# ISSUES IN EFL

# Issues in EFL

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Issues in EFL is a semi-annual, entirely student-run academic journal which aims to support Sookmyung students in their study by providing insightful and up-to-date community-based articles on areas of interest within the Sookmyung MA TESOL course and beyond.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Cover Artwork**
The picture on the front cover is a scenery of Sookmyung Women's University, taken by Professor Stephen van Vlack.

The Issues in EFL Journal Committee is open to all current Sookmyung Women's University MA TESOL students, and relies on their support. There are a variety of roles available, regardless of experience. Please check the MA TESOL message board for information on when the next committee opens. Email enquiries can be made to tesolma@sookmyung.ac.kr.

# Community
# Contributions

Advantages of being a

# Journal Committee member

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Guljamila Nurimbetova

Contributing to the Journal Committee is a volunteering work where you can get good experience, develop social skills and spend your time meaningfully through helping other students. Working for the committee, you can assist both other students and yourself. This can be accomplished through your articles, you can help new students to find answers to their questions and the experience you get from committee can improve your skills too.

Many students before getting involved in volunteering work in the Journal Committee will think that they won't get any advantage out of it and will consider it is a waste of time. The same thoughts were worrying me, and before becoming a member of the Journal Committee I was thinking about its benefits for me, and if it is really worth to contribute in it. Now, after becoming a part of this small team I can say that I made a right decision because now I have an opportunity to take part in a new scope and gain some valuable experience throughout my university life.

If you are one of those students who are still hesitating and curious about the advantages of the Journal Committee, below from my own experience, I will mention the top reasons for getting involved in this Committee;

1) Writing improvement
If your first language is not English or if you are not satisfied with your writing skills, you have a

chance to level up your writing skills in English as you will have a chance to get comments about your entries from proof-readers who can be native speakers of English. The proof-readers can assist you by checking the accuracy and consistency of your writing and formatting, correcting errors where necessary, suggesting possible improvements, and by practicing your writing in committee several times you will become confident about your writing abilities. Overall, in this committee, you can get a valuable writing training course.

2) Professional benefit
You can include your Journal Committee contribution in your resume, and it will indicate that you are not only professional in your field, but also it will show that you are an active person who has good networking skills and who is willing to help others. These points will help you in a competitive job market and enhance your chances of getting work. In short, with the journal committee you may get better career opportunities and you will become a successful job applicant.

3) Becoming closer with people
Even if you have a lot of new friends at the university, you will not always have time to socialize with them as we are studying a Master's degree. Most of the students are working people so after studying everyone hurries home. However, when you become a member of the Journal Committee, you have a chance to

interact with other students during the holiday and become closer with them. Especially, in the editing period, people actively start to communicate and give comments to each other about their works via e-mail messages.

4) Practicing in APA format
If you do not have a good understanding of APA formatting, you have an opportunity to practice it in the Journal Committee. In APA style you should adhere to the guidelines related to the content, structure, and order of pages of an academic paper. In the Journal Committee you will get comments regarding your APA style from editors, so you can enhance your awareness about formatting and following the rules of it which can help you in writing a well-organized academic paper.

5) Sense of satisfaction.
As you are doing a volunteering work which can be useful not only for yourself but for other people too, you will feel satisfied, raise your self-esteem and get a sense of achievement, because owing to your articles you can assist other students to find answers to their questions. Through your entries, you can share your experiences with others and help them more and make their life a bit easier.

6) New experience.
You can find a new experience, new hobby for yourself, and when writing an article for any journal you will become a researcher, material

developer and you can work both with international and local students. Thus, by working with international and local students in the committee, you can discover yourself from a new perspective and upgrade your thinking as you can get to know other people with a wide variety of backgrounds and culture.

In brief, I shared some tips for success in both your personal and professional improvement. We should always pay attention to things around us, as they can bring us to big results in future and Journal committee is one of them. By joining our team, I can definitely say you won't regret it as you can change your life for the better and get the opportunity to learn something new.

# IS GRADUATING EARLY WORTH IT?

Jung Won Lee

I entered to the Sookmyung TESOL MA program in Spring 2018. It has been less than a year since I started this program but I have already earned 24 credits and now I only have thesis left for my graduation. The program usually takes five semesters to complete and students need to take a total of 30 credits in order to graduate. Each course is worth three credits and students usually take two courses per semester. However, I took three courses per semester to make my early graduation. The Sookmyung TESOL MA program offers an early graduation option which allows students to take one extra course per semester and graduate faster. You might be wondering what it takes to graduate a semester or year early, and what could be some possible advantages and drawbacks of completing master's program early. Check out this guide to the pros and cons, steps to apply for early graduation, and more.

**Q.** What does it mean by 'early graduation'?

**A.** As mentioned above, under the early graduation scheme, you can take an extra course per semester and earn your master's degree in two years including the final thesis/practicum semester. If you have attained a certificate from one of the Sookmyung TESOL certificate programs (SMU-TESOL, YL-TESOL, IETTP and STG) and choose to follow the early graduation option, you can complete the MA program in three semesters (1.5 years).

## Q. What is the process?

A. To be eligible for early graduation, you need to complete the 'excess credit request form (기준학점초과신청서)'. You can get the form from TESOL MA office or from the Graduate School of Professional Studies website. Once you fill the form, contact the head of the department since you need to obtain approval and signature of the department head. Then you can submit the form to the Graduate School of Professional Studies office (특수대학원 교학팀) which is located in the Veritas Building (진리관), room 705.

## Q. Does it cost extra?

A. If you take one extra course per semester, you need to pay extra tuition fee for the additional credits. This means that the tuition fee is 1.5 times the regular tuition fee. To be specific, the tuition for the first semester would be around 7,400,000 won including the entrance fee.

## Q. What's the benefit of graduating early?

A. There are some advantages of graduating early including cutting time it takes to earn a MA degree, and being able to escape the stress of homework and exams sooner. Most importantly, you can get yourself ready for when the opportunities for your dream job comes along. In brief, it is time efficient.

## Q. What are some drawbacks of graduating early?

A. There are some drawbacks of graduating early. First, taking three courses per semester can be difficult and there are many stressful consequences that comes with it, especially during the midterm and final exam periods. It would be extremely challenging unless you use your time effectively and manage your stress levels. Second, you will have less time to think your thesis topic because you should decide your thesis topic during your first semester of the MA program, if you have already earned 6 credits from the certificate program. Last, you will only have two or three semesters for your elective courses before the final thesis/practicum semester. Therefore, you will not be able to take all the classes or electives you want and you will have no chance to take some of the great courses that are offered by the program. The program offers different course each semester and the courses run in a regular two-year rotation.

## Q. Is there any advice to students who are contemplating the early graduation option?

A. If you are a new student to the program, although you may have a desire now to graduate early, you may feel differently once you start the program. Thus, you should think about why you want to graduate early before embarking on this difficult journey since it is hard to go back to the regular graduation track. If you are considering an early graduation, discuss your plans with your advisor professor or other professors to be sure that you fully understand this option of graduating early and to evaluate the pros and cons of such a decision. Once you make the decision to graduating early, always remember to do your best to enjoy your time in the program since it will be extremely short.

# Looking for some snack places around sookmyung campus?

Sihyeon Yoo

Have you ever felt hungry and in need of grabbing something to eat before class? However, as your class is starting soon, or are running out of time, you probably would not pick a fancy pasta restaurant which takes your precious time.

Studying TESOL for two years, I have noticed that lots of TESOLers, including me, love having a quick meal or some snacks around the campus. For new comers or people who haven't tried some snacks around the Sookmyung campus, I'm going to introduce some good snack places. For the record, this is not a commercial article for the following places but real recommendations from my experience.



