

The Asian EFL Journal
Professional Teaching Articles
April 2016
Issue 91



Senior Editors:
Paul Robertson and John Adamson
Guest Editor:
Anamai Damnet



Published by the English Language Education Publishing

Asian EFL Journal

A Division of TESOL Asia Group

Part of SITE Ltd Australia

<http://www.asian-efl-journal.com>

©Asian EFL Journal 2015

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of the Asian EFL Journal Press.

No unauthorized photocopying

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the Asian EFL Journal.

Publisher: Dr. Paul Robertson

Guest Editor: Dr. Anamai Damnet

Production Editing: Dr. Mehdi Soleimani

ISSN 1738-1460

Table of Contents

1. Tamanna Mostafa	4-45
<i>A Functional Task Based Curriculum for EFL Students</i>	
2. Heny Hartono	46-62
<i>Communicative Competence Assessment for Teachers of Bilingual Schools in Indonesia</i>	
3. Yih-Lan Chen	63-89
<i>How teachers support student autonomy in EFL context</i>	
4. Harika B. Bilici	90-106
<i>The Effectiveness of Year 1 International Studies Strand of an ESP Program in Year 2: Student Perceptions</i>	
5. Takeshi Sato	107-126
<i>The Feasibility of Critical Reading in ELF Settings: Teachers' Roles and Modifications</i>	
6. Hui-Yin	127-149
<i>English Pronunciation Error/Problem Analysis for Chinese Students</i>	

A Functional Task Based Curriculum for EFL Students

Tamanna Mostafa

English Language Institute of Central Michigan University

Bioprofile:

Tamanna Mostafa is from Bangladesh. She received her MA (TESOL) degree from Central Michigan University in 2012. After that, she has worked as an ESL instructor at the English Language Center of Michigan State University and English Language Institute of Central Michigan University. She also has the experience of working as an ESL professional in Bangladesh. Any query about the article should be addressed to Tamanna Mostafa at tmostafabd@gmail.com

Abstract

In this project, a functional task-based revision of the curriculum of the English language program of a university in an EFL country is proposed. The focus of the proposed curricular revision is on the instruments used for needs analysis and on the program goals and objectives. An implementation of the proposed curriculum is illustrated through a model course design (Integrated Skills: Reading and Writing 1) for the lower intermediate learners of the program. A selection of sample lessons and a unit assessment instrument are also included with the necessary rubrics that will be used for evaluating learners' performances in the course. A rationale for the curriculum is included (with the review of relevant literature) that justifies the adoption of functional task-based curriculum.

Key Words: Task-based teaching, lesson plan, functional task-based curriculum

Introduction

To develop an effective language program, it is essential to understand the context in which the program will operate. This project proposes a revision to the existing curriculum of the English Language Program of a university in Bangladesh. This

project starts with a description of the context with a focus on the needs analysis instrument, review of relevant literature, program structure, and program level goals and objectives. This is followed by a detailed description of a specific course that functions as a model of other courses offered in the program.

EFL Group of Interest

For this project, the group of interest includes EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners of a university in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is an EFL country where English is not used for day-to-day communication. However, in the education system of Bangladesh, English is an important academic discipline (studying English is compulsory for all through the high school level), as students need proficiency in English not only for professional success but also for pursuing higher studies at both home and abroad. Therefore, the EFL scenario in Bangladesh is similar to other EFL countries such as China or Indonesia, and hence, the sample curriculum proposed in this study is also relevant to other EFL contexts besides Bangladesh.

It is mandatory for all students of the university to enroll in the English language program for the first year of their university education. This English language program is a part of the English department and offers skill-based courses to students of the whole university to increase their proficiency levels in English. Students attending the English language program come from every discipline in the university, for example, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, and Mathematics. The average age range of the student group is 19-22. As the medium of instruction in the university is English, all students need to be enrolled in the English language program to increase their proficiency in English so that they can perform their academic tasks successfully. The existing curriculum of the English language program is mainly based on the grammar-translation approach where the primary focus is on discrete items of grammar and on translation of NL (Native Language) items to TL (Target Language) and vice versa. This paper proposes that functional task-based revision of the overall curriculum of this program would be better suited to meet student needs.

Needs of the Group

Students in the language courses are in their freshman year in the university undergraduate program, and they are required to attend the English language program to attain sufficient proficiency in English so that they can survive and study in a university where the medium of instruction and communication is English. The majority of the students have had their elementary, middle, and high school level education in Bangla medium schools where they studied English as a compulsory academic subject. Therefore, although the students have the experience of studying English as an academic subject for about 12 years, the majority of them lack the necessary proficiency to pursue their higher studies in an English medium program where they not only have to be receptive to complex content areas in English but also have to produce large number of spoken and written texts in English. Moreover, they need to develop their communication skills in English with teachers and fellow students. Accordingly, the focus in this program is on English for academic purposes; and the aim is to develop student skills in all the four areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to prepare learners for various academic activities in English (see table 1 for a list of required courses for learners of different proficiency levels). Additionally, many students, after completing the fifth semester of their undergraduate program, try to transfer their credits to different universities in the U.S.A. and U.K., and they need to take part in standardized tests like TOEFL or IELTS. Therefore, the program also needs to pay attention to preparing students at the advanced level for such competitive tests.

To get a better idea of learners' needs, teachers and administrators of the program will also review the available curriculum designs of similar English language programs in five other Bangladeshi universities that also use English as the sole medium of communication and instruction. Reviewing the patterns of the needs of students in those universities will provide the administrators and teachers with the idea of what kinds of language and situation needs learners might have and how best the program can address those. No outside consultants will be hired for conducting the needs analysis; it will be carried out in house by the administrators and teachers on the program.

Apart from the general needs of the program, each student can also have his/her specific needs, strengths, and weaknesses, which depend on such factors as their linguistic backgrounds, future academic or career plan, motivation level, and

personal learning goals. Teachers need to take those needs into account to help students reach their goals, and the program must help teachers identify those needs.

The English Language Program has about six instructors. Every semester, around 200 new students get admission in the university, and every new student is required to enroll in the English Language Program. Thus, it is expected to be very difficult for six instructors to review the needs of the whole group of students. Therefore, this project proposes that at their entrance into the program, the following questionnaire (which is brief so that the task of needs analysis remains at a manageable level) can be distributed to around 150 new students (chosen randomly) to fill out so that at least 50 responses can be collected.

Figure 1

Name:	Student ID:
Level:	
1. What is your overall expectation from the program?	
2. In which skill area/areas you have the strongest ability?	
3. In which skill area/areas you have the weakest ability?	
4. In which skill area do you expect to be benefitted most by attending the program?	
5. What is your future academic goal?	

Students' responses to this questionnaire can be reviewed by teachers of the program in the annual general meeting of teachers. As the total number of instructors in the English language program is about six, each instructor can review about 10 responses. From students' responses, teachers can get an idea about learners' future goals, expectations from the program, and also their own perceptions of their linguistic strengths and weaknesses. All this information can help teachers make some important curricular decisions, for example, to ensure that the overall program goals and objectives will be congruent with the majority of the learners' goals and expectations. While it is not possible to take into account the goals and expectations of every individual student, teachers will attempt to make sure that the program's goals are serving the needs of the majority of the students. At the beginning of each academic year, a two-day long workshop will be arranged for instructors of the

English Language Program where they will be given orientation on how to analyze student responses on needs analysis questionnaires and how program/course goals and objectives and teaching strategies can be modified based on such responses. Instructors will also be given orientation on the basic tenets of task-based language teaching and how to prepare appropriate materials and tasks for learners of different proficiency levels (based on recent research on language pedagogy). This workshop will be arranged by the department of English.

Review of Relevant Literature

This project proposes a functional task-based curriculum that would replace the existing grammar-translation curriculum at a Bangladeshi university. In the contemporary literature on language education, there is substantial scholarly support for a task-based approach in facilitating language acquisition by L2 learners. Ellis (2003) argues for the appropriateness of a task-based syllabus over grammatical or notional-functional syllabuses. According to Ellis (2003), earlier structural approaches were limited because “it was not possible to specify what a learner would learn in linguistic terms”; he views grammatical syllabuses as hindering the psycholinguistic processes that L2 learners employ in learning their target language. Similarly, Long and Crookes (1992) criticize grammar-based syllabuses on the basis that learning of discrete linguistic items cannot facilitate the language acquisition process, as focusing on such discrete items interferes with the cognitive processes of acquiring a language (as cited in Ellis, 2003). Likewise, Bangladesh, as an EFL country, has already witnessed failure in enhancing learners’ linguistic proficiency by following grammatical syllabuses based on discrete linguistic items (Siddique, 2004). Therefore, in the EFL context of Bangladesh, the adoption of a task-based approach is justifiable where the focus is on the process of learning that can lead learners to the successful completion of tasks rather than on discrete structural features. However, in this shift in focus on the process of learning, the importance of formal accuracy should not be ignored. According to Nunan (2004), although the primary focus in a pedagogical task is on meaning, grammatical forms are not ignored because “meaning and form are highly interrelated, and that grammar exists to enable the language user to express different communicative meanings.” Researchers talk about the benefits of exposing learners to grammatical forms, especially at the initial stages of their

learning process, as this would help them take part in meaningful communication (Nunan, 2004). Therefore, in the model tasks discussed in this project, learners have to focus on both form (for instance, prefixes, suffixes, sentence structure) and meaning (meanings of vocabulary and sentences) to complete the tasks, for example, creating the stories or rewriting paragraphs.

In an EFL context like Bangladesh, adoption of the task-based approach in increasing learners' proficiency in English can be further justified on the ground that this method of language teaching is consistent with the natural or "organic" view of language acquisition where learners are exposed to similar linguistic items in varied contexts (Nunan, 2004). Nunan (2004) argues that in a task-based syllabus, it is possible to recycle linguistic items and functions through meaningful tasks, and by participating in tasks that demand the use of structures in varied contexts, learners can be exposed to the same grammatical or functional items several times. The sample lessons described in this project also recycle functional and linguistic items in varied contexts, and Nunan (2004) argues that such recycling allows learners to "develop an elaborated understanding of the item in question." For example, in one of the sample lessons described in this project, learners take part in a task where they have to guess the meanings of vocabulary from context, and they also identify the contextual clues that help them make the guesses; thus, this task recycles the function of guessing word-meanings from context that learners practiced in the previous lesson. Such recycling of vocabulary practice is supposed to consolidate and strengthen EFL learners' knowledge of vocabulary. Skehan (1998) mentions the following features of a task:

- "Meaning is primary.
- There is a goal which needs to be worked towards.
- The activity is outcome-evaluated.
- There is a real-world relationship."

The proposed tasks described in the sample lessons in this project have all the above-mentioned basic features of tasks specified by Skehan (1998). First of all, in the sample tasks described in this project (see the section of "Sample Lessons"), focus is not on forms but on how learners can identify the meanings of vocabulary from the contextual clues. For each sample lesson, the specific goals and objectives are specified, and the sample tasks have specific outcomes, for example, learners'

reflections on the strategies they used in guessing the word-meanings from context. In these tasks, they have to make cognitive effort while thinking of the strategies or contextual clues they used for completing the tasks. Such cognitive effort made in identifying the strategies will be useful for them while comprehending any other reading material in their academic life when they can exercise their skills of guessing the meanings of vocabulary from context or from word parts. Therefore, the proposed tasks, described in the sample lessons, are also related to real life.

As the syllabus under consideration is the functional task-based one, focus is also on the functional aspects of language in designing the sample contents and activities of the proposed lessons in this project. Tasks can be used for practicing different functions and structures (Pica, 2008). Every sample lesson in the proposed curriculum has specific task objectives and functional objectives, which are based on learners' needs; for example, in the proposed course design, one of the needs of learners is to comprehend reading texts by guessing the meanings of unknown vocabulary (see the course goals and objectives). Based on this need, one of the sample lessons has tasks where learners will practice the function of guessing the meanings of unknown vocabulary by using contextual clues.

As can be seen in the proposed course outline (see table 5), about 20 minutes time in every class is reserved for discussion on exercises/ assignments and submission of assignments/projects when learners can ask for teacher's help if they encounter any difficulty in writing their assignments/projects; they can also discuss with each other any problem they might have in collecting information for their projects and in integrating that information to their writing. Pica (2008) and Nunan (2004) talk about scaffolding as a feature of task-based language teaching where lessons "should provide supporting frameworks within which the learning takes place." While participating in tasks, some learners can confront any material that is above their proficiency levels. In such cases, by discussing with fellow learners and teachers, students can have necessary "guidance" for accomplishing the tasks, and they can apply this learning to future experiences as well (Pica, 2008). Thus, through collaboration with each other during the time allotted for discussion on exercises/ assignments in every lesson, "learners can support each other when confronted with task components that they cannot accomplish on their own" (Pica, 2008). Additionally, in the sample lessons proposed in this curriculum project, learners take

part in pair and group works. Thus, it may be possible for comparatively less proficient learners to get help from their more proficient peers. Such an approach is further supported by Mattos (2000), who draws on Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding to argue that such interaction in groups or pairs can help learners "extend their language competence by collaborating with more capable peers" (as cited in Murphy, 2003).

Additionally, as can be noticed in the structure of the program (see table 1), emphasis is put on teaching integrated skills in both the lower-intermediate and upper-intermediate levels because in real life, skills are never used in isolation but are integrated with each other (Hinkel, 2006). According to Hinkel (2006), "in meaningful communication, people employ incremental language skills not in isolation but in tandem." Hinkel (2006) argues for integrating the skills while teaching L2 learners to make language learning "as realistic as possible." According to Hinkel (2006), current communicatively oriented teaching approaches including task-based and content-based approaches provide appropriate models for teachers to practice integrated teaching of skills. Moreover, in the proposed functional task based curriculum, teachers will use mainly authentic materials. Oura (2001) argues that using authentic materials in classrooms is not only motivating for learners but is also a way to draw their attention to "content and meaning" rather than only to linguistic forms. If learners are exposed to authentic materials, they can get richer language input than the kind of contrived language historically used by textbooks or language teachers (Oura, 2001). However, on some occasions, instructors might need to adapt materials to some extent to make those more appropriate to learners' competency level. Saito-Abbott (2004) calls such materials "semi authentic," as those are "simplified to fit the lesson and students' language level." Similarly, Nunan (1999), while admitting the advantages of using authentic materials in language teaching, also discusses the necessity of making "modifications" in such materials to keep those more accessible to learners of relatively lower proficiency levels.

Furthermore, as can be noticed in the model course design proposed in this project (see "model course design" and "course requirements"), learners are required to take part in extensive reading practices. This element is incorporated in the course to get them used to the idea that reading can be done for pleasure. It is proved by researchers that repeated exposure to interesting and enjoyable reading materials in

the target language can accelerate L2 learners' proficiency in linguistic skills such as reading, listening, vocabulary, and writing besides developing their overall attitude to reading (Elley and Mangubhai, 1983; Elley, 1991; Coady, 1997; Davis, 1995). However, this extensive reading practice is incorporated in the proposed course design on a small scale because of the scarcity of time and resources.

In the evaluation of learners' performances in the proposed lessons on identifying the contextual meanings of vocabulary, it is stated that learners have to score minimum 60% in the short quiz at the end of each lesson. In a recent study of vocabulary and comprehension, Schmitt, Jiang and Grabe (2011) find that to achieve 60% comprehension in a reading task, learners need to understand 95% vocabulary of a text. In the sample quizzes designed in this project, care is taken so that learners are not presented with any complex vocabulary other than those which they are being tested on, so that they find the materials comprehensible.

Furthermore, in the unit assessment instrument proposed in this project (see "unit assessment criteria"), more emphasis is on formative assessments to evaluate learners' developing performances than on summative assessments. For example, in the proposed sample lessons, learners attach the outcomes of tasks (for instance, finished pieces of short stories, reflective paragraphs etc.) to their individual portfolios, which can help teachers evaluate learners' progress and performances in successful task completions throughout the entire semester. However, summative assessments are also necessary to motivate learners for pursuing goals and to instigate more sincerity in them (Oliveira, 2004). Summative assessments are also included, although on a minor scale, in this proposed assessment instrument in the form of projects and assignments that learners can submit towards the end of the semester. According to Oliveira (2004), "a fully formative assessment system may fail to achieve the level of commitment needed on the part of both young and adult learners." Hence, both formative and summative assessments that are "useful to the learning process" are included in the proposed course design in this project (Oliveira, 2004).

Structure of the Program

As noted earlier, this project is a proposal for functional task-based approach for the overall curriculum of the English Language program of a university in

Bangladesh; the main focus of such an approach is on engaging learners in meaningful tasks, which ensure practicing integrated skills to increase their proficiency in English. The university follows a tri-semester system. Based on the proposed functional task-based curriculum, the English Language Program of the university can be divided in three levels: level one (lower intermediate), level two (upper intermediate), and level three (Advanced). Based on their proficiency levels, students can enroll in other university courses alongside the courses of this program. The following chart lists the courses offered under each level:

Table 1

LEVEL 1 (Lower Intermediate)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrated Skills (Listening and Speaking 1) 2. Integrated Skills (Reading and Writing 1) 3. Advanced Grammar
LEVEL 2 (Upper Intermediate)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrated Skills (Listening, Speaking, and pronunciation) 2. Academic Reading 2 3. Academic Writing 2
LEVEL 3 (Advanced)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral Presentation and Communication 2. Advanced Reading 3 3. Advanced Writing 3

Students who start in level 1 will need to study in the English Language Program for more than one year if they cannot pass the levels satisfactorily; but they can pass out of this program in one year if they progress satisfactorily and achieve the minimum passing score, which is 60% in each course.

While getting admitted to the university, all students must pass a university-wide English placement test, which is compulsory for all. This test is designed by the teachers of the program, and therefore, it is particularly suited to the program's structure. Students' reading, writing, listening, speaking and grammar skills are tested here. The placement of students in different levels of the program is determined by their performance in that test. Moreover, as all students have studied English as a

compulsory subject in their high school, they already have a level of proficiency in English at their entrance into the program. Thus, the program has no lower level; it starts from the lower intermediate level. Additionally, in their previous experience of studying English as a compulsory subject in their high schools, learners received extensive exposure to English grammar. Therefore, this program does not put much emphasis on grammar, which is taught as a separate course only in the lower intermediate level.

In the academic calendar of the university, there are three semesters in a year. The duration of each level is one semester, and as can be noticed in the chart above, each level consists of three separate courses. Each semester lasts for three months. So, each course in a level has 12 weeks of class in a semester. A student enrolled in a particular level needs to take all the three courses in that level. For each course, students attend two classes in a week; the duration of each class is 2 hours (120 minutes).

Program Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are proposed for the program, and these new program goals and objectives are intended to replace the existing ones. These objectives will be applicable to learners of varied proficiency levels attending the program. Hence, in each case, the appropriate length, topics, and difficulty levels of tasks will be determined by teachers based on placement results and in-class diagnostics. Students have to fulfill the following objectives with minimum 60% accuracy.

1. Academic Spoken English: Make the students comfortable and proficient in academic spoken conversation and presentation skills in English.
 - a. Students will complete speaking tasks including information gap activities in pairs/groups where they will use English for different academic purposes, for example, asking questions to get information, making requests to borrow books, or solving a problem.
 - b. Students will make oral presentations individually or in groups on topics of their own choice from a list of options given by the teacher.

2. Academic Listening: Develop the learners' listening skills to help them take part in successful oral communication and understand content area lectures delivered in English.
 - a. Each student will note down the main points after listening to spoken texts on academic topics, for example, literature, technology, culture, global issues, and others collected from sources like MICASE (Simpson et al., 2002) and TED (n.d.).
 - b. Students will complete group/pair activities that will require them to solve problems by communicating with others.
3. Academic Reading: Learners will be able to read texts of a variety of academic genres by applying different strategies of reading and will develop critical responses to those.
 - a. Students will read academic texts on different topics and identify the main ideas and specific details from those.
 - b. Students will identify the implied meanings from reading texts on topics related to their academic subjects and will respond to those critically by participating in activities set by the teacher.
4. Academic Writing: Familiarize learners with standard conventions of written English and help them practice writing in different genres appropriate in academic setting.
 - a. Students will practice writing in academic genres, appropriate to their disciplines and proficiency levels with particular attention to grammar, punctuation, and word choice.
5. Students will learn to integrate information from various sources and synthesize different viewpoints.
 - a. Students will collect information from both print and online sources on a variety of academic topics and analyze or synthesize different perspectives on any specific issue.
 - b. Students will format their papers as per rules of different citation styles (as specified by teachers).
6. Students of advanced level will be familiar with the formats of the standardized tests like IELTS or TOEFL and will be prepared for such test situations.

- a. Each week students will practice exercises of the type that normally appear in the IELTS or TOEFL.
 - b. Students will build up confidence for the actual test situations by taking mock exams every month.
7. Students will take part in integrated skills activities and be familiar with the use of integrated skills in real life.
 - a. Learners will complete activities that will enable them to integrate more than one skill together, for example, writing an essay by responding to reading texts, preparing an oral presentation based on a listening or reading text etc.
8. Students will practice collaborative learning by working in pairs and groups.
 - a. Students will complete projects, assignments and in-class activities in groups and pairs where they will have to complete tasks by collaborating with others.
9. Learners will be autonomous and confident in the learning process.
 - a. Learners will be responsible for deciding on the possible due dates of their writing assignments, and they will participate in impromptu speaking competitions in their speaking and listening courses.

Model Course Design

This section describes in detail the design of a course (including assessment criteria, required materials, course goals and objectives, course syllabus and routine) that functions as a model for other courses to be offered in the proposed program; this section is followed by a closer focus on one specific unit of this proposed course and a detailed illustration of three sample lessons under that unit. The proposed course is Integrated Skills (Reading and Writing 1) designed for level 1 (lower intermediate) students. The course is designed to enhance the reading and writing skills of learners at the lower intermediate level. As the syllabus is task-based, the emphasis is on the process of learning rather than the product.

Course Requirements

Students are required to attend classes regularly and submit the assignments on time. In many of the assignments and projects, students will have to utilize their creative ideas besides their reading and writing skills. Students will need to visit the

British Council library on regular basis to finish reading at least one book every week from the graded readers series specified for the pre/lower intermediate learners and must fill up the comment-sheets provided by the teacher; such extensive reading will help them increase their reading fluency (Elley and Mangubhai, 1983; Renandya, 2007). Students will be required to maintain portfolios of their individual work including the comment-sheets for graded readers, and they will also need to submit written projects in pairs or groups.

Required Texts

For this course, students do not need to strictly follow any particular textbook. Teachers will provide them with booklets containing necessary materials, handouts and directions for tasks. At the end of each semester, booklets will be reviewed for the following semester; each instructor of the English Language Program will be assigned 7-10 days' time when their sole responsibility will be to prepare or update the booklets they will be using for the assigned courses in the following semester. Teachers can collaborate with each other while updating or preparing the booklets, and if necessary, they can also have additional time and financial allowance for any extra work. Learners will be given appropriate handouts in each class depending on the topics and tasks. The materials are collected from varied sources, for example, internet, newspapers, magazines, and simplified texts on different topics. Teachers will mainly use authentic materials, and sometimes, they will also need to modify or adapt the authentic materials to make those more comprehensible to learners. Teachers use graded readers to encourage learners to develop a habit of reading for pleasure; in this case, they mainly use the resources provided by the British Council library for learners of pre-intermediate level.

Unit Assessment Criteria

Students will be evaluated out of a total of 100 marks. Learners' grading in this course will be based on the following criteria:

Table 2

Attendance	5%
Classroom Performance	5%

Projects	25%
Portfolio	20%
Assignments	25%
In class Assessment	20%

- a. **Attendance (5%):** In total 5% marks will be reserved for attendance. In this course, the learning process is mainly based on classroom experiences, and as a result, learners need to attend the classes for their own learning. For maximum 2 missed classes, students will lose no credit provided they show strong reasons for their absences. But after 2 absences, they will lose 1 credit for each missed class.
- b. **Classroom Performance/Participation (5%):** Students need to actively take part in the in-class tasks for making the most out of the language learning opportunities, and 5 % marks will be reserved for this. Evaluation in this category will also depend on learners’ participation in the class-discussions and on their classroom behavior. A rubric for evaluating learners on the basis of class participation is attached (see Appendix A).
- c. **Portfolio (20%):** Each student will maintain a separate portfolio where they will save the outcomes of the tasks carried out in the classroom, comment cards on books of the graded readers’ series, and other materials as directed by the instructors. At the end of the semester, this portfolio will showcase a student’s learning all over the semester and can be used to judge a student’s overall progress from the beginning. At the end of their class on every Thursday (for 30 minutes), learners will work on materials that will be attached to the portfolio. During that time, they will prepare the materials for attachment and will seek teacher’s assistance in this regard. Portfolio will carry 20% marks of the total and will be evaluated based on a separate rubric (see Appendix B).
- d. **Project (25%):** Students will be responsible for completing 3 project works through the semester, each due in every three weeks. Although completion of these projects entails practice of all the four skills, the main focus will be on reading and writing. The project works will require students to collect information or materials from a wide range of sources (for example, websites,

articles, interviews) and analyze or synthesize those as per instructions. These projects will carry 25% marks and will be conducted in pairs or small groups. The projects will be evaluated based on a rubric designed by University of California (UC) Davis (n.d.) (See Appendix C).

- e. **Assignments (25%):** Students will submit written assignments biweekly that will carry 25% marks of the total. The assignments will be evaluated based on the same rubric as that used for evaluating the projects (See Appendix C).
- f. **In-Class Assessment (20%):** 20% marks will be reserved for in-class assessments, for example, short quizzes or writing timed essays. The assessment will be carried out throughout the semester, as students will write timed essays, or take part in short quizzes at the end of most of the lessons. Evaluation of learners' performances in the quizzes will be based on the accuracy and clarity of their answers; students have to score at least 60% in each quiz to get the pass mark. Timed essays will be evaluated using the similar rubric as that used for evaluating the written assignments, although teachers might relax some of those criteria while evaluating the timed essays.

Students will have to achieve at least 60% marks for passing out of this course. Their overall grading system will be like the following:

Table 3

93+	A
90-92	A-
85-89	B+
80-84	B
75-79	B-
70-74	C+
65-69	C
60-64	C-
Below 60	Fail

Course Goals and Objectives

The main goals and objectives of the model course (Integrated Skills: Reading and Writing 1) for the lower intermediate learners (level 1) are discussed below; the proposed goals and objectives of this course function as a model for the goals/objectives of other courses offered in the program. In this proposed model course, students will read texts of pre-intermediate level, and in each task, students will be required to perform with minimum 60% accuracy. Instructors will decide on the genre of texts and will determine whether learners are going to read texts of their own choice or of instructor's choice. Whenever students are required to write timed essays, it is mentioned in the objectives; in all other cases, their writing tasks will be as take-home assignments.

1. Learners will develop the skills of identifying the main ideas and specific details of reading texts.
 - a. Students will read texts on topics related to their academic disciplines and will identify the main ideas and supporting details from the texts.
 - b. Students will write summaries of academic articles selected by them from the websites prescribed by the instructor.
2. Students will identify implied meanings of reading texts and compare or contrast different texts to develop critical reading skills.
 - a. Students will infer the authors' implied main ideas after reading academic texts.
 - b. Students will read language learning experiences of adult EFL learners, and each student will write one analytical essay on how their experiences were similar to or dissimilar from each other.
 - c. Students will write timed paragraphs predicting the outcomes (with reasons for those predictions) of short stories after reading half of those.
3. Students will be familiar with the use of transitional phrases to produce coherent writing.
 - a. Students will read autobiographical essays on the life story of a famous Bangladeshi writer and identify the transitional phrases used there in groups.
 - b. Students will write timed paragraphs by responding to several still pictures that depict different stages of a person's life starting from childhood to old age.

- c. Students will write essays on the most memorable events of their life using the transitional devices.
4. Students will be familiar with the standard structures of writing paragraphs and essays.
 - a. Students will identify topic sentences and supporting details from paragraphs.
 - b. Students will write paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details.
 - c. Students will read academic essays to identify thesis statements and body paragraphs.
 - d. Students will write essays that include a thesis statement and at least 3 body paragraphs.
5. Students will be able to review their written scripts for both global and local issues.
 - a. Students will exchange the final copies of one of their writing assignments (teacher will decide which one) with each other and review the papers for development of ideas, organization, and clarity.
 - b. Students, in groups, will identify the mechanical errors from worksheets, distributed by the teacher, each containing a list of sentences full of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling mistakes.
6. Learners will be able to gain pleasure from reading texts of their own choice.
 - a. Each student will read a book of any genre/topic of their interest every week from the section designed for the pre-intermediate level learners in the British Council library.
 - b. Each student will write short notes on their likings and disliking about every book they read on cards to save those in their portfolios.
7. Students will be familiar with the process approach to writing.
 - a. Students, in pairs, will brainstorm their arguments for or against a topic, write their first draft of essay using those arguments, and will exchange their drafts with their peers.
 - b. Each pair will revise the spelling, grammar, organization, clarity, and development of the first draft of their essay on the basis of peer feedback and will resubmit the revised draft to the instructor.
 - c. Each pair will incorporate the thematic, organizational, or mechanical corrections recommended by the instructor in their final draft of the same paper.

