made me realize my weaknesses.	4
b. Good /Great	4 /4
c. Not much difference	1
d. Good, but the scores are too direct and may discourage me.	1

RQ5: What is learner motivation toward English writing after using the rubric for 1 year?

As shown in Table 8, participants had high self-efficacy regarding their own writing progress ($M = 4.36$) and obtained a sense of achievement after using the rubric ($M = 4.20$). Although they were concerned with their performance as reflected in the scores ($M = 4.24$), the concern became a positive driving force, as indicated in learners' willingness to continue writing ($M = 4.04$). Writing was a pleasant experience for the students ($M = 3.70$), and the overall writing motivation was promising ($M = 4.11$).

Table 8*Learner Motivation of Writing in English after Using the Rubric*

Items	Mean	SD
After using the scoring rubric for 1 year,		
27. I think writing in English is pleasant.	3.70	.71
28. I think writing in English gives me a sense of achievement.	4.20	.67
29. I care about my writing scores.	4.24	.72
30. I think I have made progress in writing.	4.36	.60
31. I am willing to continue practicing writing.	4.04	.64
Overall motivation	4.11	.44

RQ6: Do learners make writing progress in organization, word use, and grammar following 1 year of instruction and use of the scoring rubric?

The scores of the participants' pre-, mid-, and post-test assignments in organization, word use, grammar, and overall performance (see Table 9) were compared to answer this research question. First, a one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare the organization scores of the participants at different times: the beginning of the first semester (i.e., pre-test), the end of the first semester (i.e., mid-test), and the end of the second semester (i.e., post-test). A significant effect was found, $F(2,52) = 11.569$, $p < .001$. Follow-up protected t tests showed that scores increased significantly from the pre-test ($M = 25.78$, $SD = 5.43$) to the mid-test ($M = 32.15$, $SD = 4.15$) and from the pre-test to the post-test ($M = 30.51$, $SD = 5.62$). No significant difference was found between the mid-test and the post-test.

Next, one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to compare the vocabulary and grammar scores of the participants at different times. No significant effect on vocabulary and grammar was found, $F(2,52) = 2.598$, $p > .05$ and $F(2,52) = 1.206$, p

> .05, respectively. No significant difference existed among the vocabulary pre-test ($M = 16.52$, $SD = 2.19$), the mid-test ($M = 15.00$, $SD = 2.13$), and the post-test ($M = 15.48$, $SD = 2.87$) means. In addition, no significant difference existed among the grammar pre-test ($M = 11.74$, $SD = 2.86$), the mid-test ($M = 10.78$, $SD = 2.65$), and the post-test ($M = 11.63$, $SD = 2.06$) means.

Finally, a one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare the overall scores of the participants at different times. A significant effect was found, $F(2,52) = 3.659$, $p < .05$. Follow-up protected t tests showed that scores increased significantly from the pre-test ($M = 54.04$, $SD = 6.00$) to the mid-test ($M = 57.93$, $SD = 6.11$) and from the pre-test to the post-test ($M = 57.67$, $SD = 6.56$). No significant difference was found between the mid-test and the post-test.

The significant differences in participants' overall writing performance and their improvement on paragraph organization affirm the results obtained from the first and second sections of the questionnaire.

Table 9

Writing Performance Mean Scores

	Organization	Word Use	Grammar	Overall
Pre-test	25.78	16.52	11.74	54.04
Mid-test	32.15	15.00	10.78	57.93
Post-test	30.51	15.48	11.63	57.67

Discussion

The present study was designed to examine the effects of a writing program that integrated an analytical rubric into paragraph composition instruction. The study results

indicated that the learners perceived the writing program to facilitate their paragraph writing competence, including word use, grammar, and organization (Tables 2 and 3). Learners perceived the positive effects of the writing program on lexical accuracy and lexical richness, and considered themselves more capable of tending to grammar and punctuation, and in conducting more self-correction in the writing process. In organization, with the mean values of the designated questionnaire items all exceeding 4.0, learners strongly perceived having learned from the writing program to construct well-structured paragraphs (i.e., with appropriate topic and supporting sentences).

An examination of learner perceptions on the effects of the scoring rubric yielded similar results. Learners believed that using the rubric helped raise their awareness of word use, syntactic accuracy, and paragraph organization (Table 4), and that it facilitated the use of metacognitive strategies on self-monitoring and goal setting (Items 20 and 21, respectively, in Table 5) in writing. The use of metacognition has been found in prior studies to be positively related to language achievement in EFL learners (Phakiti, 2003; Radwan, 2011).

The overall response to the use of the analytical rubric was favorable (Table 6). The rubric served facilitating, diagnostic, and evaluative functions in the writing program. First, the rubric guided the writing process as it made it lucid the qualities that were valued and the criteria based on which the grading decisions to be made (Hyland, 2003). Explicitness helped learners know what to focus on from the onset of the writing process. Second, learners liked the rubric best for helping them identify their weaknesses. This verifies the assertion by Weigle (2002) that analytical rubrics are particularly useful for L2 learners who tend to have uneven performance in different aspects of writing. By identifying areas that required more attention and development, the rubric fulfilled the

diagnostic function (Hughes, 2009). Finally, the rubric served as an evaluative tool in the writing course, and because of the explicitness feature of the rubric, learners considered the grading objective. This attitude will likely achieve beneficial backwash because, as Hyland (2003) indicated, when an assessment is made “as fair and transparent as possible” (p. 232), learners have lower learning anxiety. Hyland specifically suggested that L2 writing teachers establish explicit assessment criteria and explain these criteria in detail beforehand, both of which were implemented in the writing program of this study.

After using the rubric in the writing program for 1 year, learners showed positive motivation toward writing in English (Table 8). They were motivated both intrinsically (Item 27) and extrinsically (Item 29), and showed a high level of self-efficacy (Items 28 and 30), which have often been found to be positively associated with L2 achievement (Hsieh & Kang, 2010; Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2007). The results can also be discussed using motivation theory (Gardner, 1985), according to which motivation in language learning subsumes three components: motivational intensity (effort), desire to learn the language (want), and attitude toward learning the language (enjoyment). The learners in this study were willing to continue to practice writing (effort), cared about their own performance (want), and felt a sense of pleasure and achievement (enjoyment).

Despite the positive perceptions of the L2 learners on combining instruction and use of the rubric, a further examination of students’ writing production (Table 9) showed a less evident effect. Among the three major aspects of paragraph writing under investigation (i.e., word use, grammar, and paragraph organization), the writing program was found to be effective in significantly enhancing performance in paragraph organization. However, no improvement on word use and syntactic accuracy was observed. Such results indicate that merely raising awareness is insufficient, and that awareness does not necessarily

equate performance. Thus, teachers should incorporate more lexical and syntactic practice into writing instruction (Yeh et al., 2007) to transform awareness into effective language output. We therefore suggested identifying the major types of errors that target students made as the first step to tailored teaching (Crompton, 2011; Ong, 2011; Shokrpour & Fallahzadeh, 2007), which could include incorporating grammar lessons into writing classes (Muncie, 2002) or using remedial instruction (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2007). In addition to needs-based grammar instruction, teachers can employ editing practices to facilitate transferring language input into learners' writing output performance (Williams, 2005).

Writing performance, as indicated in Table 9, corresponds to the questionnaire findings. Participants reported having learned paragraph organization, and their writing showed significant progress in this aspect. However, they perceived less progress in word use and error correction. The analysis of their assignments similarly indicated no significant progress in the two skills. In view of the correspondence, the survey validity was reinforced. However, as consistent as the results may seem, there is a slight discordance in the results. Although the participants' overall response affirms their writing progress (Item 30), the scores in Table 9 show a lack of progress in grammar and lexis.

This discrepancy may be derived from the design of the writing assignments. Because of instructional and research ethical considerations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2005), instead of learning only one text type, participants were taught different text types in the writing program and composed narrative, expository, and argumentative types of text in the pre-test, mid-test, and post-tests. As discussed in the Literature Review section, different text types vary in linguistic and cognitive complexities. The text type of argumentation (i.e., post-test) was more complex linguistically and required higher-order

thinking than exposition (i.e., mid-test), and exposition more than narration (i.e., pre-test). Therefore, when no significant difference was observed between two tests (e.g., the grammar scores of the mid-test and post-test), because of the increased linguistic and cognitive complexities, we logically postulate that the learners made certain progress. Thus, in considering the text types of the three evaluations, the progress in writing performances (Table 9) appears promising.