## 1. Monster Place (Monster Yogurt)

According to my observation, lots of TESOL students are so obsessed with this yogurt place. Whenever I go here before the class, I meet at least one student here. Whenever I go to a classroom, at least one student is having a cup of yogurt from this place. That means the yogurt here is awesome! Monster place originally used to be a to-go coffee shop. However, the owner started to add a yogurt menu and it became a very well-known yogurt place in the Sookmyung area!

**Menu**
- Plain yogurt: 3,500 won
- Greek yogurt: 2,500 won  (one scoop), 3,500won (2 scoops)
- Toppings : 500 won for each (blueberries, strawberries, bananas, oatmeal, granola, almonds, etc.)

Other menu items: Salads and some beverages

**Location:** 70, Chungparo 43 gil, Yongsangu, Seoul (close to the Sookmyung main library)

**Hours:** 10:00 am ~ 9:00 pm on weekdays



## 2. Oppa Eggbread (오빠달걀빵)

Oppa Eggbread has tasty eggbreads. Eggbread is one of Korean street foods that people usually eat in the winter season. Unlike other eggbread street foods, Oppa eggbread is special with more ingredients as besides eggs; such as ham, mozzarella cheese, parsley, ketchup (or mayonnaise), etc. In other words, the egg bread here has a quite balanced nutrition for street food. I recommend this place for you especially when you feel a bit hungry after your class is finished. Instead of having heavy and greasy food and then feeling guilty, having one egg bread would be a smarter choice. Here are some information on Oppa Eggbread.

**Menu**
Eggbread (with ketchup or mayonnaise) : 2,000won

**Location:** 37, Chungparo 47 gil, Yongsangu, Seoul

**Hours:** 11:30 am ~ 10:30 pm on weekdays

## 3. Ding Dong Waffle
(띵똥와플)

If you are craving for some sweet snacks, having a waffle would be one of the best choices. Ding Dong waffle is a franchise waffle place. When you order a waffle here, the staff let you know your order is ready by ringing a bell. Yes, that's why the name of this waffle store is 'Ding Dong', which is cute. To be honest, the waffle here is not a classic Belgium style one so you might be disappointed if you are looking for a decent and authentic Belgium waffle. However, if you want to try a more Koreanized waffle, this place will not let you down. You can make a choice among 60 combinations according to a type of waffle bread and various toppings such as jams, ice-cream, and syrup. Therefore, if you are an indecisive person, you would better make your mind before you get a waffle here.

**Price:** 1,200won ~ 3,000 won

**Recommendation:**
- For classic lovers: Plain waffle + butter + apple jam or strawberry jam (no.1 or no.2)
- For chocolate lovers: Cacao waffle + Nutella jam + Whip cream + Oreos (Special A)
- My favorite: Cacao waffle + Yogurt ice-cream + apple jam (no.35)

**Location:** 84, Chungparo 47 gil, Yongsangu, Seoul

**Hours:** 12:00 am ~ 9:00 pm on weekdays

## 4. Miam Miam

Reading through this article, you might think 'oh, is there any sandwich places? I'm not into yogurt or street foods.' So here we go. Miam Miam is a French word which means 'yummy yummy'. If you are in a French mood, the owner here makes very sophisticated sandwiches with fresh ingredients. Frankly speaking, the price is more expensive than a Subway sandwich. Also you should be patient getting your food, I strongly recommend this place if you are looking for some healthy and tasty sandwiches. Also, when you have some spare time after class, go to this café and relax in the cozy atmosphere.

**Signature Menu:**
- Tripple club sandwich: 6,300 won
- Olive avocado sandwich: 7,200 won
- Salsa Shrimp sandwich: 7,900 won
- Irish Potato Soup: 5,000won

**Location:** 2nd floor, 10, Chungparo 47-gil, Yongsangu, Seoul

**Hours:** 9:00 am ~ 10:30 pm on weekdays (closed on Fridays)

I hope this article was helpful for you to find good snacks around the campus. As I picked those places personally, you might not like all of the places. However, the bottom line is that all of us deserve to eat something tasty, because we study hard in this program. Therefore, if you find any other new snack places aside from the places I mentioned, share with other students.

# "*Talking TESOL*

Sihyeon Yoo & Darren Rushbrook

# *terms* "

**Sihyeon:** Hi, Darren. How are you?

**Darren:** I'm pretty good. What do you want to talk about?

**Sihyeon:** I thought that we could figure out some academic terms that newcomers to TESOL should know. Defining different terms are tricky, so we can help them out by discussing some of them.

**Darren:** That sounds awesome. Let's go for it.

Sihyeon: Cool. How about I ask you about some terms first? Are you ready?

**Darren:** Yes, I'll try my best.

**Sihyeon:** When it comes to speaking English, there are concepts of intelligibility and comprehensibility. What are these and how do they differ?

**Darren:** Well, intelligibility and comprehensibility are both related to how speech is understood. Intelligibility is linked to the need for the listener to be able to identify the words used by the speaker. Words need to be spoken with enough clarity so they can be understood by the listener.
**Sihyeon:** So, you are saying that intelligibility is basically about identifiability of sounds so that words can be decoded properly?

**Darren:** Exactly. For example, when two people are unfamiliar with one another's accents and cannot make out the words the other person is saying, the communicative exchange lacks the degree of intelligibility needed for them to understand one another.

**Sihyeon:** I see. Then, what about comprehensibility?

**Darren:** Comprehensibility is concerned with whether the intended meaning of the speaker's message is understood by the listener. Even if an utterance is intelligible and all the words are effectively identified by the listener, it may still not be fully understandable due to it lacking comprehensibility.

**Sihyeon:** So, it's not enough to have identifiable and clear sounds to deliver one's thoughts?

**Darren:** That's right, to express their intended meaning speakers also choose to use certain intonation patterns, emphasize particular words and sounds, and arrange thoughts into chunks of language.

**Sihyeon:** So, if I talk to you with clear pronunciation but in an unorganized way, or by using inconsistent grammatical features, my speech may be intelligible but it is unlikely to be comprehensible?

**Darren:** Yes, that's why comprehensibility has to be considered as well as the need for words to be intelligible. To wrap up, comprehensibility is concerned with the conveyance of desired meaning, whereas intelligibility relates to the effective phonological conveyance of words. Both are required for speech to be understood.

**Sihyeon:** I see. I hope your answer can help new students.

**Darren:** I hope so, too. Now it's your turn. My question is quite simple, but it's a big issue. How would you define fluency? Lots of Korean students always say "I want to be fluent in English," but what does it mean exactly?
**Sihyeon:** That's a good question. Lots of people usually think of fluency as being native-like performance, but I would say that fluency is basically about speed of process. Ellis (2003)

defines fluency as the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation. The less of these features there are, the higher the degree of fluency.

**Darren:** So, that definition relates to language production. Couldn't the concept of fluency be applied to all four English skills- speaking, writing, listening and reading?

**Sihyeon:** Although fluency is commonly referred to with regards to speaking, it can relate to any of the language skills. In speaking and writing, if a person can produce an utterance or sentence rapidly, we could say they are fluent. Being fluent in reading means she or he can read and comprehend text quickly. Being fluent in listening would mean that she or he can understand what they hear without overthinking. To show fluency would mean that a person is able to express and comprehend thoughts and ideas smoothly and easily.

**Darren:** So, to put it simply, fluency is a matter of rapid language use in both productive and receptive areas of English.