8. Students will be able to use strategies for guessing the meanings of unknown words from contexts or from structures of words and will reflect on their use of strategies in this regard.

- a. Students will read texts and write down their guesses about the meanings of the vocabulary they do not know or are not sure of.
- b. Students will reflect on and explain in short written paragraphs how they could make the correct guesses of the meanings of the unknown vocabulary.
- c. Students, in pairs, will identify the meanings of different word-parts, for instance, prefixes and suffixes from the lists of words distributed by the teacher.

9. Learners will collaborate with others in the process of writing and reading.

- a. Students will work in groups and pairs in different reading and writing tasks.

10. Learners will be autonomous in their learning process.

- a. Learners themselves will set the due dates of each of their assignments and will maintain them.
- b. Learners will review the assignments of their peers for developmental, organizational, and mechanical issues and thus, will learn how to review their own assignments.

Course Design

The classes of the proposed model course will continue for 12 weeks. An outline of the design of the model course (Integrated Skills: Reading and Writing 1) is given below. As the syllabus is a functional task-based one, the course is designed based on both functions and tasks. The order of these tasks/functions in the syllabus is determined by their complexity level and the necessity of learners.

Table 4

Week	Tasks and Functions
1	Identifying main ideas and specific details from reading texts
2	Writing summaries
3	Inferring meanings from reading texts
4	Transitional devices: Identifying and using transitional devices
5	Reviewing written texts for global and local issues

6	Identifying meanings of vocabulary from context-1
7	Identifying meanings of vocabulary from context-2
8	Writing paragraphs and essays in proper structures-1
9	Writing paragraphs and essays in proper structures-2
10	Practicing writing as a process: brainstorming, preparing first draft, revising, redrafting -1
11	Practicing writing as a process: brainstorming, preparing first draft, revising, redrafting -2
12	Review of the topics covered in the whole semester

Course Routine

The classes are held twice a week for two hours each time. From week 3, on day 2, students will work on their portfolios for the last 30 minutes of the class. Teachers will supervise what materials they will be attaching to their portfolios. Last 20-25 minutes of each class will be reserved for submission of or discussion on projects and assignments. The classroom activities will mainly be divided in pre-task, task and post-task phases; teacher will introduce tasks to learners who will take part in the activities that will be followed by the post-task discussion or focus on the skills being practiced. Such a framework is supported by Willis and Willis and Willis who talk about first “input-rich pre task activities,” then “a planning phase” in which learners perform the task, and the third stage when learners “share their report with their classmates” (as cited in Pica, 2008). Similarly, Ellis (2003) also refers to the “pre-task,” “during task,” and “post-task” phases of a task based lesson. According to Ellis (2003), although the pre-task and post-task phases are not compulsory stages in a task-based lesson, these “can serve a crucial role in ensuring that the task performance is maximally effective for language development.” However, in the proposed model course illustrated in this project, stages like pre-task, task and post-task phases will not be rigidly followed; instructors will determine how much time they want to invest in each of these stages depending on the type of task involved, and they will plan accordingly. In the case of some tasks, instructors may choose to focus only on pre-

task and task phases ignoring the post-task phase if they think such planning will benefit learners more. Such flexibility will allow instructors to respond to the diverse needs of learners, and they will be able to adapt their classroom procedures to maximize the learning opportunities. A general routine of the course is given below:

Table 5

Tuesday	Thursday
From 2 pm to 4 pm (120 minutes)	From 2 pm to 4 pm (120 minutes)
Introducing-the-task Phase (15-20minutes)	Introducing-the-task phase (10-15 minutes)
Task phase (40-60 minutes)	Task phase (30-40 minutes)
Short Quiz/discussion on performance (20-30 minutes)	Short Quiz/discussion on performance (20-25 minutes)
Discussion on exercise or assignments / Submission of assignments and projects (20-30 minutes)	Discussion on /Submission of assignments and projects (20 minutes)
	Work on Portfolio (30 minutes)

During the discussion on assignments/projects, teachers will explain the assignments or projects to learners and will respond to their queries. Teachers can show them sample assignments; learners can also bring in their unfinished project papers or assignments if they are stuck at any point and need the teacher’s advice. Learners can also check each other’s writings and offer valuable suggestions. These activities will help enhance the collaborative environment of the classroom. When the teacher gives learners an assignment, learners will determine the due date of that and will work towards the deadline.

Sample Unit

The proposed sample unit is “Identifying meanings of vocabulary from context,” covered in two parts over weeks 6 and 7. In academic reading, an important skill is guessing the meanings of unknown vocabulary from context, and the activities in this regard can help learners raise their consciousness about the importance of

vocabulary learning for effective reading. As in this course, reading and writing skills are integrated, learners will also practice writing by reflecting in short paragraphs on how they could make the correct guesses of the meanings of vocabulary. The total number of students in the class is 15.

Overall Unit Goals and Objectives

- a. Learners will be able to guess the meanings of unknown words from the context of the reading text.
 - Learners will identify the words they are not familiar with from the reading text.
 - They will write down their guesses about the meanings of those words.
 - If the learners fail to make correct guesses, they will look up the meanings of the words appropriate in that specific context from the dictionary and write those down for their practice.
- b. Learners will be familiar with different clues in the text, which they can use to guess the meanings of unknown vocabulary.
 - Learners will recognize different contextual clues like examples, synonyms, definitions, comparisons, or contrast, which they can use to guess the meanings of unknown vocabulary in the text.
- c. Learners will practice writing short reflective paragraphs.
 - Learners will write reflective paragraphs on how they could make the correct guesses about the meanings of the unknown words by using contextual clues.
- d. Learners will be able to use the dictionary to find out the meanings of unknown vocabulary.
 - Learners will identify the appropriate meanings of unknown words in the context of the reading texts from a dictionary.
- e. Learners will know how to guess the meanings of unknown vocabulary from different parts of words: prefixes, suffixes, and roots.
 - Learners will identify the meanings of prefixes, suffixes, or roots to guess the meanings of individual words in the context of sentences.

Unit Length: Two weeks.

Materials: Copies of Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, whiteboard, marker, overhead projector, copies of quizzes, a typed list of meanings of different prefixes and suffixes, one reading text on the history of Bangladesh and another reading text on the cultural festivals of Bangladesh, a list of the types of context clues with example sentences.

Evaluation: Minimum 60% score in short quizzes; successful completion of in-class tasks; successful completion of reflective paragraphs on how they could make the correct guesses of the unknown words.

Sample Lessons

In total, four lessons will take place in this unit on “identifying meanings of vocabulary from context” throughout week 6 and 7 (two lessons in week 6 and two in week 7). From these, three sample lessons (two from week 6 and one from week 7) are described below.

Lesson One

- **Title:** Identifying Meanings of Unknown Words from Context- 1
- **Day:** Week 6, Tuesday.
- **Duration:** From 2 pm to 4 pm (120 minutes)
- **Goal:** Learners will guess the meanings of unknown words from context by using the contextual clues and will use the dictionary to check their guesses.
- **Task Objectives:**
 - Learners will read a one page long text on the history of Bangladesh.
 - Using the contextual clues, learners, in pairs, will guess the meanings of words they do not know or are not sure of and will write those down.
 - Learners will compare the guesses they have made with others and if necessary, will make some changes in those by discussing with their partners.
 - Learners will check the dictionary to find out whether their guesses about the word meanings are correct.

- In case of unsuccessful guesses, learners will write down the correct meanings of the words from the dictionary.
- Learners will guess the meanings of unknown vocabulary by collaborating with others.
- **Functional Objectives:**
 - Guessing and defining the meanings of unknown vocabulary from contextual clues.
 - Correcting the wrong guesses about the word-meanings with the help of a dictionary.
- **Materials:** Copies of one reading text (see Appendix D) , copies of the smaller version of Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, white board, markers, overhead projector, a set of short quiz to evaluate the learners' ability to guess word-meanings from contextual clues, a list of contextual clues with example sentences (see Appendix G).
- **Introducing-the-Task Phase/ Teacher Input (20 minutes):**
 - The teacher introduces the topic by explaining that while reading a text, learners may not know the meaning of every word; so, sometimes they have to make guesses about the word meanings.
 - The teacher writes on the white board the names of common contextual clues (definitions, synonyms, comparison, examples, contrasts, inference) and explains how by using these clues, learners can make informed guesses about word meanings. For example, in the sentence, "My sister's amiability, her ability to mix up with all, has made her very famous among her friends," the meaning of "amiability" is defined right next to this word; thus, in this case, definition can be used as a contextual clue to guess the meaning of this word.
 - The teacher shows, on the overhead projector, a list of sentences exemplifying how the meanings of some words in those sentences can be guessed by using the above-mentioned contextual clues. For example, in the sentence, "Jim was quite skeptical about his success in cargo business, as he had no prior experience in that sector," the meaning of the word "skeptical" can be inferred from the rest of the sentence; hence, inference can be used as a contextual clue in this case.

- **Task Phase (55 minutes):** Learners will be divided in pairs. Each pair will be given a one page long reading text on the history of Bangladesh (see Appendix D).

Directions: Read the text and underline the words the meanings of which you don't know or are not sure of. From your knowledge of the contextual clues, guess the meanings of at least 5 unknown words and write those down in a piece of paper. You can discuss your guesses with your partner.

- Learners will write down their guessed meanings of the unknown words from the text.
- Each pair will discuss with the pair sitting next to them about the vocabulary- guesses they have made and will make some alterations in their guesses if necessary.
- The teacher will keep a smaller version of the Oxford Learners' Dictionary in front of each pair of students. They will be given the following direction.

Direction: Find out from the dictionary the words you have guessed the meanings of and match your guessed meanings with the dictionary meanings; if for a word, those meanings do not match, write down the correct meaning from the dictionary.

- Each pair of learners matches their guessed meanings with the dictionary meanings and writes down the correct meanings of those words in a piece of paper.
 - Teacher will monitor how learners are performing the tasks and answer if they have any questions.
- **Short Quiz (25 minutes):** After the task, the learners will be divided in groups of three, and they will take part in the following short quiz.

Direction: Read the following paragraph and use the contextual clues to guess the meanings of the underlined words. Rewrite the paragraph by replacing the underlined words with their meanings. Discuss with your group partners while doing this task.

Figure 2

My father's sociability, his ability to mix up with all, has made him very popular among his colleagues. But there were some people in his office who found him to be a voluble person, as he just keeps talking continuously. A few years ago, he had a chance to be involved in textile business. But he was quite skeptical about his success in business, as he had no prior experience in that sector. In terms of character, I do not resemble my father at all because we have totally different types of personality.

After completing the quiz, the learners will submit their paragraphs to the teacher.

- **Discussion on exercise or assignments/Submission of Assignments or Project(20 minutes):**

- After collecting the quizzes from the learners, the teacher will explain the correct answers.
- Teacher will ask the learners whether they had any other question about the exercise or the quiz.
- Learners will submit any previous assignment that is due.
- Learners will ask the teacher questions (if they have any) about any prior assignment or project that they are working on; they can also discuss with each other about their questions.

- **Home-task:** Teacher will tell the learners to review the whole lesson as home task because the following day's (Thursday) lesson will be related to it.

Lesson Two

- **Title:** Identifying meanings of unknown words from context-1
- **Date:** Week 6 (Thursday)
- **Duration:** From 2 pm to 4 pm (120 minutes)
- **Goal:** Learners will be aware of their learning process and strategies while using the contextual clues in guessing the meanings of unknown words.

Task Objectives: Learners will read a text on the cultural festivals of Bangladesh.

- Learners will underline the unknown words from the text and will guess the meanings of those words.
- Learners will identify which contextual clues or strategies help them make the guesses.
- Learners will match their guesses with the word meanings from the dictionary and will correct if they make any wrong choice.
- Learners will write paragraphs reflecting on the kinds of strategies/clues they have used in guessing the word meanings from context.
- **Functional Objectives:**
 - Identifying and defining the contextual clues or strategies used in guessing the meanings of unknown vocabulary.
 - Confirming the strategies used by checking the guesses with the word-meanings from the dictionary.
- **Materials:** A reading text (of one page) on the cultural festivals of Bangladesh (see Appendix E), white board, markers, over-head projector, copies of a short quiz, copies of the smaller version of Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, a list of contextual clues with example sentences (see Appendix G).
- **Introducing-the-Task Phase / Teacher Input(10 minutes):**
 - Teacher will review the previous day's lesson and show them a list of sentences that illustrates how strategies like contextual clues (for instance, example, definition, sense of reasoning, synonym, and contrast) can help in guessing the meanings of vocabulary from context.
 - Teacher will ask learners whether they have any question on the contextual clues or whether they had any problem while reviewing the previous day's lesson.
- **Task Phase (40 minutes):**
 - Students will be divided in small groups of 3. So, in total, there will be 5 groups in the class.
 - Each group will read the one page long text on the cultural festivals of Bangladesh (see Appendix E).

- Each group will identify 5 words the meanings of which they do not know or are not sure of and will guess the meanings of those.
- Teacher will give the groups dictionaries, and they will match their guesses with the correct meanings from the dictionary.
- Each group will prepare a reflective paper where they will write down, for every correctly guessed word, the contextual clue or strategy that has helped them make the correct guesses. For the unsuccessful guesses, members of each group will discuss among them the reasons for the mistakes and how they could make those correct and will write those down in the paper.
- Teacher will monitor the activities and will help the learners if necessary. After the task, the learners will save their reflective papers to attach to their portfolios.

- **Short Quiz (20 minutes):**

Teacher will divide the learners in pairs and will give each pair the following quiz.

Direction: Read the following paragraph and try to guess the meanings of underlined words from context. Discuss with your partner and write a paragraph on how you could make the guesses and which contextual clues helped you in this regard.

Figure 3

My sister Amanda has a very good rapport with me, but she does not like my best friend Maria. Amanda helped me vacate my apartment in the last year when I went to London for three months, and I was not even allowed to keep a few kitchen utensils in the apartment. Then, my mother did not thwart my plan of visiting London, rather she sent Amanda to help me move out of my apartment. I always appreciate my mom for her extraordinary ability or prowess in handling critical situations.

After completing the quiz, each pair will hand their reflections in to the teacher.

- **Discussion on Exercises or Assignments/ Submission of Assignments or Projects (20 minutes):**

- After collecting the quizzes from the learners, teacher will tell them the correct answers.
 - Teacher will ask the students whether they had any problem in answering the quiz or in identifying the right contextual clues for making the guesses.
 - Students will ask the teacher questions if they have problem with any of the prior assignments or projects.
 - Students will submit to the teacher any assignments or projects that were due.
- **Work on Portfolio (30 minutes):**
 - Teacher will tell the students that each of them will have to write a reflective paragraph (in 1-2 pages). In those paragraphs, they will reflect on the kinds of strategies or contextual clues they used in making the correct guesses about the word-meanings in the task phases in the previous two classes. In their paragraphs, students will reflect on how the contextual clues helped them make the correct guesses. The teacher will also inform them that these paragraphs will be attached to their individual portfolios.
 - Teacher will ask the students whether they have any question or confusion about this writing task.
 - Each student will decide a due date within the semester when they will be able to complete writing the paragraphs, and the teacher will take a note of that date.
 - Teacher will ask the students whether they have any problem with or question about any of the writing tasks that they are working on for attaching to their portfolios.
 - Students will share their questions and concerns with the teacher.
 - **Home task:** Teacher will give each student a list of common English prefixes and suffixes with the meanings and example words. Students will be asked to review that list before coming to the next class on Tuesday.

Lesson Three

Title: Identifying meanings of unknown words from context- 2

- **Day:** Week 7 (Tuesday)
- **Duration:** From 2 pm to 4 pm (120 minutes)
- **Goal:** Learners will be able to identify different parts of the words by knowing about prefixes and suffixes, and this knowledge will help them comprehend meanings of vocabularies when they fail to guess word-meanings from contextual clues.

Task Objectives:

- Learners will review a list of prefixes and suffixes with meanings and example sentences.
- Learners will form meaningful words using prefixes and suffixes.
- Learners will write a short story sequence in about 250 words by incorporating vocabulary from a list given by the instructor.
- Learners will complete a list of sentences using appropriate words.

Functional Objectives:

- Identifying meanings of words from their parts.
- Increasing power of vocabulary by forming words using prefixes and suffixes.
- **Materials:** Copies of the smaller version of Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, overhead projector, copies of quiz, copies of exercise, a list of common English prefixes and suffixes with meanings and example words (see Appendix F), white board, marker.
- **Introducing-the-task Phase/Teacher Input(20 minutes) :**
 - Teacher will explain that students can comprehend the meanings of vocabulary from their knowledge of different parts of words if there are no contextual clues to help them guess the meanings.
 - Teacher will write the following structure of words on the white board :
Prefix+ Root+ Suffix= New Word
 - Teacher will explain that prefixes are added at the beginning of roots and suffixes are added at the end.
 - Teacher will show the list of common prefixes and suffixes (with their meanings and example words) on the over-head projector. Teacher will

remind the learners that this list was given to them for review (as home task) in the previous class and will ask them if they have any confusion or question about the list or about any prefixes or suffixes.

- Teacher will write a couple of example words on board and show how those words are formed with prefixes and/or suffixes.
- **Task Phase (60 minutes):**
 - Teacher will divide the learners in 5 groups, each consisting of 3 students.
 - Teacher will give each group the following set of words and ask them to write a short story using these vocabularies within about 250 words. Teacher will tell the groups that if they are confused about the meaning of any word, they can take help from the lists of prefixes and suffixes that was given to them before.

Figure 4

Extramarital, Unlawful, Interpersonal, Misconduct, Misunderstand, Reestablish, Hypersensitive, Retrospect, Jealous, Loyalty, Relationship, Discontinue.

- After all the groups have finished writing their stories, one student from each group will read out their story to the whole class.
- The teacher will tell each group how successful they were in using the words appropriately and meaningfully in sentences.
- If any group fails to use any word correctly in the context of their story, the instructor will give them necessary feedback.
- The instructor will respond to any further confusion or questions from the learners.
- **Short Quiz (20 minutes):**
 - Students will take part in the following quiz in pairs.

Figure 5

QUIZ	
Directions: Add appropriate prefix or suffix to each of the words listed below so that you can use it to complete the sentence that follows each word; write the correct form of the words to fill in the blanks. You can take help from the lists of prefixes and suffixes you have. [There is an example given for you in no. 1.]	
1. Compare.	My situation is totally different from yours; there can be no <u>comparison</u> between the two.
2. Amaze	I was so fascinated by that _____ sight that I did not feel like coming back.
3. Credible.	It was _____ that Bangladesh would defeat India in the world cup cricket.
4. Accept	It was not _____ to me that I would not be allowed to enter that auditorium for being only 5 minutes late.
5. Relation	Nobody knows anything about the close _____ between Harry and Molly although they look like hostile to each other.
6. Literate	He is not totally _____ because he can write his own name and address.
7. Arrange	You have to _____ the whole living room again because your father did not like the new decoration.
8. Perfect	It is not possible for a human being to achieve _____, as human beings are fallible creatures.
9. Inspect	

The police came to my room for _____ because they were desperately looking for a clue to the robbery.

10. Build

You have to _____ your house again; the engineers have declared it to be prone to earthquakes.

- After finishing the quiz, the learners will hand it in to the teacher.
- **Discussion on Activities or Assignments/ Submission of Assignments or Projects (20 minutes):**
 - Teacher will ask the students whether they had any question about the quiz or whether they had any problem in answering the quiz.
 - Students will share their experiences or problems with the teacher and also with the fellow learners.
 - Teacher will tell the learners to revise the short stories they wrote in groups for both meaning and structure and attach those stories to their individual portfolios; teacher will tell the learners that they can work on those stories during the time reserved for portfolio work on Thursday.
 - Students will ask the teacher questions (if they have any) on any previous assignments or project they are working on.
 - Students will submit any assignment or project that is due.

Home task: Teacher will give the learners a list of common roots with meanings and examples for review, as the following lesson will be focused on this.

Conclusion

The functional task-based curriculum proposed in this study can replace a grammar-based curriculum at any EFL context (teachers need to select the materials relevant to their specific student groups). Such a curriculum can orient learners more to meaning and use of language than to grammar, and thus, learners can have the opportunity to use English to perform specific functions and attain successful communication.

References

- Bangla 2000. (n.d.a). *Festivals*. Retrieved from <http://www.bangla2000.com/bangladesh/festivals.shtm>
- Bangla 2000. (n.d.b). *History*. Retrieved from <http://www.bangla2000.com/bangladesh/history.shtm>
- Brown, J. D.(1995). *The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development*. Boston, MA: Heinle Cengage Learning.
- Coady, J. (1997). L2 vocabulary acquisition through extensive reading. . In J. Coady &T. Huckin (Eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition: A rationale for pedagogy* (pp.225-237). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cook, G. (1997). Language play, language learning. *ELT Journal*, 51 (3), 224-231.
- Davis, C. (1995). Extensive reading: An expensive extravagance? *ELT Journal*, 49 (4), 329-336.
- Elley, B.W., & Mangubhai, F. (1983). The impact of reading on second language learning. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 19 (1), 53-67.
- Elley, W.B. (1991). Acquiring literacy in a second language: The effect of book-based programs. *Language Learning*, 41(3), 375-411.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hinkel, E. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching the four skills. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40 (1), 109-131.
- Honig, B., Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2000). *Teaching reading sourcebook: For kindergarten through eighth grade*. Washington, DC: Arena Press.
- Krashen, S. (1989). We acquire vocabulary and spelling by reading: Additional evidence for the input hypothesis. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73 (4), 440-464.
- Laufer, B. (1997). The lexical plight in second language reading: Words you don't know, words you think you know, and words you can't guess. In J. Coady &T. Huckin (Eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition: A rationale for pedagogy* (pp.20-34). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McWhorter, K.T. (2009). *Guide to college reading*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Murphy, J. (2003). Task-based learning: The interaction between tasks and learners. *ELT Journal*, 57 (4), 352-360.

- Nagy, W.E. (1988). *Teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Massachusetts, Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oliveira, C. P. D. (2004). Implementing task-based assessment in a TEFL environment. In B.L. Leaver & J.R. Willis (Eds.), *Task-based instruction in foreign language education: practices and programs* (pp.253-279). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Ohio State University. (n.d.). *Portfolio rubric*. Retrieved from <http://course1.winona.edu/shatfield/air/OSU%20portfolio%20rubric.pdf>
- Oura, G. K. (2001). Authentic task-based materials: Bringing the real world into the classroom. *Sophia Junior College Faculty Bulletin*, 65-84.
- Pica, T. (2008). Task-based instruction. *Second and Foreign Language Education*, 4, 71-82.
- Renandya, W. (2007). The power of extensive reading. *RELC Journal*, 38(2), 133-149.
- Saito-Abbott, Y. (2004). Designing an outcomes-based TBI Japanese language program. In B.L. Leaver & J.R. Willis (Eds.), *Task-based instruction in foreign language education: practices and programs* (pp. 122-141). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Schmitt, N., Jiang, X., & Grabe, W.(2011). The percentage of words known in a text and reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95, 26-43.
- Siddique, R. (2004). CLT: Another assumed ideal from the west? *The Dhaka University Studies*, 61 (1), 15-28.
- Simpson, R. C., S. L. Briggs, J. Ovens, and J. M. Swales. (2002) *The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English*. Ann Arbor, MI: The Regents of the University of Michigan.
- Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 17 (1), 38-62.
- Skehan, P. (1998). Task-based instruction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 268-286.

TED. (n.d.). *TED: Ideas worth spreading*. Retrieved from

<http://www.ted.com/talks?orderedby=PERSUASIVE&tagid=28#>

The Web Portal for Educators. (n.d.). *Class participation rubric for teachers*.

Retrieved from <http://teachers.teach-nology.com/cgi-bin/classpar.cgi>

University of California (UC) Davis English Department Composition Program.

(n.d.). *Example of a grading rubric for a term paper in any discipline*.

Retrieved from <http://course1.winona.edu/shatfield/air/termpaper.pdf>

Vandervelde, J. (2011). *A+ Rubric*. Retrieved from

<http://www2.uwstout.edu/content/profdev/rubrics/eportfoliorubric.html>

Appendices

A. Class Participation Rubric for Teachers (The Web Portal for Educators, n.d.).

Adapted from <http://teachers.teach-nology.com/cgi-bin/classpar.cgi>

B. Portfolio Rubric. Adapted from Ohio State University (n.d.) and University of Wisconsin E- Portfolio Rubric (Vandervelde, 2011).

C. Example of a Grading Rubric for a Term Paper in any Discipline (University of California (UC) Davis English Department Composition Program, n.d.)

D. History of Bangladesh (Bangla 2000, n.d. b). Retrieved from <http://www.bangla2000.com/bangladesh/history.shtm>

E. Festivals in Bangladesh (Bangla 2000, n.d.a). Retrieved from <http://www.bangla2000.com/bangladesh/festivals.shtm>

F. Lists of Prefixes and Suffixes with meanings and example words, from Honig, Diamond, and Gutlohn (2000).

G. List of context clues with example sentences (McWhorter, 2009)

Appendix A (Class Participation Rubric for Teachers)

Grading level Criteria	A/ A-	B+/ B	B-/C+	C/C-
Level of Engagement in Class	Student proactively contributes to	Student proactively contributes to	Student rarely contributes to class by	Student never contributes to class by

	class by offering ideas and asking questions more than once per class.	class by offering ideas and asking questions once per class.	offering ideas and asking questions.	offering ideas and asking questions.
Behavior	Student almost never displays disruptive behavior during class.	Student rarely displays disruptive behavior during class.	Student occasionally displays disruptive behavior during class.	Student almost always displays disruptive behavior during class.
Preparation	Student is always prepared for class with assignments and required class materials.	Student is usually prepared for class with assignments and required class materials.	Student is rarely prepared for class with assignments and required class materials.	Student is never prepared for class with assignments and required class materials.

Appendix B (Portfolio Rubric)

Criteria	Excellent(A/A-)	Satisfactory(B+/B)	Fair (B-/C+)	Substandard C/C-
Clear, organized and professional format	The portfolio has a cover page with the student's name and contact information, dividers are visible and readable, Table	All elements are present but lack clarity and organization.	A few elements are missing; the remaining ones lack clarity and organization.	Most of the elements are missing; the remaining ones are incomplete and disorganized.

	of Content directs readers to each section.			
Context setting Paragraphs (Each portfolio entry is preceded by a 150 words long paragraph that describes the entry and explains what it shows about the portfolio developer).	Each paragraph clearly describes the entry it precedes, its purpose, and how it reveals the candidate's capabilities.	Paragraphs describe the entries and how those relate to the learners' abilities. But some paragraphs are missing and others are not clear enough.	Many entries are not preceded by paragraphs. The remaining paragraphs are poorly written and lack clarity.	Most of the paragraphs are missing, and others show little or no connection between the entries and the learners' abilities.
Teaching Artifacts (exercises, lecture notes, quizzes, comment cards on graded readers etc.)	Well developed and organized.	Adequately developed. Some artifacts could have been better organized.	Artifacts are not well developed. Lack of organization.	Some/most of the artifacts are missing; poor organization.

Creativity	The development and organization of the artifacts show creativity and original ideas.	Most of the artifacts are developed and organized in a way that shows learner's creativity and original ideas.	The development and organization of some of the artifacts show learner's creativity and original ideas.	A few or no artifact show any use of learner's creativity or original ideas.
-------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Appendix C

See the following link:

<http://course1.winona.edu/shatfield/air/termpaper.pdf>

Appendix D

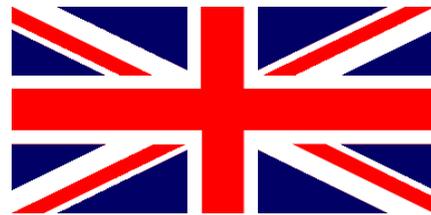
History of Bangladesh

“Bangladesh came to today's shape through a long history of political evolution. Bengal was probably the wealthiest part of the subcontinent up till the 16th century. The area's early history featured a succession of Indian empires, internal squabbling, and a tussle between Hinduism and Buddhism for dominance. Under the Mughal viceroys, art and literature flourished, overland trade expanded and Bengal was opened to world maritime trade - the latter marking the death knell of Mughal power as Europeans began to establish themselves in the region. The Portuguese arrived as early as the 15th century but were ousted in 1633 by local opposition. The East India Company negotiated terms to establish a fortified trading post in Calcutta in 1690.

The decline of Mughal power led to greater provincial autonomy, heralding the rise of the independent dynasty of the *nawabs* of Bengal. Humble East India Company clerk Robert Clive ended up effectively ruling Bengal when one of the impetuous *nawabs* attacked the thriving British enclave in Calcutta and stuffed those unlucky enough not to escape in an underground cellar. Clive retook Calcutta

a year later and the British Government replaced the East India Company following the Indian Mutiny in 1857. The Britons established an organizational and social structure unparalleled in Bengal, and Calcutta became one of the most important centers for commerce, education and culture in the subcontinent. The British presence was a relief to the minority Hindus but a catastrophe for the Muslims. The Hindus cooperated with the Brits, entering British educational institutions and studying the English language, but the Muslims refused to cooperate, and rioted whenever crops failed or another local product was rendered unprofitable by government policy.