Conclusion and Implications

This 1-year longitudinal time-series research study incorporated the analytical rubric into both writing instruction and assessment to examine its effects on improving EFL learners' text structure and accuracy. The results show that the rubric raises learner awareness of structure, improves writing organization, and alerts students to lexical usage and grammar. Believing that the rubric had helped them realize their writing weaknesses, students showed a highly-positive attitude toward its usage and a strong motivation for learning writing.

Several pedagogical implications can be drawn from the results. First, using an analytical rubric to guide writing is beneficial. Clearly articulated criteria raise student awareness, guide them to focus on various writing aspects, and urge them to act and be responsible for improving their writing. Instructors must therefore develop evaluation criteria to properly reflect course objectives (Hughes, 2009). Other than formal features, the criteria can also stress discourse and communication.

Second, an analytical rubric is an ideal tool for diagnosing writing problems and is particularly effective for L2 learners, who tend to have uneven performances in different areas (Weigle, 2002). Third, using the rubric to conduct self-diagnosis and self-

improvement enhances student motivation in learning to write. However, students should be allowed to turn in revisions. The opportunity to improve their scores could motivate learners, particularly those with strong extrinsic motivation (Dornyei, 2001), and the revision process sharpens their writing skills. Teachers, however, should also be cautious of over-correction. Previous research (El-Koumy, 2000) indicated that selective correction is more effective than overall correction. Fourth, we recommend that an L2 writing program be supplemented with the following: needs-based analysis of the major types of errors made by target learners (Crompton, 2011; Ong, 2011), integrated or remedial grammar lessons (Muncie, 2002; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2007; Yeh et al., 2007), and editing practice (Williams, 2005).

Teaching must be tailored to meet the specific needs of a particular group of learners; instructional decisions should be made by carefully considering the learning context (Hyland, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). When teaching EFL learners who are learning the language and writing simultaneously (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Hyland, 2003), both form (lexis and grammar) and discourse (text organization) should be emphasized. In the teaching and learning cycle, an analytical scoring rubric serves in facilitating, diagnostic, and evaluative functions to help increase learning motivation and self-efficacy, reinforce writing behaviors and use of metacognition, and enhance writing outcome.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

Our examination of using analytical rubrics on learning paragraph writing has certain limitations. First, because of the practical teaching situation, the participants were not divided randomly into comparison groups to compare the differential effects of using and

not using the analytical rubric. In addition, the pre-test, mid-test, and post-test belonged to different text types of increased linguistic and cognitive complexities. This can likely affect participant performances and, consequently, the interpretation of the results. In the future, it is suggested that researchers conduct quasi-experimental studies to investigate the effects of analytical scoring rubrics in improving the paragraph writing performance of L2 learners. Furthermore, the text-type variable must be considered when designing future research to enhance the validity of the study. Finally, individual and group interviews can be utilized as an additional data collection method to triangulate the results derived from questionnaires and writing pieces.

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Appendix: The Paragraph Scoring Rubric

Categories	Max Score	Score Obtained	Subtotal
【Content】			
The topic is developed clearly and completely.	10	_____	
The paragraph is informative and interesting to read.	10	_____	
【Organization】			
The topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.	10	_____	
The supporting sentences explain or support the topic sentence. Examples are provided.	15	_____	
An appropriate concluding sentence is included.	10	_____	
【Vocabulary and Sentence Structure】			
Proper words are used and the meanings are clear.	10	_____	
Higher vocabulary and varied words are used.	5	_____	
Sentence structures are varied.	5	_____	
【Grammar】			
Grammar is accurate.	15	_____	
【Mechanics】			
Spelling and the use of capitals and punctuation are correct.	15	_____	
【Format】			
The title is centered.	1	_____	
The first line is indented.	2	_____	
The paragraph is double spaced.	2	_____	
TOTAL	100		

Oral Reading Rate, Reading Comprehension, and Listening Comprehension in Learners of EFL

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Abstract

This study, motivated by child reading research in L1, explored the relationships between: 1) Two oral reading rates; 2) Reading comprehension; and 3) Listening comprehension in English in Japanese learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Results unexpectedly showed that the correlations between two rates and two modes of comprehension were low or non-significant, which are in marked contrast to high correlations reported for English-speaking children. In addition, and more surprisingly, the EFL readers exhibited only small incremental or even detrimental changes from habitual to maximum rate. These unexpected results are discussed in terms of English language teaching/learning practice and the possible effects of Japanese speech and orthography.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, habitual and maximum reading rates, listening comprehension, ESL readers

Introduction

There has been a great amount of research on the relationships between reading comprehension, oral reading rate, and listening comprehension in child readers in L1 contexts, which has made a number of important contributions to our understanding of reading comprehension and fluency. However, little research has been conducted on this issue in L2 contexts, although, there have been a few studies that have reported on the effects of reading fluency training on reading performances of EFL students (Akamatsu, 2008; Taguchi, 1997; Taguchi, Takayasu-Maass, & Gorsuch, 2004). As Grabe (2009; 2010) points out, fluent L1 readers can read texts between 250-300 words per minute (WPM), while L2 readers' speeds are typically at only one-half to one-third of these rates. Since “much of the L2 reading represents extensions from issues and developments initially explored in L1 reading research” (Grabe, 2009; p. xiv), we thus set out to investigate several issues centered around reading comprehension and fluency in Japanese learners of EFL.

Reading comprehension and oral reading rate

It is well documented that, in native English-speaking children, a strong association exists between reading comprehension and oral reading rate as conventionally measured by the number of words read aloud correctly in one minute (CWPM: correct words per minute) from an unpracticed passage (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp *et al.* 2001; Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006; Hosp & Fuchs, 2005; Jenkins, Fuchs, van den Broek *et al.*, 2003; Klauda & Guthrie, 2008; Slocum, Street, & Gilberts, 1995; but see Walczyk & Griffith-Ross, 2007). These correlations have been studied extensively under the rubric of curriculum-based measurement of reading (R-CBM). Hamilton and Shinn (2003) summarize its validity by

stating, “Criterion-related validity studies typically show correlations of .60 to .80 between R-CBM scores and commercial reading achievement tests and other reading tests” (p. 228). Some researchers reported even higher correlations, including an amazing correlation of .80. Fuchs et al. (2001), for example, obtained a correlation of .91 for middle school and junior high school students ($n = 70$). Hosp and Fuchs (2005) reported correlations of .79 ($n = 74$), .83 ($n = 81$), .84 ($n = 79$), and .82 ($n = 76$) for first to fourth graders, respectively.

The studies reviewed above motivated the present study to examine the relationship between oral reading rate and reading comprehension among learners of EFL, i.e., Japanese learners. While little or no research on this or related issues has been published (see Baker & Good, 1995; Grabe, 2009, 2010), one may assume that parallels can be drawn between English-speaking children and adult EFL learners, but the hypothesis that such is not the case is equally plausible. The rationale for this negative hypothesis can be twofold: the possible existence of (a) word-caller type readers and (b) slow, but good, comprehenders. First, there are few “word callers” among English-speaking children (Hamilton & Shinn, 2003; Meisinger, Bradley, Schwanenflugel, & Kuhn, 2010), but we may have an appreciable number of word-calling readers among EFL learners because word decoding seems easier to acquire than the higher linguistic systems. Although Haynes and Carr (1990) suggest that the common assumption that “the writing system is mastered easily and rapidly, quite early in the study of a new language” (p. 414) is not correct, the huge systems of phonology, vocabulary, syntax, semantics, and discourse seem far more difficult for EFL learners to acquire than orthographic rules. To the extent that this is tenable, the presence of word callers would lower the correlation between oral reading rate and reading comprehension.