**Sihyeon:** Exactly. I have one more question for you.

**Darren:** Okay, go ahead.

**Sihyeon:** When reading papers in our field, I've often seen the terms reliability and validity. Can you explain what they are?

**Darren:** I'll try. Those terms are typically used in processes for assessing learners. First, reliability is concerned with the consistency of outcomes. If an assessment measure is reliable it can be replicated a number of times and can still provide consistent results. A reliable measure offers objectivity. A completely reliable test would result in learners of the same ability always achieving the same scores.

**Sihyeon:** Okay, that reminds me of when I took the OPIC test. I took the test twice in a row with what I thought was a similar performance level, but then I scored as a high-intermediate level for the first test and a low-advanced level for the second one. In this case, the test cannot

be seen as a fully reliable one, right?

**Darren:** That could be the case.

**Sihyeon:** Then, what about validity?

**Darren:** Validity is concerned more with the accuracy of an assessment measure. A valid test is one that assesses the content and skills that it is required to assess. The meaning given to the results also reflects the purpose of a test if it is a valid one.

**Sihyeon:** For example?

**Darren:** Well, if driving licenses were allocated based only on successful performance in a paper test, the test would seem invalid. A paper test cannot be reasonably considered an accurate measure of the performance of the practical processes involved in driving a car on public roads, and the assumption that someone is competent in doing so by having only completed a paper test amounts to an inappropriate interpretation of the test results. To be valid, it would seem that a driving test would have to incorporate a practical driving component.

**Sihyeon:** So if a driving test is not valid, one could be unfit to drive although they've passed the test, and capable drivers could also fail the test. And if a driving test is not reliable, one could pass or fail with the same driving performance or drivers of different standards could achieve the same score.

**Darren:** You've got it.
Sihyeon: This part also helped me a lot, thanks.

**Darren:** No problem, I guess we've covered a few useful terms.

**Sihyeon:** Yes, it was a quite a productive talk.

**Darren:** It was! Then, see you around, Sihyeon.

**Sihyeon:** See you!

# Appendix: An introduction to basic APA-style citation and referencing

Darren Rushbrook

## Citing ideas

When referring to an idea from another writer's work include the writer's last name and the year of publication of the work in parenthesis.

*Subconscious language acquisition can be considered more important than conscious language learning when it comes to developing second language ability (Krashen, 1981).*

If writer's name features in the main text, only the year needs to be placed in parenthesis after the writer's last name.

*Krashen (1981) claims that subconscious acquisition is more important than conscious language learning when it comes to developing second language ability.*

## Quoting other writers

If directly quoting from another writer's work, the writer's last name, the year of publication, and the number of the page upon which the quote features in the original work is included in parenthesis. The quote should be indicated by quotation marks.

*Content validity requires that "the content of the test should be a reasonable and representative sample of the total content to be tested" (Farhady, 2012, p. 38).*

If the writer's name features in the main text, citations can take the following formats:

*According to Farhady (2012), content validity requires that "the content of the test should be a reasonable and representative sample of the total content to be tested" (p. 38).*

*According to Farhady, content validity requires that "the content of the test should be a reasonable and representative sample of the total content to be tested" (2012, p. 38).*

A quote more than 40 words long should feature as a stand-alone block of text that is indented from both sides. Quotation marks are not required. The citation is placed at the end of the quote.

## Referencing works

When including books in the reference list, the following information needs to be included in this order: writer's name, date of publication, book title, publication details. The book title is italicised.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Hasan, R. (1976). Cohesion in English. London: Longman.

When referencing an article from a book, the article's name and the pages upon which it can be found in the book feature alongside the book title, with the latter italicised.

Graesser, A. C. (2007). An introduction to strategic reading comprehension. In D. S. McNamara (ed.) Reading comprehension strategies: Theories, interventions, and technologies, (pp. 3-26). London/New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

If a reference takes up more than one line, subsequent lines are indented.

When referencing an article from a journal, the journal's name and the pages upon which the article is found are included in addition to the title of the article. The journal title and issue number is italicised as part of the following format:

Carrell, P. L. (1985). Facilitating ESL reading by text structure. TESOL Quarterly, 19, 727-752.

## References

Ellis, R. (2003). Task-based language learning and teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Farhady, H. (2012). Principles of language assessment. In C. Coombe, P. Davidson, B. O'Sullivan & S. Stoynoff (Eds.), The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Assessment (pp. 37-46), Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

Krashen, S. D. (1981). Second language acquisition and second language learning. New York: Permagon Press.

# Thesis or Practicum? That is the question.

Kyewon Lee

All TESOL MA students face the moment to make an important decision - Thesis or Practicum? New MA students don't need to worry about this but most of students start to think about their choice as semesters go by. There are some people who decided the option before they entered the course, but graduate students usually have a hard time making up their mind until thesis proposal day is coming. In my case, I was the person who had set my mind to write a thesis. However, now I am in my last vacation before doing the practicum. It was a long and tough journey to select one option. From this experience, I want to share my story to give some tips to you facing same moment.

**First, gather the information about writing a thesis and taking the practicum as much as possible.**

To make a decision, you need to know the details of writing a thesis and doing practicum. Until MA students face the last semester, most of students have enough time to compare these options so I hope you use the semesters more effectively. Thesis people should make a plan from thesis proposal to submission of the paper. However, it usually starts to work on the thesis before the beginning of the 4th semester. So it takes more than 1 year by doing data collection, analysis, defense and revision. In my opinion, the most important part of thesis is the research question (RQ). You need to find an RQ that you are interested in. To find an interesting RQ, it would be helpful to read lots of articles. I know that it might be a burden to read extra articles during the semester so I recommend you to read them for summer and winter vacation.
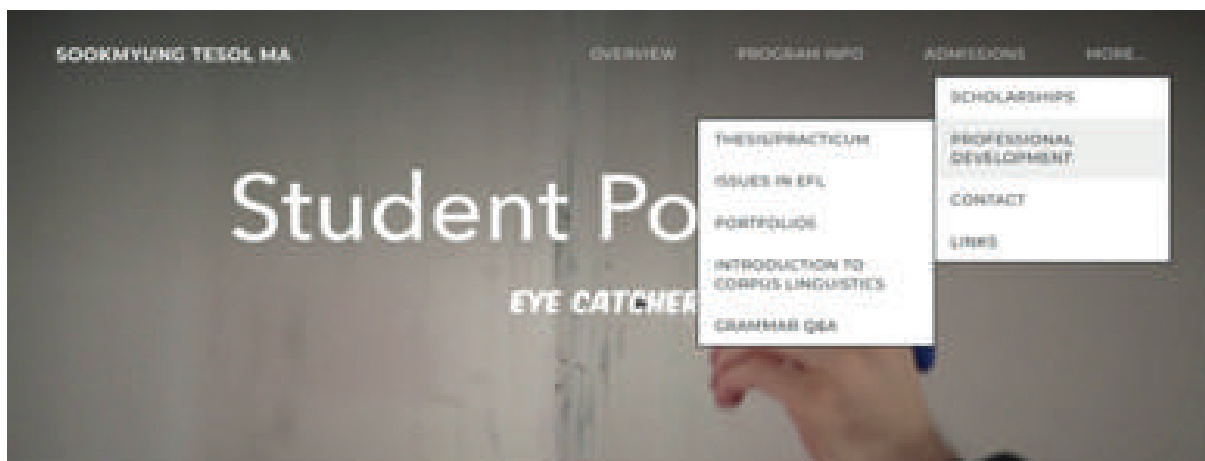
## Practicum

(링크를 클릭하시면 프랙티컴을 수강했던 졸업생들의 포트폴리오를 보실 수 있습니다)

*You can see portfolios of students who took the practicum on the MA website.*

Compared to writing a thesis, practicum people do not need to prepare anything until their final semester. However, there are lots of intensive works you should do for one semester such as making lesson plans, running the class, reflection, conducting action research, making a portfolio and preparing for the graduation test. To me, the tricky parts of practicum were writing action research and the portfolio, because it seemed to be similar to writing a thesis at first glance. For people who have some concerns, I recommend you to read final papers in the last journals and student portfolio on the MA website. These materials help you to prepare for taking the practicum course.