At the closure of World War II it was clear that European colonialism had run its course and Indian independence was inevitable. Independence was attained in 1947 but the struggle was bitter and divisive, especially in



Bengal where the fight for self-government was complicated by internal religious conflict. The British, realizing any agreement between the Muslims and Hindus was impossible, decided to partition the subcontinent.”

Appendix E

Festivals in Bangladesh

“Festivals have always played a significant role in the life of the people of Bangladesh. Those are parts and parcels of Bangalee culture and tradition. Brief account of the major and regular festivals is given below.

Pahela Baishakh

The advent of Bengali New Year is gaily observed throughout the country. The Day (mid-April) is a public holiday. Most colorful daylong gatherings along with arrangement of cultural program and traditional *Panta* at Ramna Park, Dhaka is a special feature of Pahela Baishakh. Tournaments, boat races etc. are held in cities and villages amidst great jubilation. Many fairs are held in Dhaka and other towns and villages.

Independence Day

March 26 is the day of Independence of Bangladesh. It is the biggest state festival. This day is most befittingly observed and the capital wears a festive look. It is a public holiday. The citizens of Dhaka wake up early in the morning with the booming of guns heralding the day. Citizens including government leaders and sociopolitical organizations and freedom fighters place floral wreaths at the National Martyrs Monument at Savar. At night the main public buildings are tastefully illuminated to give the capital city a dazzling look.

21st Feb, the National Mourning Day and World Mother Language Day

21 February is observed throughout the country to pay respect and homage to the sacred souls of the martyrs' of Language Movement of 1952. Blood was shed on this day at the Central Shahid Minar (near Dhaka Medical College Hospital) area to establish Bangla as a state language of the then Pakistan. All subsequent movements including struggle for independence owe their origin to the historic language movement. The martyrs' monument is the symbol of sacrifice for Bangla, the mother tongue. The day is closed holiday. Mourning procedure begin in Dhaka at midnight with the song *Amar vaier raktay rangano ekushay February* (21st February, the day stained with my brothers' blood). Nationals pay homage to the martyrs by placing flora wreaths at the monument. Very recently the day has been declared World Mother Language Day by UNESCO.

Eid-ul-Fitr

The biggest Muslim festival observed throughout the world. This is held on the day following the Ramadan or the month of fasting. In Dhaka big congregations are held at the National Eidgah and many mosques.

Durga Puja

Durga Puja, the biggest festival of the Hindu community continues for ten days, the last three days being culmination with the idol immersed in rivers.”

Appendix F

See the following link:

http://teacher.scholastic.com/reading/bestpractices/vocabulary/pdf/prefixes_suffixes.pdf

Appendix G

Examples Sentences of Different Types of Context Clues

Definition clue-

A **dialogue** refers to a conversation between two people.

Synonym clue-

Avoiding direct sunlight is a **prudent** or sensible decision for those who are allergic to sunlight.

Example Clue-

Physiological needs like hunger and thirst need to be satisfied for the sake of a healthy life.

Contrast Clue-

Most of the students were **elated**, but a few of them looked depressed.

Inference clue-

The main dish looked very plain; so I decided to **garnish** it with coriander leaves, carrots, and lettuce.

Communicative Competence Assessment for Teachers of Bilingual Schools in Indonesia

Heny Hartono, SS, M.Pd

English Department Soegijapranata Catholic University

Bioprofile:

Heny Hartono is a senior lecturer at the English Department, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang, Indonesia where she coordinates and teaches TEFL and Second Language Acquisition classes. In the last few years she has been involved in various researches within second language acquisition field which becomes her main focus. Any query about the article should be addressed to Heny Hartono at hartonoheny@gmail.com

Abstract

The use of English as the global language has impacted the dynamics of all aspects of human life including education. This condition has been caught by some Indonesian private schools as a highly marketing opportunity to get more students. In fact, the use of English as the language of instruction has become one of the main attractions for Indonesian parents to send their children to those schools. Some schools label themselves as bilingual schools or national plus schools with some variations of the English use in only some subjects (such as math, science, and arts) or in all subjects except Indonesian language and local or traditional language. By sending their children to the schools, the parents expect their children to be fluent and proficient in English. One of the determinant keys to the success of making students proficient in English is the quality teachers. The schools should have a strict teaching staff recruitment system as well as having a continuous professional development programs to maintain and improve the quality of the teachers. Since teachers have to teach in English, they are not only required to master the content of the subjects but they are also required to have communicative competence in English to handle the classroom discourse and to provide students with opportunity for meaning negotiation. The importance of assessing teacher's communicative competence to further develop and design the most appropriate professional development program for teachers is highlighted in this paper.

Key Words: Communicative Competence, Assessment, Teacher, Bilingual

Introduction

As a global language, English has been taught as a foreign language in many countries around the world. In fact, it has been the language most widely taught as a foreign language in more than 100 countries in the world (Crystal, 2003) including in Indonesia. The teaching of English in Indonesia has started since the Dutch colonization more than a century ago. After passing through decades, the curriculum of English teaching in Indonesia has changed several times from the grammar translation until the meaning-based communicative curriculum (Paksira, 2009). The curriculum changes reflect the needs of English not only as a school subject but also as a means of communication.

With the fast growing of English as the main language of the world, English has been used as the main language in academic and non-academic books, newspapers, science, technology, music, movies, and advertising. It has been used as an official language or semiofficial language in over than 60 countries of all six continents. The number of people who are able to speak English is also increasing in the last few decades (Crystal, 2003). Therefore, it is not surprising if the number of children learning English as an additional language is significantly increasing. There is also another interesting fact that there is a shift taking place in the number of English users as first language. In 1960s, the most English users were detected as the first language speakers but now there are more people speak English as a second language and even there are many more speak it as a foreign language (Crystal, 2003).

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language. Despite its position as a foreign language, the number of Indonesian people including children and adults study or learn English as a foreign language is also increasing. It is supported by a recent report from Himpunan Pengusaha Kursus Indonesia (HIPKI or the Indonesian Courses Association, 2004) cited in Mantiri (2004), which shows that there are about 25,000 registered courses in Indonesia and half of these courses are English courses. Meanwhile, within formal educational institutions, English has been taught as a school subject in Indonesia for 50 years or so. English is one of the compulsory

subjects in junior and senior high schools. English is also one of the subjects in the National Exams of high schools.

For elementary schools, English is not a compulsory subject. However, since 1992 elementary schools can teach and introduce English to young learners as a local content subject. It is stated in the Decree of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Number 0487/4/1992, Chapter VIII, which allows schools to add some other basic subjects in the curriculum, as long as the lessons are not against the national education goals. Then, the policy has been followed by the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 060/U/1993 dated February 25, 1993 which opens the possibility of having English as a local content subject in the elementary school curriculum starting from the 4th grade (Sikki, Rahman, Hamra, Noni, 2013).

The reformation era in Indonesia has encouraged schools to modify its curriculum (Arlini, 2011). It is the educational reformation which encourages schools to modify their curriculum by adding or combining the national curriculum with international curriculum or curriculum from other countries. This idea has become the base of some educational institutions to open bilingual or multilingual school programs. Mostly, one of the languages used as the instructional language is English. The use of English as the language of instruction has been one of the main attractions for parents to send their children to such schools with an expectation that their children will master and have high proficiency in English. In the writer's previous study (Hartono, 2013) about parents' beliefs and expectations to send their children to English speaking schools, the writer found that most parents sent their children to schools which used English as the delivery language because they wanted their children to be fluent in English. Although none of the parents admitted that they sent their children to such schools for prestige, it cannot be denied that the ability to understand and use English theoretically and in practice is considered as a prestige.

The flourishing bilingual schools especially in big cities in Indonesia raises a question of the readiness of the schools to give their best educational services through the facilities, curriculum, teaching materials, and their human resources. In this paper, a concern is given to the quality and the quality maintenance of the teachers as the main human resource. As teachers have to teach different subjects in English, teachers' communicative competence to enhance classroom discourse should be given attention. The starting point to develop and increase teachers'

communicative competence is knowing the current level of their communicative competence. Therefore, an assessment tool needs to be designed to measure the teacher's communicative competence level. In further steps, the results of the assessment can be used to plan, design and decide the most appropriate trainings or other programs to improve the teachers' competence. In this paper the writer will highlight the notion of bilingual schools, how the bilingual schools in Indonesia look like, the concepts of assessment and the importance of communicative competence assessment for teachers of bilingual schools.

Bilingual Schools

The learning of a second or foreign language can take place in some contexts such as in natural context which includes the learning of a second or foreign language in majority language contexts, in official language context, or in international context; and in educational contexts in which one of them is through immersion program (Ellis, 1994, pp. 216-228). Language immersion program is a method of teaching a second language where members of the majority group are educated through the medium of the target language (Pacific Policy Research Center (PPRC), 2010; Ellis, 1994, p. 225). Rod Ellis explains there are a number of variants of this program depending on the age of the learners when they start the program and the kind of the immersion program. Baker (2006) contends that there are three generic levels of entry into language immersion education according to age:

- Early immersion : it is when students begin the second language from age 5 to 6
- Middle immersion: it is when students begin the second language from age 9 to 10
- Late immersion : it is when students begin the second language from age 11 to 14

The types of immersion program are mainly in the form of (a) full immersion in which more or less instruction is conducted in the target language (b) partial immersion in which only part of the curriculum is taught through the target language (Ellis, 1994) and (c) two-way immersion which “integrate language minority students and language majority students in the same classroom with the goal of academic excellence and bilingual proficiency for both student groups” (PPRC, 2010).

From the above exposition, it can be clearly seen that immersion program can take form as bilingual education. Bilingual education is characterized by the use of instruction in two languages as medium of instruction for any part, or all, of the school curriculum (PPRC, 2010). Bilingual education does not include programs which do not use bilingual instruction although the schools have bilingual students. It also excludes schools which only teach the target language as a “subject” (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008).

Stephen May (2008) categorizes bilingual education as subtractive and additive programs. It is called as subtractive when there is one language dominates the program either by losing or replacing one language with another. On the other hand, it is considered as an additive program if it promotes bilingual or biliteracy by adding another language to the student’s existing language. Further, she also classifies bilingual education into four categories called as transitional models, maintenance models, enrichment models, and heritage model of bilingual education.

The transitional model is bilingual only at first but later it is monolingual. It starts with the use of L1 but later the L2 (which is the dominant language) will take over all the use of L1. The aim is not bilingualism or biliteracy but monolingual of the dominant language. It is usually applied in early education level such as kindergarden or elementary school. Maintenance bilingual education does not involve the development of minority language, it only involves the maintenance of the minority language. It aims to form a solid academic base for the students in their L1 that “in turn facilitates the acquisition of literacy in an L2, on the basis of the developmental interdependence principle” (James Cummins, 1979, Jim Cummins, 2000 in PPRC, 2010). Enrichment bilingual education’s goal is bilingualism and biliteracy. It also aims to maintain the minority language in the community. It focuses on teaching students academic proficiency through the medium of a second language, whereupon literacy in the second language can be attained. It is different from maintenance model as it aims to extend the influence of minority language to enrich the national culture or to achieve cultural pluralism and autonomy of cultural groups. The heritage model falls between the maintenance and enrichment. It is especially to conserve and maintain language which is lost or in danger. Thus it can be said that maintenance, enrichment, and heritage bilingual education models are additive while transitional model is subtractive.

Bilingual Schools in Indonesia

In Indonesia, bilingual education can be found in different levels of education, starting from kindergarden until high schools. Mostly, bilingual schools in Indonesia are partial immersion in which there are some parts of the school curriculum taught in the first language. There are some variants of partial immersion or bilingual education programs applied in Indonesia. Some schools use the target language in almost all subjects except for Indonesian language, local (traditional) language, and other foreign languages. Several other schools only teach some subjects in the target language. Some of the subjects are mathematics, science, TIK (ICT --Information Computer Technology) and arts. Mainly, schools prefer to teach mathematics and science in English with a hope that they will produce globally competitive graduates because mathematics and science are seen as the base for technology development (Supriyadi, 2011).

Almost all Indonesian schools which offer immersion programs include English as the language of instruction. Some other schools also use other foreign languages which are considered as the international languages such as Arabic, Mandarin, and French. Therefore, it is possible that the schools have multilingual programs. Despite the attraction of other foreign languages, English as the most widely used international language has dominated the bilingual or multilingual schools. In fact, English has got its first place as a foreign language in Indonesia. This beneficial situation has been caught by educational institutions especially from the private or non-government sector to open immersion programs. In reality, these programs are commonly found in big cities (capital city of provinces) in Indonesia. The use of English as the language of instruction has become a part of marketing strategies for private schools to get more students.

Nowadays, there are more and more schools open and offer immersion program with various programs which sound marketable. Some labels are used to name the programs such as “smart class”, “special class”, “international class”, etc. The main characteristic of the programs is the use of English in teaching and learning process in some or all subjects. The school may use national curriculum or modification of national curriculum and curriculum from other countries. These programs are different from international schools which have international students,

use international curriculum, and use English as the main and only language of instruction.

The target of immersion programs is middle-upper families. It is due to the high tuition fee and the expensive books used by the students. The facilities offered in this program are above the regular programs. Usually, there are two teachers in one class and the classes are in small size where there are fewer students compared to the number of students in regular class. In basic education level, the classrooms are commonly designed in such a way to enable teacher and students have interaction. Some schools may also hire native speakers of English to teach.

Some schools are under the category of transitional bilingual schools where in the first years, L1 or mixed language is still used but in the higher level, all content subjects are taught in English. Some others apply enrichment model in which students are expected to be bilingual and biliterate by having high proficiency in both languages as well as having cultural awareness in both languages. Thus, students are expected to be ready and able to participate in the global community because they can adapt themselves in the target language culture without losing their identity in the first language culture.

Communicative Competence

One of the challenges faced by the educational institutions in Indonesia which offer immersion program is the quality insurance of the teachers. Considering the role of English as a foreign language in Indonesia, there is limited exposure to English outside the classroom. As a result, the role of teachers as the target language role-model in the classroom is very significant. Students are mostly exposed to English in the classroom. Although classroom discourse may not be able to create as natural discourse as the real discourse outside the classroom, teachers are demanded to provide ‘natural’ discourse through the classroom interaction. The ability of handling a discourse is the core of communicative competence as suggested by Celce Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrel (1995).

The concept of communicative competence began in 1960s as a counter-movement against the so-called “linguistic competence” introduced by linguist Noam Chomsky (Rickheit and Strohner, 2008). Chomsky referred linguistics competence to the inner linguistic knowledge someone has which is supposed to be unaffected by

cognitive and situational factors during actual linguistic performance. Around 1970s, Habermas and Dell Hymes (as cited in Rickheit and Strohner, 2008) argued that Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence was not relevant for real-life communication. Habermas condemns that Chomsky's idea of idealized speaker-hearer is too narrow. He suggests to consider speech situation:

Above all, communicative competence relates to an ideal speech situation in the same way that linguistic competence relates to the abstract system of linguistic rules. The dialogue constitutive universals at the same time generate and describe the form of inter subjectivity which makes mutuality of understanding possible. Communicative competence is defined by the ideal speaker's mastery of the dialogue constitutive universals irrespective of the actual restrictions under empirical conditions. (As cited in Rickheit and Strohner, 2008, p.17).

Dell Hymes emphasizes that the knowledge of grammatical rules is not sufficient for speaking a language and for communicating. He stresses that the interlocutor's ability is needed to conduct a good communication. Hence, he introduced the notion of 'communicative competence'. The two most important criteria of communicative competence are effectiveness which is related to satisfaction, desired change, or creativity and appropriateness which indicates contextuality (Rickheit and Strohner, 2008). Wieman et al (1997, p.31 cited by Lesenciuc and Codreanu, 2012) state that competence is a matter of establishing a relationship between effectiveness and appropriateness and one's knowledge, motivation, and skills affect the perceived effectiveness and appropriateness, and ultimately influences other's judgment of competence. Meanwhile, Spitzberg and Cupach (1989 in Rickheit and Strohner, 2008, p.26) point out "effectiveness derives from control and is defined as successful goal achievement or task accomplishment". Effectiveness relates to the ability to achieve or to infer a speaker's meaning.

The other criterion of communicative competence is appropriateness. As it was already proposed by Dell Hymes, a competent communication should be judged as appropriate according to the social factors in a given situation. Combining effectiveness and appropriateness, Brian Spitzberg (2003, p. 98 in Rickheit and Strohner, 2008, p.27) concludes:

However, combining appropriateness and effectiveness provides a framework that most competence theorists accept as generally viable. Competence, according to the dual criteria of appropriateness and effectiveness, is the extent to which an interactant achieves preferred outcomes in a manner that upholds the emergent standards of legitimacy of those judging the interaction.

A classroom teacher is supposed to use language effectively and appropriately. Moreover, within a foreign language setting where exposure to the target language is limited to the classroom discourse, teacher's language is playing a significant role to determine the success of teaching and learning process. While English is used as the medium of communication, teacher's communicative competence in English is challenged. Cummins (1979, 1981 in Brown, 2000) introduced the notions of cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). CALP consists of linguistics knowledge and literacy skills required for academic work and focuses on form while BICS is more about communication skills needed for interpersonal context. Cummins modified his notion of CALP and BICS as context-reduced and context embedded. Good share of classroom, supportive classroom environment is context-reduced. Since the position of English in Indonesia is a foreign language, English is mainly taught in the classroom or context-reduced. In this way, teacher's English communicative competence is challenged.

In relation to foreign or second language classroom, Michael Canale and Merrill Swain (1980) proposed four different components of communicative competence. Those components are grammatical competence which includes the knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology; discourse competence which is the ability to connect sentences and to form meaning through a series of utterances; sociolinguistics competence which is the knowledge of the sociocultural rules of language and discourse; and strategic competence which is "the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence" (Canale and Swain, 1980, p.30).

In 1990s, Celce-Murcia et al, (1995) presented a syntactic model of functional relationship among the sociocultural, strategic, actional, linguistic and discourse competences.

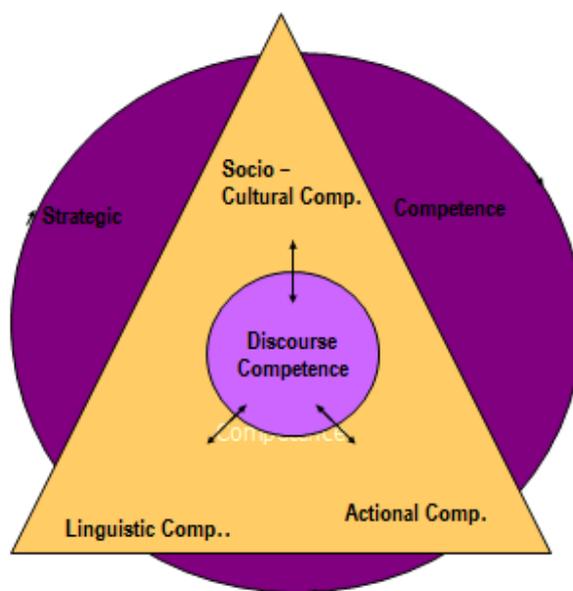


Figure 1. A schematic overview of the communicative competence (Celce-Murcia et al (1995)

Celce-Murcia et al represent the model of communicative competence as a pyramid by placing discourse competence in the center surrounded by sociocultural competence, linguistic competence and actional competence in the three points of triangle and strategic competence in the circle. In details, Celce-Murcia et al (1995, p.9) explain:

Thus our construct places the discourse component in a position where the lexico-grammatical building blocks, the actional organizing skills of communicative intent, and the sociocultural context come together and shape the discourse, which, in turn, *also* shapes each of the other three components. The circle surrounding the pyramid represents *strategic competence*, an ever-present, potentially usable inventory of skills that allows a strategically competent speaker to negotiate messages and resolve problems or to compensate for deficiencies in any of the other underlying competencies.

The model of communicative competence above is the development of previous communicative competence by Canale and Swain, Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), and Celce-Murcia et al (1995).

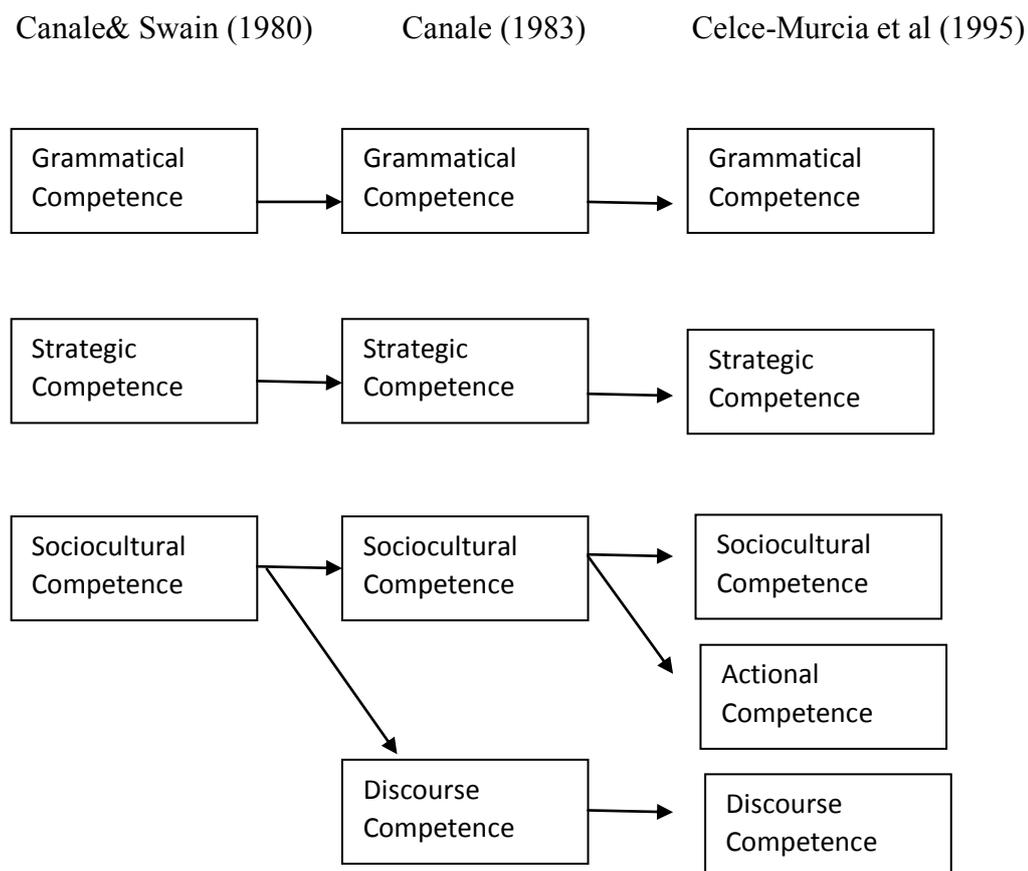


Figure 2. Chronological evolution of communicative competence model

In this model, Celce-Murcia adds actional competence which includes knowledge of language functions and language speech. It also puts discourse as the center of the competence. For a teacher, his or her communicative competence is shown by his or her ability to create, handle, and enhance classroom discourse. In their revised model, Celce-Murcia (2007) put formulaic competence as additional competence. She argues formulaic competence which consists of chunks used for everyday interaction is important to support the fluency of the speakers.

Enric Llurda (2000) underlines the term communicative language ability which refers to the development of communicative competence proposed by Chomsky. Llurda mentions that it was Bachman in 1990 who renamed communicative competence as communicative language ability. Communicative

language ability includes the language proficiency and communicative proficiency. By outlining these two concepts, we have two different concepts:

- Competence which refers to Chomskyan formulation of permanent knowledge possessed by all human beings
- Communicative language ability which is “applied to speakers’ ability to use a given language, with a special emphasis on second language use” (Llurda, 2000, p.93). It is subdivided into two more components namely language proficiency and communicative proficiency.

Teachers of bilingual schools in Indonesia should have both language proficiency and communicative proficiency. Nevertheless, in reality, not both of them are given concerns. Mostly, language proficiency is given more focus. In fact, those teachers also need to improve their communicative proficiency. To do so, teachers need to be given opportunities to experience more real communicative interaction by living in English speaking countries. Besides, schools need to provide intensive professional training development to improve teachers’ language proficiency as well as their communicative proficiency. However, many schools do not provide continuous trainings to improve teachers’ communicative competence.

One of the reasons why schools do not provide continuous trainings to improve teachers’ communicative competence is because the schools do not know exactly the level of teachers’ communicative competence. This may happen because some of the schools, especially the private ones, offer the bilingual program as companion to the regular program and the teachers who teach at the bilingual program are some of those regular teachers who “can” speak English or those who teach other subjects in English. As it has been mentioned earlier, most of bilingual schools in Indonesia are partial bilingual programs in which some schools only teach some subjects in English. Teachers who have no experience in teaching with English are usually trained how to teach in English for certain period.

From the writer’s interview with some teachers of bilingual schools in Semarang, the capital city of Central Java, the writer found that some of the teachers received short trainings of how to teach in English before the schools offer bilingual program. Therefore, those teachers are involved in the preparation of the program. While some others who join the established bilingual schools admit that they had to undergo several tests including micro teaching in English during the process of

recruitment. The kinds of test are varied such as TOEFL test, English interview, and translation test. Basically, the tests are to measure teachers' English proficiency but not really measure teachers' communicative competence. Once they have been accepted as teaching staff, assessment to the teachers' communicative competence are not really given priority. Mostly, the teachers are struggling to teach in English. Although some of them have received short training on how to teach in English, their English communicative competence is not sufficient enough to enhance classroom discourse.

Assessment

Assessment practices are defined as a process of inquiry that integrates multiple sources of evidence, whether test-based or not, to support an interpretation, decision, or action (Moss et al, 2006 as cited by Freeman, Orzulak and Morrissey in Burn and Richard, 2009). Moss argues that assessment involves two main aspects namely questions or problems and evidence. The evidence is used to address questions or problems, to support interpretation, decision and action.

Educational institution needs to conduct assessment for teacher's teaching performance as teacher's performance is the reflection of his or her competence. The assessment will be useful to support decision and action needed for individual teacher professional development as well as the schools' continuous effort to improve the quality. There are three main kinds of assessment strategies which are commonly used to make decision about achievement and competency (Malloy and Uman, 2005). Those strategies are:

- a) Structured Response: A set of pre-selected responses to questions is provided for the test-takers. The test questions may take form as true-false questions, multiple choices, matching questions and similar other types of test questions.
- b) Constructed Response: Test takers are asked to answer questions to demonstrate mastery of content. This type of assessment needs raters or judges to make decisions about whether the answers of the test takers are correct. Test are scored using a rubric or a guidance. The test questions may take form of essay, short answer questions or fill in the blank questions.
- c) Performance Assessments: this type of assessment requires test takers to perform their skills to show or demonstrate the skills required by their

profession. The assessment uses a rubric that consists of the attributes and procedures for the success of skill demonstration. Examples of performance assessments include computer-based simulations, oral questioning and live skill demonstration.

Whatever assessment used, validity and reliability of the tests should be given importance. About validity and reliability of assessment, Malloy and Uman (2005) say,

Validity is the degree to which a test measures the knowledge and skills it is supposed to measure. It is particularly important that the questions on a test adequately represent the various performance domains that are required to be competent. Reliability is the degree to which the results from one assessment would be similar if the assessment were administered again (with no additional education or training). In other words, a test is reliable when you would receive nearly the same score if you retake the test. Communicative Competence Assessment should be designed as performance evaluation by considering the validity and reliability of the assessment tools.

The Importance of Assessing Teachers' Communicative Competence

Considering the importance of knowing the level of teachers' communicative competence, it is worth to think of an instrument to assess teachers' communicative competence. The teachers' level of communicative competence will provide description of teachers' areas of strength and weaknesses. Referring to the concept of communicative competence by Celce-Murcia (1995, 2007), teachers need to know their level of communicative competence in the areas of linguistics competence, strategic competence, socio-cultural competence, actional competence, formulaic competence, and discourse competence. Those aspects of communicative competence will support and improve their actual use of communicative teacher talk.

The results of communicative competence assessment will be beneficial for the teachers and institution in these following issues:

- The results of the assessment can be used as reference for the schools to map their human resources' strength and weaknesses
- The results of the assessment can be the starting point for schools to plan and design programs and trainings for teachers' professional development.

Knowing accurately what the teachers need for their professional development will maximize the achievement.

- Further, the teachers' professional development is a means to maintain the quality of the schools.

Conclusion

Teachers' communicative competence is very crucial in bilingual schools in Indonesia. It is due to the fact that English takes role as a foreign language in this country. Mostly, parents and students rely much on teachers as the target language role model. Therefore, schools need to give concern on teachers' communicative competence which is reflected through the communicative teacher talk. A continuous assessment to teachers' communicative competence needs to be conducted regularly. The results of the assessment is not only useful for quality insurance but it is also useful to plan and design programs or training for teachers' professional development, especially teachers of bilingual schools under this study.