Second, the existence of the opposite type, namely slow but good comprehenders, would also reduce the correlation between oral reading rate and reading comprehension. We know that EFL learners are generally slow readers as compared to native English readers (e.g., Chang, 2010; Taguchi et al., 2004), presumably because priority is often given to comprehension rather than oral reading rate in the practice of English language teaching and learning. However, there would be individual differences in oral reading rates even among such readers. We may thus find relatively slow, but relatively good comprehenders. In this regard, the question immediately raised is whether slow readers are, if asked to, able to read fast. We will call such readers potentially fast readers and define them, following Tsao and Weismer's (1997) procedure with some minor modification. To investigate the nature of English-speaking individuals' idiosyncratic speech rates, these researchers compared the differences between habitual and maximum oral reading/articulation rates in two fast and slow adult reader groups defined by the mean plus/minus 1 SD, and found that the change in articulation rates (which excluded pause durations) from habitual to maximum was greater for the fast group than for the slow group in terms of absolute values (90 wpm and 73 wpm) but about the same in terms of relative values (27% and 26%). Considering these patterns of English readers, we define potentially fast readers as those who read slowly at their habitual rates but relatively faster at their maximum rates. The basic question is thus whether we can identify slow, good comprehenders or not, and a further question is whether some of slow readers are potentially fast readers.

Listening comprehension: another potent variable

In addition to these issues, more comprehensive questions should be raised involving listening comprehension in the case of EFL readers. The relationship between listening comprehension and reading comprehension in L1 may be accounted for in the “simple view of reading” formulated by Hoover and Gough (1990), which holds that reading comprehension is the product of word decoding and listening comprehension (i.e., $\text{Reading comprehension} = \text{Word decoding} \times \text{Listening comprehension}$). For English-speaking children, correlations between listening and reading comprehension vary from nonsignificant to very high levels. Adlof, Catts, and Little (2006) obtained .80, .88, and 1.00 in second, fourth, and eighth grades, respectively (total $n = 604$); Curtis (1980), — .26 (n.s.) for second graders ($n = 20$), .66 for third graders ($n = 40$), and .74 for fifth graders ($n = 40$); Dreyer and Katz (1992) .38 for third graders ($n = 166$); and Hoover and Gough (1990) .46 for first graders ($n = 210$), .71 for second graders ($n = 206$), .80 for third graders ($n = 86$), and .87 for fourth graders ($n = 55$). These findings indicate that listening comprehension can account for a substantial amount of the variance of reading comprehension. In general, however, for poor or early-grade readers, reading comprehension is explained to a much greater extent by decoding than by listening comprehension, but the opposite is the case for good or late-grade readers (Catts, Hogan, & Adolf, 2005; Keenan, Betjemann, & Olson, 2008; see Bell and Perfetti, 1994, and Gernsbacher, Varner, and Faust, 1990, for high correlations between reading and listening comprehension among adult readers).

Turning to Japanese EFL learners, Hirai (1999) observed a high correlation between reading and listening comprehension, but we needed further information concerning oral reading rate and the relationship between these two modes of comprehension. Therefore,

rather than the single correlation between reading and listening comprehension, the following three-fold research question guides the present study: What relationships can we observe between 1) two oral reading rates, 2) reading comprehension, and 3) listening comprehension? Specifically, we asked whether the interactions between oral reading rate (maximum and habitual), reading comprehension, and listening comprehension are significant or not based on the two assumptions: written word decoding rate is associated with both oral reading rate and spoken word recoding rate; and spoken word recoding rate is also associated with listening comprehension. For example, if maximum rate represents word decoding fluency better than does habitual rate, it would be predicted that the correlation between maximum rate and comprehension is higher than that between habitual rate and comprehension. Also in the simple view of reading, it would be predicted that reading comprehension is correlated more highly with maximum rate times listening comprehension (i.e., the product of word decoding and listening comprehension) than with maximum rate alone or with listening comprehension alone.

In summary, we addressed the following research questions concerning Japanese EFL learners in the current study:

1. What correlations can we find between 1) two oral reading rates; 2) reading comprehension; and 3) listening comprehension?
2. Can we find two subgroups of readers: 1) word callers and 2) slow good comprehenders?
3. Can we find potentially fast readers?
4. Is reading comprehension correlated more highly with maximum rate times listening comprehension (i.e., the product of word decoding and listening comprehension) than with maximum rate alone or listening comprehension alone?

Method

Participants

One hundred and forty undergraduate students from four English Language classes and one psycholinguistics class at a national university in Japan took a commercially available TOEIC® IP test which the university administered as its annual English language test. Of these students, 119 students took both a Reading Comprehension Test which we developed as part of our larger project and an oral reading test. Of the 119 students, two were excluded because they did not complete all of the items of the Reading Comprehension Test. The remaining 117 students (56 females and 61 males) thus served as the subjects of this study. All were native speakers of Japanese and had mainly studied English as a foreign language in formal school settings. Most of them were freshman or sophomore students and most were between the age of 18 to 20 years.

Test materials

The TOEIC® IP test was composed of a listening comprehension section (n = 100 items) and a reading comprehension section (n = 100 items). We will henceforth designate these categories as Listening Comprehension (LC) and Reading Comprehension 1 (RC1), respectively. (Note that, while the reliability of the TOEIC® IP test is known to be high, the reliability for the present subjects was unavailable because the information about item responses was kept confidential.) The allotted time for each test section was 60 min.

The Reading Comprehension Test we constructed consisted of four passages (356, 265, 295, and 341 words in length) and was randomly selected from various sources; and it will hereby be called Reading Comprehension 2 (or RC2). The readability values of the Flesch reading ease scale for them were 55.4, 56.6, 52.2, and 61.4, respectively. For each

passage, 10 questions about the text were asked. Each question had four choices and the subject chose the most appropriate choice from among four options. In a pilot study, 10 graduate students were given the initial version of this test; and the pre-test showed that the students were able to complete the test in about one hour.

For the Oral Reading Test, two short, decodable passages were taken from Crystal and House's (1982; 1988) *Farm* script, which was originally composed by Huggins (1967). [Note: Crystal and House's version is slightly different from Huggins'. Tsao and Weismer, 1997, referred to in the introduction, also employed Crystal & House's *Farm*]. The passage of Oral Reading Test 1 consisted of the first nine sentences of the original story; and that of Test 2, consisted of the last nine sentences of the same story (where four segments ending with a semi-colon were regarded as sentences). The passage of Test 2 was a continuation of that of Test 1 with one sentence deleted between them. The length of the passages (141 and 146 words) was considered appropriate for most of our subjects on the basis of our informal observations of their oral reading performances in regular English classrooms. The readability values of the Flesch reading ease index for them are 100.0 and 91.0, respectively, which means that the two passages are very easy (i.e., appropriate for early-grade levels). The two test passages are as follows:

Passage 1

John and I went to the farm in June. The sun shone all day, and wind waved the grass in wide fields that ran by the road. Most birds had left on their trek south, but old friends were there to greet us. Piles of wood had been stacked by the door, left there by the man who lived twelve miles down the road. The stove would not last till dawn on what he had cut, so I went and chopped more till the sun set. The sky stays light quite late as far north as that, but I knew it would be a cold night. The

car seat was piled high with stuff, but it would have to stay there for the night. It was too far to go to take it all out now. Food was the next thing.

Passage 2

My box with most of the food was deep in the car, and it was too dark now to dig my way down to it. When served hot, hash and beans taste quite good if it's been a long time since you last ate. We had some bread, of a sort that you find in small stores far from the towns, where the new ways to make bread, and the new types of flour have not yet reached. We had passed such a place on the road, and had stocked up with some things that can't be bought in a town. Things like home baked bread; and real cheese made from cow's milk; jam with real fruit in it; and fresh milk with rich deep cream on top. We shall not have a chance to buy these in the cold months that are to come.

Crystal and House (1982) examined 14 native American English speakers' oral reading rates, and presented the mean durations in seconds for the first four sentences of the *Farm* script passage (313 words). For our purposes, it is noted that the mean oral reading rate was 179 wpm for the slower group ($n = 7$) and 231 wpm for the faster group ($n = 7$).