**Second, get many opinions from a lot of people around you.**

Even though you have enough information about writing a thesis and taking the practicum, it might not be enough to make a decision by yourself. Also, even if you believe that you have a clear plan, there might be a better option for you. I have been in the situation that I had to change my plan just right before 4th semester.

When the professor suggested me to take the practicum, I was confused. I had no idea whether

I should take his suggestion or not. First, I have never thought of the practicum option. Especially, as I studied biotechnology for my bachelor's degree, I haven't heard about graduate students who graduated without their thesis. Second, frankly speaking, I used to think that the only reason why the professor asked me to do practicum is just because it is easier than writing a thesis, which is not true. I got him wrong thinking, 'Does he think I cannot write a thesis?' Anyway, even if I knew that he always tries to help me out, it was hard for me to accept his suggestion. To figure out this situation, I talked with a lot of people around me as well as who are in the MA course. Throughout the process, I was able to think and talk about the practicum. When people heard my situation, most of them suggested to me to take it, considering that I studied a different major and I haven't experienced teaching English before. Then, I started to look at the bright side of practicum that it will be more helpful for my future than writing a thesis. What I'm saying here is that asking other people's thoughts is absolutely helpful. You don't have to struggle with this issue by yourself. People around you gladly help you and their perspective can give you chances to think about the option in different ways.

**Third, take advantages of the opportunity to experience each option.**

While you study in the MA course, there are some opportunities to experience a little bit of writing a thesis and taking the practicum. You can't attend thesis proposal but you can attend the thesis defense or can be a teacher in the practicum class for one day. In my case, I used to be interested in writing a thesis so I have attended thesis defense every semester. In the defense, thesis students present their works to the professors and audience. Taking a look at a timetable of thesis defense, you can see a presentation which you are interested in. By attending thesis defense, it can help you to get some ideas for your thesis. To people who are considering the practicum, there is one chance to experience the practicum class. During each semester, you can volunteer as a substitute position of practicum people when they take graduation exam. Note these two occasions, I hope you can take valuable chances to experience both writing a thesis and taking the practicum.

**Lastly, once you make a decision, stay calm and keep going.**

"Thesis or practicum?" is not the question to find the right or wrong answer. That's why it is not easy to make a decision and you might not be sure about your decision. While I was in college, a professor said that the choice is another name for disclaimer. As I did, you will spend a lot of time making a decision so I hope you don't regret about it as long as you decide what you are going to do. Instead of thinking about the one you didn't choose, focus on what you choose. Whatever you decide, to write a thesis or take the practicum, I want you to concentrate on your own way to get better results.

I wish these tips can help you make a better decision. One last thing, I want to give the words from students in 4th semester when I was a freshman - You will be fine. Don't worry.

Reference
(n.d.). Retrieved from
http://tesolma.com/portfolios.html

*Being a volunteer teacher was worthy to make a decision to take the practicum.*

# Utilization of Printing Places at School

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Wonjung Cho

SMU TESOL MA program is not only well known for its long history in Korea but also because of its hard work, both from the professors and the students. As much as the professors prepare and deliver beneficial lectures, students respond through their hard work, writing essays (homework) and mid-/final projects, where the students generally hand in hard copies of their work and then receive feedbacks from the professors. In this progress of pursuing one's studies, we could make good use of facilities offered from school, such as libraries, cafeterias, and even the rest areas. The information regarding these facilities are offered in the school homepage or at our department website. However, the journal committee also has been offering detailed information regarding various facilities over time, for example; how to utilize medical insurance union at SMU (2017-Fall), introduction of libraries in SMU after renovation (2015-Fall), and Other places to go beyond the library (2016-Fall), etc., which could be found in www.tesolma.com/ , at [Professional Development] – [Issues in EFL]. This time, I would like to introduce another important facility related to our studies, the PRINTING places. As mentioned above, in our program, we normally hand in the hard copies for our important papers. Within this process, except for the students who always finish their work early enough and also have a decent printer at home to print out their works in advance, it is fairly natural for the students to utilize the printing places near or inside school. However, in my case, I did not know how to use these printing places inside school during my earlier semesters. Due to that, I used printing places outside the campus, which seemed to cost more and at the same time unpractical in terms of time as soon as I enter the campus after the steep,

high hill. Thus, I hope this article would help the new/current students to make good use of the facilities that are meant to be helpful for the students in the first place.

To start with, there are basically two types of printing/copying places inside school. One is a normal photocopy room where the staffs are on duty and the other is the automatic photocopy room, where the replicators are installed connected to the desktop PCs. Concerning the photocopy room with the staffs, there are three main places, which could be found as below:

| Building | Contact Number | Location |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Library | 02-2077-7081 | 5th Floor |
| Soonheon Building | 02-2077-7081 | 2nd Floor |
| Second Foundation Campus (Renaissance Plaza Hall) | 02-2077-7082 | Zemma Hall |

Main services of these places are not only limited to copy & print but they also offer bookbinding, thesis, and portfolios work too. Also, though it is not the main usage for individual students, making posters or brochures are also available when necessary. During the semester, the working hours are from 9h (9am) ~ 18h (6pm) during the weekdays (Monday - Friday). On Saturdays, only the one in the library is opened from 9h (9am) ~ 14h (2pm). All the places are closed on Sundays. During the summer/winter vacations, the working hours are the same on the weekdays but closed both on Saturdays & Sundays.

This is the picture of the copying place located in Soonheon building. As for our program, this place has been used the most among the professors and the students due to the accessibility. The basic price for copying is 50won per page. However, the price varies according to its amount. When copying a great quantity for example when copying text books, the price goes down (depending on how many pages you copy).

Now, to move on, there are many automatic copy rooms in our campus. The location, available time and functions for each automatic copy rooms are as below:

| Building | Location | Black & white | colors | Mon ~ Fri. | Sat | Sun | Available time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Myungshin Building | #108 PC laboratory (1st floor) | O | O | O | X | X | During Sem.: ~19h30 During Vacation: ~17h |
| | Lounge / Common rooms (2nd floor) | O | O | O | O | X | Semester: ~22h (Sat. ~17h) Vacation: ~19h (Sat. ~13h) |
| Jinri Building | Inside Library, next to the PC (1st floor) | O | O | O | O | X | |
| Soonheon Building | Middle hallway (2nd floor) | O | O | O | O | O | |
| | Middle hallway (3rd floor) | O | X | O | O | O | |
| Myungjae Building (Dormitory) | Student Lounge (3rd floor) | X | O | O | O | O | |
| | Student Lounge (4th floor) | O | X | O | O | O | |
| Main Library | Plaza (2nd floor) | O | O | O | O | X | Semester: ~22h (Sat. ~17h) Vacation: ~19h (Sat. ~13h) |
| | Reading Room (3rd floor) | O | X | O | O | X | |
| | Reading Room (4th floor) | O | X | O | O | X | |
| College of Science | Entrance (1st floor) | O | X | O | O | O | |
| The Second Foundation Campus | In front of the copy room (1st basement) | O | X | O | O | O | During semester: ~20h |
| | Pharmacy Library (3rd floor) | O | X | O | X | X | |
| College of Music | Music Library (2nd floor) | O | O | O | X | X | During semester: ~20h During vacation: ~17h |