References

- Arlini, FF. (2011). Tantangan dan Peluang Sekolah Dwibahasa. *Media Indonesia*, Education Coloumn p.15.
- Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism (4th ed.)*. Clevedon, Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.
- Burns, A & Richards, J. (2009). *Second Language Teacher Education*. New York, USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Fourth Edition. New York, USA: Pearson Longman.
- Brown, D. (2000). *Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practices*. New York, USA: Pearson Longman.
- Canale, M and Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, pp 1-47.
- Celce-Murcia, M, Dornyei, Z, Thurrell, S. (1995). *Communicative Competence: A Pedagogically Motivated Model with Content Specifications*. Retrieved from

<http://www.zoltandonyei.co.uk/uploads/1995-celce-murcia-dornyei-thurrell-ial.pdf>.

- Celce-Murcia. (2007). Rethinking the Role of Communicative Competence in Language Teaching. *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*. Soler, E.A and Jorda, M.P. S (Eds). pp. 41-57. Springer.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*, New York, USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Cummins, J., & Hornberger, N. H. (2008). *Bilingual Education* (2nd ed.), New York, USA Springer.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Hongkong : Oxford University Press.
- Hartono, H. (2014). Parents' Beliefs and Expectations to Send Their Children to English Speaking Schools. Proceeding of the 1st International Conference of TEYLIN: "Bringing Culture and Indigenous Norms to Classroom". Kudus, Indonesia: Muria Kudus University Publisher.
- Lesenciuc, A & Codreanu, A. (2012). Interpersonal Communication: Cultural Underpinnings. *Journal of Defense Resources Management*. Vol 3 Issue 1 (4).
- Llurda, E. (2000). On Competence, proficiency, and communicative language ability. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. Vol 10 (1). pp 85-96.
- Malloy, C & Uman, G. (2005). *Measuring Competencies: Understanding the tradeoffs of different assessment strategies*. Retrieved from <http://www.vitalresearch.com>.
- Mantiri, Oktavian. (2004), "Problematic Issues of ELT in Indonesia". In Cahyono, Y. B and Widiati, Utami (Eds). *The Tapestry of English Language Teaching and Learning in Indonesia*. Malang, Indonesia: State University of Malang Press.
- May, S. (2008). Bilingual/Immersion Education: What the Research Tells Us. In J. Cummins, & Hornberger, N. H. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education 2nd ed*. Vol. Bilingual Education, pp. 19-34). New York, USA: Springer.

- Pacific Policy Research Center. (2010). *Successful Bilingual and Immersion Education Models/Programs*. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Research and Evaluation Division.
- Paksira.(2009). *The History of English Curriculum in Indonesia*. Retrieved from <http://paksira.wordpress.com/2009/05/22/the-history-of-english-curriculum-in-Indonesia/>.
- Rickeit, G & Trohner, H. (2008). *Handbook of Communicative Competence*. Germany: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.
- Sikki, EAA; Rahman, A; Hamra, A; Noni, N. (2013). The Competence of Primary English School Teachers in Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Practice*. Vol.4, No.11, 2013, pp. 139-145.
- Supriyadi, E. (n.d). *Pengembangan Pembelajaran Bilingual Pada Rintisan Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Bertaraf Internasional*. Retrieved from <http://www.data.org.uk/generaldocs/journals/Journal12.2.pdf>.

How teachers support student autonomy in EFL context

Yih-Lan Chen

Ming Chuan University

Biodata:

Yih-Lan Ellen Chen, PhD in education from University of Washington, is an associate Professor with specialty in second language teaching and learning at the Department of Applied English in Ming Chuan University (MCU) that has been accredited by Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), USA. Her research interest has been focused on motivation and instruction in second language acquisition. She had been the chair of the department for four years and the dean of International College at MCU for five years. Any query about the article should be addressed to Yih-Lan Chen at ylchen@mail.mcu.edu.tw; ylc1958@gmail.com

Abstract

To investigate L2 motivation in a context in Taiwan where English is used as a foreign language (EFL), it is suggested that a whole person perspective, such as L2 motivation Self System (L2MSS) or a humanistic approach, such as Self-determination theory (SDT) can be more appropriate. In EFL context of Taiwanese high schools where students are busy preparing for college entrance examinations, promoting students' interest in learning English is a challenge for the teachers. Specifically, SDT further posits that autonomy supportive teachers promote learners' sense of self initiation which contributes to the learners' intrinsic motivation and learning outcome. As a result, the purpose of the present study is to investigate how high school teachers' autonomy support affects students' motivation and interest in English learning. Participants were 121 students invited to fill out a questionnaire which was comprised of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ), the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ), and Interest in English Reading (INT). Semi-structured interviews with the three teachers were also conducted. Results showed that although the teachers generally support students in engendering their competence and autonomy, they also believe that providing clear guidance is necessary for successful learning. It is suggested that while supporting student autonomy may enhance intrinsic interest in learning, appropriate degree of guidance from the teachers is also key to successful EFL learning.

Key Words: autonomy, intrinsic motivation, Self-determination Theory, Motivation

Introduction

As the world becomes more globalized, English is accepted as the lingua franca for most parts of the world. Taiwan, as one of the four little dragons in Asia, has experienced some rise in English proficiency in the past seven years but still maintains in the moderate proficiency category, according to English First (2014). To enhance students' English learning engagement, motivating students to learn and to persist in learning remains a challenge for all teachers. Currently, Taiwan's high school teachers face a particularly difficult challenge because there is a large gap in the curricular standards between junior high school and senior high school. The teachers make every effort to help graduating students from junior high school to catch up. To ease the transition in the learning of English, high school teachers spend extra time reviewing phonetic symbols and going over basic grammar. With the much heavier curricular requirements and the up-coming college entrance examinations, the instruction in high schools focuses specifically on preparing students for college entrance examinations, causing students to be test-oriented. In this context, it is very challenging for teachers to finish all the lessons and still maintain students' interest in the subjects. Therefore, the current study intends to find out what teachers do in enhancing and maintaining students' interest in learning English.

Traditionally, studies in language learning motivation adopted Gardner's Social educational model (SEM) in approaching the issues of why and how learners are driven to learn a second language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Masgoret & Gardner, 1999). Gardner's model is especially appropriate in explaining the learning of a different language in which the learners have frequent contact with the target language people and culture (McEown, Noels, and Chaffee, 2014): For example, a Chinese learning English in Australia or a Japanese learning English in the Anglo side of Canada. However, McEown et al. (2014) suggested that Dornyei's L2 motivation Self System model (L2MSS) and Deci and Ryan's Self Determination theory (SDT) are able to rationalize a broader picture of L2 learning motivation.

L2MSS proposed by Dornyei (2009), depicted L2 motivation from a self-perspective, including three components: The ideal L2 self which is the characteristics

related to L2 learning that one ideally desire to possess, the ought-to L2 self-indicating the attributes that one believes one have to possess in relation to L2 learning, and the L2 learning experience that consists of immediate motives related to the impact of learning environment, such as teacher, curriculum, the peers, the experience of success.

Drawing from humanistic psychology, SDT posits that human learning is related to three basic psychological needs (Niemiec and Ryan, 2009): Autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The need for autonomy refers to the need for volitional and self-endorsed experience; the need for competence refers to the need to effectively enact some behaviors. According to Deci, Koestner, and Ryan, (1999), both autonomy and competence are necessary conditions in sustaining intrinsic motivation. In addition to autonomy and competence, the need for relatedness is concerning being connected to people and learning context, similar to sense of belonging which will facilitate the internalization of motivation.

McEown et al. (2014) in their study illustrate that L2MSS and SDT are theoretically somewhat overlapping yet divergent. Empirically, these two models harmonious show significant contribution to learning-related rather than culture related outcomes. More specifically, both L2MSS and SDT variables significantly predict engagement in learning, anxiety, and intention to continue to learn; while only an SDT variable predict how the learners self-evaluate their target language proficiency.

More specifically, to explore the question of what teachers can do, SDT suggests that teacher's support for learners' autonomy and competence will facilitate intrinsic motivation, which in turn, promotes high-quality learning (Deci, Nezlek, & Sheinman, 1981; Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981). While not all educational activities at school are constructed to be intrinsically interesting, the major task for the teachers is to motivate students to value and self-regulate their school work. For example, a study by Shih (2008) found that Taiwanese junior high school students who perceived higher levels of autonomy support from the teacher were more involved and experienced higher levels of enjoyment while studying. Nevertheless, in the EFL context, many questions are left unexplored; particularly in regard to what and how instructors do to support students' autonomy and competence and how different levels of autonomy support make a difference in the students'

motivation and interest in learning the language.

As a result, the purpose of the current study is to investigate how high school English teachers support students in their sense of competence and sense of autonomy, while examining teachers' impact on student motivation and interest in EFL learning. Accordingly, two research questions drive this research:

Research Question 1: What do high school English teachers do in supporting students' needs in autonomy and competence?

Research Question 2: Is teachers' autonomy support effective in making differences in students' motivation and specific interest in EFL reading?

Literature Review

This section begins by a general description of English Education in Taiwan. Next is a brief description of three prominent L2 motivation models followed by an emphasis of Self-determination Theory that the current study is based on. Finally, studies focusing on the relation between autonomy support and motivation are presented.

English Education in Taiwan

As the world becomes more and more competitive, English is accepted as a lingua franca. To help citizens accommodate the ever changing world, most countries engage in large investment in English education. According to English Proficiency (EP) ranking by English First (2014), a total of 63 countries and territories with test data from 750,000 adults aged 18 and above took the EP test in 2013. The eighteen countries in the 'very high proficient' and 'high proficient' categories are all European except Malaysia, Singapore (two former UK colonies) and Argentina. In Asia, where there are some of the world's good education systems, only Singapore is shown in 'high English proficiency' category (English First, 2014, p. 15). Taiwan, as one of the four economic little dragons in Asia, has experienced small-scale rise in EP in the past seven years but still maintains in the moderate proficiency category, ranked 30th among 63 countries surveyed world-wide (p. 8).

Due to the high demand of the use of English, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan mandated English as a regular subject in elementary school starting from fifth

grade in 2001 and extended to third grade in the fall 2005. In some northern areas, such as Taipei and Taoyuan, English has become a required course beginning from first grade since 2002. Despite the significant expansion of English education, instructional methods generally remain test-oriented, focusing on preparing students for examinations (Chyu & Smith, 1991; Chang & Goswami, 2011).

According to Chang and Goswami (2011), reasons for test-oriented teaching has to do with the teacher's lack of training for alternative approaches, students' insufficient proficiency and the test-orientated education system itself. In addition, a qualitative study involving high school students, Liao and Yang (2012) found that test-oriented preference also has to do with the large class size and insufficient teaching hours. As a result, students tend to be passive and rule-bounded, while teachers are seen as the authority figure whose responsibility is to transfer knowledge. With this context, how high school teachers can help students learn English with interest while helping them preparing for college entrance examination becomes a difficult task.

Gardner's Social Educational model

For decades, research on L2 motivation has adopted Gardner's social educational model (Gardner, 1985), incorporating four major components into the system: milieu, the setting, individual learner differences and learning outcomes. Milieu is the context in which the learning is taking place. The setting refers to formal vs. informal learning contexts. The outcome refers to linguistic vs. non-linguistic achievement. The individual differences component contains a complicated motivation construct explaining integrative motivation, including *integrativeness* which is an individual's openness to the target language culture. It also includes *attitudes toward the learning situations* which are the learners' attitudes toward teacher and the course, as well as *motivational issues* such as attitudes towards learning the L2, motivation intensity, and desire to learn the L2. (Chen, 2015).

Dornyei's L2 Motivation Self System

More recently, motivation has been viewed to be more associated with the individual's self (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Dornyei and Ryan, 2015). This perspective began to inform various L2 Motivation conceptualizations; among these, the most influential L2 motivation construct, L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), was first

proposed by Dornyei (2005) and later developed into a more pedagogical approach with ‘substantiation’ of vision and action plans for both learners and teachers of languages (Dornyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). The concept of the possible self represents an individual's ideas of what they *might become*, *what they would like to become* and what they are *afraid of becoming*. This concept of possible self has two types (Higgins, 1987): The Ideal self which is the representation of the attributes that someone would ideally like to possess and Ought-to Self that refers to the attributes that one believes one ought to possess. As a result of self-concepts of Marcus and Nurius's (1986) and Higgins' (1987), the L2 motivation self-system—proposed by Dörnyei (2005) consists of three components: (1) Ideal L2 --the person one wants to be; it is similar to Gardner's integrativeness and *promotive* aspect of instrumentality; (2) Ought-to L2 self -- the person that one out to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes; this has to do with the *preventive* aspect of instrumentality; (3) L2 Learning experience -- situated motive concerning contextual learning situations, such as impacts from teachers, curriculum, peer group, experience of success, etc.

Self-determination Theory

Over the past thirty years, Self-determination Theory, a humanistic perspective, has been applied to health care, parenting, sport and exercise, mental health, and education. The theory generally concerns the degrees to which human behaviors are volitional or self-determined (SDT website). The theory further posits that human learning is primarily concerned with innate needs, the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Autonomy refers to being self-initiating and self-regulating of one's own actions. Competence refers to the experience of a task successfully completed. Relatedness refers to a sense of shared experience, as when learners feel connected to others and interact with them. (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991; Niemeic & Ryan 2009).

Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Motivation. Other than the three basic needs, SDT concerns two major concepts: intrinsic motivation (IM) and extrinsic motivation (EM). IM is the doing of an activity for the pure enjoyment or inherent satisfaction rather than for any instrumental purposes. Optimal conditions for IM are those that satisfy the need for autonomy and competence. However, IM only occurs

for activities holding intrinsic interest for the individual. For activities not holding inherent interest, EM is activated. (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is a tendency to do something when the activity is done for the purpose of gaining a separate outcome or for instrumental reasons. In a sense, there are four types of extrinsic motivation: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. These subtypes of extrinsic motivation can be considered along a continuum of *internalization* where the further one moves to the right in terms of extrinsic motivation, the more autonomous in motivation. (SDT website)

At one end of the continuum, the least autonomous type of extrinsic motivation is external regulation; such behaviors are performed to gain external reward or to meet external demands. The next type of extrinsic motivation is introjected regulation. It describes a kind of internalization but is still quite controlling in the sense that there is still a feeling of pressure to avoid guilt or to attain pride. A more autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is identified regulation, through which an individual identifies with the importance of an activity and thus accepts it as his own. The most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation, which occurs when the regulation process is fully assimilated to the self. (Deci & Ryan, 2002)

Studies Based on SDT. Empirical studies have shown that students' perception of teachers' autonomy support showed significant relationship with students' intrinsic motivation (Deci, Nezlek, & Sheinman, 1981; Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000). Skinner and Belmont (1993) on the study concerning teachers' motivating styles confirmed that students' autonomous forms of motivation were nurtured by teacher-provided autonomy support. More recently, Shih (2008) found that junior high school students in Taiwan who perceived higher levels of autonomy support from the teacher were more involved and experienced higher levels of enjoyment while studying.

Studies on teacher's response to student performance further indicate the positive effect of autonomy support on motivation. Some of the studies (Ryan, 1982; Vallerand & Reid, 1984) showed that feedback supporting student autonomy may enhance intrinsic motivation. Still, other studies indicate that the quality of feedback may influence the learners' interest in subsequent learning activities. According to

Deci and Ryan (1985), feedback confirming a learner's competence may be controlling when there is pressure for such performance; however, feedback without such pressure can be beneficial for enhancing motivation. (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Other than autonomy, Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008) in their meta-analysis of 41 studies confirmed the effect of choice on intrinsic motivation and other outcomes (such as effort, task performance, and perceived competence, etc.) in a variety of settings. More specifically, the first study in second language acquisition using SDT as framework by Noéls et al. (2000) found that freedom of choice and perceived competence, as antecedents of intrinsic motivation, are significantly correlated with intrinsic motivation and identified regulation.

Although these previous studies suggested that autonomy support, shown in the many forms, may contribute to learners' intrinsic interest in learning, for high school students facing competitive college entrance examinations in Taiwan, it is questionable whether intrinsic interest has an instant meaning, whether feedback without pressure may result in learning of correct forms, and whether provision of choice is an option contributing to desired learning outcomes.

Methods

Participants

A total of one hundred twenty-one (N = 121) 10th and 11th graders in three classes from two public high schools in the northern Taiwan were invited to participate in the study. They were admitted to these public schools through the screening of high school entrance examinations. These students generally represent students of intermediate academic achievements. Volunteer students were recruited by their teachers during their regular class periods. The teachers of these three classes were involved in the semi-structured interviews. Teacher A (the English teacher of Class A), in her mid-twenties, received her master's degree a couple of years ago and had less teaching experience. Teacher B (the English teacher of Class B) was outgoing and in her late twenties and, had more years of experience in teaching; she also worked as the principal's secretary. Teacher C (the English teacher of Class C), in her mid-thirties, had been teaching in high school for 10 years.

Measurement

To answer Research Question 1, semi-structure interviews with the teachers

were conducted with the purpose of understanding teachers' autonomy support. In addition, one part of the questionnaire on students' perception of teacher's autonomy support measured by Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ) is used to support the interview results. To answer Research Question 2, quantitative data from the students' survey on their motivation and interest in English reading were collected.

Semi-structured interviews. The six interview questions ask teachers how they respond to diverse student performance, support student autonomy, make suggestions for improvement, and enhance students' interest in studying English (Appendix A). The first three questions were generated based on the ideas in Problems in School Questionnaire¹ (Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981), which measures teachers' degree of autonomy support through their responses to a series of potential school problems. Questions 4 to 6 were inspired based on the theory of SDT in aspects of satisfying learners' basic needs in autonomy and competence.

Survey Questionnaire. The survey questionnaire (Appendix C) is a 6-point Likert type scale, ranging from strongly agree (6) to strongly disagree (1); the questionnaire consists of three parts: Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ), Self-regulation Questionnaire (SRQ), and Interest in English reading. These were face-validated by TESOL professionals in the field and revised before it was piloted. After a pilot study with 48 students from a high school, the scales were then further revised before the questionnaire was distributed to the one hundred twenty-one students in the current study.

Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ). Adapted from Learning Climate Questionnaire (Black & Deci, 2000), the current LCQ is related to learners' perceptions of the degree of autonomy support given by individual instructor in each class. Six items make up the scale ($\alpha = .80$), which measures how learners perceive the instructors' teaching style, specifically focusing on the degree of the teacher's autonomy support. For example, one of the items on this scale includes the following:

¹ There are eight vignettes in the questionnaire; each describes an incident, in which a student performs well, on average level, disruptively, or is un-motivated, etc. After each description, there are four ways of responding to the situation. Respondents are asked to think about each response option in terms of how appropriate they consider it to be for dealing with the problem described in the vignette (One vignette is described in Appendix B). Responses to these situations are scored to reflect the degree of autonomy support, ranging from highly autonomy supportive to highly controlling (least autonomy support). Using these basic ideas, the first three interview questions were adapted with the intention to elicit information on how exactly teachers respond to different situations. For example, the first interview question in the current study has to do with how teachers deal with students of poor performance.

The teacher would try to understand my ideas before giving me any suggestion for improvement. The current LCQ is used as an independent measure.

Self-regulation Questionnaire (SRQ). Adapted from Academic Self-regulation Questionnaire (SRQ) (Ryan & Connell, 1989), the current version of SRQ included fourteen items (Appendix C) in two parts with the intention to see similar behavior in two situations: The first seven items are concerning “doing homework” and the second set of seven items are concerning “doing class exercises.” There are four items for intrinsic motivation (IM, $\alpha = .88$), measuring how learners regulate learning EFL based on pure interest. A sample item from the IM sub-scale includes: *I do homework because I enjoy doing it.* There are also four items for identified regulation (IR, $\alpha = .86$), measuring how they regulate through identifying learning with importance. *I do homework, because it is important for me,* is a sample item from the IR sub-scale. Also there are another four for external regulation (ER, $\alpha = .86$) subscales which measures the type of regulation to meet external demand or avert punishment, as in this sample item: *I do homework, because if I don't do it I'll get rebuked by the teacher.* Introjected regulation (ITR, $\alpha = .90$) included two items, measuring how learners regulate learning based on the pressure to gain pride or avoid guilt; for example, *I do homework because I want the teacher to see me as a good student.*

Interest in English reading (INT). Items to measure subject specific interest were drafted; they were items related to interest in EFL reading adapted from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (Ryan, Koestner & Deci, 1991) which is a measure of specific activity revealing the learners' level of interest/enjoyment in doing the activity. To collect more reliable data, subject specific interest rather than general interest were adopted as suggested in the instructions of the instrument implementation proposed by SDT (SDT website). There are three items in this scale ($\alpha = .83$). Sample item is: *I like English reading very much.*

Procedure

The complete set of the survey questionnaire were distributed to students to fill out by a research assistant after a reading activity during their regular class period. Each session of survey lasted approximately 15 minutes. The semi-structured interview with each teacher was conducted by the principal researcher in a separate

room. Each interview took about 30 minutes.

Analyses

To answer Research Question 1, the content of the interviews were transcribed verbatim and then reviewed two more times to verify the information and correct minor errors. The collected data were processed using grounded theory; with which data were initially coded and further categorized based on similarity of content. Emerging themes were then extracted. The results were then compared with the categories of basic needs proposed by SDT—competence, autonomy, and relatedness. In addition, ANOVA analyzing the effect of teachers autonomy support (measured by LCQ) in the three classes showed that the Teachers A, B and C for the corresponding Classes A, B, and C are significantly different from each other in their autonomy support with $p < 0.01$. As a result, the scores of LCQ is used as fixed factor in three levels for the next analysis.

To answer Research Question 2, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and multiple analyses of variance (MANOVA) were conducted. First, to explore the factor structure of the 14 items in the revised SRQ, EFA was implemented. Then, based on the EFA results, MANOVA was conducted to test whether or not teachers' autonomy support is effective in enhancing learners' types of motivation, and interest in English reading (INT).

Results

For Research Question One

To answer Research Question 1 (What do high school English teachers do in supporting students' needs in competence and autonomy?), interview data were summarized and further categorized in the following:

Convergence.

Although the three teachers were identified for interviews based on their differences in LCQ, they did agree in many aspects.

Supporting competence and enhancing interest. The three teachers agree that enhancing students' sense of competence is crucial for successful learning in English. As a result, they provided extra material for above-average students, helped average learners to set up clear criteria for improvement, and recognized

accomplishments for all students. In addition, they all had great ideas in enhancing student interest in learning, such as field trip to English radio stations, turning a lesson into a play, and group discussion about TV series. These activities also helped making the links between material and the students' lives.

Not much opportunity for choice. However, the teachers provided students with very little opportunity for choice, because they believed that students had no ideas at all in making study plans. Even though the teachers make decisions in most class activities, they did take students' feeling and suggestions into consideration, as demonstrated in the following excerpts:

Teacher A: *I think there shouldn't be too many choices because they don't know what they want. Basically, I make most of the decisions in the tests and assignments.* (A-Q6b)

Teacher B: *In my opinion, my students need pushing. If given choices, they would choose easier tasks.* . (B-Q6b)

Teacher C: *I made decisions for them because it is more effective. My students have no ideas in making decisions..*(C-Q6b)

Divergence

The three teachers differ in ways in their instructions. To ensure sense of competence, Teacher A provided scaffolding, demonstrated learning strategies, and recognized achievement in public. Teacher B provided information feedback and recognized achievement in private. Teacher C gave warning notes to those who fail to accomplish tasks. For those who performed well, she encouraged them to get tested to confirm competence. To support autonomous learning, Teacher A would provide students opportunities to explore and search for answers. However, when asked how she helped her students to learn autonomously, Teacher B said she gave students daily reminders for upcoming examinations. For the same question, Teacher C did not provide any answers. As for sense of relatedness, only Teacher A was supporting such need; she would take a model student for others to learn from, telling them that 'if he could do it, you can do it too.'

The following sections, affixed with excerpts of interviews, summarize each teacher's methods of supporting competence, autonomy, and relatedness; in addition, two other topics also emerged in the interviews: relevancy and supporting engagement

Teacher A

1. Competence:

- a. Ensuring student success by helping with the following: time management, use of appropriate strategies, clarification of concepts by explaining and giving examples, offer opportunity to re-do tasks:

“One student said that he didn’t do his homework because he was too tired and fell asleep. So, I would ask him what time he got home and helped him find time to study and tell him how much time he needed to study. (A-Q1)

- b. Recognizing successful performance in public

“I would set a common goal for all students to achieve. For those who go over 80, I recognized the achievement in public; for those went below 80, I would ask them to re-do the tasks. This way, I could understand better who was improving and who was not. (A-Q3)

2. Autonomy:

- a. Offering opportunity to explore, to collect information in search of answers

“I suggested students subscribe to language learning magazines; they would listen to the VCD attached and then the next day I would ask them about what they listened to. (A-Q6a)

- b. Using indirect approach to support autonomous learning

“I would correct their common errors during the class using transparencies for analysis. After a few times, they could identify errors themselves. (A-Q5)

3. Relatedness:

- a. Emphasizing students as a group

“I’ve always emphasized the class as a group. If one student did a great job in some kind of competition, I would openly praise him/her and said that this is the class honor. Then all others would be so proud because they were part of this class. (A-Q2)

4. Relevancy

- a. Making subject relevant to students’ lives

“I let them know that English is in their lives. For example, I would

make sentences on the issues they care about so that they realize that English is usable and interesting in their immediate environment.

(A-Q6a)

Teacher B:

1. Competence:
 - a. Providing clear feedback to assist success:

“I would talk to them in private about their good performance and also point out their weaknesses. I would also offer more material for them to read and discuss with them a week later. (B-Q5)
 - b. Recognizing achievement in private

“I would approach the individual student and tell them how good they were but also pointed out how they could become even better. (B-Q2)

“I would set 80 as the goal. Those under 80 would re-do the task and I would ask them why they did not reach 80. (B-Q3)
2. Autonomy:
 - a. Reminding students upcoming tests in order to develop study habit

“Every day I would remind students about the tests for which they need to study. My purpose was to help students develop a habit to study; as a result they may study on their own in a couple of months. (B-Q6b)
3. Relevancy:
 - a. Linking material to students’ lives.

“I would relate the course material with something interesting and relate it to their daily life. For example, a lesson titled “Tornado” can be related to a current TV series ‘Taiwan Tornado.’ This way they began to feel interested in the material. (B-Q6a)

Teacher C (the least in PAS)

1. Highlighting Competence (enforcing competence in her case):
 - a. Give warning slips for incomplete tasks.

“We have a class rule that says: missing one homework assignment means one warning slip. Three warning slips result in weekend campus service. Since most students did not want that to happen, they usually complete their assignments anyway.(C-Q1)
 - b. Encouraging good performers to take proficiency tests (for TOEIC, GEPT,

etc.); offering opportunity for good performers to act as teacher’s assistant; Help students set goals in order to achieve.

“I would suggest the [good]student to take GEPT[a standardized English assessment test in Taiwan]. I would also help the student set up a little bit higher goal to achieve, give him/her opportunity to be a class assistant (C-Q2)

In addition to the interview data, Research Question 1 was also answered by the results of ANOVA and the follow-up Post Hoc tests (Scheffé) on the differences of autonomy support (measured by LCQ). Results showed that Teacher A had the highest degree of autonomy support (mean = 4.86), while Teacher C had the lowest degree of autonomy support (mean = 3.44). Teacher B was between the two (mean = 4.07).

For Research Question Two

To answer Research Question 2 (Is teachers’ autonomy support effective in making differences in students’ motivation and specific interest in EFL reading?), several statistical procedures were conducted.

First, to explore the factor structure of the 14 items of the revised questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring with promax rotation demonstrated a three-factor structure (Table 1), when eigen value is greater than one. Factor 1 is *Autonomous Regulation* on which all intrinsic and identified regulation items loaded highly with loadings ranging from .72 to .80. Factor 2 is *External Regulation* on which all external regulation items loaded from .68 to .91. Factor 3 is *Introjected Regulation* with loadings of .88 and .87 on this latent factor.

Table 1
Factor Matrix for Self-regulation Questionnaire

	Factors		
	1	2	3
Intrinsic 3	.802		
Identified 1	.791		
Intrinsic 1	.781		
Identified 4	.774		
Identified 3	.746		
Intrinsic 3	.740		
Intrinsic 2	.727		
Identified 2	.723		

External 4	.906	
	.799	
External 2		
External 1	.692	
External 3	.683	
Introject 2		.878
Introject 1		.872

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. N = 205
Intrinsic 1~4: items on intrinsic motivation
Identified 1~4: items on identified regulation
External 1~4: items on external regulation
Introject 1~2: items on introjected regulation

Since results of EFA indicated that all related items in IM and IR loaded significantly on one factor, an autonomous regulation (AR) composite was created by calculating the means of these items for further analyses. As a result, descriptive statistics of AR, Introjected regulation (ITR), External regulation ER) and Interest in English reading (INT) (Table 2) were computed before MANOVA.