In the current study, Oral Reading Test 1 (OR1) was intended to measure subjects' habitual reading rates and Oral reading Test 2 (OR2) was intended to measure their maximum reading rates.

Procedure

The TOEIC® IP test was administered first, and about two weeks later the Reading Comprehension Test was given as the course requirements in each class. The test time for the Reading Comprehension Test was not limited, because we thought that we could

find more slow, good comprehenders in this condition. The time varied from 45 to 75 minutes for most of the subjects.

The Oral Reading Test was then conducted individually in a quiet room of the university during regular class hours. The subject was first instructed to try to accurately read Passage 1 out loud at his/her habitual, comfortable rate, and, after a short break, instructed to read Passage 2 out loud as fast, but as accurately, as possible.

The subject started reading with the experimenter's utterance, "Start," and stopped reading when the experimenter said, "Stop," exactly after one minute. Each subject's oral reading performance was audio-recorded with Roland's Edirol (R-09).

Subgroups of EFL readers

As shown in Table 1, the subgroups (i.e., fast, good readers, slow, good readers, fast, poor readers, and slow, poor readers) were defined by the following criteria. We used the group mean plus/minus 0.5 SDs (rather than 1 SD) as a cutoff point to obtain a sufficient number of subjects in each sub-group. Thus, for habitual reading rate, readers who read 123 wpm or more were fast readers and those who read 100 wpm or less were slow readers; for maximum reading rate, those who read 135 wpm or more were fast readers and those who read 112 wpm or less were slow readers. For Reading Comprehension 1, subjects who scored 230 points or higher were good readers and those who scored 173 points or lower were poor readers; for Reading Comprehension 2, those who scored 25 points or higher were good readers and those who scored 20 points or lower as poor readers. Potentially fast readers were defined as those who were slow readers in the habitual rate condition, but fast readers in the maximum rate condition.

Table 1*Subgroups of EFL readers*

	Habitual reading rate		Maximum reading rate	
	n	Word per min	n	Word per min
Fast readers	35	123 or more	38	135 or more
Slow readers	34	100 or less	33	112 or less
	Reading comp 1		Reading comp 2	
	n	Score (pts.)	n	Score (pts.)
Good readers	35	230 or more	31	25 or more
Poor readers	40	173 or less	39	20 or less

Results

Cronbach's alpha for Reading Comprehension 2 was .65. (When six items with weak discriminatory power were excluded, Cronbach's alpha became .69, but we used the original 40 items for analysis.) For Oral Reading Rate, the first author counted correctly-read words (CWPM, hereafter simply "wpm") and used them as the subjects' oral reading rates.

Research questions 1: What correlations can we find between 1) two oral reading rates, 2) reading comprehension, and 3) listening comprehension?

The main findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Means, SDs, correlations for reading comprehension 1 (RC1), reading comprehension 2 (RC2), oral reading rate 1 (OR1), oral reading rate 2 (OR2), and listening comprehension (LC) (N = 115).

	RC1	RC2	OR1	OR2	LC
RC1	-				
RC2	.44**	-			
OR1	.23*	.12	-		
OR2	.29**	.23*	.82***	-	
LC	.55**	.34*	.23*	.22*	-
Mean	200.3	22.6	111.6	123.7	239.7
SD	54.7	4.8	22.1	23.3	58.4

The correlations between reading comprehension performances and oral reading rates are surprisingly low (.23, $p < .05$, and .29, $p < .01$) or even non-significant (.12), which are far lower than those found for native English-speaking readers. The correlation between reading comprehension performances and listening comprehension were moderate (.55, $p < .01$, and .34, $p < .01$) while those between listening comprehension and reading rates 1 and 2 were low (.23, $p < .05$, and .22, $p < .05$).

Research question 2: Can we find two subgroups of readers: word callers and slow, good comprehenders?

The answer to this question is in the affirmative as shown in Table 3. We can identify the learners in the fast, poor comprehender group ($n = 8$) as word callers, whereas we can also find slow, good comprehenders ($n = 9$).

Table 3

Four subgroups and their means (SDs) of reading comprehension 1 (RC1), reading comprehension 2 (RC2), oral reading rate 1 (OR1), oral reading rate 2 (OR2), and listening comprehension (LC).

Subgroup	RC1	RC2	OR1	OR2	LC
Fast, good (n = 13)	283.8 (39.6)	23.9 (3.5)	138.4 (14.7)	144.5 (15.4)	283.8 (39.6)
Fast, poor (n = 8)	141.7 (19.7)	22.2 (5.1)	141.0 (10.9)	141.2 (13.3)	215.6 (64.6)
Slow, good (n = 9)	241.3 (13.6)	23.3 (3.7)	86.5 (17.9)	97.6 (9.1)	262.5 (34.4)
Slow, poor (n = 18)	141.4 (19.4)	19.3 (5.0)	84.4 (12.5)	96.0 (18.5)	214.7 (44.4)

The general picture which emerges from Table 2 is the following. For the good groups, a 2×2 ANOVA with mode (RC1 and LC) as a within-subject factor and group (fast and slow) and as a between-subject factor showed that neither the effect of mode nor the interaction between mode and group was significant, $F(1, 19) = 1.83, p > .10$, and $F(1, 19) < 1.0$, while the effect of group approached significance, $F(1, 19) = 3.54, p < .10$. For the poor groups, an ANOVA indicated that the effect of mode was significant, $F(1, 25) = 61.29, p < .001$, but more importantly, neither the effect of rate nor the interaction of mode and rate was not - both $F_s(1, 25) < 1.0$. (Only the findings based on the RC1 scores are presented here because the results for the RC1 and RC2 scores were essentially similar.)

Research question 3: Can we find potentially fast readers?

Before answering this question, it is worth mentioning that the EFL readers are slow readers, the mean habitual rate being 112 wpm (Table 1), roughly comparable to the rates

for the average English-speaking children in third grade (e.g., Hamilton & Shinn, 2003; Mercer, Campbell, Miller et al., 2000; Wood, 2006). The fastest reader's maximum rate was 182 wpm, and the second fastest reader's was 172 wpm. In Crystal and House (1982), the mean rate was 175 wpm for the slow group and 232 wpm for the fast group; and in the repeated condition of Tsao and Weismer (1997), the mean was 223 wpm for the slow group and 307 wpm for the fast group.

Such being the case, Table 3 suggests that there were no potentially fast readers among either the slow, good group ($n = 8$) or the slow, poor group ($n = 9$). As reported above, the effect of rate was not significant, $F(1, 25) < 1.0$. Let us now turn to the slow and fast readers ($n = 35$ and $n = 34$, respectively) to answer this third question. Table 4 presents the means of habitual and maximum oral reading rates for the fast and slow groups.

Table 4

Means (SDs) of habitual and maximum oral reading rates for the fast and slow groups.

	Habitual	Maximum	Difference
Fast readers	138.0	144.8	6.8
($n = 35$)	(12.4)	(15.1)	
Slow readers	86.5	97.6	11.1
($n = 34$)	(9.1)	(17.9)	

In general, the incremental changes are surprisingly small, only 6.8 wpm (5%) for the fast group and 11.1 wpm (13%) for the slow group (cf. 90 wpm, 26% increases for the slow group ($n = 15$) and 73 wpm, 27% increases for the slow group ($n = 15$) in the Tsao & Weismer (1997) study). A 2×2 ANOVA revealed that the interaction between group and rate approached significance in terms of wpm, $F(1, 67) = 3.67$, $p = .06$, suggesting that the increase tended to be greater for the slow group than for the fast group. Superficially,

it may appear to suggest that there are potentially fast readers among the slow group. The fact is, however, that the mean maximum rate was only 98 wpm for the slow group, which is far slower than the mean habitual rate for the fast group (138 wpm). We thus conclude that there are no potentially fast readers among the slow readers in this study.

Research question 4: Is reading comprehension correlated more highly with maximum rate times listening comprehension (i.e., the product of word decoding and listening comprehension) than with maximum rate alone or listening comprehension alone?