At each place, the staplers are provided next to the printers for students' convenience. Also, the directions for how to use the replicator for copying and printing is adhered on the walls. However, as it is written in Korean, I would like to explain once more by using the instructions given by the school.
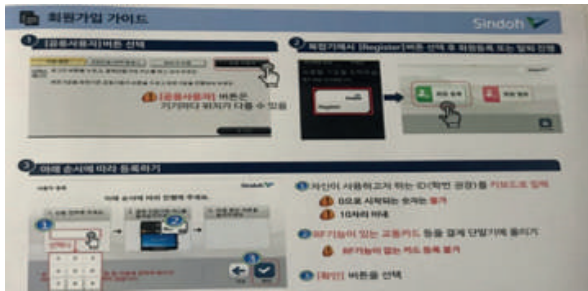
**Signing up:**
1) Select the "Common User" button as above (colored in blue and written [공용사용자] ).
2) Press "Register" from the replicator machine and then press "sign up" (In case you want to erase your ID, press "withdraw".
3-1) type in the ID you want to use (Student # is preferred/ cannot start by 0/ below 10 digits).
3-2) Register a card that has RF (radio frequency card) function on the card terminal. 3-3) Press "Confirmation".





**For printing:**
1) Practice "Print" at the PC.
2) Insert ID and press "Print"
3) Move to the machine you would like to use and press "Login" (the yellow button) and then put your card on the screen of the card terminal.
4) Press "Print List".
5) Select the file you would like to print and press "Start" button, and the payment will be done automatically by the card. (In case you want to change the payment card, press the button in the red box and then change how you would like your payment to be done).
6) Place or insert your credit card or your T-money card on/inside the card terminal.
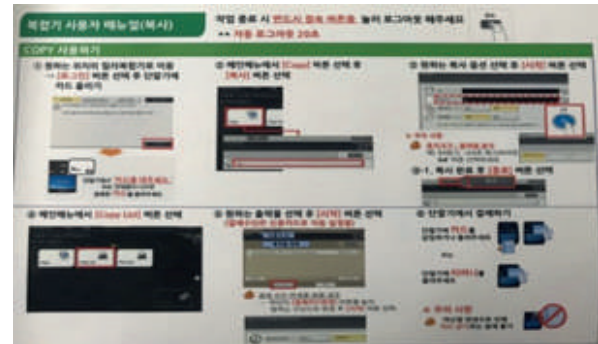


**For copying:**
1) Move to the machine you would like to use and press "Login" (the yellow button) and then put your card on the screen of the card terminal.
2) Press "Copy".
3) Select the file you would like to copy and press "Start" button.
4) Press "Finish" button after copying.
5) Press "Copy List" from the main menu
6) Select the file you would like to print and press "Start" button, and the payment will be done automatically by the card. (In case you want to change the payment card, press the button in the red box and then change how you would like your payment to be done).
By taking a glance for the first time, it might seem complicated and difficult, especially for the foreigners. However, as you may see above, the process is not that much complicated and once you have it done, the rest of your semesters will be much more convenient. Go for it and make the best use of this closest, and easily accessible student welfare! If you still need more help on accessing or using this facility, feel free to contact the TA or other colleagues for help.
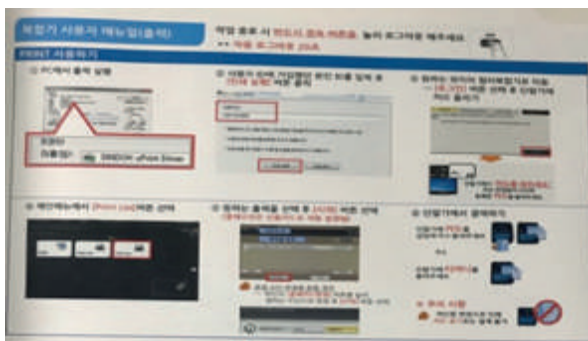
Reference
(n.d.). Retrieved from https://blog.naver.com/iamsookmyung/220873671299
(n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.sookmyung.ac.kr/sookmyungkr/1193/subview.do

# Final Papers

# Improving the Time Management Strategies of Facilitators in a Writing Course: An Action Research Study

By: Alexandria Malfitano & Jiwon Yoon

***Abstract***

*The following action research study sought to improve the time management of class facilitators in an undergraduate writing course. The course had previously run for a 2-hour time period twice a week, but had been reduced to shorter 75-minute intervals. In beginning of the semester classes, plans, practices, and methods of past iterations of the writing course quickly proved to be ineffective in the new time frame, and needed to be adapted. In order to address the issue of matching course requirements to the new class time, a number of time keeping and time management strategies were designed and implemented and coupled with weekly facilitator surveys to track effectiveness and implementation of strategies. Each of the strategies were designed to assist facilitators in developing and becoming more aware of their own time management as they relate to group and class leader responsibilities. After the 5-week intervention, it was found that be raising awareness of time, and combining both visual and audio time-tracking strategies proved to be the most effective strategies in improving the time management of not only class facilitators, but for students as well.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The following action research was completed during the *English in Action Writing* course offered to undergraduate students at Sookmyung Women's University in South Korea. This course is primarily student-centered and focuses on a task-based learning (TBLT) approach. Each class is centered around student-generated themes each week, along with target genres and functions derived from ACTFL writing proficiency guidelines. This Fall semester, the writing course ran for a total of 16 weeks. Each week consisted of two classes lasting 75-minutes held on Tuesdays and Thursdays in which students actively and collaboratively engaged in the writing process.

Rather than a traditional professor-lead class, the English in Action course is facilitated by a number of TESOL graduate students of the same university. At this time, there were five current graduate students, one returning volunteer graduate student, and the professor who acted as class facilitators, or 'big siblings'. Each big sibling was assigned four undergraduate students, referred to as 'little sisters', whom they supervise and work with throughout the semester. Each week teams of two big siblings act as class leaders; their responsibilities include creating homework, lesson plans, tasks, and running the two classes for the week. When not teaching, the big siblings act as group

leaders and sit with their little sisters; in addition, the big siblings acting as class leaders distribute their little sisters to other big sibling groups as 'visitors' for the week so that they still work with a facilitator. This meant that each week, big siblings work with anywhere from four to six little sisters at a time.

In the beginning of the course, there were a total of 28 little sisters enrolled. However, by the time of the intervention, that number had decreased to 24. The majority of the little sisters are Korean, with two Chinese exchange students also participating in the class. Regarding little sister English writing levels, during initial proficiency testing using a WPT assessment, their levels covered the following range of scores: Intermediate Low (1), Intermediate Mid (3), Intermediate High (13), Advanced Low (8), and Advanced Mid (1). Based off of these proficiency scores, most students have a relatively high proficiency in English writing, with the majority of little sisters reaching around the Intermediate High and Advanced Low levels.

This particular action research focuses primarily on the roles and responsibilities of the big siblings. Prior to this semester, the English in Action Writing class originally ran for approximately two hour sessions twice a week. With a significant reduction in class time, the traditional design of the writing class was challenged. This pressure to effectively facilitate learning and development of skills related to English and the writing process in a reduced time frame led to the development of this action research. Where in previous iterations of this course acting big siblings were able to refer to past semesters to act as models, this semester the big siblings were challenged to condense or more often create new methods and plans to facilitate each class. The main challenge was to effectively cover what had once spanned a semester of approximately 55 hours, to a much shorter 37.5 hours of in-class interaction time.