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics of motivation and interest in English reading by the three classes*

	class	Mean	SD	Number
AR	A	3.9572	.89257	38
	B	3.4583	.84260	39
	C	3.3052	.67092	44
	Total	3.5593	.84197	121
ER	A	4.2895	.85922	38
	B	3.9936	1.06914	39
	C	5.2898	.81402	44
	Total	4.5579	1.07226	121
ITR	A	4.0789	1.28150	38
	B	3.2308	1.11122	39
	C	4.1136	1.25227	44
	Total	3.8182	1.27475	121
INT	A	4.2807	.78088	38
	B	3.9829	.84101	39
	C	3.7500	.89248	44
	Total	3.9917	.86331	121

Notes:

AR: Autonomous regulation; ER: External regulation;

ITR: Introjected regulation; INT: Interest in English reading

To answer Research Question 2, MANOVA was conducted (N = 121). The results showed that students in three classes taught by teachers with significant difference in autonomy support were significantly different in the combination of motivation and INT (with Wilks Lumda = .000, $p < .01$). The results shown in Table 3 illustrate that perceived autonomy support (with the fixed factor of Class) has a significant effect in the students' AR ($F_{2, 118} = 7.204$, $p < .01$; partial $\epsilon^2 = .109$), ITR ($F_{2, 118} = 6.699$, $p < .01$; partial $\epsilon^2 = .102$), ER ($F_{2, 118} = 23.022$, $p < .00$; partial $\epsilon^2 = .281$), and INT ($F_{2, 118} = 4.052$, $p < .05$; partial $\epsilon^2 = .064$).

Table 3
Between-Subject Tests

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III SS	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	ETA square
Class	AR	9.257	2	4.628	7.204	.001	.109
	ITR	19.882	2	9.941	6.699	.002	.102
	ER	38.75	2	19.363	23.022	.000	.281
	INT	5.747	2	2.874	4.052	.020	.064

Notes: AR: Autonomous regulation; ER: External regulation; ITR: Introjected regulation; INT: Interest in English reading

Multiple comparisons with Scheffé procedure (Table 4) indicated that with Class as the fixed factor, there is significant difference in AR between Class A and Class C (Mean difference = .6521, SD = .178, $p < .01$), and between Class A and Class B (Mean difference = .4989, SD = .183, $p < .05$); significant difference in ITR between Class A and Class B (Mean difference = .8482, SD = .278, $p < .05$), and between Class B and Class C (Mean difference = -.8829, SD = .268, $p < .01$); significant difference in ER between Class A and Class C (Means difference = -1.0, SD = .203, $p < .001$) and between Class B and Class C (Mean difference = - 1.30, SD = .202, $p < .001$), and significant difference in INT between Class A and Class C (Mean difference = .5307, SD = .1865, $p < .05$).

Table 4
Multiple Comparison with Scheffé Method

Independent Variable	(I) Class	(J) Class	M (I-J)	SD	Sig
Class	A	B	.4989*	.18270	.027

		C	.6521*	.17751	.002
	B	A	-.4989*	.18270	.027
		C	.1532	.17628	.686
	C	A	-.6521*	.17751	.002
		B	-.1532	.17628	.686
ITR	A	B	.8482*	.27768	.011
		C	-.0347	.26978	.992
	B	A	-.8482*	.27768	.011
		C	-.8829*	.26792	.006
	C	A	.0347	.26978	.992
		B	.8829*	.26792	.006
ER	A	B	.2959	.20904	.370
		C	-1.0003*	.20310	.000
	B	A	-.2959	.20904	.370
		C	-1.2962*	.20169	.000
	C	A	1.0003*	.20310	.000
		B	1.2962*	.20169	.000
INT	A	B	.2978	.19196	.304
		C	.5307*	.18650	.020
	B	A	-.2978	.19196	.304
		C	.2329	.18521	.456
	C	A	-.5307*	.18650	.020
		B	-.2329	.18521	.456

In other words, autonomy support positively affects students' autonomous regulation (AR) and interest in English reading (INT) yet it negatively affects students' external regulation (ER).

Discussion

Support of Autonomy and Beyond

Consistent with prior studies (Ryan, 1982; Vallerand & Reid, 1984), both interviews and survey questionnaire confirmed the effect of autonomy support from the teachers on students' motivation and interest in learning. Furthermore, interview details also showed that recognizing improvement as a form of autonomy support can enhance motivation to learn. As also suggested by Ryan (1982) and Vallerand and Reid (1984), these responses are feedback supporting autonomy and enhancing intrinsic motivation. Yet, the quality of feedback may influence the learners' interest in subsequent learning activities (Deci & Ryan, 1985). For example, feedback that provides support for further improvement as shown by Teacher A (1a) and Teacher B (1a) such as scaffolding, learning strategies demo, clarification, is beneficial to

learning. On the contrary, negative feedback such as a warning slip given by Teacher C (1a), can diminish a student's interest in learning.

Providing supplemental learning material when students do well is also a form of autonomy supportive feedback, as shown in Teacher A (2a). The provision may in fact satisfy the learners' need for competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Such feedback actually tells the students the following information: 'You did a good job on this subject; I believe you have the ability to achieve something even more sophisticated.' From L2MSS point of view, this information provided by the teacher may also enable the learners to formulate their ideal self which is the person that the learner wants to be (Dörnyei, 2005). With this ideal self in mind, the learners are driven to endeavour further in the L2 learning.

Is Sense of Competence Enough?

All three teachers seemed to fully understand students' need in the sense of competence and they did support it in different ways. This understanding can be demonstrated by the many strategies and encouragement by the teachers to help students improve. As postulated by SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985), interpersonal events and context that support the feeling of competence can enhance intrinsic motivation. In this study, even though the teachers believed their students need a lot of 'pushing' because they are 'passive,' they recognized students' good performance and improvement of any degree, and offered extra material and opportunity to lead and to tutor. Their recognition helped create a sense of competence in the students.

However, even if the student has good performance, his/her inner sense of competence may not be satisfied; as a result, there will be no enhanced intrinsic motivation towards learning. As indicated by Ryan (1982) intrinsic motivation can be enhanced only by the combination feeling of competence with sense of autonomy. For example, Class C students perceived the teacher to be relatively less autonomy supportive although Teacher C made great effort to enhance students' sense of competence. In other words, this intricacy indicated that feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless it is accompanied by feelings of autonomy (Ryan, 1982).

Furthermore, Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014, pp.90 - 92) more specifically depicted the necessity to help the learners 'substantiate' their goals to make them

become plausible. In the current study, the teachers provided those who seem more highly motivated to achieve with the kind of extra suitable material is a good example of such ‘substantiation.’ However, realistic goal doesn’t take the learners too far. As Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014, pp. 99 - 102) suggested, the learner’s ‘vision’ of successful language learning needs to be transformed into action. Therefore, language teachers should provide learners with relevant roadmap as well as individual guidance, especially for inexperienced learners. Specific directions and guidance may include learning strategies and techniques along with action plans for reaching the goals.

Choice or Guidance Provision?

Although Teacher A was perceived to be the most autonomy supportive, all three teachers offered only very limited opportunity for choice because they judged that the students had no ideas at all in making study plans. In particular, Teacher A was the only one that supported students’ autonomy. She provided students opportunity to explore (2a) and gave indirect instruction for students to figure out on their own (2b). In Taiwan, the majority of students are not accustomed to making choices and decisions. Since childhood, they have been taught at home and at school to listen to authority and not to express their opinions. The teachers being interviewed seemed to think that their students had no ideas in making plans for college entrance examinations let alone learning English.

Nevertheless, some studies conducted in Asia have shown the effectiveness of learner autonomy on student involvement in learning (Deng, 2007; Ho & Crookall, 1995). Specifically, researchers have approached the issue of autonomy in second language acquisition from the perspective of learner training. Some foci have been on training learners to become autonomous by enhancing language learning awareness, teaching of language learning theories, and transferring learning strategies (Yang, 1998; Dickinson, 1988).

A more recent account of L2MSS (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014) provided realistic direction toward successful L2. Several practical approaches guiding L2 learning are suggested: Strengthen students’ vision for future self through imagery enhancement; substantiate the vision making it plausible; transforming the vision into action. Among the approaches, these are specific instructional strategies, including a) help create self-checks, provide roadmaps, and offer individual guidance and even

regular reminders.

Limitations

1. Current study begins by consider SDT as a framework which is a humanistic approach to motivation in general. It does have application in the area of L2 learning motivation. However, as data were collected and analyzed, more practical issues concerning L2 learning have surfaced. It was then Dornyei and colleagues' model L2MSS comes into play with more pertinent suggestions and revelation.
2. Many studies, using SDT as the framework, adopted Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ) from learner's perception and Problems in School Questionnaire (PIS) from teacher's point of view to measure autonomy support. However, due to limited access to more teachers, the current study did not quite have a chance to implement PIS to teachers. To enhance the validity of teacher's autonomy support measurement, future study may also invite more teachers to fill out PIS questionnaire in addition to interviews.
3. Due to access limitation the participants in the current study were limited to high school students in medium range. Inclusion of students and teachers from other types of schools may present a better picture of Taiwanese high school teacher's autonomy support and their students' interest in learning English.

Conclusion

From the perspective of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation proposed by the Self-determination Theory, the current study investigated the teaching styles of Taiwanese high school teachers, particularly through their responses toward students' conditions in EFL learning context. Results demonstrated the teachers with diverse autonomy support provided students' sense of competence and autonomy in significantly different manners. Moreover, the teachers generally supported students' sense of competence and acknowledged students' improvement; they also believed that providing clear guidance and maintaining a relative degree of control are necessary for successful learning. In addition, the study also surveyed how high school students regulated their learning of EFL and their perceptions of teachers' autonomy support. Results of exploratory factor analysis on Self-Regulation indicated

intrinsic motivation and identified regulations converge as one factor – autonomous regulation. MANOVA confirmed that autonomy support measured by LCQ is effective in enhancing autonomous regulation and interest in learning EFL. Considerations also arise concerning whether enhancing sense of autonomy is practical enough in promoting L2 learning. Some practical suggestions in guiding L2 learning were presented based on Dornyei's L2MSS, such as providing L2 learning roadmap, learning strategies, and individual guidance.

References

- Black, A. E., & Deci, E. L. (2000). The effects of instructors' autonomy support and students' autonomous motivation on learning organic chemistry: A self-determination theory perspective. *Science Education, 84*, 740-756.
- Chang, M., & Goswarni, J. S. (2011). Factors affecting the implementation of communicative language teaching in Taiwanese college English classes. *English Language Teaching, 4* (2), 3-12.
- Chen, Y.L. (2015). The Impact of Social Milieu on EFL Learner's L2 Motivation. *Journal of Ming Chuan University, 20*, 49-66.
- Chyu, L., & Smith, D. C. (1991). Secondary academic education. In D. C. Smith (Ed.), *The Confucian continuum: Educational modernization in Taiwan*. NY: Praeger.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.
- Deci, E. L., Nezlek, J., & Sheinman, L. (1981). Characteristics of the rewarder and intrinsic motivation of the rewardee. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 40*, 1-10.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, 54-67.
- Deci, E. L., Nezlec, J., & Sheinman, L. (1981). Characteristics of the rewarder and intrinsic motivation of the rewardee. *Journal Personality and Social Psychology, 40*, 1-10.
- Deci, E. L., Shwartz, A., Sheinman, L., & Ryan, R. M. (1981). An instrument to assess adults' orientations toward control versus autonomy with children: Reflections on intrinsic motivation and perceived competence. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 73*, 642-650.

- Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: The self-determination perspective. *Educational Psychologist*, 26, 325-346.
- Deci, E.L., Koestner, R. & Ryan, R.M. (1999) 'A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation', *Psychological Bulletin* 125, 627– 68.
- Deng, D. (2007). An exploration of the relationship between learner autonomy and English proficiency. *Asian EFL Journal – Teaching Articles*, 24, 5-30.
- Dickinson, L. (1988). Learning training. In A. Brookes & P. Grundy (Eds.), *Individualization and autonomy in language learning* (pp. 45-53). ELT Documents 131. London, UK: Modern English Publications in association with the British Council, Macmillan.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Nahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The motivational self-system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Dörnyei, Z. and Kubanyiova, M. (2014). *Motivating Learners, Motivating Teachers: Building Vision in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
- English First. (2014). *English Proficiency Index, 4th Edition*. Retrieved from http://media.ef.com/~/_/media/centralefcom/epi/v4/downloads/full-reports/ef-epi-2014-english.pdf
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The role of Attitudes and Motivation*. Baltimore, Maryland: Edward Arnold.
- Gardner, R. C. and MacIntyre, P. D. (1991). An instrumental motivation in language study: Who says it isn't effective? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13 (1), 57-72.
- Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review*, 94, 319-340.
- Ho, J., & Crookall, D. (1995). Breaking with Chinese cultural tradition: Learner autonomy in English language teaching. *System*, 23 (2), 235-243.
- Liao, H.C., & Yang, C. C. (2012). Teaching practice and cultural difference of an English as foreign language classroom in Taiwan. *English Language Teaching*,

5 (11), 151-160.

- Markus, H. & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, *41*, 954-969.
- Masgoret, A. M., and Gardner, R. C. (1999). A model of Spanish immigrant adaptation in Canada. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *20*(3), 216-236.
- McEown, M. S., Noels, K.A., & Chaffee, K.E. (2014). At the Interface between the Socio- educational model, Self-determination theory, and the L2 motivational system models. In K. Csizer and M. Magid (Eds.), *The Impact of self-concept on second language acquisition* (pp. 19-50). Bristol, UK.:Multilingual Matters.
- Niemiec, C. P., & Ryan, R. M. (2009). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice. *Theory and Research in Education*, *7* (2), 133-144.
- Noéls, K. A., Pelletier, L. G., Clément, R., & Vallerand, R. J. (2000). Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and Self-Determination Theory. *Language Learning*, *50* (1), 57-85.
- Pajare, F. (2001). Toward a positive psychology of academic motivation. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *95* (1), 27-35.
- Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Robinson, J. C. (2008). The effects of choice on intrinsic motivation and related outcomes: A meta-analysis of research findings. *Psychological Bulletin*, *134* (2), 270-300. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.134.2.270.
- Reeve, J. (2009, Dec. 23). Autonomy support. [Online article]. Retrieved from [http://www.education.com/reference/article/autonomy support/](http://www.education.com/reference/article/autonomy%20support/)
- Ryan, R. M. (1982). Control and information in the intrapersonal sphere: An extension of cognitive evaluation theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *43*, 450-461.
- Ryan, R. M., & Connell, J. P. (1989). Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*, 749-761.
- Ryan, R. M., Koestner, R., & Deci, E. L. (1991). Varied forms of persistence: When free-choice behavior is not intrinsically motivated. *Motivation and Emotion*, *15*, 185-205.
- SDT website. Retrieved from <http://www.selfdeterminationtheory.org/theory/>

- Shih, S. S. (2008). The relation of self-determination and achievement goals to Taiwanese eighth graders' behavioral and emotional engagement in schoolwork. *The Elementary School Journal*, 108 (4), 313-334.
- Skinner, E. A., & Belmont, M. J. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85 (4), 571-581.
- Vallerand, R. J., & Reid, G. (1984). On the causal effects of perceived competence on intrinsic motivation: A test of cognitive evaluation theory. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, 6, 94-102.
- Yang, N. T. (1998). Exploring a new role for teachers: Promoting learner autonomy. *System*, 26, 127-135.

Appendix A

Interview Questions for High School Teachers

Based on your actual experiences, please share how you dealt with the following situations.

1. How do you deal with students who perform poorly; for example, frequently not handing in assignments?
2. How do you react to students who perform well; for example, winning speech contest?
3. How do you respond to students who perform in the average level?
4. Do you listen to students' opinion? Do you give students opportunity for choice? Concerning the content and amount in school assignments.
5. How do you suggest students to make improvements?
6. At last, please give your precious opinions for all other high school teachers of EFL in:
 - 1) How to enhance students' interest in studying English?
 - 2) How do you help students study English autonomously?

Appendix B

Vignette H from Problem in School Questionnaire (This is an exact reproduction from the questionnaire with permission by Deci & Ryan on Jan., 16, 2014; the notes were provided by the researcher.)

H. Your child has been getting average grades, and you'd like to see her improve.

A useful approach might be to:

1. Encourage her to talk about her report card and what it means for her.
2. Go over the report card with her; point out where she stands in the class.
3. Stress that she should do better; she'll never get into college with grades like these.
4. Offer her a dollar for every A and 50 cents for every B on future report cards.

Notes:

Dollar and cents are in US\$.

Option 1 represents highly autonomy supportive.

Option 2 represents moderately autonomy supportive.

Option 3 represents moderately controlling.

Option 4 represents highly controlling.

Appendix C

Scales for Measurement

I. Learning Climate Questionnaire

1. I feel that the teacher understands my conditions in learning EFL.
2. I feel that the teacher has provided me an opportunity for choice in instruction and course work.
3. The teacher is confident in my performance in the English class.
4. The teacher encourages me to ask questions.
5. The teacher would listen to students' ideas before finalize any rules.
6. The teacher would try to understand my ideas before giving me any suggestions for improvement.

II. Self-Regulation Questionnaire

This scale helps us understand how you self-regulate yourself in LEARNING ENGLISH.

The reason why I do my homework is that.....

1. It is very interesting. (Intrinsic motivation 1)
2. I enjoy doing it.(Intrinsic motivation 2)
3. I'd like to understand the content of the course. (Identified regulation 1)

4. It is very important to me.(Identified regulation 2)
5. I wish the teacher would perceive me as a good student. (Introjected regulation 1)
6. If I don't do it, I would have trouble. (External regulation 1)
7. The teacher requested that I must do it. (External regulation 2)

The reason why I do English exercises during the class is that.....

8. It is very interesting. (Intrinsic motivation 3)
9. I like doing English exercises. (Intrinsic motivation 4)
10. I want to learn new things.(Identified regulation 3)
11. Doing English exercises is very important to me. (Identified regulation 4)
12. I want the teacher to think that I am a good student. (Introjected regulation 2)
13. If I don't do the exercises, the teacher would reprimand me. (External regulation 3)
14. It is the rule that we have to do the exercises. (External regulation 4)

III. Interest Scale in EFL Reading

This is scale measuring general interest in English reading.

1. I like English reading very much.
2. English reading is very boring. (reversed)
3. English reading should be fairly interesting.

The Effectiveness of Year 1 International Studies Strand of an ESP Program in Year 2: Student Perceptions

Harika B. Bilici

Kwansei Gakuin University

Bioprofile:

Harika Basak Bilici, MA, DELTA, taught academic English in Turkey and China. She is currently teaching at the ELP of Kwansei Gakuin University. Her interests include integrating student experiences into curriculum and whole person education through art to motivate learners and encourage life-long learning. Any query about the article should be addressed to Harika B. Bilici at HarikaBilici@kwansei.ac.jp

Abstract

This research was conducted to learn about to what extent students think the Year 1 (Y1) International Studies (IS) course was useful for their studies in Year 2 (Y2) by asking them which topics and skills they found most useful through a questionnaire. It aimed to explore why students think some of these topics and skills contributed to their studies more than others through semi-structured individual interviews. The research questions were: 1) Do IS students think IS Y1 course, in terms of content (course topics) and skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening and other learning skills) taught in the course, have been beneficial in their studies in Year 2? 2) To what extent do they think it has been useful? 3) Which part of the IS Y1 syllabus did they find the most useful in terms of skills or content in their Y2? 4) What implications could be made from the results of this research to understand the perspective of the learners on the IS Y1 course? Results indicated that IS Y1 course helped their studies in Y2 in several ways, such as choosing courses and providing examples for essays; however it is revealed that certain skills and content such as critical thinking, scaffolding the formation of independent study skills could be further emphasized to better meet students' needs in Y2. The research results also give insights into the importance of keeping the curriculum alive by ensuring communication between Y1 & Y2 curriculum writers, as well as involving students in the process of curriculum design and improvement.

Key Words: International students, syllabus, curriculum design

Introduction

As the need for English continues to grow with the continuation of globalization of industry, business and communications, the importance of the EAP programs at universities are focusing more on how to equip their students better to be able to meet their academic needs. More and more universities are starting to integrate more discipline- specific writing, grammar and vocabulary into their first year programs. However, it seems that student experience with this subject-specific education is not considered as vital to the success of these programs. This is particularly noteworthy given the results of recent research on the impact of student perceptions (SP) and how it affects “performance and satisfaction” (Trinder, 2012).

The idea of *live curriculum* where students also provide input into the process of designing curriculum is not new. It is well known that a successful curriculum is “responsive to changing values and expectations” [through SP] (Prideaux, 2003). Nonetheless, there is not only a lack of research on SP in ESP, and specifically on IS, to inform curriculum improvement, but also into the connection between ESP programs & department curricula. Therefore, there is a need for exploring student perceptions in ESP programs and specific strands, such as International Business or Engineering, to make these programs more relevant and effective for the main beneficiary of EAP programs. Thus, this paper will discuss the student perceptions of the effectiveness of the Y1 IS Course in Y2 IS program. The findings will be used to give insights into the student perspectives of the effectiveness of the program as well as making some suggestions to improve programs of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes ESP in general.

Research Context

The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) First Year Program mostly consists of Chinese Students, with a small proportion of international students. However, the UNNC First Year (FY) curriculum was adapted from the First Year English Program in the UK. In the first semester, students take both English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses such as Reading and Writing in Academic Contexts and Listening and Speaking in Academic Contexts as well as some content courses depending on their major. In the second semester, students are introduced to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), while they also continue taking some content

courses. In addition, they are also required to take some courses that will help them adapt to the Western university system such as ‘Academic Oral Presentations’ and ‘Analytical Thinking’. The aim of the Y1 program is providing students with the language, study and thinking skills that is required to manage their studies independently and to meet the demands of their future academic courses. (The University of Nottingham, 2014).

IS Y1 Course is a 12-week course which uses an in-house created IS Book as the main course book. The syllabus includes skills and vocabulary around IS Topics such as ‘Nation-State’, ‘Globalization’, and ‘Colonialism’ and it is a mix of Politics, History, International Relations & Economics. As for the content relevance between Y1 & Y2 IS courses, IS Y1 content has some similarity to courses in certain pathways such as ‘World History Pathway (Europe)’, International Relations and Comparative Politics Pathway (Globalization/Politics)- depending on students’ choice. Furthermore, Y2 IS Courses such as ‘Capitalism’ and ‘Modern Asia’ are also comparable to Y1 IS topics. However, there is no data available as to whether the students find IS Y1 curriculum effective in Y2.

Literature Review

Although it is difficult to find a body of literature into ‘student perceptions in IS Strand of ESP’ and specifically on ‘comparisons between Y1 & Y2 ESP programs’, there has been a growing interest into exploring student perceptions in EAP and ESP in recent years. Some of the recent research on student perceptions in EAP and ESP will be outlined below.

Student Perceptions in EAP

Kirkgoz (2009) investigated higher education students’ and lecturers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of foreign language instruction in an English-medium university in Turkey and found out that skills-based EAP curriculum remains inadequate in preparing students effectively for the academic requirements. The research pointed out for a multi-dimensional approach to needs analysis. The results of this research draw attention to the weaknesses of current EAP programs as well as the need for more research related to how to improve them. Dooley (2010) also explored students’ perspectives of an EAP pathway program. The participants

reported the program was beneficial since it helped them to make a smooth transition to studying in Australia, although there were some problems to overcome. Another finding suggested that even though students pass a language proficiency test, they might not be ready to study in a tertiary institution, which indicates the need for further research into the challenges EAP programs face. Zafarghandi, Khoshroo, and Barkat (2012) focused on Iranian EFL Masters students' perceptions of plagiarism. The findings indicated that plagiarism was common among the students, and they lacked adequate understanding of different forms of plagiarism. It was also revealed that most students who plagiarized had an inadequate understanding of plagiarism and its seriousness. The research also demonstrated that students' perceptions and understanding of plagiarism did not change as they progressed into their further years of study, which implies the need for ensuring students adequately comprehend the meaning and different forms of plagiarism and its seriousness in academia. This research is particularly important as it gives insights into the relationship between student perceptions and performance in certain academic tasks and might mean that exploring student perceptions in problematic academic tasks could be critical to understanding and producing solutions to those problems.

Student Perceptions in ESP

As for SP in ESP, Roskams (1999) investigated Chinese EFL Students' Attitudes to Peer Feedback and Peer Assessment in an Extended Pair work Setting. The findings suggested that most students benefitted from peer feedback if they enjoyed collaborative learning environment. Although students were uncertain about its fairness in formal assessment, peer assessment as a learning experience was viewed positively. Another research in ESP was carried out by Tsao, Wei & Fang (2008) who studied student and faculty perceptions of ESP for College Students in Taiwan. They found out that the students preferred ESP more than EGP (English for general purposes) while teachers, were more cautious with the replacement of EGP with ESP. Although both parties were aware of the importance of ESP, both believed English proficiency of students were not adequate to cope with the requirements of ESP. Both students and faculty members thought ESP courses needed to differ from EGP in their objectives, materials and approaches. However, training of language skills while integrating specialized terms and discipline content into the course was

considered to be essential by both parties. Finally, both parties believed ESP instructors need to be equipped with English-teaching competency and subject content knowledge, opinions on whether English should be the only medium of instruction differs. Participants expressed concerns over the potential problems facing ESP such as inadequate number of qualified teachers, limited instruction, lack of opportunities to apply English in daily life and the workplace, and the possibility of ESP courses being limited to the learning of specific lexicon and the translation of content-specific texts. Finally, two parties varied significantly in their views of the factors influencing the effectiveness of an ESP course. Students held the view that student needs analysis, students' learning capacity, and students' learning motivation were the most important factors while teachers focused on the importance of the course itself, including teaching materials and methods, course objectives and design of the course as well as student needs. This is a comprehensive research which gives insights into the similarities and differences between student and teacher perception, and demonstrates the importance of communication between those two parties to be able to overcome obstacles in learning academic English.

The results of Ferreira and Santoso's (2008) research on whether students' perceptions matter or not by studying the effect of students' perceptions on academic performance indicated that negative perceptions of accounting led to negative performance while positive perceptions of accounting have a positive impact on students' performance. Although the correlation in this study might not be applicable to all subjects, it can be argued that it demonstrates an interesting area to explore student perceptions as factor in their success. Another researcher investigating student perceptions in ESP was Hung (2011) who researched pedagogical applications of Vlogs by investigating into ESP learners' perceptions. The results of this research indicated that the student perceptions towards the Vlog project were positive because Vlogs were useful in organizing and reflecting on their learning products. It also gave them a tool to archive their learning processes. Students stated other advantages of it such as 'visual representation, relief from time constraints, self-evaluation, professional development, wider audience, peer learning and technical capability', despite 'some technical difficulties, affective interferences, weak linkage to real-time communication and time issues' (Hung, 2011) which were problematic during the

process. This research was intended to give insights into the effectiveness of a technological tool and produced useful data to evaluate this educational tool.

Furthermore, Ismail (2011) investigated students' perceptions of ESL writing at university and the results demonstrated the students' positive views towards the Academic Writing Course (AWC) in particular and ESL writing in general. The findings demonstrated that students were aware of their needs and requirements of ESL writing, which highlights the importance of considering integrating student perceptions into curriculum as an indicator of a possible correlation between student perceptions and actual effectiveness of specific skills, courses or programs. Ferris (1998) also explored students' views of academic aural/oral skills. The findings revealed that the students' responses across several contextual and student demographic variables as well as professors' responses varied significantly both in the aural/oral skills rankings and most survey items. The study is critical in pointing out the significance of the interpretation of needs analysis data. It is also useful in understanding how curriculum designers and students are likely to have dramatic differences in the way they view student needs; therefore, the communication between the two is fundamental in the process of syllabus design for the main stakeholders', students' perceptions as it may affect their performance, which is in line with the results of this research.

Finally, Eslami's (2010) research on Iranian teachers' voice vs. students' voice, through a needs analysis approach of EAP found out that there is a discrepancy between the perceptions of EAP learners in different academic fields and between learners and instructors, which could have implications for curriculum design. Although it is natural and acceptable to have differences in the perceptions of students and teachers, it is also likely to indicate the reasons for problems or lack of success in student learning.

Methodology

Data Collection and Analysis

Method of Research and Analysis:

Qualitative Research can be defined as 'Non-statistical methods of inquiry and analysis of social phenomena which draws on an inductive process in which themes and categories emerge through analysis of data collected' (McRoy, 1997). Its aim is

‘to generate theory from the data.’ (Woods, 2006). Thus, it focuses more on *natural settings, meanings, perspectives and understandings* and ‘seeks to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behavior, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on particular issues’ (Ibid, 2006). Since this study is also interested in learning and understanding student perceptions, the qualitative method was chosen as the research method.

Qualitative research is often criticized for not being generalizable. However, in this type of research, the quest is not so much with *getting it right* as “getting it differently contoured and nuanced” (Richardson 1994, p. 521). The researcher first intends to “understand an experience based on available data” rather than trying to arrive at conclusions based on the available data or increasing the quantifiable data to be able to make more generalizable conclusions. In addition, there are some ways in which qualitative research can be generalized, namely:

- a) Through the theory that is generated. Such theory then becomes available to others to test and apply - see the example above on differentiation-polarization;
- b) Though it might be only a single case study, it might contribute to an archive of studies on a particular issue which then become reinterpreted. (Woods, 2006).

Mainly two specific methods were used to analyze the research results, which are namely *data reduction* which is “identifying emerging (recurring) themes, categories, and patterns” and *serendipity* which refers to “chance occurrences” and engaging with the process of ideas that “*spark off new lines of thought and enquiry.*” (McRoy, 1997).