We first note that the correlation between OR2 and RC1 was significantly higher than that between OR1 and RC1, $t(114) = 2.26, p < .05$, and the correlation between OR2 and RC2 was significantly higher than that between OR1 and RC2, $t(114) = 10.76, p < .001$. Thus, as was predicted, reading comprehension is correlated more highly with maximum rate than with habitual rate.

The correlations between RC1 and OR1*LIS, between RC1 and OR2*LIS, between RC2 and OR1*LIS, and between RC2 and OR2*LIS were .51, .55, .31, and .37, respectively. A comparison between these findings and those in Table 1 suggests that the simple view of reading does not apply to the present EFL readers' reading comprehension.

Before concluding this section, we should mention one baffling result. Most surprisingly, as many as 20 readers read *more slowly* in the maximum rate condition than in the habitual rate condition. One question raised here is how this decreased group is characterized in terms of reading comprehension, oral reading rate, and listening comprehension. We thus asked how this group compares with the greatest gain group of 20 readers who increased their maximum reading rates to the greatest degrees. The

means (SDs) for RC1, RC2, OR1, OR2, and LC for these groups are shown in Table 5. We will briefly discuss these results in the next section.

Table 5

Means (SDs) of reading comprehension 1 (RC1), reading comprehension 2 (RC2), oral reading rate 1 (OR1), oral reading rate 2 (OR2), and listening comprehension (LC) for the decreased and the increased group.

Group	RC1	RC2	OR1	OR2	LC
Decreased (n = 20)	201.3 (73.2)	21.2 (5.4)	124.5 (26.6)	114.3 (25.6)	245.0 (63.4)
Increased (n = 20)	215.3 (46.9)	24.0 (4.0)	103.5 (13.3)	133.8 (13.8)	237.5 (47.9)

Discussion

One striking feature of the EFL readers in this study is a low or even non-significant correlation between oral reading rate and reading comprehension (Table 1), which is in marked contrast to the case of native English-speaking children (e.g., Fuchs et al., 2001). The existence of fast, poor readers as well as slow, good readers certainly lowers the correlation. However, the low correlation requires a deeper interpretation. We speculate that the fundamental cause of the discrepancy between oral reading rate and reading comprehension involves the readers' slow oral reading rates and the test procedure. It may sound somewhat exaggerated to say that "unless the reader reads fast enough, that is, around 200 wpm or more, he is not going to comprehend what he is reading" (Smith & Holmes, 1971, p. 412), but this statement seems to have some truth for the present EFL readers. It appears that, due to their slow rates, for many readers, oral reading more or less becomes one thing and reading comprehension is another; more basically, their oral reading rate has not developed in tandem with their reading comprehension. The exact

developmental course of these two reading skills is far from clear at this stage of research. However, we will present the simplest explanation of the low correlation that, to our knowledge, no previous researchers on EFL reading have explicitly put forth.

The simplest explanation goes like this. The RC1 and RC2 scores are on untimed comprehension measures which do not include a reading rate component in them. In such a condition, some slow readers can perform adequately on those measures by reading the relevant phrases and sentences repeatedly. Repeated reading increases reading rate and also helps the readers reduce their working memory constraints. Such readers, if any, would be slow readers on the oral reading test and identified as good readers on the basis of the reading comprehension tests. But it is important to emphasize that, given a timed reading comprehension test, they would become poor comprehenders. All this means is that the low correlations we obtained in the current study can be viewed as reflecting, at least partially, a test-instrumental artifact. Thus, if we had measured the EFL readers' reading comprehension skills on a timed reading comprehension test, the dissociation between oral reading rate and reading comprehension might have been largely reduced, resulting in a higher correlation. In this sense, and on the assumption that oral reading rate measures a great deal of word decoding in EFL readers, the above conclusion that Gough's simple view of reading (Hoover & Gough, 1990) does not apply to the present EFL readers is somewhat misleading. On the other hand, as for native English-speaking children, although the effect of repeated reading on reading comprehension measured with a standardized test would not be negligible, the effect size would be far smaller as compared to that for the present EFL readers. The verification of this simplest explanation, however, is left to future research.

Perhaps the most surprising finding was that the incremental changes from habitual to maximum rate were very small for the EFL readers. Moreover, as many as 20 readers read *more slowly* in the time-pressured maximum reading condition ($M = 114$ wpm) than in the habitual reading condition ($M = 125$ wpm), the difference being -10.3 wpm (-8.2%). These findings may be unique to the EFL readers in this study. Breznitz (1987, Experiment 4) had 60 English-speaking children in first grade read passages orally in self-paced and fast conditions, and found the rate differences averaged 20% faster in the latter condition in terms of reading time (mean wpm rates, unreported). Why then are the incremental changes small in the present study, and why did some readers decrease their reading rates in the maximum rate condition? One likely answer may involve the unexpected condition which was produced in the experiment. Although the instructions of the first oral reading task certainly included “Read at a normal rate,” some readers, but not all, might have wanted to display their good oral reading performances in this task. A good oral reading performance naturally includes reading fluency. Thus, their oral reading rates in the first task probably unconsciously became near or at their maximum rates.

Another plausible interpretation for the small incremental changes, which we prefer, is that most readers in this study learned to read English at slow, almost fixed rates. Virtually no readers had been given time-pressured reading tests (Note: It may be, however, that as the TOEIC test includes a reading rate component in that 100 items are given in 60 min., and some examinees complain that they cannot finish the test within the allotted time, that at least some high scorers may be regarded as fast readers), nor had they had rapid reading training (cf. Chang, 2010; Taguchi et al. 2004). In the course of their English language learning in formal school settings, overemphasis on accuracy in

classrooms seems to have constrained fluent oral reading. Moreover, the amount of oral reading practice is extremely limited. Pikulski and Chard (2005) state, “Most [L1] readers spend a minuscule amount of time doing oral reading as compared to silent reading” (p. 510). This seems to be much truer with EFL readers. A consequence of this learning practice is considered to have resulted in the very small intra-subject variability at their slow oral reading rates. It seems reasonable to conclude that the readers had reached a plateau phase of slow oral reading rates as a consequence of the English language teaching/learning practice in Japan. Regarding this tentative conclusion, we should hastily point out that the EFL readers’ slow reading rate is different from the constant rate implied in Carver’s (1980) ‘reading’ theory that maintains that “[native English-speaking] individuals typically read at a constant rate” (p. 192). Carver was dealing with readers’ relatively constant ‘habitual’ rates.

Conclusions

The major findings are summarized as follows:

- *Research question 1. What correlations can we find between 1) two oral reading rates, 2) reading comprehension, and 3) listening comprehension?*

The correlations between reading comprehension and oral reading rates are low or non-significant, which are marked contrast with those found for native English-speaking readers, whereas the correlations between reading comprehension and listening comprehension are moderate.

- *Research question 2. Can we find two subgroups of readers: word callers and slow, good comprehenders?*

Yes, we find such subgroups, which lower the correlations among oral reading rate, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.

- *Research question 3. Can we find potentially fast readers?*

No, we failed to find such readers. Slow readers seem to have reached a plateau phase of slow, inflexible oral reading rates.

- *Research question 4. Is reading comprehension correlated more highly with maximum rate times listening comprehension (i.e., the product of word decoding and listening comprehension) than with maximum rate alone or listening comprehension alone?*

No, it was not found in the present condition. As such, this finding is also taken as a prototypical feature of the readers of EFL in the current study.