## 2. RESEARCH QUESTION

Due to the recent change in program and class design having been reduced from the previous two-hour time period it occupied to a significantly shorter 75-minutes, previous methods of organization and classroom planning have proven to be ineffective in a short amount of time. Within the first few weeks of class, all big siblings have taken note of the difficulties of completing activities, rushing tasks, and going over time. In particular, issues regarding sharing, reviewing, and completing all objectives were pressing topics discussed among the big siblings in relation to areas that suffered the most. With the modified course scheduling made by the university, and the concerns of the big siblings in mind, we propose the following question:

*How can we effectively manage time in a recently shortened writing class period?*

## 3. RATIONALE

Throughout the first six weeks of pre-intervention class, time management was presented as a major issue in the classroom from the big siblings' reflections, from both perspectives of class leaders and

group leaders. According to the reflections, the overall perceptions of the big siblings on the class time for the first few pre-intervention weeks was that they felt rushed and frenetic during the class.

> I don't like that frenetic of a pace in my classes.-C.W., Wk 2
>
> Timing was so crunched it was a little hard to get to talk and bond.  As soon as one thing was done, it was on to another, and there was very little actual time to chat with the little sisters...-A.M., Wk 2
>
> As I was watching students write, time was too short for them to share their own findings within their group.-A.M., Wk 3

Moreover, since our class time has been shortened, it was revealed that both big siblings and the students felt difficulties when dealing with the tasks. For instance, on a number of occasions, it took more time to complete certain tasks forcing class leaders to sacrifice the final planned task to meet the end time.  This is most clearly shown in the following big siblings' reflections after week 5.

> Class LP was designed with a focus on giving Ss enough time at the end to properly give peer comments and respond to them. 20 minutes was allotted. That basically became 5. The free writing and revision stations just took up too much time. - C.W., Wk 5
>
> Many of the students had no prior experience doing 'free writing' and that meant they were being really meticulous, kept editing and erasing their own work.…This task was 10 minutes over the limit of when it was scheduled to end. That really threw a wrench in writing comments on the final task.-A.M., Wk 5
>
> Extended time for the students to keep writing as much as they can in FREE WRITING task, we finally were lack of time for commenting on post-it notes. Therefore, they were only able to read one other group's testimonials. - J.W., Wk 5

Not only did big siblings and little sisters alike feel the pressure of poor time management, but prior research has demonstrated the importance of time in the classroom.

Ugwulashi (2013) writes about the importance of time management in the classroom being as a crucial factor for learner success.  He says that for time to be effective it must be planned, organized, implemented and evaluated by any administrator in suitably utilizing resources available at his disposal.  More important than the quantity of time, is the quality of time management.  Even in a shorter time period, effective student learning can take place so long as the time is managed well.  Ugwulashi (2013) goes on to quote time-management expert Peter Drucker by further asserting the notion that "time are scarcest resources available to man"(p. 62), time determines ability to accomplish activities.

According to additional commentary such as Qadri (2010, as cited in Ugwulashi, 2013), time management is a point where creativity meets productivity in such a manner that resources are effectively and efficiently implemented or used to complete classroom tasks.  However, in pre-intervention lessons we saw the opposite happening, further solidifying the notion that time

management is an important area to address in this context. The following reflection shows how lack of time hinders the ability of students to accomplish tasks.

> I really feel like the comments and presentations in the first two classes have been too rushed. Ss don't really have enough time to browse the other group's posters and think of any comments beyond the immediate and superficial or really give much of a response. - C.W., Wk 3

With Ugwulashi's (2013) notion that time management facilitates learning in the classroom, and the big sibling reflections demonstrating just how a lack of time negatively affects the learning process, we conclude that time management is an important area to focus on improving. Therefore, in order to manage time effectively we propose implementing many different timekeeping and time saving strategies in order to solve these problems and ensure a better learning environment.

## 4. INTERVENTION

To address the issue of time management in the classroom, we proposed a blended intervention, taking into account a number of different timekeeping and time-saving strategies. Such strategies are divided and implemented at different stages of each week's proceedings as lesson planning, pre-class, in-class, and post-class.

### 4.1 Pre-Intervention

Before the onset of the intervention, some initial changes to the course design had already been made. Such adaptations included an elimination of homework review time in class, a shortening of Tuesday warm-ups, and a removal of Thursday warm-ups each week. These modifications came at the recommendation of the professor. The writing homework platform pbworks will also be used as an extension of class; compared to previous semesters, there will be a greater focus on interaction and feedback in order to facilitate writing development.

### 4.2 Lesson Planning Stage

Each week a different pair of big siblings, the class leaders, are in charge of developing and implementing a lesson plan for the week. When lesson planning, we proposed the following interventions. One, any warm-ups should be kept brief, as should the majority of earlier tasks to be completed. Warm-ups are important to maintain due to the fact that they can set students into 'English mode', and set the tone and energy level for the class (Cotter, 2013). Despite the lack of an explicit Thursday warm-up, taking time to set the context and provide an explicit and authentic reason for students to complete their writing tasks is important to ensure the success of the lesson (Akther, 2014). In addition, class leaders should overestimate time needed at the end of the class, such as during peer review tasks, to provide an allowance for earlier tasks to go over time. This method was

agreed upon during a big sibling discussion, after noting that feedback was continuously sacrificed at the end of class because other tasks continuously went over time. Therefore, as a preemptive measure, ensuring a minimum of 5 extra minutes at the end was decided upon to eliminate the ongoing trend of losing a final tasks all together. In anticipation of proper time management, we also suggest that the class leaders prepare an additional task or discussion idea to ensure students are always doing something meaningful.

### 4.3 Pre-Class Stage

Big Siblings generally arrive 15-30 minutes before the beginning of each class to prepare the classroom. During this time, two main interventions should be implemented. For one, all materials for each task should be ordered, labeled, and distributed to group leaders before class begins. Group leaders should also receive a cue-card with times, instructions, and materials listed for each task. During pre-intervention classes, class leaders distributed materials as needed, which added time to the tasks; therefore it was decided material distribution should be done ahead of time. One big sibling made the following suggestions:

> I was not sure what papers were for what task...failed to complete a task the class leaders wanted us to do. Something small with activity name, required materials, and maybe suggestions for time keeping strategies could be helpful. Having a small reminder card of what's next and what's what may help everyone sync up and stay on the same page for classes. A.M, Week 3

By suggesting marking materials and providing cue-cards, the hope was that it would keep the amount of materials given to group leaders less overwhelming and more comprehensive to ensure smooth task transitions. After distributing all materials, class leaders should also hold a quick debrief session with the group leaders to go over the lesson for the day, the materials, and address any questions the group leaders may have. Graziano and Navarrete (2012) discuss the importance of communication and preparation in the context of a co-teaching situation. By doing so the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of each teacher are explicitly and clearly defined prior to the lesson to ensure a smooth class. In the context of this intervention, there are two main class leaders, but effectively all seven facilitators must work together to effectively facilitate learning. Based on the importance of communication, these debrief sessions aim to ensure smoother class proceedings.