Participants

The students from the 2012-2013 IS Y1 course were asked whether they would be willing to take part in the study on the IS Y1 course and some expressed interest. These students were then e-mailed to ask again if they would still be willing to participate and three of them took part in the study.

One questionnaire and one interview were carried out with each individual student at the end of semester 2. First the questionnaires, which were adapted using the IS Y1 syllabus, were emailed to students. Second, an individual interview with

each student was arranged to discuss his or her answers to the questionnaire. The interview questions were also e-mailed to students before the interviews to brainstorm answers. Answers from the questionnaires were then collated and analyzed to find student perceptions of the effectiveness of each lesson in the syllabus. Interviews were recorded as an audio file and were analyzed.

Results

Student answers demonstrated that they found the topics and skills covered in the Y1 IS syllable mostly useful, although the extent of its effectiveness varied. However, some topics such as East and West Germany, Political Beliefs, The Rise and Fall of Civilizations and all Lecture and Seminar Skills lessons were found to be the least useful in Y2. A more detailed version of the topics and skills they found useful is shown below:

Collated Answers to the Questionnaires:

Most Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not so Useful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Nation-State ➤ A Borderless World ➤ A Borderless World + Exam Writing ➤ Exam Writing: Discuss Essay ➤ Capitalism: Critical Writing ➤ Synthesizing Sources into a Paragraph ➤ Critical Writing: Degrees of Certainty and Topic Development ➤ Exam Writing Mock Feedback ➤ Class Tutorials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development Theory ➤ Government Systems and Economic Growth ➤ Comparing Political Systems – The U.S. and China ➤ Colonialism ➤ Rise and Fall of Civilizations ➤ Introduction to Discursive Writing ➤ Introduction to Critical Evaluation + IWA Topic introduction ➤ The Nation State + Critical Writing: Evaluating Theories ➤ Government Systems and Economic Growth + Exam Writing ➤ Exam Writing: TWE Essay ➤ Exam Writing Mock ➤ Lecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ East and West Germany ➤ Political Beliefs – The Left and the Right ➤ The Rise and Fall of Civilizations + Exam Writing ➤ Lecture and Seminar Discussion 1 ➤ Lecture and Seminar Discussion 2 ➤ Lecture and Seminar Discussion 4 Human Behavior

	Comprehension Mock ➤ Colonialism Quotations + Exam Writing	
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Interviews:

For the first question, which was ‘Do you think Y1 IS course in general has been beneficial in your Y2 studies? To what extent? Answers were mostly positive. The students stated that the IS Y1 Course was useful in choosing courses, helping understand lessons and providing examples for essays.

The main purpose of the second question was to learn the content of the courses students chose to be able to verify which courses from Y1 IS course are likely to be more relevant in Y2. The answers to this question, ‘How many courses have you taken in Y2 S1 (or S2)? What are their names and what do they focus on?’ were as follows:

Semester 1:

Understanding Global Relations: includes subjects such as International Relations Theories, Liberalism, Neo-Liberal Social Constructivism.

Issues of Global Relations: covers examples of empirical studies/ Occupying Wall Street and BRICS/ Up-to-date events in Syria.

European Union Institutions: policies and law in Europe.

Origins of Capitalism: capitalism theory and development capitalists.

Understanding the West: Europe: Cradle of civilization: religions, art, and history of the Western Civilization.

Japanese/French/Spanish (Elective language course)

Semester 2

Making of Modern Asia (Online lecture): politics of Modern Asia, Imperialism, and Cold War, political economy and democracy

Roots of Globalization: organizations& International relations

Japanese/French/Spanish (Elective language course)

The third question was ‘In which ones of these Y2 courses do you think IS Y1 skills and language helped most?’ The bolded sections below were given to scaffold

students and remind them of what was covered in Y1 IS. Summary of the answers were as below:

Some examples of skills and language we studied in Y1:

Guessing vocabulary:

Students stated there were many unfamiliar vocabulary items, but they could learn many words from readings, so this skill was only useful for guessing more complex words.

Looking up unknown historical events, dates, and figures before lectures:

Students reported that they sometimes look up events on the Internet, however, many students expressed they have not formed a habit, so most students do not do it. Also, they added that pre-readings assigned (which were compulsory) helped to understand the lessons, even though students often did the pre-research assigned in Chinese rather than in English.

Predicting the content and doing research on the lecture topic before lectures:

Although students stated they sometimes do research on the topics of lectures before class, most students do not do it as they had not gained this skill in Y1.

Writing models: (Were the requirements in writing lessons in Y1, especially writing models provided similar to IS Y2 writing expectations?)

Students stated the essay topics in Y2 were similar to Y1, their detailed answers are as follows:

The (most useful) type of essays: (From the type of essays taught in Y1 (To what extent (TWE), Discuss, Theory Evaluation, Compare Contrast) which one was most commonly used in Y2?)

Students stated that 'Discuss, TWE and Compare Contrast' essays were the most common ones, (since they were often given a situation to discuss and needed to apply it in another context). However, evaluation of theory was not so common, and there were essays asking students to comment on historical events (although students added that how useful certain essay types might depend on what courses they chose to take).

Introduction/conclusion/thesis statements/topic sentences/stance and voice:

Students stated that it was their responsibility to make their essays structured in Y2. They reported there was no feedback available to writing or specific structure expected. They were just told to be ‘clear’ in their writing.

Noun combinations in writing:

Students expressed that they tended to forget most noun combinations, so they were not found to be useful.

Coherence & cohesion (CC):

Students stated that they realized they were better at cohesion, especially use of linkers and order of ideas. They stated that CC, especially connectors were useful in writing to clarify ideas.

Paraphrases/quotations:

Students said they used paraphrases much more than quotations in Y2, so they were more useful in Y2 essays.

Discussions about the lectures/readings:

They were reported to be useful in some lessons in Y2 such as ‘Globalization’ and ‘Origins of Capitalism’, and in seminars, namely, ‘Making of Modern Asia’. Students also reported that Y2 teachers also ask them to present ideas from discussions, which is similar discussion structure to Y1.

To sum up, most notable Y1 skills that were useful in Y2 were: 1) TWE & Discuss essays, 2) Academic writing features, structure, and paraphrasing, 3) Discussions (after lectures). Students also stated that they did not find some of the important skills such as doing pre-research before lectures as helpful:

“Pre-reading helps (understanding the ideas in lectures) but (the) habit (skills such as doing research before lectures) is not formed, so most students don’t use these skills”

The fourth and final question of the interview was to inquire into what skills and topics they thought they needed in Y2, and what else could have been done in Y1 that could have helped them have a smoother transition to their Y2. The question was: ‘What kind of skills or topics do you think could make IS Y1 course more useful? (What was different in Y2? What did you have difficulty with the most in Y2? What could have helped prepare you better in Y1?)’ The replies categorized into four main headings with some interesting student comments are given below:

1. More reading:

Students stated that the most difficult subject in Y2 was ‘Western Civilization/History’ because the historical terms were quite confusing. Therefore, more readings on western history are reported to be necessary. However, students added that more reading would be useful only if they are compulsory, because anything that is optional seems not necessary to do for students:

‘More reading is needed as Y2 readings such as the ones in ‘Roots of Globalization’, which are longer and more complex than the ones in Y1’

“But we’d not read too long ones, work (assigned) has to be compulsory, or we get lazy, forget and don't do it”*

2. More recent/up to date topics:

Student reported that they did not find the topics in Y1 as interesting as some topics in Y2; therefore, they did not want to discuss these topics outside the classroom (unlike the ones in Y2 which they enjoyed discussing even outside the classroom) with their friends or classmates. They also showed awareness of the requirements of their major and highlighted the importance of habit formation in Y1 to help students in Y2:

“Most students don't read the news, and it is very important for IS students. Forming habits is necessary, so, for example, we can read the news and talk about it every day in class in Y1”.

3. More writing practice:

Although students expressed they benefitted from the writing practice in Y1, they pointed out the necessity of emphasizing mainly four areas in Y1 writing:

- Coherence/ cohesion
- Timed Writing
- More instruction & practice on TWE/ Discuss essays (as well as the differences between the two)
- Less evaluation, but more compare & contrast essays

4. More encouragement of creativity & originality in writing:

Students reported that they could write an essay with an acceptable clarity and structure, the main problem their teachers complained about in their essays were lacking originality:

“Teachers say our essays are not academic, deep, they are shallow”

“Y2 tutors ask for new findings, and your voice, so you need to excite the tutor. Y1 is conservative, but more creativity should be encouraged. Inspire them. Chinese students think in the box, they need to be inspired to think outside the box.”

Discussion

Based on the research results, four questions can be raised for discussion in the EAP/ ESP context:

- **Are student perspectives taken into consideration in curriculum improvement?**

Especially in contexts where the culture of learners has significant differences in beliefs and practices than the education system they are in, it seems that student perceptions can give insights into how we can help learners overcome challenges and be more successful. Integrating their beliefs, observations and experiences into the design and improvement of the curriculum, thereby keeping the curriculum alive could aid the program to achieve its goals.

- **Are critical thinking, creativity and originality in academic writing encouraged enough (or sacrificed for the sake of learning the basics of academic writing)?**

Especially in the first year EAP programs where students are introduced to academic skills for the first time, it can be argued that the focus on learning the basics of academic structure and language could mean sacrificing the element of creativity in the curriculum. Learning goals and teachers justifiably concentrate on helping students read and organize their ideas in the academic format while writing. However, based on the importance of writer’s voice, which was reported to be problematic in students’ future academic studies in this study, it can be suggested that exercises and strategies to help learners cope with the demands of their future academic studies.

- **Is there enough emphasis on recycling key skills and helping students form good study skills/ habits to support autonomy in the curriculum?**

Student responses indicated that key study habits for independent learning, which is among the goals of many current EAP programs, were not formed.

This could be because the time students spend in high school is tightly scheduled while students are expected to manage their own time and studies at university. This, however, seems the problematic especially in Asian contexts where student beliefs and habits pose an obstacle to the goal of making them autonomous learners.

Conclusion

One of the conclusions from this research could be the importance of ensuring communication between Y1 and Y2 syllabuses. Since teachers and syllabuses change over time in Y2 programs, Y1 syllabus needs to be updated according to the changing needs of Y2 programs. Therefore, a channel for ongoing communication between students, teachers & curriculum designers in Y1 & Y2 is essential to provide one of the main stakeholders of EAP programs, students, with the best means to be able to cope with the demands of their future academic studies. Integrating students into the process of curriculum is also essential since student perceptions may help improve motivation, learning environment & autonomy (Kift & Field, 2009). Another important step towards making the EAP programs more effective could be considering ways of helping students understand & practice creativity in writing. Most importantly, curriculum writers and teachers should be aware of the importance of ‘scaffolded autonomy’ and strive to find ways to assist students internalize how to be independent learners. Teachers should also look for ways to give them opportunities to practice good study skills and habits as well as emphasizing the link between these study skills and the success in their future academic life. As Watson & Railton (2005) point out very often this process is either left to chance or seen as a natural attribute of the higher education learning system rather than a skill that must be learnt and can be taught. However, many teachers working at Asian academic contexts are aware that autonomy needs to be guided and supported. Therefore, considering classroom structures or support mechanisms could help students in the process of transition to self-study is necessary (Comerio, 2014).

The first step to scaffold students in the process of autonomy could start with by investigating both teacher and student beliefs of autonomy and finding ways to support autonomy in curriculum based on these beliefs. Ribbe and Bezanilla (2013) argue that “teachers and course designers can support the development and exertion of

learner autonomy” and a greater attention to learner autonomy could contribute to student success. Teachers can foster student autonomy firstly by providing effective learner support (McLoughlin, 2002, p. 149). Learner support in the process of autonomy becomes even more important for educational environments where the teaching environment is highly controlled by the teacher, and students are mainly follow teachers’ instructions rather than being responsible for their own learning. Therefore, one of the most important steps after exploring autonomy perceptions of learners and students is to train teachers to guide students and help them make a smooth transition to independent learning. Ribbe and Bezanilla (2013) suggest three core principles in this transition process. First, teachers can facilitate learner involvement by encouraging them to participate in the process of defining goals and deciding the content and techniques. Second, teachers can integrate reflection by helping self-monitoring and evaluation in the learning process. Finally, teachers can support immersion of learners in an authentic learning environment and community of practice. This means students can gain skills of autonomy by interacting with other students. In the whole process is based on reported information from a limited number of participants. Therefore, further research with more participants is necessary to be able to interpret the results of this research. Secondly, access to Y2 teachers to verify reported information was also not available. of transition, both teacher and learner perspectives play an important role making use of them to create a more effective curriculum and classroom environment is critical.

Limitations & Future Study

First of all, the research Thus, it would be useful to interview IS Y2 teachers to learn their perspectives of how prepared students seem to be in for their academic studies in Y2, and compare the perspectives of students and teachers to analyze their similarities and differences. In addition, as students choose different pathways in Y2, usefulness of some Y1 content and skills might depend on the courses selected. Therefore, further research with more participants possibly classified into different pathways would provide more reliable data. Finally, comparing the similarities & differences between Y1/Y2 curriculum, and the student and teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of Y1 and needs of Y2 would also be beneficial to give insights into creating a more effective Y1 curriculum.

References

- Comerio, G. (2014). Supporting learner's autonomy. [Power point slides]
- Dooley, P. (2010). Students' perspectives of an EAP pathway program. *Journal for EAP*, 9(3), 184-197.
- Eslami, R.Z. (2010). Teachers' voice vs. students' voice: A needs analysis approach of English for academic purposes (EAP) in Iran. *English Language Teaching*, 3(1).
- Ferreira, A. and Santoso, A. (2008). 'Do students' perceptions matter? A study of the effect of students' perceptions on academic performance'. *Accounting and Finance*, 48(2), 209-231.
- Ferris, D (1998). Students' Views of Academic Aural/Oral Skills: A Comparative Needs Analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(2), 289-316.
- Hung, S.A. (2011). Pedagogical applications of Vlogs: An investigation into ESP learners' perceptions. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 42(5) 736-746.
- Ismail, A.A.S.(2011). Exploring students' perceptions of ESL writing. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 4(2).
- Kift, S. M. & Field, S.M. (2009). Intentional first year curriculum design as a means of facilitating student engagement: some exemplars. *In Proceedings of the 12th Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference Proceedings*. Townsville, Queensland: Queensland University of Technology.
- Kirkgoz, Y. (2009). Student perceptions in EAP teaching in higher education students' and lecturers' perceptions of the effectiveness of foreign language instruction in an English-medium university in Turkey. *Taylor Francis Online*, 10(1).
- McRoy (1997). *Qualitative Research*. Retrieved from http://www2.uncp.edu/home/marson/qualitative_research.html
- McLoughlin, C. (2002). Learner support in distance and networked learning environments: Ten dimensions for successful design. *Distance Education*, (23)2, 149- 162.
- Prideaux, D. (2003). The clinical review ABC of learning and teaching in medicine curriculum design. *The BMJ*. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.326.7383.268>
- Ribbe, E. & Bezanilla, M.J. (2013). Scaffolding learner autonomy in online university courses. *Digital Education Review*, 24, 98-113. Retrieved from <http://greav.ub.edu/der/>

- Richardson, L. (1994). 'Writing: a method of inquiry' in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London and New York, Sage.
- Roskams, T. (1999). Chinese EFL students' attitudes to peer feedback and peer assessment in an extended pair work setting. *RELC Journal*, 30, 79- 123.
- The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (2014). The School of International Studies: Undergraduate Studies. Retrieved from <http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/internationalstudies/ug/index.aspx>
- The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (2014). Center for Language Education. Retrieved from <http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/cele/welcome.aspx>
- Trinder, R. (2012). Business students' beliefs about language learning in a university context. *English for Specific Purposes*, 32(1), 1-11.
- Tsao, C. Wei, A.M.S & Fang, A.S.H. (2008). ESP for college students in Taiwan: A survey of student and faculty perceptions. *International Symposium on ESP & Its Application in Nursing & Medical English Education*, 245-262.
- Watson, P, Railton, D. (2005). Teaching autonomy 'Reading groups' and the development of autonomous learning practices. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 6(3), 182-193. doi: 10.1177/1469787405057665
- Woods (2006). Qualitative Research. *Educational Research in Action*. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/resined/Qualitative%20methods%202/qualrshm.htm>
- Zafarghandi A.M., Khoshroo, Barkat, F (2012). An investigation of Iranian EFL Masters students' perceptions of plagiarism. *International Journal FOE Educational Integrity*, 8 (2).

The Feasibility of Critical Reading in ELF Settings: Teachers' Roles and Modifications

Takeshi Sato

Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology

Bioprofile:

Takeshi Sato is an associate professor of Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology. His current academic interests are L2 vocabulary acquisition, computer-assisted language learning and pedagogy from English as a Lingua Franca perspective. His articles are found in *TESOL Quarterly*, *ReCALL*, *Asian EFL Journal* & *the Journal of English as an International Language*. Any query about this article should be addressed to Takeshi Sato at tsato@cc.tuat.ac.jp.

Abstract

This study aims to explore the feasibility of teaching critical reading—a practice based on critical language awareness—in local English language classes where learners tend to be receptive about the contents, and to describe the pedagogical applications of the theoretical framework of critical reading to English reading classes in the settings where English serves as a lingua franca. Through the action research in my critical reading practices at a Japanese university, critical reading activities could serve as a catalyst to change learners' passive attitudes towards texts: they did not uncritically accept the contents and value of texts from an anglophone country, but rather willingly expressed their own opinions and values towards the texts. This study concludes that critical reading could be a feasible pedagogy for English language classrooms, although some modifications to fit local settings would be required.

Key Words: Critical Reading, Critical Language Awareness, English as a lingua franca, Writing back, Talking back, Action Research

Background

In countries such as Japan where English is not a common or official language, a reading class might be a challenge for non-native teachers of English. In reading classes in Japan, for example, the teachers tend to transmit knowledge to their

students: that is, they might think that teaching how to read a text only involves providing vocabulary and grammar knowledge, a translation of a reading text, and then writing these on the blackboard. *Yakudoku*, translating the text of English into Japanese word by word, referring to the grammar-translation method, is one of the major practices in reading classrooms (Gorsuch, 1998; Hart, 2002; Matsuura et al., 2001; Powell, 2005). In this method, students quietly and passively make an effort to decode the text and transcribe what teachers write on the blackboard. Students seldom answer voluntarily and respond only when asked by the teacher (Tanaka, 2009). In this respect, the teaching and learning can be regarded as receptive (Kubota, 2002), teacher-fronted, or teacher-centered (Tanaka, 2009).

The tendency of Japanese (or East Asian) English learners' receptive attitudes toward reading (Kimura et al., 2001) does not necessarily stem from their lower motivation; students are, in fact, involved in various activities in their classrooms (Morita, 2004). Rather, this style of teaching and learning may result from the cultural attributes of Asian countries (Hilleson, 1996; Kubota, 1999; Tsui, 1996 as cited in Morita, 2004; Turner & Hiraga, 1996). Even if the preference of Japanese (or East Asian) English learners' passive attitude is related to their cultural values, this attitude can cause some problems. For one thing, the learners cannot comprehend the text, although it should be the main purpose of any L2 reading task: when students adopt a passive attitude in class, especially in reading class, they might learn only what is necessary to receive a satisfactory score. Their prime motivation is accessing word meanings, not understanding the text. Another problem is, as Kubota (1999) points out, that students tend to pay too much attention to the passive decoding of the meanings of words, and sentences, to such an extent that they often fail to critically comprehend the content of the English texts. They regard decoding the text as the goal of their reading activities (Wallace, 2003).

This passive attitude of uncritical acceptance of the content of English texts may cause a more serious problem. Because of successive exposure to English texts, learners may uncritically accept the content, thought, or value as correct. Therefore, they may presume that these concepts are true or unbiased, even though most of the readings from Anglophone countries reflect the perspectives of those countries, which are, in many cases, different from those in the learners' countries. This leads to the problem that the spread of English is perceived as natural, neutral, and beneficial.

This perception seems to influence many people involved in English Language Teaching (Pennycook, 1995). As a result, they tend to associate English with Anglophone cultures (Honna, 2000). This study purports to demonstrate that this attitude is not appropriate to the current usage of English as a lingua franca (ELF). English has been used not just as a medium for communication with native speakers of English, but also for communication between non-native speakers of English (Widdowson, 1994). This has caused the focus of English to shift from native-like competence towards international intelligibility (Jenkins, 2000). Therefore, English teachers in ELF settings should help students realize that English is not a tool to accept the knowledge and values from Anglophone countries, but a tool to express their opinions and values not only to native speakers but also to non-native speakers of English.

Aim of the study

Considering the current situation in Japan, where the classes are teacher-centered, and students accept knowledge passively, and where English serves as an international lingua franca, this study presents critical reading (CR) as a practical solution to change the situation. The study begins by defining CR, elucidating what English teachers should bear in mind in order to conduct CR to make English reading classes a place, not just for knowledge transmission, but also for social practices (Fairclough, 1992). This can be achieved by critically interpreting texts and by becoming aware of the implicit messages of power and social relations related in texts (Auerbach, 1995). Then, to validate the practicability of CR in ELF settings, the practices of CR in my reading class in Japan occur in the form of teacher-initiated classroom investigation, a definition of action research. This concept is intended to enhance the teachers' understanding of their teaching and learning, leading to changes in their practices (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). It can be seen "as an empirical test of whether the generalizations provided by confirmatory research or understandings provided by interpretative research are applicable to specific classroom settings" (Ellis, 1997, p. 26). Through observation and self-reflection on the practices conducted in my CR classes, I make some suggestions for future teaching and research.

Definition of Critical Reading

First, I would like to give a brief definition of critical reading (CR). CR is regarded as the pedagogic part of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) (Wallace, 1992; 1999; 2003). Bolitho et al. (2003) state that CLA is “a mental attribute which develops through paying motivated attention to language in use, and which enables language learners to gradually gain insights into how languages work with a focus on the relationship between language and social context” (pp. 251–252). That is to say, CLA fosters critical and analytical attitudes and skills through understanding and interpreting spoken and written texts (Van Duzer & Florez, 1999). This is achieved by questioning the who/what/why/how of a text’s production and interpretation (Lohrey, 1998). By posing a problem based on a text and analyzing it with critical questions, readers could learn to recognize that all texts contain a hidden bias that writers sometimes consciously intend to include. The texts governed by this discourse might include those of powerful countries or people (Fairclough, 1999).

What does “critical” mean in ELF settings?

The word “critical” in CLA refers not to finding fault with something or someone, but to “draw[ing] attention to the ideological bases of discourses” (Wallace, 1999, p. 98) or to be positively skeptical (Wallace & Wray, 2006). That is, “critical,” in this context, stands for the attitude of questioning the accepted norms of knowledge.

Considering this definition, how should English teachers in countries where English is seldom used in daily life, such as Japan, think “critically” when teaching and learning English in ELF settings? As mentioned above, English learners tend to accept, unconditionally, knowledge, thoughts, and values in the process of reading texts. Therefore, this study addresses the notion of native speakers’ fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) as a hidden agenda in the texts. Phillipson (1992) defines the term as an idea that “[t]he ideal teacher is a native speaker, somebody with native speaker proficiency in English who can serve as a model for pupils” (p. 193). In other words, the native speakers’ fallacy refers to the blind acceptance of content or perspective presented by teachers from Anglophone countries, which are perceived as powerful (Fairclough, 1999). This “mindless acceptance” results in the students tending to unquestioningly accept the opinions of people from English-speaking countries and to use them as the basis for learning (Sato & Suzuki, 2007).

The roles of ELF teachers for their CR pedagogies

What are the roles of English teachers in facilitating CR? I will discuss their roles from the following three perspectives: reading materials, tasks, and communicating with students.

Reading materials

First, the important role of teachers in CR is to carefully select the content of the reading materials. As mentioned earlier, CLA requires students to deal with the issues of power, identity, and ideology. Auerbach (1995) suggests

[I]t is the teacher's job to investigate and represent this reality in problematized form to the learners. Rather than solving problems for learners, the teacher poses problems and engages students in dialogue and critical reflection (Auerbach, 1995, p. 12).

With this requirement, ELF teachers need to find texts that are not only intriguing to the students, but also stimulating, in order to prompt many critical opinions from them. There is no limitation on genres. Brown (2004) suggests that teachers should choose texts that are sensitive to students' value systems and that demand critical thinking on topics such as human rights or ethnic discrimination.

To facilitate CR, reading materials should be chosen, not only from English-speaking countries, but also from other countries where English is a second or foreign language. Wallace (2002) defines such materials as "global literate English," or formal written English that is "elegant and eloquent, such as that in newspapers, novels, and non-fiction texts" (p. 105). Wallace, therefore, suggests that "global literate English" be explored in reading materials in ELF contexts. Fairclough (1992) states that teachers may use written Standard English for English reading materials, but they should not forget to expose learners to critical views about Standard English.

Taking these perspectives into consideration, written English texts in a newspaper, for example, can be used as resources, not only from Anglophone countries, but also from any other countries, if these texts have "elegance of eloquence" (Wallace, 2002, p. 105). The more thought-provoking the text, the more actively engaged the learners will be, leading to active manifestation of their opinions in their CR. The ultimate aim of language learning and teaching should be developing students' autonomy in language use (Littlejohn, 1997).

Tasks

It is of foremost importance that we develop tasks and questions to encourage students' critical interpretation of the texts. The teacher should formulate questions, not only by means of vocabulary checks, true and false quizzes, and cloze tests, but also by the following:

- On what basis is the text selected?
- Who wrote it and for what purpose?
- Whose opinion does it represent?
- How is its content related to the reality of the lives of the students?
- What kinds of responses are expected?

(Auerbach, 1995; Wallace, 1993)

We should note here that asking the critical questions above does not mean forcing learners to find fault with or blame the contents of the texts (Fairclough, 1995), but, as Wallace (1999) claims, fostering the attitude of critical resistance to the text: that is, fostering learners' "reflective, considered judgment" (Wallace, 2002, p. 112) about the claim of the text.

Interaction with students

Finally, we consider the role of teachers, in terms of interaction with students. Wallace (1993) says that the aim of CR, in a pedagogical sense, is to enable learners to be assertive in their discussion of texts by asking critical questions. Therefore, we should provide students with more chances to talk about issues with teachers or other students. Wells (1999) defines this activity as the dialogic inquiry. In CR, it is recommended that students discuss or negotiate the correct responses as a group rather than on their own.

In order to allow learners to express their critical opinions, we should facilitate their "writing back" (Pennycook, 1994) and "talking back" (Wallace, 2002) about the issue. In other words, students can openly express their opinions or thoughts by speaking or writing about the text that they have critically read. With regard to "talking back," teachers can first provide students with the chance to rehearse in a small group discussion, and then to participate in a public debate; it is hoped that this will help them broaden their viewpoints (Wallace, 2002). However, for learners as non-native speakers of English, "writing back," which is defined as "the way in which non-native speakers are able to appropriate English for their own creative and critical purposes" (Wallace, 2003, p. 70), would be a better way to express their opinions.

Kramersch and Lam (1999) point out the advantage of written texts, as a means for non-native speakers to express their ideas, as follows:

“Unlike the evanescent spoken word with its social pressure to conform and it’s highly conventionalized rituals of everyday life that might make non-native speakers the targets of scorn and ridicule, the written word offers them the possibility of expressing and reflecting upon their unique experience as immigrant and foreigners (p. 71).

Taking into consideration these viewpoints for implementation of CR, especially for the students in East Asian countries, the feasibility of teaching CR in Japanese universities is validated based on the challenges in my reading class in a Japanese university.

Critical Reading in a Japanese university setting: action research

CR seems to be practiced mainly in Anglophone countries. According to Wallace (2003), a CR course for non-native college students was conducted in the U.K. In her class, the students read a single text brought to the classroom by the students, then analyzed the text based on critical questions, and finally talked about the issue as a class. ELF teachers outside Anglophone countries might uncritically apply these processes in local language classrooms, but as Canagarajah (1999) points out, the same method could be altered due to logistical, cultural, and institutional factors. That is to say, no best method exists which can be applied in all settings; accommodating pedagogical strategies need to be adjusted to local settings (Canagarajah, 1999; Tarone 1994). In that respect, further examination is necessary to determine whether CR is feasible in ELF.

Based on CLA theory, I will describe the practices of action research used in Japan, in order to examine the feasibility of teaching the concepts and practices of CR in local classrooms. In a strict sense, the type of action research used to examine a particular intervention for the purpose of bridging the gap between theory and practice (Wieringa and Morari, 2012) is called technical action research (e.g., Berg, 2001; Ellis, 1997, 2010), where researchers cooperate with teachers to tackle issues derived from theory, or research undertaken by teachers, to improve the practices in their classroom (Crookes, 1993, as cited in Ellis 2010). As a researcher and teacher, I will describe my practices according to the steps of action research suggested by Nunan (1992):

initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, and evaluation.

Initiation

As discussed above, ELF teachers are faced with the problem that their learners tend to keep silent in classrooms. This occurs because both teachers and learners are accustomed to one-way transmission of knowledge. As a result, the learners' passive attitudes might lead to their uncritical acceptance, not only of knowledge, but also of the values and perspectives of the texts originating primarily in Anglophone countries. Hence, different pedagogical practice must be initiated in order to enhance learners' critical language awareness of their readings, and to make their classrooms active and lively.