Further research and implications

In this study, we have found that some readers read more slowly in the maximum rate condition than in the habitual rate condition. Including this unexpected finding, there remain many related questions and implications. We will briefly discuss four of them. First, we need to learn about the differences in scores between traditional untimed versus timed reading comprehension measures. A future challenge is to construct a valid and reliable timed reading comprehension test, which targets a sample of readers with a particular range of reading rates. Second, we need to learn more about the performance of oral reading itself. Obviously, oral reading involves multiple sub-processes: phonological, orthographic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic sub-processes, in addition to the rapid access of the mental lexicon. To reveal the mechanism of these sub-processes, one step is to carry out more precise analyses for oral reading performance; and more specifically, while in this study we measured reading rate by means of correct words per minute (wpm), it is certainly more informative to measure reading rates in smaller units. Indeed, the articulatory rate, measured in syllables per second, may be a better indicator of reading rate and so may be the number of phonemes per second (see Hall et al., 1999). Third, we have to locate the source of slow reading rates among various EFL readers. Are Japanese readers of EFL particularly slower readers than other readers with different language backgrounds? Due to the fact that Japanese learners

have a native language which uses the syllable as the smallest orthographic unit, have they overlearned syllable processing and had great difficulties processing words composed of phoneme-carrying graphemes (Koda, 2004; Yamada & Leong, 2005)? Cross-cultural studies are particularly in need. Fourth, is it practically possible for Japanese EFL readers who have reached a plateau of slow fixed-rate able to acquire fast-reading techniques? Perhaps this is the greatest challenge for researchers of fluent reading in EFL. Several attempts to help slow readers read fast have been made not only in L1 (Herman, 1985; Levy, Abello, & Lysynchuk, 1997; Rasinski, 2003; Tan & Nicholson, 1997), but also, in L2 (Akamatsu, 2008; Taguchi, 1997; Taguchi, Takayasu-Maass, & Gorsuch, 2004). However, it has yet to be determined which approach is the most appropriate for the readers of EFL in this study; and as such, much research is left for future endeavours.

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Book Review

Applied Linguistics and Materials Development.

Brian Tomlinson (Ed.), London/New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013. Pp. ix + 272.

Reviewed by Darío Luis Banegas

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Bridging the distance between theory and practice is a recurrent concern in foreign language teaching. The literature is rich in understanding the tensions between what applied linguists and ELT experts suggest and what teachers and learners do in the classroom. *Applied Linguistics and Materials Development*, edited by Brian Tomlinson, contributes to this issue by examining the gaps between theory and practice in relation to materials development in the market so as to provide learners with effective ways of learning. Thus, Tomlinson has teachers, researchers, and materials writers as the intended audience of this edited collection.

The book opens with a reflective introduction through which Tomlinson revisits the relationship between theory and practice and principled practices of materials development. The introduction is followed by four parts which contain between four and five chapters. All chapters follow a structure the authors usually term as *what we know* about a topic, *what we think we know* about it, and *what we would like to know*. At the end of each part, Tomlinson summarises the main discussions and offers further

reflections on each area advanced by the contributors. With reference to contributors, there are 20 experts whose affiliations evidence the international spirit of this book. Authors are based in Australia, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, the UK, and the USA. This multiplicity of settings also illustrates a widespread interest in effective materials development.

Part 1 “Learning and teaching languages” includes four chapters which deal with second language acquisition and materials, the role of semantics in the classroom, and an emphasis on viewing coursebooks, for example, as learning materials rather than teaching aids. In this respect, contributors in this part offer possible paths for developing materials targeted at teacher educators and young learners. Tomlinson examines principles of language learning and materials as found in the literature but he notes that future reports should be based on classroom research of language classes in order to move from principles of materials evaluation to principles of material use derived from teachers’ real practices. In so doing, we will narrow the distance between theories and principles proposed by applied linguistics and materials enactment led by teachers.

Part 2 “Aspects of language” contains five chapters focusing on spoken language research, vocabulary, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and intercultural competence. However, the authors of these chapters share their interest in the coursebook as a unit of analysis since their reports emerge from coursebook analysis through different discourse research tools. Tomlinson, in his comments to this part, highlights that coursebook publishers offer very little about the guiding principles behind their products. The editor wonders about the extent to which what we know about language learning and language use informs coursebooks and other learning materials. Nonetheless, he does acknowledge the fact that publishers usually pilot their materials and carry out market research, but the

outcomes are not shared with a wider audience.

Part 3 “Language skills” comprises five chapters. While the first two chapters examine reading from a general stance (e.g. types of reading texts, types of reading, and strategies) and among young learners, the remaining chapters investigate materials development for listening, writing, and speaking. Unlike the previous parts, the outcomes reported in these chapters seem to indicate a stronger alignment between research and materials for skills development. Tomlinson observes that materials have started to include personalisation and engaging topics and sources of input. Yet, as the editor argues, reading is still mainly intensive and materials, although framed in skills development, are more concerned with language practice. Therefore, skills development continues to be treated differently from what learners do in their L1.

Part 4 “Curriculum development” contains four chapters which go beyond the classroom. Authors in this last part of the book discuss aspects such as language policy, perspectives on influential language pedagogies (e.g. task-based learning and problem-solving learning) and their impact on materials, modes of delivery of materials as seen in a continuum from teacher-talk to blended learning to self-access materials, and last the relationship between testing materials and language testing washback. Tomlinson suggests that the variety and innovations underlying the materials in Part 4 should be seen as signs of improvement as new technologies have become useful tools in the quest for effective materials. Nevertheless, the reports in this part also warn that commercial materials, even when they appear as digital tools and beyond the printed page, are still dominated by a focus on form at the expense of meaning.

In conclusion, *Applied Linguistics and Materials Development* provides materials writers, and researchers with principled frameworks, pedagogical tools, and issues to

reflect and act on. However, those who approach this book should do it with a welcoming and critical eye since some may observe that its ambitious scope, given the number of areas covered, is a shortcoming. More importantly, this book should be seen by teachers as an invitation to become critical materials users and engage in professional development by designing or adapting their own materials under the light of informed decisions which integrate language learning theories and classroom practices in their contexts.

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Book Review~~Book Review~~

The ELT Daily Journal: Learning to Teach ESL/EFL.

Hall Houston, Anthimeria Press, 2013.

Reviewed by Brian Wadman

Mahidol University, Thailand

The ELT Journal by Hall Houston is an introductory journal/book designed for the novice language teacher just entering the field of English Language teaching. It is a comprehensive package of ideas, tips and resources. The premise of the book is built on the idea that a self-reflective teacher is a successful one. Of the 136 pages that make up the journal, 105 of the pages are blank, white-lined notebook pages for the new teacher to do their own critical self-reflection. Located at the bottom of each of the white-lined pages is a footnote of advice (in less than 50 words) under the categories: Icebreakers, Warmers, Closers, Classic Activities, Something to Ponder, Stop It! and Top Tips. At the completion of the journal pages are two additional sections; one chapter offers recommendations from 15 “legendary” experts in the field and the final section lists additional resources in the form of book suggestions, websites, periodicals, blogs and organizations for the new teacher to join.

Houston describes the goals of the journal as follows, “the book’s use is flexible; the

pages contained here can be filled up in any of the following ways:

- Planning lessons
- Taking notes in a teacher training course (CELTA, TESOL, TKT, etc.)
- Keeping a diary during the beginning of your teaching career
- Jotting down sudden brainstorm
- Capturing thoughts and reflections while teaching overseas
- Highlighting important points that come up in a staff meeting
- Creating rough drafts of articles about teaching ESL/EFL” (p.IX)

To start off, the reader is introduced to veteran New Zealand professor Dr. Rose Senior. In less than four pages, Senior offers the pedagogical pathway to develop from a “newly-qualified, novice teacher to confident and competent language teaching professional”. She addresses four major problems the new teacher faces - pacing issues, timing issues, syllabus issues and communication issues. Senior then makes suggestions on how to improve the social climate of the classroom; including advising how to develop rapport with students and making classes more student-centered. A minor criticism of Senior’s introduction is the lack of any data to support the solutions she offers. To be fair, as the journal was written for the newly trained teacher, the simple, unempirical explanations she offers may be for their benefit.

One weakness of the journal is neither Houston nor Senior address the issue of which grammar to teach, standard or Lingua Franca English (LFE). Houston writes in one footnote “take a few notes of the most common or important errors you hear... you can mention the errors in a feedback session after the speaking activity ends. (p.9)” Houston leaves it up to the teacher to decide what constitutes an error. But in Lingua Franca English, more than one form can be seen as the standard. “We are now unable to treat English as a homogenous language characterized by a uniform norm or grammatical system... English is a heterogeneous language with multiple norms and diverse grammars

(Canagarajah, 2006 p. 231, 232).