### 4.4 In-Class Stage

Additional interventions are to take place during the class. These interventions are the responsibility of all big siblings. Class leaders should use some form of timer to signal the end of a task stage. This method had been briefly used pre-intervention and in previous semesters, however, it was viewed unfavorably due to the distracting nature since the class leaders needed to flip screens back and forth between instructions and timer. Thus, we plan to implement more effective means of

timer use than those currently used; including using a timers on cell phones, or adding countdown timers to class slides based on class leader comfort and choice. Also regarding class leader responsibility, class leaders are advised to give frequent time checks and reminders, instead of only a two- or one- minute warning. Pre-intervention warnings only came with one minute to spare, which was insufficient time for students to finalize writing, making such late reminders ineffective. In addition, class leaders should aim to complete earlier tasks such as warm-ups effectively and quickly. So long as these initial tasks are meaningful, generally they can be abruptly stopped without risking the following task's success in the cycle (Akther, 2014). One big sibling even commented:

> I also really like to have a quick and easy warm-up just to shift their minds into
> English mode.-C.W., Wk 2

Based off of his own teaching experiences, warm-ups were best when quick, engaging, and really helped set the class right even for large groups. Group leaders are also responsible for watching the timer, ensuring that their little sisters stay on-task, and moving students through the tasks via interventions such as modeling, examples, and other interventions deemed acceptable via the group leader's discretion.

## 4.5 Extending Class Interactions

Outside of the classroom, we interviewed students about the possibility of employing group chats or emails to extend class communication. Due to constrained times there is no more allowance for homework review, discussion, and reminder, which we hope to alleviate with a form of external communication. Such ideas of implementing group chats or email as effective means of time management and extending, in particular, writing classes were found in studies such as d'Eça (2003) and Mansor (2007). After a quick in-class survey given to students pre-intervention in week 5, most students responded favorably to the implementation of a chat group using a popular messaging application, Kakao Talk, and in the case of one group, via emails to keep in contact. Big siblings also seemed hopeful, reflecting on the future implementation of group chats:

> As we just started to remind HWs by Kakao message from this week, I believe they
> [the students] will prepare better and better. J.W., Wk 6

The implementation of additional reminders was viewed as a possible positive extension of not only class time and interaction, but also serve to better remind students to come fully prepared to class so that tasks could be completed quickly and efficiently since students were already cognizant of what was expected.

## 4.6 Data Collection

In order to collect data each week of the intervention, we employed the following methods. In part, the collected data came from observation and discussion. Big siblings are required by practicum course design to keep reflective journals, and we tracked comments about time, timing, and strategies

made each week. We created separate small reflective questionnaires for group leaders and class leaders more focused on usefulness and comfort using some of the recommended interventions. Such surveys were e-mailed out via Google Forms. They collected data each week, and in turn served as reminders of the different interventions and time management strategies big siblings should be increasingly aware of. Peter Drucker notes that one of the most important steps in time management is recording one's time (Chu, 2017), which is why recording the start and end times are included as the first part of the class leader surveys. Additional reflective discussions are also part of the course design, so further comments about time management were collected from these sessions. Drucker also mentions that analyzing records and diagnosing where time could be better spent or managed are important for improving time management (Chu, 2017). At the end of the intervention we distributed a final survey also via Google Forms to big siblings assessing the overall effect time-management strategies had and their perceived usefulness from participants.

**4.7 Intervention alterations**

There were three main alterations made to the intervention after a post-week 9 midway intervention check. One of these alterations was to change the nature of the debrief sessions. Originally, whole-group big sibling sessions were prescribed, however after some discussion the intervention was changed to also include one-on-one discussions. The second alteration was to exclude one of the timers from further use. One of the timers used pre-intervention and in week 9 was a bomb timer, however this was discontinued after discussion between big siblings. The final alteration was to the surveys. At first these surveys did not track week number and group name, however for later ease of tracking development and sorting data, these questions were added to the Google Forms surveys distributed each week.

# 5. RESULTS

## 5.1 Weekly Class Leader Results

Over the course of the intervention, we collected weekly surveys from the class leaders regarding their personal perceptions and observation about their intervention use, and time management ability for the week. Due to the large variety of interventions, they have been broken down and grouped to identify patterns and trends.

### 5.1.1 Class Times

The first requirement of class leaders was to track their beginning and end times for class each week. The class was expected to begin at 18:00, and end at 19:15 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, resulting in an approximately 75 minute class. The following chart demonstrated the tracked time during the 5-week intervention.

|  | Tuesday | | Thursday | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Start | End | Start | End |
| Week 7 | 18:00 | 19:17 | 18:00 | 19:17 |
| Week 9 | 18:00 | 19:20 | 18:00 | 19:16 |
| Week 10 | 18:00 | 19:15 | 18:02 | 19:16 |
| Week 11 | 18:00 | 19:15 | 18:00 | 19:17 |
| Week 12 | 18:00 | 19:15 | 18:01 | 19:18 |

According to the time table, over the course of the intervention, we see a steady increase in ending on time at 19:15 for the Tuesday classes. To explain the difference in the first two weeks, we can attribute the unfamiliar nature of the intervention resulting in a late ending on Tuesday, and for week 9, due to an in-class Halloween party the class went over time. The class that week involved moving classrooms, dressing in costumes, and engaging activities such as trick-or-treating which resulted in the class going over. Once those two weeks passed and the intervention became familiar, we see consistent trends in ending on time. One big sibling noted in their weekly reflection:

It was expected we would go over time on Tuesday with all the fun we were having.

The activities were so engaging and we moved around a lot, so naturally things took a

while.-A.M., Wk 9

On Thursdays, we see less of a consistent trend in better time keeping. Despite the intervention, the class consistently ends one to two minutes late. Though Thursday classes never ended at the expected 19:15 time, they also never went severely over time. This delay in class ending time may be attributed to the nature of Thursday activities. For one, the time management intervention was not the only intervention being implemented at this time. An additional intervention required students to

complete a quick survey at the end of each Thursday class. This may have been one reason for the consistent extra minute or two added to the class time. An additional issue with Thursday was noted clearly by one big sibling:

> I don't think the time interventions could have speed things up any more than they have. The time interventions probably got as far as we did. I just think outlining, drafting, revising, and writing an essay generally takes more time than an hour and a half. -C.W., Wk 9

Generally on Thursdays, the task load was not only greater, but also more demanding compared to Tuesday tasks. Thursday generally involved the entire writing process including brainstorming, outlining, drafts, revisions, poster making, and sharing, whereas Tuesday was generally an assortment of controlled activities that were easier to transition to and from. We see additional comments about the writing process from other big siblings:

> Usually my group tends to take time until they are satisfied with their own work...some students wanted to take more time was writing on Thursday. J.E., Wk 9
>
> On Thursday, however, my group couldn't have enough time for peer feedback because they had to complete writing their cover letters in time. -J.W., Wk 10

These comments further support the idea that the writing process itself cannot be neatly condensed into a single 75-minute session. As J.W. noted in week 10, there were often cuts in planned tasks due to the writing taking more time than originally planned. Considering these challenges, class time ending an average of one to two minutes late seems like a reasonable demonstration that timing went well regardless of not ending exactly on time.

In respect to a few variations seen in the time table, during week 12, on Thursday, the current big siblings were away for exams, and the guest big siblings were unaware of typical class procedures and the time management intervention which is likely responsible for the extra 3 minutes observed that day; according to the class leader that week, she noted that there was a small delay starting for the same reason. The late start to week 10 Thursday was due to notably unfavorable weather resulting in many students arriving late. The class then began after waiting for more students to arrive.

### 5.1.2 Main Method of Timekeeping

The next intervention class leaders were asked to address was their main method of timekeeping. The following chart demonstrates the patterns of timer use and selection made over the 5 week intervention by class leaders.