Preliminary investigation

I have explored the roles of ELF teachers in conducting CR in terms of materials, tasks, and interactions with students. The pedagogical practices of CR are not often implemented in reading classes in countries where English serves as a lingua franca; that is, as a medium of communication between non-native speakers. Hence, I tried to put CR into practice in my classroom.

Research Questions

The aim of this research is to explore whether the practices used to enhance learners' CLA in my classroom could encourage students to respond spontaneously, and whether their responses reflect the learners' critical viewpoints towards the text. Based on these explorations about the feasibility of CR, the following research questions were formulated: 1.) If the practices of CR are conducted, can more autonomous responses be achieved from the students than with non-CR practices?; 2.) If the practices of CR are conducted, will learner responses to the text produce more critical attitudes than with non-CR practices?

Intervention

My class

Before explaining the intervention, I offer here the specifics of my English reading class at a university in Japan. My university consists of two departments: agriculture and technology; thus, no students specialize in literature, language, or culture. I teach several compulsory English reading classes for freshmen and

sophomores. The class in which I conducted the CR is called “Advanced Reading,” which is a compulsory subject for sophomore students (This does not imply that their language proficiency is advanced), consisting of fifteen lectures per semester. The aim of the class is to improve their overall English reading skills, so various topics and skills were addressed: extensive reading, intensive reading, speed-reading, and CR. The reading materials were obtained from domestic and international English newspapers, textbooks, scientific magazines, etc. CR was introduced in the final lecture of the class. Since critical interpretation of the text should be based on efficient reading comprehension, I determined that the tasks for CR should be implemented when learners’ reading skills had somewhat improved.

Students

The class was comprised of thirty-three sophomore students, ten women and twenty-three men, all belonged to the veterinary department and expected to be veterinarians after their graduation. The age of these students ranged from twenty to forty-nine years old. Their skills in interpreting English texts seemed to be proficient enough to understand the contents of articles in English newspapers or magazines. They have become accustomed to reading such texts and to grasping their general ideas within a time limit, in order to pass an entrance examination for their university. Whereas they seemed to have the adequate linguistic knowledge to understand texts, their motivation to learn English seemed lower than students from other departments. This could be explained by the fact that there was no need to master English in order to get their veterinary certification. In the first class, I found they were quite unmotivated and uninterested in reading English texts. Therefore, their attitude, as in many English reading classes in Japanese universities, was quite passive.

Lesson Plan

This ninety-minute lesson was divided into four parts: warm-up, reading texts on site, discussion of the contents with their neighbors and expressing their opinions in public as their “talking back.” Based on the three viewpoints of the roles of the teachers listed earlier, this study focused on three parts: reading materials, tasks and “talking back,” which is, asking the students for their opinions about the contents.

Reading materials

A careful selection of reading materials was needed to enhance CLA and

autonomous expressions of the learners' opinions, thoughts, and values. I chose a topic that not only seems intriguing to the students as future veterinarians, but also poses a problem: the custom of eating dog meat. I chose this topic based on the uncomfortable feeling that I experienced in London in 2002, just before the FIFA World Cup championship between Japan and Korea. I felt irritated whenever I heard the responses to the issue raised in local newspapers and magazines, mostly due to the antagonistic attitude of people in the U.K. on this topic. I felt that they tended to criticize some eating habits of animal meat as brutal, especially mammals that they keep as pets and not for edible purpose, for example, eating whale meat in Japan and dog meat in some Asian countries. Hearing the criticism, not only Koreans, but also the Japanese might feel embarrassed because these eating habits have a long history in those countries. Conversely, European people often eat rabbits, which Asian people keep as pets and do not commonly eat. In the viewpoint of those in Western countries, the custom of eating dogs is brutal and should be prohibited, because dogs are considered family members. I found no articles in the U.K. in support of this custom. This issue is relevant to an English reading class for veterinary students because they, as future veterinarians who focus on the life of animals, might have more to say about this issue than students from other departments.

In a general CR practice, a single text tends to be prepared as a reading material. However, in this instance, to enhance their CLA, I chose three different texts, from South Korea, Japan, and the U.K. Each text dealt with the same issue of the custom of eating dogs. With regard to South Korea and Japan, the articles were taken from the editorials of local English-language newspapers, and in the case of the U.K., the article quoted *The Big Issue*, a street newspaper sold by homeless individuals. These three materials provided us with different viewpoints based on cultural backgrounds.

Tasks

I will now describe the tasks assigned to the students. First, before reading each article, I presented only the headlines of these articles to the students as shown below. I then asked the students to guess who wrote each article, as one of the typical questions for CR. In other words, I asked them to guess in which country, out of the three countries, each article was written, and the reason behind their choices. The

headlines are:

- Korean butchers will stop this puppy being man's best friend.
(From a magazine in the U.K.)
- Dog Meat Thrice a Day?
(From an English newspaper in South Korea)
- A Traditional Dish: Dog Meat.
(From an English newspaper in Japan)

I asked some of the students to guess who wrote each text. They told me their answers with their reasons, and I did not give them the correct answers at this stage. The reason behind this question was not to find out the correct answer, but to pique the students' interest and find out their opinions.

After students reading each article for some time, with some annotations about the meaning of the words of the texts, I asked them the following questions:

- Which article suits which headline?
- On the basis of which words and expressions of each article did you come to your conclusions?
- Were your assumptions correct?

In my view, the article from the South Korean newspaper provided a positive and a defensive viewpoint on the issue. The article from the U.K., however, showed a strongly negative attitude toward the topic and looked at it from the perspective of protecting animals. The article from Japan took a rather neutral stance.

After reading these articles, the students compared their answers to these questions and asked their partners about their reasons. After these exercises, I predicted that they would become aware that not every text is written neutrally, a key tenet of CLA. Such critical awareness, I believed, might elicit their more engaged responses to the content of the text.

Students' responses

As a final task in the class, I conducted activities to encourage the students to express their opinions. I tried to set the environment based on Brown (2001) as follows:

- “1. Allow students to express themselves openly. (Be sensitive to power relationship, encourage candid expression)

2. Genuinely respect students' points of view. (Validate students' points of view)
3. Encourage both or many sides of an issue. (Embrace all seriously offered statements, opinions, and beliefs.)
4. Do not force students to think just like their teacher. (Delay or withhold your own opinion.)" Brown (2001, p. 444)

This activity was the last task of our CR activity. With regard to my final questions, I gave them the following question: "Do we have the right to criticize others for eating food we never eat?" First, I gave them some time to exchange their opinions within the groups, which were set up in advance. They were, for the most part, willing to discuss the issues with their partners. However, when I asked them to express their opinions to the class, none of them raised their hands. After a while, when I offered extra marks for their grades, a few students, reluctantly, expressed their ideas. Due to their lack of willingness to "talk back," or orally express their opinions, it appeared that my "talking back" task did not make the classroom as lively as I had expected.

However, I found that students were eager to express their opinions, not by their spoken language, but by their written language, even though this task was not compulsory. At the end of each class, I always asked them to jot down their comments or feedback about the class. They were allowed to write in either Japanese or English. This task was always conducted in the last five minutes of each class. Students could leave the classroom after submitting their comment sheet, so they did not have to write much if they did not want to. In addition, comment-writing was definitely a voluntary task since it has nothing to do with their grade in this reading class whether they wrote longer comments or not.. In previous classes, comments were mostly simple and unrelated to the content of the text (e.g., "the article they read was difficult to read"; "I could get a full mark for the in-class test"; or "I have never conducted skimming for my EFL reading") Only a few students mentioned the contents of the text (e.g., "I will not try to memorize stuffs when I am feeling down, because it is not effective, according to the article we ready today").

Despite these facts, after conducting the CR activities in this lesson, twenty-eight out of thirty-four students expressed their opinions about the text, whereas in the non-CR lecture conducted one week before the CR activities, only eight students did so; the other comments were not related to the contents of the text (i.e. the task we did

was easy/difficult to do). Furthermore, twenty-three out of the twenty-eight students expressed their opinions by rejecting the contents of the article from the U.K. which claimed that the habit of eating dog should be banned.

Some examples of their responses to the text are presented here. The italics of each sentence show their attitudes of opposition to the text, which might reflect their CLA (Wallace, 1999). Similarly, Canagarajah (1999) analyzes the graffiti his Sri Lankan students wrote in the margins of their English texts, which came from Anglophone countries, demonstrating their rejection to the tasks or contents based on the norm of Anglophone countries.

- “We use many animals for various purposes such as food, pets, and experiments. Some animals make sacrifice for our sake without us even noticing that. As these animals include dogs and primates, *we cannot criticize eating dog meat.* (Written in Japanese, hereafter J)
- “Honestly, it is not very exciting to imagine dogs being slaughtered, but the Koreans are just doing the same things we do when we eat beef and pork. I believe no matter what animals are, *our life never outweighs another.*” (Written in English)
- “We have the right to criticize, *not to force eating habits.*” (J)
- “It is *not good to deny it* because every culture is different.” (J)
- “It is no use *criticizing something from other cultures.*” (J)
- “I have eaten dog meat when I was in a foreign country. Firstly, I felt scared when I saw dog meat sold in a market, but I found it was tasty. In that sense, *indigenous cultures should be protected.*” (J)
- “I used to have a feeling of dislike about eating dog meat, but *I realize we cannot criticize other cultures* after reading the articles.” (J)
- “*We cannot deny culture.* It is the same situation with eating whales in Japan.” (J)
- “Although there are many opinions on eating meat, it is *very good to begin such an argument by criticizing it*” (J)
- “It is impossible to fully understand other cultures, so *we should not interfere with them.*” (J)

- “I am wondering *why eating horses is allowed, but eating dogs should not be allowed.*” (J)
- “It is *ill-mannered to ask those from other cultures to change their habits.*” (J)
- “It is natural to criticize cultures from other countries, but I *would like to eat dog meat.*” (J)
- “We *should not say a certain animal should be eaten but another should not be*, whether they are intellectual or not.” (J)
- “*Why is eating dog meat problematic, and eating livestock is not?*” (J)

Evaluation and self-reflection

With respect to the research questions in this action research, two predictions were made: (1) whether CR practices produce more autonomous responses by students than non-CR practices ; (2) whether CR practices elicit more critical responses about the text than non-CR practices

As for the first question, the practices for CR produced many more self-motivated responses than the non-CR practices conducted one week before. As a result of calculating the total words the students wrote voluntarily on their comment sheets, the number of the words written after the CR practices (n=34) was 2,978 (87.6 words per person), whereas the number of words written after the non-CR practice conducted one week before (n=35) was 2,078 (59.4 words per person). The result of the paired-sample *t*-test (two-sided) between the CR and non-CR practices shows a significant difference ($t(67) = -2.33, p < .05$). These results might indicate that the CR practices foster the students’ motivation to respond to the text, leading to the fact that they offered their comments on their comment sheet more assertively than in the previous classes.

As for the second question, 23 responses displayed “writing back” after the CR practices. They showed the critical attitudes toward the text from the U.K. by rejecting the claim that eating dog meat should be banned. On the other hand, no critical responses appeared in their comment sheet after the non-CR practices; they only responded about the readability of the text such as “I felt difficult skimming the main point of the text.” or “I could understand the text after reading several times.”

This result articulates that CR practices could enhance critical reflection in classes where English serves as ELF.

Considering that more responses from the students included the manifestations of their standpoints against the contents of the text, the CR practices I conducted could elicit more voluntary response, which incorporate their attitude of resistance to the text. However, some challenges remain; one is the choice of the tasks to foster their CLA. When I asked my students to express their opinions about the questions raised, very few of them tried to “talk back” their opinions in public. This is not what I expected to find in researching the feasibility of CR in my setting. Before my CR practice, I predicted that reading a thought-provoking text with critical questions to enhance CLA could lead to learners’ feedback about the text. However, students appeared less motivated to “talk back” about the text. On the other hand, they were willing to “write back” their opinions, although I did not ask them to do so.

One reason for their preference for the *writing back* task might be the fact that expressing ideas in public could be quite difficult in Japan, because there are very few chances to speak English, while there are more opportunities to write in English. Therefore, students might feel more comfortable when writing something in English rather than speaking. Another reason might be that written words are more suitable to express their opinions. Kramsch and Lam (1999) claim that written words offer opportunities for students to express their own unique experiences. As shown in the responses above, for example, one female student who did not *talk back* during the lecture did express her opinion with her own experience of eating dog meat. These reasons might suggest that written work is a more appropriate pedagogy, that the difficult task of expressing critical ideas requires time for reflection. However, for future CR practice and research, teachers should modify the CR tasks according to the students’ competence, characteristics, and contexts and decide what practices are better in their local settings.

Conclusion

This study examined the feasibility of teaching CR in local English language classrooms, based on the theoretical framework of CLA, perspectives to modify CR tasks in ELF settings, and the action research of my CR practice at a Japanese university. I chose a topic related to the students who specialized in veterinary science.

Three articles on the same topic, but published in different countries were chosen as reading materials. Those articles were selected so that reading each text would require the learners to compare the perspectives and thus enhance their CLA. Analyzing the texts based on the critical questions, students were asked to express their opinions, first with their spoken language. However, students did not respond actively to the task. Yet, compared with the non-CR tasks, they were willing to write voluntary reactions to the text from their own experiences, thoughts, and values about the claim. Furthermore, most of their responses expressed their resistance to the claim from an Anglophone article. They did not uncritically accept the contents, but were able to write *back* their opinions as a result of their improved CLA. According to my research, as Kramsch & Lam (1999) point out, written words are effective tools to express ideas. By writing their opinions in English for their own purposes (Pennycook, 1994), students demonstrated that the relationship between center and periphery, that is, the relationship between the countries where English serves as a first language and those where English functions as a second, or foreign language, would be inverted (Mair, 2003), which is one of the goals of CLA.

There are still challenges for this study. First, the findings of my pedagogical practices cannot definitively determine whether CR could serve as an effective practice for English reading in all ELF settings. The problems encountered and the trials conducted are situational, so it is hard to generalize the conclusion reached by this research. In that sense, a variety of strategies for CR need to be devised in order to suit local settings and classroom conditions, because no method is perfect for all settings (Canagarajah, 1999). Furthermore, the technical action research used for this study is not considered acceptable by some researchers (Nunan, 1997; Ellis, 2010) because the purpose of this research might be regarded as less pedagogical. My action research, however, follows the basic procedures of action research: initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, and evaluation. In addition, the aim of my research, which is the same as that of action research, is to change the practices in local classrooms. These should underpin my examination in this study as an action research. In that sense, my trial based on the CLA framework with modifications could be an example of activities for CR in ELF settings. I hope that it could serve as a catalyst for CR in classrooms, making the classroom more active and lively.

References

- Auerbach, E. (1995). The Politics of the ESL classroom: Issues of power in pedagogical choices. In J. W. Tollefson (Ed.), *Power and inequality in language education* (pp. 9-33). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berg, B. L. (2001). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bolitho, R., Carter, R., Hughes, R., Ivanič, R., Masuhara, H., & Tomlinson, B. (2003). Ten questions about language awareness. *ELT Journal*, 57(3), 251-259.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy (2nd edition)*. New York: Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). Some practical thoughts about student-sensitive critical pedagogy. *The Language Teacher*, 28(7), 23-27.
- Canagarajah, S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Van Duzer, C., & Florez, M. (1999). *Critical literacy for adult English language learners*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved 27th of September, 2015 from http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/critlit.html
- Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA research and language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2010). Second language acquisition, teacher education and language pedagogy, *Language Teaching*, 43(2), 182-201.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Critical language awareness*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1999). Global capitalism and critical awareness of language. *Language Awareness*, 8(2), 71-83.
- Gorsuch, G. J. (1998). Yakudoku EFL instruction in two Japanese high school classrooms: An exploratory study. *JALT Journal*, 20(1), 6-41.
- Hart, N. (2002). Intragroup autonomy and authentic materials: A different approach to ELT in Japanese colleges and universities. *System*, 30(1), 33-46.
- Hilleson, M. (1996). "I want to talk with them, but I don't want them to hear: an introspective study of second language anxiety in an English-medium school," In K. M. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative*

- research in second language acquisition* (pp. 248–282). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Honna, N. (2000). Eigo ha Asia no kyoutsuugo (English as a common language in Asia), *Eigo Tenbou (ELEC BULLETIN)*, 107, 6-11.
- Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kimura, Y., Nakata, Y., & Okumura, T. (2001). Language learning motivation of EFL learners in Japan: A cross sectional analysis of various learning milieus. *JALT Journal*, 23(1), 47–68.
- Kramsch, C. & Lam, W, S, E. (1999). Textual identities: The importance of being non-native. In G. Braine. (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp.57-72). New York: Routledge.
- Kubota, R. (1999). Japanese culture constructed by discourses: Implications for applied linguistic research and English language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33(1), 9-35.
- Kubota, R. (2002). Language teaching in Japan. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching* (pp. 13-28). London: Routledge.
- Mair, C. (2003). *The politics of English as a world language: New horizons in postcolonial cultural studies*. New York: Rodopi.
- Matsuura, H., Chiba, R., & Hilderbrandt, P. (2001). Beliefs about learning and teaching communicative English in Japan. *JALT Journal*, 23(1), 69-89.
- Morita, N. (2004). Negotiating participation and identity in second language academic communities. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38(4), 573-603.
- Pennycook, A. (1994). *The cultural politics of English as an international language*. London: Longman.
- Pennycook, A. (1995). English in the world / The world in English. In J. W. Tollefson (Ed.). *Power and inequality in language education* (pp.34-58). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Powell, S. (2005). Extensive reading and its role in Japanese high schools. *The Reading Matrix*, 5(2), 28-42.
- Littlejohn, A. (1997). Language learning tasks and education. *English Teaching Professional*, 6. Retrieved 27st of September, 2015 from

<http://www.andrewlittlejohn.net/website/docs/languagelearningtasksandeducation.pdf>

- Lohrey, A. (1998). *Critical literacy: A professional development resource*. Melbourne: Language Australia.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J. & Lockhart, C. (1994). *Reflective teaching in second language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sato, T. & Suzuki, A. (2007). Diagnosing factors of the preference for center variants of English in English as a Lingua Franca settings. *The Journal of English as an International Language*, 2, 50-64.
- Tanaka, T. (2009). Communicative language teaching and its cultural appropriateness in Japan. *Doshisha Studies in English*, 84, 107-123.
- Tarone, E. (1994). A summary: Research approaches in studying second-language acquisition or “If the shoe fits...” In E. Tarone, S.M. Gass & A.D. Cohen (Eds.), *Research methodology in second-language acquisition* (pp. 323-36). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (1996). Reticence and anxiety in second language learning. In K. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative research in second language acquisition* (pp. 145–167). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Turner, J. M., & Hiraga, M. K. (1996). Elaborating elaboration in academic tutorials: Changing cultural assumptions. In H. Coleman & L. Cameron (Eds.), *Change and language* (pp. 131–140). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Wallace, C. (1992). *Reading*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wallace, C. (1999). Critical language awareness: Key principle for a course in critical reading. *Language Awareness*, 8 (2), 98-110.
- Wallace, C. (2002). Local literacies and global literacy. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching* (pp. 101-114). London: Routledge.
- Wallace, C. (2003). *Critical reading in language education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wallace, M. & Wray, A. (2006). *Critical reading and writing for postgraduates*. London: SAGE publications.

- Wells, F. (1999). *Dialogic inquiry: Towards socio-cultural practice and theory of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly* 28(2), 377-389.
- Wieringa, R., Morali, A. (2012). Technical action research as a validation method in information systems design science. In Peffers, K, Rothenberger, M, Kuechler, B (Eds.), *DESRIST 2012. LNCS, vol. 7286* (pp. 220–238). Heidelberg: Springer.

English Pronunciation Error/Problem Analysis for Chinese Students

Hui Yin

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

Bioprofile:

Dr. Hui Yin currently holds an academic position at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. Before joining Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Dr. Yin was Professor at Xiamen University of Technology, China; Linguist at Zi Corporation, Canada; Associate Professor and Director at the Institute of College English, Zhejiang University, China; Visiting Scholar, Central College, USA. His main research areas are Cognitive Linguistics, Corpus Linguistics, Language Teaching and Learning. Any query about this article should be addressed to Hui Yin at yinhui18@yahoo.com.

Abstract

This study aims to analyze English pronunciation errors of Chinese students and explore how identifying pronunciation errors can feed FLT. Previous research focuses on English pronunciation errors for Chinese students on the segmental level but little attention has been paid to the suprasegmental level. Instead, this study intends to investigate English pronunciation errors for Chinese students at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. The participants for this study were 20 Chinese undergraduates. They read English minimal pairs, words, sentences and short paragraphs presented to them in a piece of paper. Pronunciation errors/problems were identified and frequency and distributions of the errors were obtained. It has been found that the common English pronunciation errors Chinese students made lie in those sounds lacking in Chinese such as vowels /æ/, /i/, consonants like dark /l/ and interdental sounds. The findings also indicate Chinese students have problems with those sounds similar but not identical to their Chinese counterparts. Chinese has no consonant clusters and sometimes Chinese students insert a vowel between two English consonants to break such clusters. This study reveals that largely due to L1 influences, Chinese students often make errors on the English suprasegmental level as well such as rhythm and intonation.

Key Words: English pronunciation, error, Chinese student, language transfer

Introduction

From time to time, English speakers complain that they do not understand English in China due to the fact that some Chinese people speak English with heavy accents and poor pronunciation. Once Chinese students went abroad, some of them could hardly utter intelligible sentences due to their poor pronunciation (Ho, 2003). Ho (2003) maintains that it was often the case that it was poor pronunciation that hindered communication between them and non-Chinese people. Jing (2007) and Wang (2009) claim that in China many people including both students and English users do not possess correct English pronunciation and intonation. What is more, it is not rare that for Chinese English teachers, they cannot speak standard or natural English. Poor English pronunciation results from such factors as their native language interference, influence by their earlier English teachers whose pronunciation is not good either, and their own negligence of pronunciation learning and practice (Jing, 2007). For a long time, Chinese EFL teaching emphasizes vocabulary and grammar teaching, and written English practice while pronunciation teaching and spoken English practice are largely neglected. In various English exams in China, assessed items mainly involve written English rather than spoken English. Even if there are non-written English components, they are usually assessments for listening comprehension. Thus, teaching pronunciation is largely ignored, which results in students' poor pronunciation.

Therefore, due to historical reasons in English teaching, English pronunciation teaching has been the weakest aspect of English teaching in higher education institutions in China (e.g. Fu, 2011; Yin, 2014). In China, English phonetic or pronunciation teaching has received far less attention than it should. There are some obvious issues which concern English pronunciation teaching in China and students' English proficiency remains at a low level (Fu, 2011; Hu & Yu, 2004; Xie, 2005; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) claims that the situation that Chinese students' poor pronunciation and intonation hinder their overall progress in English needs to be changed. The present study aims to analyze English pronunciation errors of Chinese students and explore how identifying pronunciation errors can feed English pronunciation teaching.

Previous research on English pronunciation for Chinese students either focuses on errors at the segmental level or is largely based on theoretical grounds or researchers' personal impressions or observations. Chen's study (2003) focuses on

English pronunciation at the segmental level and only a dozen sounds have been addressed. Her findings (2003) indicate that Chinese students have problems with English long vowels such as /i:/ and /u:/ and that they also have difficulty in pronouncing those sounds such as /v/ and /ð/ which are lacking in Chinese. Jing's research (2007) even focuses on several sounds such as dark /l/ and she points out that it is common for Chinese students to use close sounds in Chinese to substitute for those English sounds which are similar or do not exist in Chinese. Jing (2007) addresses very briefly that Chinese students have problems in intonation. However, no empirical studies or experiments have been mentioned in her study to support her claim and it seems that her claim is based on her impression. There are a number of studies (e.g. Chen, 2013; Fu, 2011; Li, 2009; Lin, 2014; Liu, 2009; Wei, 2010; Xu & Wang, 2002; Ying, 2007; Zhang & Wu, 2008; Zhang & Yin, 2009; Zhu, 2010) which are based on theoretical grounds of contrastive analysis. These studies compare and contrast phonetic systems of English and Chinese and explore possible effects of language transfer. Based on contrastive analysis, the studies predict what pronunciation errors that Chinese students are likely to commit; however, it is not clear from these studies what pronunciation errors Chinese students actually make. Xie (2005) conducted a survey on English pronunciation errors and problems for Chinese students. Most of the items in the survey involve questions at the segmental level. Xie's study (2005) is based on qualitative approaches and from the responses from the students it has been found what students think their pronunciation errors are. Nevertheless, the frequency of the errors or the error rate is not known.

In English phonetic and pronunciation research for Mainland Chinese students, not enough attention has been paid to studying errors at the suprasegmental level. This is also the case with pronunciation research for Hong Kong students. For example, Ling's study (2006) on pronunciation errors for Hong Kong students exclusively focused on English segments. Moreover, experimental pronunciation tests to investigate actual error patterns of English pronunciation for Chinese students are lacking. It is not known what the error patterns or error rates of English pronunciation are for Chinese students. The present study intends to fill these gaps and conduct an actual pronunciation test involving undergraduates as participants to investigate

English pronunciation errors for Chinese students at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. At the segmental level, this study largely focuses on the sounds

which are difficult for Chinese learners to pronounce such as /v/ and dark /l/, those which do not exist in Chinese such as /θ/, /ð/ and /æ/ (e.g. Ho, 2003; Lin, 2014; Zhang & Yin, 2009) and those segments which look similar to but sound different from their Chinese counterparts such as /r/ and /ai/ (e.g. Pan, 2010; Wei, 2010; Xu & Wang, 2002). At the supraegmental level, this research focuses on those areas such as syllable, stress, liaison, rhythm, plosion and intonation where Chinese learners were reported to have problems (e.g. Chen, 2013; Lin, 2014) or were predicated to make potential errors in previous contrastive literature (e.g. Xu & Wang, 2002; Zhang & Yin, 2009). The experimental data were used for identifying pronunciation errors and for obtaining frequency and distributions of the errors. This research aims to obtain error patterns and magnitudes of errors (error rate) in English pronunciation for Chinese students based on a real reading test.

Method

This study was designed to test students' English pronunciation and intonation. Students' reading of words, phrases, sentences and passages were recorded in a phonetic laboratory and data from an experimental phonetic test were collected to analyze students' English pronunciation errors and to obtain frequency and distributions of the errors. The research adopted quantitative approaches to collect and analyze the experimental data.

Participants

The participants for this study were 20 undergraduates from Xiamen Ligong University, which is located in the southeast part of China. Among the participants, there were 10 males and 10 females and students in this study came from both cities or towns and rural areas.

Xiamen Ligong University is a comprehensive university which has different academic areas of studies such as science, engineering, business, arts, humanities and social sciences. The participants for this research came from different specializations of the university. Although the university lies in the southeast part of China, students are enrolled from 29 provinces, municipalities directly under the central government and autonomous districts in China. The student body in this university reflects geographic diversities.

Stimuli

The stimuli used in this study were quite varied and comprehensive. They ranged from phonemes, words, minimal pairs, phrases, sentences and passages. The phonetic test was designed to assess Chinese students' pronunciation at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. There were six parts in this experiment. The first part of the test intending to test segmental features required participants to pronounce individual phonemes including difficult ones for Chinese students to pronounce such as [i], [tʃ], [ð], [æ], [tr], [ʌ], [ɔ:], [r], etc. The second part consisted of phonetic symbols of 10 words including those which might be hard for some Chinese students to pronounce such as [ræt], [pu:l], [breθ], [ðəuz], [vest], [milk]. This part of the test was designed mainly to test segmental features in the context of syllables and words. The third part comprised 10 minimal pairs of words, and in each pair only one sound was different from each other such as cock-cork, red-rate, pull-pool, think-sink, much-march beer-bare. The minimal pairs included contrasts of long vs. short vowels, similar sounds, diphthongs and others. Generally, Chinese students have difficulty in distinguishing long vowels from short ones and pronouncing similar sounds and diphthongs.

The other three parts of the phonetic test were to assess pronunciation at the suprasegmental level as well as the segmental level. The fourth part required participants to read phrases such as *put it off*, *answer it*, *a great success*, *a big blackboard*. This part of the test was mainly to assess liaison and loss of plosives at the phrasal level. The next part of the test contained 10 sentences (e.g. *These red roses are really pretty*; *Would you please turn off the radio for us?*) which according to functions spanned different sentence types such as statement, questions and command. These 10 sentences were used for testing pronunciation in terms of both segmental features including words with potentially difficult sounds (e.g. /l/, /r/, /i/, /θ/, /ð/, etc.) for Chinese students to pronounce, and suprasegmental features such as liaison, loss of plosion and intonation in the context of sentences. The last part was 3 passages, the length of which ranged from approximately 80 to 120 words each. The passages enabled the researcher to observe the participants' pronunciation and intonation in a comprehensive way. In particular, these passages were useful to examine students' phonetic quality at the suprasegmental level such as stress, liaison, rhythm and intonation.