By failing to mention LFE, Houston could be directing novice teachers to reproduce a hegemonic norm of English whose usage is clearly dependent on context. As this review is being addressed to the Asian EFL Journal, an area of growing usage of LFE, the omission of this topic is significant. This is a difficult issue for the new teacher to confront, but one they must grapple with as they are developing habits which will be difficult to change if not attended to until later in their career.

Another criticism of the journal is that Houston only mentions the word culture **twice** in a book which is designed for teaching English as a second or foreign language. Culture which is part of the fabric of language plays a prominent role in second language acquisition. New teachers especially, need to make culture a fundamental consideration in their approach. In one footnote, Houston writes “find out more about students’ cultural background, skills and interests. Take a few minutes in each lesson to get your students to talk about themselves” (p.77). Culture and identity, as well as all of the knowledge students bring with them into the class, must be used as a bridges to transfer the learner into the acquisition of their new language. Are a few minutes really enough? Culture should have been mentioned more here.

Despite some of the book’s failings, this is a guide I would still recommend for the new teacher. Houston’s pedagogical approach of providing space for teachers to work out the issues by themselves is of sound value. As each situation is unique, there isn’t one approach that will work for all teachers. While The ELT Daily Journal only begins to unravel the complexity of teaching English as a second or foreign language, this is a guide I still wish I had possessed when getting started. It will help the new teacher towards a better understanding of the profession and allow them to more easily survive in

their first year(s).

Reference:

Canagarajah, S. (2006). Changing communicative needs, revised assessment objectives: testing English as an International Language. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 3(3), 229-242.

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Book Review

Grammar and Beyond 2.

Randi Reppen. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012, Pp. ix + 399.

Reviewed by Sarab Yousif Al-Akraa

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Teachers who intend to teach the authentic form, meaning and use of English grammar to their ESL students as it occurs in real life should take a look at Randi Reppen's *Grammar and Beyond 2*. This book is a series of four books for beginning to advanced level ESL students. All books in the series focus on the grammar structures most commonly used in North America with an emphasis on the application of grammar structures to academic writing. Book 2 of this series is designed for intermediate adult ESL students. Reppen presents grammar points in such a realistic way by using contemporary texts. Additionally, the author connects grammar points to specific application within writing.

The main goal of this book is to draw ELL students' attention to the structures that are commonly used in written and spoken North American English. The tasks and activities are designed to help students avoid the most common mistakes that English language learners make. For example, each grammar unit has tasks that require students to find and correct the common mistakes made by non-native English speakers. Moreover, the text of each chapter introduces substantial vocabulary from the Academic Word List.

The book is organized in a level-appropriate order in which students can master syntactical rules of the target language. It is recommended that the teacher should follow the same order to increase the students' knowledge of structure gradually. *Grammar and Beyond 2* consists of 32 units. The typical format of the individual unit begins with a demonstration of realistic context illustrating how that unit's grammar is used in the real world. This demonstration is followed by activities that guide students to analyze the form, meaning, and use of the structure. The second section of each unit presents the grammar point of the unit in charts that describe the structure and rules in an easy-to-understand summary providing the students with relevant guidance on the form, meaning, and use of the target grammar. Each unit also includes some exercises that motivate students to apply what they have learned in a variety of natural contexts, followed by 'Avoid Common Mistakes' tasks introducing students to common errors that are made by English language learners. The final section contains writing tasks related to applying the grammatical lesson in writing. This composition task consists of two parts: the first part is a pre-writing task in which the students can use a model for analyzing grammar in writing; the second part is the final writing task where students can apply their knowledge of the unit's grammar in writing.

Although the book has many strong points, it has its own share of shortcomings. *Grammar and Beyond 2*, as mentioned in the preface, places focus on using realistic texts in presenting grammar points that are appropriate for intermediate level classrooms. However there seems to be a mismatch between the level of grammar and vocabulary knowledge that ESL/EFL learners need in order to be able to read and understand these texts and the level of knowledge that is being conveyed. In part 3 'Nouns, Determiners, and Pronouns', it is interesting how the author explains count and noncount nouns.

However, I think there appears to be a problem in explaining noun determiners. For instance, the author includes pronouns (my, our, etc.,) which are listed on page 105 as determiners. Explaining this kind of information to learners who don't speak much English can be confusing making grammar learning more difficult.

Overall, this book has many positive features. The content of the book depends on authentic material that provides students with the opportunity to understand the actual usage of the target language. The exercises develop students' ability to understand grammar structure, apply grammar points in their academic writing, and increase their awareness of the most common mistakes made by English language learners. Finally, deductive approach is used in presenting grammar. For example, grammar points are disclosed in the reading text which precedes each unit, and then charts are used in presenting the pattern or the form of the structure.

In summary, I believe *Grammar and Beyond 2* will be a solid resource and a valuable guide that aligns with English learners' goals in learning grammar both authentically and practically. Therefore, I would highly recommend using it in intermediate adult ESL and EFL classroom.

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Book Review

English through Climate Change.

Walter Leal Filho and Evangelos Manolas (Eds.). Orestiada: Department of Forestry and Management of the Environment and Natural Resources, Democritus University of Thrace, 2012. Pp. 198. ISBN 978-960-9698-04-7.

Reviewed by Eirene C. Katsarou

Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

Climate change as one of the greatest challenges in history is most eloquently addressed in this book of thirteen authentic chapters written by experts in the field. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach on the topic, this volume manages to fulfill successfully its primary aim through an in-depth presentation of the complicated nature of climatic change and its consequences on human welfare and natural ecosystems alike while at the same time it also serves as a collection of valuable material to be used by students who wish to get acquainted with the terminology in one of the key areas of environmental studies, i.e. climate change, allowing them at the same time to improve their reading skills in English. Given the notable lack of teaching materials in the area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), *English through Climate Change* could successfully be adopted by environmental science departments in Greece and other countries as it combines a series of original specialized texts followed by appropriate tasks and activities.

In the introductory chapter ‘The Challenge of Climate Change’ (1-12) climate change is defined as one of the greatest challenges humanity has faced and its multifaceted nature is presented: rising sea levels, extreme weather events, ocean acidity and biodiversity loss are described and the pressing need for action via the adoption of mitigation strategies is heavily stressed. The second chapter ‘Psychology and Climate Change’ (13-27) focuses on how psychology relates to people’s climate-related behaviour exploring the relationship between designing climate policy and peoples’ experiences of a changing climate. The third chapter ‘Climate Change and Marine Ecosystems’ (29-42) examines the interconnection between marine ecosystems and climate change through a discussion of the real and potential impacts of climatic change that call for the adoption of effective coastal adaptation strategies. In the fourth chapter ‘Knowledge and Awareness about Climate Change around the World and Its Impacts on Natural and Human Systems’ (43-56) empirical results are presented on worldwide knowledge and awareness about climate change and its causes showing the extent to which people feel threatened by it.

The fifth chapter ‘Integrated Assessment of Climate Policy Instruments’ (57-73) presents an integrated assessment framework of climate policy instrument interactions that reconciles environmental, socio-economic, political and institutional aspects for the initial stage of policy development. The sixth chapter ‘Climate Change and Wood Production Strategies’ (75-86) stresses the need for planting more trees as a major mitigation measure in the context of sustainable forest management. The seventh chapter ‘Climate Change Adaptation’ (87-101) discusses the institutional context for addressing climate risks, the types of changes affected, the notion of adaptation strategies (structural and/or non-structural) that are dependent on an assessment of the hazards that human populations are likely to face. In the eighth chapter ‘Adaptation is not enough: Why

Insurers Need Climate Change Mitigation’ (103-118), effective mitigation is viewed as a necessary precondition for successful longer-term insurance system adaptation to climate change as the Earth system, global economy and insurance are viewed as inter-connected issues.