Procedures

The study was conducted in a phonetic laboratory at Xiamen Ligong University for securing recording quality. The stimuli containing the aforementioned 6 parts were presented to the participants in 2 pieces of paper. Participants used headsets and read the materials to the speaker. They were instructed to read the stimuli only once and the whole reading process normally took less than 10 minutes. Before the actual experiment, the participants were told to have trials to record their own voices for a few seconds and play them back to see the quality of the recording. They could adjust their recording equipment such as volumes to ensure recording quality. After the trials were done, the actual reading and recording started. Once the reading was finished, the computer in the phonetic lab created a file of the recording for each participant. The files of the recordings were then transferred to the researcher's computer for analysis.

Error Identification

The recordings of the reading of the stimuli were carefully examined by the researcher who has expertise in both English and Chinese phonetics and phonology. Most of the cases to identify errors in pronunciation and intonation were quite clear and unambiguous. If there was a case for which the researcher did not feel his judgment with high confidence, a native English speaking teacher would be invited for judging the case independently and then compared their judgments. If there was a disagreement between the two people for a particular case in error identification, a third assessor who is a native English speaker would be called for to join the discussion for a final decision.

Results and Discussions

The pronunciation errors/problems were identified and the error rates were calculated. The pronunciation errors/problems will be presented in the following two sub-sections: one is at the segmental level and the other is at the suprasegmental level.

Errors/problems at the segmental level

In order to facilitate analysis of English pronunciation errors/problems for Chinese students, some background information of sound systems in English and Chinese will be helpful. Compared with the Chinese vowel system, English has more

vowels than Chinese (Zhang & Xu, 2005). English has 12 vowels and they are 4 front vowels: /i:/, /i/, /e/, /æ/, 3 central vowels: /ə:/, /ə/, /ʌ/ and 5 back vowels: /u:/, /u/, /ɔ:/, /ɔ:/, /ɑ:/. However, Chinese only has 6 vowels and they are 2 front vowels: (i), (y), 2 central vowels: (e), (a), and 2 back vowels: (u), (o). The sounds in parenthesis stand for Chinese phonetic symbols, which might be different from corresponding international phonetic symbols to some extent.

In terms of front vowels, Chinese (i) is close to English /i:/, but in pronouncing (i) the tongue position is higher than that in pronouncing /i:/. Chinese (i) has a little frication but /i:/ doesn't, and also Chinese (i) is more tense than English /i:/ (Wei, 2010, P.46). The other front vowel in Chinese is (y), which is a round vowel. When the vowel (y) is pronounced, the tongue is positioned as in [i] in English and the lips are positioned as in [u] in English (Lin, 2010, P.27).

In terms of central vowels, Chinese (e) is close to /e/, but in pronouncing Chinese (e), the tongue position is higher than that in pronouncing English /e/ and in articulation, (e)'s oral cavity is narrower than that of English /e/ (Wei, 2010, P.46). Chinese (a) also has some similarities with English /a:/, that is, low tongue position and wide mouth opening; however, Chinese (a) is a central vowel, but English /a:/ is a back vowel (Pan, 2010, P.63; Wei, 2010, P.46).

The Chinese back vowel (u) is similar to English /u:/, but in pronouncing (u) the tongue position is a little more back and higher than that in pronouncing /u:/, and (u)'s lips are more rounded than that of /u:/. The sound (u) is more tense than /u:/ and it has some frication (Wei, 2010, P.46). Both Chinese (o) and English /ɔ:/ are back vowels. Chinese (o) is similar to English /ɔ:/, but the tongue position in pronouncing (o) is higher than that in pronouncing /ɔ:/ (Wei, 2010, P.46).

Chinese does not have /i/, and English /i/ is easily pronounced as /i:/ or short form of /i:/ or the fricative /j/ by Chinese students. For example, Chinese students often pronounce *it* as *eat* or *slip* as *sleep*. English /æ/ is also lacking in Chinese, and /æ/ is easily pronounced as /e/ by Chinese students. For example, Chinese students often confuse *bad* with *bed* in pronunciation (Pan, 2010; Wei, 2010). Table 1 shows error rates with /i/ and /æ/. Error rates are represented in Table 1 and subsequent tables by *frequency* and *percentage*. Frequency of errors in this study refers to the number of people among the 20 participants who has had the errors. In fact, error rates calculated in this way reflect magnitude of pronunciation errors committed by

Chinese students and they also reveal whether a particular pronunciation error is a common error or not among Chinese learners.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of errors with /i/ and /æ/

	/i/	/æ/
Frequency	16	15
Percentage	80%	75%

As Table 1 shows, among the 20 participants, most of the students could not pronounce the two sounds correctly and the error rates for these two sounds are quite high. The possible explanation for the high error rate is that Chinese does not have these two sounds. In fact, most of the students who had problems with these two sounds pronounced them like Chinese (i) and (e) or English /i:/ and /e/ respectively.

In terms of diphthongs, English has 8 and they are /ai/, /ei/, /ɔi/, /au/, /əu/, /iə/, /eə/ and /uə/. In English diphthongs, the first sound is clear, tense and longer while the second one is shorter. Chinese has 8 diphthongs as well and they are (ai), (ei), (ao), (ou), (ia), (ie), (ua), (uo). Among the Chinese diphthongs, the first sound in the first 4 diphthongs (i.e. (ai), (ei), (ao), (ou)) is clear and loud while the second sound is weak and vague. On the contrary, the first sound in the second 4 diphthongs (i.e. (ia), (ie), (ua), (uo)) is weak and short while the second one is clear and loud (Pan, 2010, P.64). In English diphthongs, the transition between the first and the second sound is slower and clearer than that in Chinese diphthongs. Actually, transitions in Chinese diphthongs are much faster. Thus, Chinese (ei) is different from English /ei/ and Chinese (ai) is different from English /ai/ (Wei, 2010, P.47). Table 2 shows the error rates with these two sounds. The error rate for /ai/ is unexpectedly low and majority of the students can pronounce this diphthong correctly. This may be due to the fact that the first person pronoun *I* is exactly pronounced as this diphthong. The high frequency usage of this pronoun seems to largely help students pronounce /ai/ correctly. However, in the case of the diphthong /ei/, nearly half of the students have problems in pronouncing it. It was found that some students are likely to use Chinese (ei) or English /e/ to replace /ei/ in pronunciation

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of errors with /ai/ and /ei/

	/ai/	/ei/
Frequency	2	9
Percentage	10%	45%

In terms of duration of vowels, English has long vs. short distinction (e.g. /ɔ/ vs. /ɔ:/ and /u/ vs. /u:/), but Chinese does not have such duration distinction. The findings of this study indicate that Chinese students have difficulty in acquiring long vowels as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of errors with /ɔ:/ and /u:/

	/ɔ:/	/u:/
Frequency	13	13
Percentage	65%	65%

As shown in Table 3, the error rate with the two long vowels is quite high and three-fourths of the students committed errors with these two vowels. Influenced by their L1 which does not have long and short distinction, students pronounced the long vowels like short ones.

In terms of consonants, the following is overlapping in the two languages: (b), (p), (m), (f), (d), (t), (n), (l), (g), (k), (s), (ŋ) (Li, 2009). The results of this study indicate that generally Chinese students do not have much difficulty in these overlapping sounds. Positive transfer from L1 in the acquisition of these sounds was observed. However, the students in this experiment had problems with aspiration of initial voiceless stops as Table 4 shows.

Table 4. Initial voiceless stops with or without aspiration

	with aspiration	without aspiration
Frequency	4	16
Percentage	20%	80%

Both English and Chinese stops have a two-way distinction. However, the nature of the distinction is different. English stop sounds like /p/ and /b/ have voiced and

voiceless contrast while Chinese stop sounds like (p) and (b) have aspirated and non-aspirated contrast. Different from English, aspiration for Chinese stop sounds are independent of positions. Whether they are in initial positions or elsewhere, their (plus or minus) aspiration features will not be changed; otherwise, they will become different phonemes since aspiration is a distinctive feature for Chinese stops (Lin, 2001). Due to L1 influence, it is very common for Chinese students to pronounce initial voiceless stops without aspiration.

In terms of consonants, English has more voiced consonants while Chinese has more voiceless consonants. Chinese only has 5 voiced consonants, and they are (m), (n), (ŋ), (l), and (r). Chinese has (f), but does not have its voiced counterpart (v) and the students had problems with the sound (v) as Table 5 indicates.

Table 5. Frequency and percentage of /v/ pronounced as v and w

/v/	pronounced as [v]	pronounced as [w]
Frequency	6	14
Percentage	30%	70%

As shown in Table 5, most of the students pronounced /v/ as [w]. As Chinese does not have the sound /v/, most students in this study used the closest sound available in Chinese (that is, the sound /w/) to substitute for it. Again, this is apparent evidence of L1 transfer in pronunciation acquisition.

In terms of liquids, both English and Chinese have two phonemes. Chinese has clear /l/, but does not have dark /l/. When Chinese students pronounce dark /l/, there is a tendency that their tongue tips do not reach the target: the alveolar ridge in terms of articulation. Chinese (r) is different from English /r/ in both place and manner of articulation. Some linguists (e.g. Wei, 2010, P.49) even claim that English /r/ is a gap in Chinese. Chinese (r) is a fricative sound while English /r/ is not. In pronouncing Chinese (r), the tongue tip raises toward the alveolar ridge so narrowly that some friction will be produced. However, in pronouncing English /r/, the tongue pulls back somewhat and raises in the middle. When some Chinese students produce English /r/, they produce a sound like Chinese (r). For example, when some students intend to produce the word *right*, they produce the word between /rait/ and /lait/. In fact, in terms of the tongue tip position, Chinese (r) is somewhere between English /r/ and /l/

(Pan, 2010). Table 6 shows error rates with English dark /l/ and /r/.

Table 6. Frequency and percentage of errors with dark /l/ and /r/

	dark /l/	/r/
Frequency	16	8
Percentage	80%	40%

Table 6 indicates that most of the participants had errors with English dark /l/ and this seems to be due to the fact that English dark /l/ is entirely a gap in Chinese. The error rate with /r/ is not as high as that with dark /l/. This may be due to the fact that Chinese has a sound which is somewhat similar to English /r/. Thus, producing /r/ is not as difficult as producing dark /l/ for Chinese students. The findings of the error rate with /r/ are contrary to the common belief that almost all Chinese students make errors in pronouncing the English sound /r/.

In the Chinese phonetic inventory, inter-dental sounds are also lacking. Chinese students have difficulty in producing English sounds /θ/ and /ð/ as Table 7 illustrates.

Table 7. Frequency and percentage of errors with dark /θ/ and /ð/

	/θ/	/ð/
Frequency	9	16
Percentage	45%	80%

The findings indicate that Chinese students tend to use the closest sounds available in Chinese (that is, (s) and (z)) to replace the two inter-dental sounds /θ/ and /ð/). For example, Chinese students often pronounce /θɪnk/ as /sɪnk/ and /ðæt/ as /zæt/. The error rate with /ð/ is higher than that of /θ/. The results of the study show that Chinese students often use /z/ or /θ/ to replace /ð/. In Chinese, most consonants are voiceless. In fact, the only voiced consonants in Chinese are 3 nasals and 2 liquids. In cases of producing a non-nasal or non-liquid voiced consonant, there is a tendency that Chinese students use its voiceless counterpart to substitute for it. The degree of difficulty in producing the English voiced interdental sound /ð/ is higher than that in producing the English voiceless interdental sound /θ/ since non-nasal and non-liquid

voiced consonants are gaps in Chinese. This may explain why the error rate with /ð/ is higher than that with /ð/.

Pronunciation errors at the segmental level have been just discussed. Both positive and negative transfer from L1 for Chinese students have been observed. The next sub-section will address pronunciation errors at the suprasegmental level.

Errors/problems at the suprasegmental level

Errors/problems at the suprasegmental level for Chinese students were identified in this study and error rates were also calculated. Errors for analysis in this sub-section concerns syllable, stress, liaison, rhythm, plosion, intonation, etc.

In terms of syllable structure, Chinese and English are different. Basically Chinese syllables consist of C (consonant) plus V (vowel) or V alone. Consonants in Chinese cannot close a syllable except for nasals. Most Chinese syllables have CV structure and CV is the default Chinese structure template (Lin, 2001). However, in English it is common to close a syllable with a consonant. Some Chinese students would add a vowel to the syllable final consonant to make it look like a Chinese default syllable structure, that is, CV (Zahng & Xu, 2009). For example, in pronouncing the word *bag*, some students add a schwa /ə/ after the syllable final consonant /g/ to make it a two syllable word, that is, /bægə/. Table 8 shows the error rate of adding a vowel after a syllable final consonant. The findings indicate that the error rate of adding a vowel to a syllable final consonant is not high, which is different from the common brief which holds that adding a vowel after a syllable final consonant is a common problem for Chinese students. The results suggest that most Chinese students have no problems with English syllables closed with consonants.

Table 8. Frequency & percentage of adding a vowel to syllable final consonant

	adding	without adding
Frequency	4	16
Percentage	20%	80%

Chen (2013) claims that “Chinese and English represent two contrasting prosodic types” (P.546). Chinese is a tone language while English is an intonation language (Chrabaszczyk et al., 2014). There are four basic tone categories in Mandarin. Every stressed syllable belongs to one of the four (Ch'en et al., 1994). When different

tones apply to the same syllable, different morphemes will be produced as Table 9 illustrates.

Table 9. Application of tones to the same syllable

syllable	tone	gloss
ma	tone 1: high level	‘mother’
ma	tone 2: high rise	‘hemp’
ma	tone 3: fall-rise	‘horse’
ma	tone 4: falling	‘scold’

Thus, every syllable in Chinese has its fixed tone and change of the tone for a syllable will make it a different morpheme. As Table 9 shows, if you change a level tone, that is, tone 1 to fall-then-rise tone, it will become tone 3 and the meaning will change too. In Chinese, there is some flexibility of changing the pitch to apply different intonations but change of the pitch of a particular syllable or word needs to be based on its original tone and cannot violate its tone value. However, English does not have fixed pitch value for a particular syllable or word and application of different pitch values to the same syllable does not make it a different morpheme. In other words, English can freely change the tone for a word without changing the meaning of the word though the function or meaning of the sentence may be changed. So English has much more flexibility and freedom to change the pitch to apply intonation (Wei, 2010). Therefore, the range of changing pitch to acquire sentential intonation is rather larger in English than that in Chinese. Due to L1 influence, it is common for Chinese students to commit errors in using English intonation to achieve different functions. In particular, Chinese students have difficulty in using rising intonation as Table 10 indicates.

Table 10. Intonation of yes/no questions for Chinese students

	with rising tone	without rising tone
Frequency	9	11
Percentage	45%	55%

The results of the study indicate that about half the participants had problems with the intonation of yes/no question. Some students failed to use appropriate

intonation largely due to the effects of L1 transfer since Chinese is a tone language rather than an intonation language.

Another important feature at the suprasegmental level in English is liaison. English has much more liaison than that in Chinese. There are different kinds of liaison in English. R-linking and consonant + vowel linking are two major kinds (Zhang & Wang, 2010). In English, r-linking takes place when a syllable or word final /r/ precedes a syllable or word initial vowel (e.g. *answer it, forever, take care of it*). Table 11 shows frequency and percentage of r-linking for Chinese students when the condition allows r-linking to take place.

Table 11. Frequency and percentage of r-linking

	r-linking	no r-linking
Frequency	3	17
Percentage	15%	85%

The findings indicate that most of the Chinese students did not link a syllable or word final /r/ sound with a following syllable or word initial vowel sound. This is again the effect of negative language transfer since in Chinese there is no r-linking phenomenon and liaison seldom happens in Chinese.

Another major kind of liaison takes place in the CV context. When a word-final consonant immediately precedes a vowel sound (e.g. *put it up, turn off, not at all*), the condition of liaison will be met as well. Table 12 shows frequency and percentage of liaison in the CV context by Chinese students.

Table 12. Frequency and percentage of liaison in the CV context

	with liaison	without liaison
Frequency	6	14
Percentage	30%	70%

Table 12 indicates that most of the 20 participants did not have liaison when the condition of liaison is met in the English CV context. Liaison often takes place in English, but liaison seldom takes place in Chinese. For one thing, Chinese consonants cannot close a syllable or word except for the nasals (Lin, 2001). Thus, CV cases

between syllables or morphemes are much fewer in Chinese than those in English. The only possible CV cases between syllables or words are those in which a syllable or word final nasal sound immediately precedes a vowel sound. However, even in these contexts it is often the case that Chinese speakers will add a glottal stop between the final nasal sound and the following vowel sound so that liaison will be blocked (Ying, 2007, P.59). Therefore, liaison cases in Chinese are not common at all. Due to L1 influence, Chinese students are not very likely to make liaison happen in English even if the condition of liaison is satisfied.

Cases of loss of plosion in English are quite common too. When two stops are adjacent (e.g. *bookkeeper*, *sit down*), the first one will lose its plosion though it still retains its place of articulation for a short period of time. Chinese does not have consonant clusters and Chinese stops cannot end syllables or morphemes (Lin, 2001); therefore, cases of two adjacent stops do not exist in Chinese and Chinese does not have the phenomenon of loss of plosion. The findings of this study indicate that some Chinese students have problems with loss of plosion as shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Frequency and percentage of plosion/loss of plosion in two adjacent contexts

	plosion	loss of plosion
Frequency	10	10
Percentage	50%	50%

In the stop plus stop context where loss of plosion takes place, half of the participants retained plosion for both stop sounds while the other half made loss of plosion happen for the first stop sound. Problems to retain unwanted plosion in English by Chinese students seem to result from negative L1 transfer as well.

In English sentences, some words are important to convey the main information and they are normally content words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. Some words which mainly serve as grammatical roles such as linking, reference are function words. In English, content words are normally stressed words while function words are unstressed ones. The findings of this study indicate that students generally had problems with English sentence stress as Table 14 shows.

Table 14. Problems in English sentence stress

	minor problem	major problem
Frequency	3	17
Percentage	15%	85%

Table 14 indicates that all the students had problems with English sentence stress at different degrees. One possible explanation for such problems is Chinese learners' L1 transfer, that is, effects of tone in the Chinese language (Chen, 2013). There is a one-to-one mapping between tones and syllables in Chinese. Chen (2013) claims that "tone is an integral part of word meaning, which is arbitrary and cannot be manipulated at the speaker's free will" (P.553). In Chinese each morpheme or syllable has a fixed tone and Chinese speakers tend to stress almost every word to make its fixed lexical tone prominent in speaking Chinese whether they are content words or function words. The results of this study show that due to L1 transfer most participants generally did not distinguish content words from function words in terms of stress in reading the English stimuli. These participants were considered to have major problems with sentence stress in this study. Some students showed some correct stress patterns but their performance in stressing words which need to be stressed was not consistent or not consistently correct. These participants were considered to have minor problems in the present study. Generally, due to problems with sentence stress, Chinese students' intonation seems to be flat and lacks fluctuation when they speak English. Another weak area of English pronunciation at the suprasegmental level for Chinese students is rhythm. The findings of this study indicate that all of the participants had problems with English rhythm as Table 15 indicates.

Table 15. Performance of English rhythm

	limited rhythm	having problems with rhythm
Frequency	3	20
Percentage	15%	100%

The results of the present research indicate that the participants overwhelmingly had problems with English rhythm. In fact, no participant showed

satisfactory rhythm in this test and only 3 out of 20 participants showed some rhythm to a quite limited extent. Even though the three participants showed some English rhythm, their use of English rhythm is generally inconsistent. Sometimes they displayed some acceptable rhythm patterns, but sometimes they didn't show obvious correct rhythm patterns. Therefore, these three students were still considered to have problems with English rhythm.

As already discussed, English content words are normally stressed words in a sentence. An English stressed word often forms a rhythmic unit with its adjacent related (usually function) words like a beat in music. English pauses are largely based on sense groups or rhythmic units but Chinese pauses are largely based on syllables. In Chinese, every syllable is a morpheme or a word and it carries a fixed tone. Chinese speakers tend to pronounce almost every syllable clear and stress most syllables in reading Chinese. Due to L1 transfer, in speaking English, Chinese students tend to stress one syllable right after another whether it is a content word or function word and their rhythmic units are largely based on syllables, which are apparently not right English rhythm patterns.

This section discussed errors and magnitudes of errors at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. The findings indicate that students had problems with all the major areas at the suprasegmental level such as intonation, plosion, stress and rhythm. It seems that the magnitude of English pronunciation errors at the suprasegmental level is larger than that at the segmental level. However, currently English pronunciation teaching in China focuses on segmental teaching and far less attention has been paid to teaching at the suprasegmental level (Yin, 2014). The results of this study have the implication that the phenomenon that some Chinese students' spoken English is hard to comprehend may be largely due to their pronunciation problems at the suprasegmental level. Based on the findings, it would be highly recommended that English teachers should pay enough attention not only to pronunciation teaching at the segmental level but also to that at the suprasegmental level in order to help students improve their English pronunciation and intonation.

Conclusions

This study examined pronunciation and intonation of Chinese students through a real reading test. One of the main objectives of this study was sought to fill the gap

of little research of English pronunciation error/problem rates of Chinese students based on real tests. Pronunciation and intonation errors and problems at both segmental and suprasegmental levels were identified and analyzed. The following table illustrates distributions of errors/problems identified at the segmental level.

Table 16. Error/problem rates at segmental levels

Segments	Error/problem rates	
	Frequency	Percentage
/i/	16	80%
dark /l/	16	80%
/ð/	16	80%
/æ/	15	75%
/v/	14	70%
/ɔ:/	13	65%
/u:/	13	65%
/ei/	9	45%
/θ/	9	45%
/r/	8	40%
/ai/	2	10%

Table 16 shows that error rates beyond 50% are associated with those sounds which are lacking in Chinese. The error rates below 50% generally involve those sounds which bear some similarity with their Chinese counterparts, but their differences in certain aspects are also obvious. The degrees of error rates seem to be positively correlated with degrees of difficulty in pronouncing English sounds for Chinese students. The findings indicate that it is common for Chinese students to use the closest sounds available in Chinese to substitute for those which are lacking or similar in Chinese. The evidence from this study helps reveal the strength of contrastive analysis in predicting difficulties in foreign language learning and teaching and in providing students and instructors with guidance as to where they should concentrate on their teaching or learning (Chiang, 1986). The findings also suggest that generally the sounds which are overlapping or quite similar between English and Chinese do not pose problems for Chinese students in pronunciation. Positive effects of language transfer were also observed. Table 17 illustrates distributions of errors/problems identified at the suprasegmental level.

Table 17. Error/problem rates at suprasegmental levels

Error/problem	Error/problem rates	
	Frequency	Percentage
problem with sentence stress	20	100%
problem with rhythm	20	100%
no r-linking	17	85%
without liaison in the CV context	14	70%
wrong yes/no question intonation	11	65%
unwanted plosion	10	50%

The findings of this study indicate that errors/problems at the suprasegmental level are more serious. All the participants had problems with sentence stress and rhythm at varying degrees. Most students also had errors/problems in other major areas at the suprasegmental level such as liaison and intonation. These areas and problems are largely due to negative L1 transfer since Chinese and English are quite different in syllable structure, rhythmic and intonation patterns. It seems that in speaking English, Chinese accents in the suprasegmental level are more prominent than those at the segmental level. The pronunciation problems that Chinese-speaking students face are quite prominent and distinctive (Chen, 2013). In fact, some Chinese students' heavy accents and poor pronunciation seriously impede comprehension and communication when they communicate in English. Thus, in order to achieve communication efficiency in English, it is of necessity for English instructors to help Chinese students of English improve their pronunciation and reduce their foreign accents.

In this study, prominent effects of both positive and negative language transfer were observed in acquisition of English pronunciation for Chinese students. The results of this study suggest that in terms of phonetics and phonology, similarities of English and Chinese will facilitate English pronunciation acquisition whereas differences of the two languages will increase the learners' difficulty in learning English pronunciation. The pronunciation problems of Chinese students of English largely mirror the interference of their first language (Lin, 2014). Chinese phonetic systems influence the pronunciation of a target language and further affect Chinese students' foreign accents (Zhang & Yin, 2009). Identifying and analyzing pronunciation errors/problems can feed FLT in general and pronunciation teaching in particular. Systematically analyzing pronunciation errors committed by English

learners makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in pronunciation teaching (Yiing, 2011). With information of pronunciation errors/problems available, English instructors will be able to know what typical errors have occurred in students' pronunciation and focus on the common types of errors in pronunciation teaching. The findings of the study can help students raise their awareness of pronunciation errors/problems and will be useful for providing scaffolding practice to students to avoid common pronunciation errors.

The study suggests the importance to promote comparative methodology in pronunciation teaching in EFL and the usefulness for conducting comparative studies of Chinese and English phonetics. English teachers should take an in-depth look at similarities and differences of sound patterns (Lin, 2014) between English and English to explore comparative methodology for helping students improve English pronunciation. It is also beneficial for Chinese learners themselves to become aware of the differences between English and Chinese during the learning process (Yiing, 2011). By finding and analyzing differences in phonetic systems, pronunciation and intonation of the two languages, teachers can predict where difficulties of pronunciation lie in pronunciation teaching. Knowledge of pronunciation differences in English and Chinese enable language learners to help students avoid or reduce negative transfer and foreign accents in foreign/second language acquisition. On the other hand, by making students aware of similarities in pronunciation and intonation of English and Chinese, it would be helpful for language teachers to promote positive language transfer in foreign/second language acquisition.

References

- Chen, H.C. (2013). Chinese learners' acquisition of English word stress and factors affecting stress assignment. *Linguistics and Education*. 24, 545-555.
- Chen, L. (2003). Common problems for adult English learners and strategies to overcome them. *Journal of Hunan Economic Management College*. 14(1), 117-119.
- Ch'en, T. et al. 1994. *Chinese Primer*. 2nd Edition. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Chiang, T. (1986). Correspondence analysis of Chinese and English phonetics. *China Report*. 23(3): 299-310.

- Chrabaszczyk, A., Winn, M., Lin, C., & Idsardi, W. (2014). Acoustic cues to perception of word stress by English, Mandarin, and Russian speakers. *Journal of Speech, Language & Hearing Research*. 4, 468-1179.
- Fu, T. (2011). Effects of Chinese transfer in English learning. *Young Scholars*. 22, 62-68.
- Ho, L. (2003). Pronunciation Problems for PRC Students. In Ling, L. G., Ho, L., Meyer, J.E.L., Varaprasad, C. & Young, C. (eds.), *Teaching English to students from China* (pp. 138-157). Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Hu, L. & Yu, J. (2004). Present situations in and innovative strategies for English phonetic teaching for English majors. *Journal of Zhejiang Marine University*. 21(4), 89-93.
- Jing, G. (2007). On some important and difficult points in English phonetic learning. *Knowledge World*. 20, 164-165.
- Li, H. (2009). Influence of Chinese pronunciation on English pronunciation and intonation and spoken English teaching. *Science and Technology Information*. 9, 203-204.
- Lin, H. (2001). *A Grammar of Mandarin Chinese*. Munich, Germany: Lincom Europa.
- Lin, L. C. (2014). Understanding pronunciation variations facing ESL students. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. 4, No. 5(1), 16-20.
- Ling, C. K. (2006). *An analysis of Hong Kong native Cantonese Form Three students' problems in English pronunciation*. Masters' thesis. The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Liu, L. (2009). Chinese transfer in English phonetic teaching and teaching strategies. *Journal of Tianjin Science and Technology Institute*. 3, 89-91.
- Wang, Y. (2009). Negative transfer of the Chinese phonetic system to English pronunciation. *Journal of Examinations*. 46, 31-32.
- Wei, Z. (2010). *An introduction to comparative studies of English and Chinese*. Shanghai, China: Shanghai Foreign Language Press.
- Xie, Y. (2005). Survey on the present situations of English pronunciation for English majors. *Journal of Pingxiang College*. 1, 55-57.
- Xu, G. & Wang, Z. (2002). On the contrastive studies on Chinese-English phonetics in China in the 20th Century. *Journal of Zhejiang University*. 32(5), 1-6.
- Yiing, I. K. C. (2011). *An analysis of pronunciation errors in English of six UTRA*

- Chinese studies undergraduates*. BA dissertation. Tunku Abdul Rahman University.
- Yin, H. (2014). The status quo, issues and remedies of English phonetic teaching in higher education institutions. *East China Foreign Language Platform*. 9, 112-118.
- Ying, P. (2007). Differences between English and Chinese syllables and its inspiration on English pronunciation teaching. *Sino-US English Teaching*. 4 (1): 57-61.
- Zhang, F. & Yin, P. (2009). A study of pronunciation problems of English learners in China. *Asian Social Science*. 5(6): 141-146.
- Zhang, G. & Xu, J. (2005). A brief comparison of English and Chinese phonetics and phonology. *Journal of Hechi University*. 25(10): 88-90.
- Zhang, R. & Wu, A. (2008). Comparative studies of English and Chinese phonetics. *Journal of Liaoning University of Technology*. 10(5): 128-130.
- Zhang, Z. & Wang, W. (2010). *English phonetic symbols and intonation*. Beijing, China: Qinghua University Press.
- Zhu, H. (2010). *English pronunciation problems and their possible causations: A study with Hainan University freshmen*. Masters' thesis. Hainan University.