The ninth chapter (119-126) ‘The Experience of Cap-and-Trade’ offers a description of an innovative environmental regulation tool, i.e. Cap-and-Trade, designed to fight air pollution consequences. Its main characteristics are reviewed in relation to a variety of temporal, geographical and allocation provisions that need to be taken into account so that successful implementation of such programs can be secured. Chapter ten ‘An overview of the climate refugees’ issues and scenario’ (119-126) provides us with an overview of the climate refugees’ issue that demands a new international legal framework for climate induced migration and mobility. Chapter eleven ‘Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change in a Caribbean Small island Developing State’ (141-152) discusses the effects of climate change on the agricultural sector by looking into the adaptive capacity strategies employed by people in the Caribbean Island of St Lucia in the form of alternative farming methods in order to cope with the challenges of climate change. Chapter twelve ‘Adaptation and Governance in Transboundary Water Management’ (153-165) focuses on the issue of transboundary water management which requires the coordination of different political, legal and institutional settings. Finally, chapter thirteen ‘Climate Change: A Challenge for Ethics’ (167-178) addresses the threat of climate change primarily as a challenge for ethics given that the stabilization and gradual improvement of the situation requires the abandonment of the present dominant model of life and long-established customs.

Overall, this volume offers an excellent account of the complex phenomenon of

climatic change by vividly highlighting its immense impact on human activity and natural wildlife in different parts of our planet. Capitalizing on this highly controversial environmental issue, the book successfully manages to sustain ESP environmental students' motivation to deal with key topics of their main discipline, but in the medium of English. Thus, it helps them to expand their vocabulary knowledge in the area and promote their reading comprehension skills through a wide range of related tasks and activities in an effective and efficient way. However, based on the multi-dimensional notion of word knowledge in a second language (Nation 2001), it can be suggested that the key terms listed in the glossary could be more enriched with additional grammatical (e.g. the word *species* occurs only in plural) and semantic information necessary for the vocabulary expansion and consolidation of university students with reference to their specialized field of studies. Moreover, new entries could also include features such as (a) the range of synonyms and antonyms for a given word (e.g. *susceptible* and *accessible* can also be used interchangeably as synonyms with *vulnerable*) and (b) word derivatives (e.g. words such as *value*, *habit*, should be accompanied by information related to the derivation of nouns (*value*) and adjectives (*habitual*) of the same word family). In sum, the well-delineated outline of the book allows ESP students to appreciate the significance of climatic change as a global phenomenon. It helps improve and expand their English language vocabulary in the most efficient and cost-effective manner since the anthology can be easily accessed and downloaded via the internet for use in the ESP class (Solon 2013).

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Nation, P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. CUP.

Solon. (2013). *Solon Synthesis*. Retrieved from

<http://www.Solonsynthesis.org/index.php/recommendedbooks.html>

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Erratum

Asian EFL Journal 15(4), p. 8: Fan-Wei Kung's affiliation should be Queen's University Belfast, UK.

with five multi-chapter parts is intended as an introduction for students of cognitive science, linguistics, and speech pathology.

—The first section (chapters 1-4) examines foundational concepts and issues on the nature of language, language processing, and brain language disorders (aphasiology). The author explains that these chapters can compliment many “standalone introductory courses in linguistics, psychology or neuroanatomy.” In chapter 1 the author examines the theory of the coevolution of the human brain, a theory which contends that language developed out of a need for a representational system. He then treats upon an alternative to this theory which holds that language ability is based upon inherent neurological wiring. After dealing with the structural aspects of neuroanatomy, the author then proceeds to chapter 2 to look at language forms and meanings, phonology, syntax, semantics and various other design features of language which fall within the domain of the linguist. Ingram then devotes chapter 3 to relating language to neuroanatomical areas and explains the tools and methods employed by the neurologist in imaging these areas. In the final chapter of this section, the author examines the modularity versus integration debate and explains the two theories of modularity as expounded by Chomsky and Fodor.

—In the second part (chapters 5-8) the author deals “with successively 'higher' levels of language processing and their respective manifestations in brain damage: speech perception.” Ingram considers the main three aspects of speech recognition in chapter 5. Here he explains how input signals are processed by the human auditory system, how words are stored in the speech recognition lexicon, and how these can be retrieved by human neurological processes. In chapter 6 he considers how speech perception differs from other forms of auditory perception and what the experimental evidence is for this. And in chapter 7, he explores lexical retrieval systems and how the human brain

recognizes larger semantic units from basic phonological segments. The author concludes the section with a chapter that provides a framework for evaluating clinical processing disorders which affect the ability of an aphasiac patient to perceive single words.

Part three of the book offers a discussion of word structure and meaning (lexical processing and its disorders). The author begins this unit by examining in chapter 9 how the meanings of words are represented in the human mental lexicon and how lexical meanings are assigned to words within sentence structure. The following chapter considers theories dealing with the semantic meanings of words and how these are related to wider structural contexts in which they are embedded. The final chapter of the section then deals with aphasic disorders in which word retrieval and word recognition pose a problem for the patient.

In part four, the author explores syntax and syntactic disorder (agrammatism; chapters 12-14) and discourse and the language of thought disorder (chapters 15-16). In the opening chapter to this part of the book, Ingram looks at the problems patients with brain damage have in utilizing the grammatical rules of language and then goes on to explore the connection between loss of syntax and sentence comprehension. In the following chapter he takes a close look at the two opposing theories (the modular theory and the interactive theory) which concern the role syntactic processing plays in the comprehension of sentences. And in the final chapter of the section, chapter 14, Ingram takes another look at the problem of agrammatism in patients suffering from Broca's aphasia and makes a critical evaluation of the theories related to receptive agrammatism.

And in the final part, part 5, the author speculates on unsolved problems and possible ways forward. The opening chapter deals with discourse, which Ingram describes as "the

highest and most complex form of linguistic representation” and one where there is interaction with non-linguistic concepts and structures. The author states that the precise nature of a discourse model with regard to neurological representation is still an area into which a lot of research will have to be conducted. In the following chapter, Ingram examines discourse within the clinical context of discourse breakdown, a condition which occurs in patients suffering from Broca’s aphasia. And in the final chapter of his book, the author considers the direction in which the theories of language are heading and the changing types of metaphor employed in explaining this uniquely human phenomenon. He additionally emphasizes that the current trend is veering away from analogies with the digital computer and towards what neurophysiologists term “embodied cognition.”

What makes *Neurolinguistics: An introduction to spoken language and its disorders* by J.C. Ingram so interesting is its attempt to get to the very roots of language itself by delving inside the human brain. Ingram's book is significant in the field of English



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The *Asian EFL Journal* currently encourages two kinds of submissions, unsolicited and solicited. Unsolicited reviewers select their own materials to review. Both teachers and graduate students are encouraged to submit reviews. Solicited reviewers are contacted and asked to review materials from its current list of availability. If you would like to be considered as a solicited reviewer, please forward your CV with a list of publications to the Book Review Editor at:

asianefljournalbookreviews@yahoo.com.

All reviewers, unsolicited and solicited, are encouraged to provide submissions about materials that they would like to suggest to colleagues in the field by choosing materials that they feel have more positive features than negative ones.

Length and Format:

1. Reviews should be prepared using MS Word and the format should conform to 12 pica New Times Roman font, 1.5 spacing between lines, and 1 inch margins.
2. The reviewer(s)' full names including middle initial(s), title, school affiliation, school address, phone number, and e-mail address should be included at the top of the first page.
3. The complete title of the text, edition number, complete name(s) of author(s), publisher, publisher's address (city & state), and date of publication should be included after the reviewer(s)' identifying information.
4. Reviews should be between 500-700 words.

5. A brief biography of the author(s) should be included after the review.
6. A statement that the submission has not been previously published or is not being considered for publication elsewhere should be included at the bottom of the page.

Organization:

Reviewers are encouraged to peruse reviews recently published in the quarterly PDF version of the Journal for content and style before writing their own. While creativity and a variety of writing styles are encouraged, reviews, like other types of articles, should be concisely written and contain certain information that follows a predictable order: a statement about the work's intended audience, a non-evaluative description of the material's contents, an academically worded evaluative summary which includes a discussion of its positive features and one or two shortcomings if applicable (no materials are perfect), and a comment about the material's significance to the field.

Style:

1. All reviews should conform to the Journal's APA guideline requirements and references should be used sparingly.
2. Authors should use plural nouns rather than gendered pronouns such as he/she, his/her him/her and adhere to the APA's Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language, which can be found at: <http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html>.