Method of Time Keeping
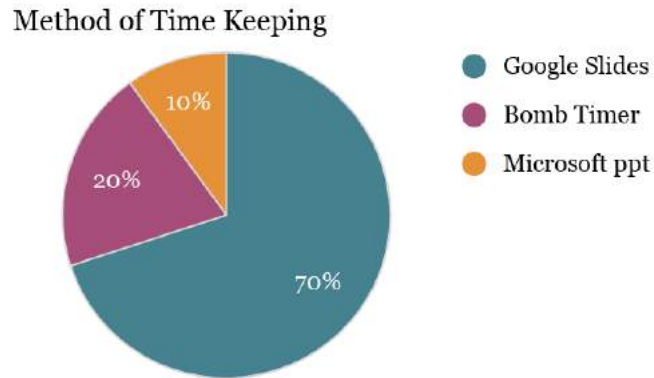


According to the data, the main method of time keeping noted by both teaching partners each week was a video timer embedded into Google Slides. This is most likely do to the features of this method. The timer could be embedded into the PowerPoint slide alongside task instructions, could be modified for size and visuals, could vary by time and sounds display, and provided clearly visible and audio cues to keep track of time and tasks. We see some minor variations as well. The Microsoft PowerPoint video timer was used only once, but functions in the same manner as the Google Slides timer, but can be used offline. In addition, there was one week where both class leaders used a bomb timer. Unfortunately, despite the clear visual representation of time and audio cues, the bomb timer could not be on the screen the same time as the PowerPoint with this instructions. The sacrifice of only being able to see time or instructions is what ultimately resulted in all participants of the intervention agreeing to try different methods. Regarding the bomb timer, some big siblings commented:

> I am not a fan of the bomb timers...students cannot see what their objectives
> are…[they] have to rely on memory to recall all the objectives of each task.-A.M.,
> Wk 9

Though it visually facilitated time management, it also created additional issues where students could not see instructions and objectives, resulting in single use.

### 5.1.3 Details Regarding Timer Use

Continuing inquiries about timer use, class leaders were also asked about how easy the timer was to prepare, how easy it was to use in class, and the likelihood of them using it again. Ease was graded on a 5-point scale, with one corresponding to difficulty, and 5 corresponding to ease. The likelihood of use was calculated where yes=1, no=0, and maybe=0.5 on the scale. In weeks 7-11, the class leader scores are combined; the only difference we see is in week 12, where the class leaders are separate. This division in data is due to the fact that one class leader was absent due to practical exams, where the partner is an already graduated volunteer and therefore was not required to take the exams.
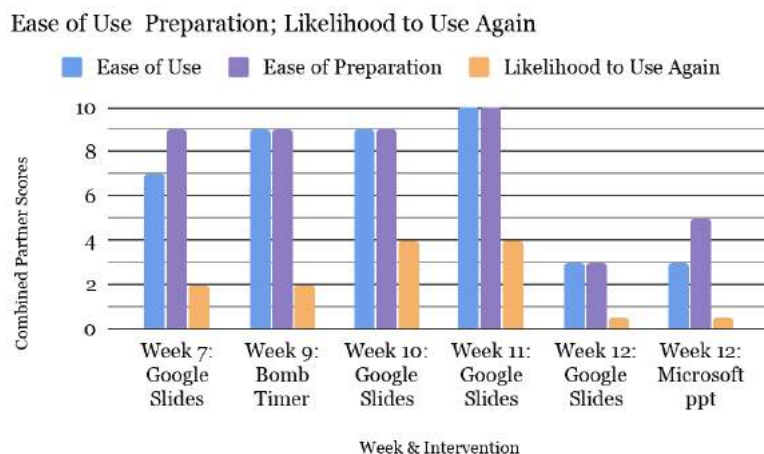
Across the three main methods of timer use, using the video timer on Google Slides pulled high favoritism and was noted as both easy to use and prepare, even scoring perfectly by the week 11 class leaders. In regard to Google Slides, we find the following comments from big siblings:

> I liked the timer a lot because the direction and timer were shown all the time...the big number on the slide helped me...be more aware of the time.-J.E., Wk 7
>
> The use of embedded timers on the Google Drive ppt kept the tasks moving along and the students on schedule...the embedded timers with audible attention grabbing alarms work .-C.W., Wk 11
>
> Having the timer in the slides is always good for visuals, and I felt that I paid much more attention this week to the timers and was able to give reminders at a better frequency. -A.M., Wk 11

These comments highlight the earlier noted features of the Google Slides timer. Such features of clear visual and audio cues were favored by big siblings as being very useful in a timer.

Though the bomb timer was also noted as both easy to use and prepare, due to feedback from the group leaders and little sisters, the method was not used again. In both cases, the timer, though visually acceptable, presented an issue of switching the screen between the tasks and time, causing confusion. One big siblings commented:

> In respect to the timer, the bomb timer was not bad, but it was hard to check the instructions on the ppt.-J.W., Wk 9

Another variation noticed is the class leaders in week 12 were less convinced they uncertain, with both responding 'maybe', about using a timer variation embedded in a PowerPoint slide. One group leader noted:

> I thought verbal time reminder was more effective than ppt timer.-H.L., Wk 12

On one hand, one group leader felt that the video timer was ineffective and was interested in finding a more effective intervention. The other class leader who ran the class on Thursday and used the embedded video on Microsoft PowerPoint, and unfortunately experienced some issues.

For me, when H.L.'s husband did something special and put it in the ppt, it worked

fine. But when I tried by just putting the hyperlink, it had buffering and it stopped if I

didn't move the mouse cursor from time to time...if I want to move the slide to

previous one to show something, I couldn't since it would reset the time.-J.H., Wk 12

The following comments about the Microsoft PowerPoint timer, combined with a 3-rating for ease of use and preparation indicate greater complexity in preparing and using this method. Despite being similar to Google Slides, the class leader, J.H., had a number of difficulties with this method.


**5.1.4 Lesson Planning Stage**

The next area of the intervention for class leaders took place during the lesson planning stage. During lesson planning, class leaders were asked to create short initial tasks that could be completed quickly. They were also asked to overestimate time needed for final tasks by about five minutes. If tasks were appropriately designed, class leaders responded yes=1, and no=0 to achieve success scores for each week. The following chart depicts the implementation of these interventions.
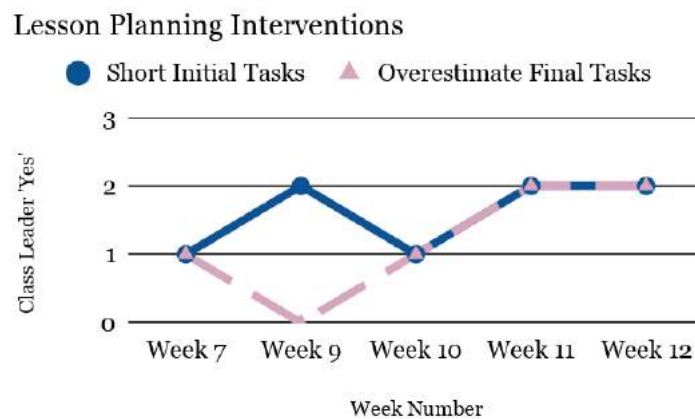


As seen in the chart, by weeks 11 and 12, both these interventions were well executed and agreed upon by both class leaders. On the other hand, we see less agreement in previous weeks. In weeks 7 and 10, there was disagreement about planning between the classes leaders, with one feeling that planning was done appropriately, where the other disagreed. During discussions, partner one in both cases perceived their lesson planning as accurately heeding to the idea of short initial and extended final tasks, where partner two in both cases felt they did not take such steps. Despite further discussions, they could not come to an understanding in the perceived differences. This variation in perception has resulted in the 1-agreement rating between those weeks.

Additionally, in week 9 we see a divergence where though both class leaders remembered to create short initial tasks, they did not overestimate time in the final tasks. In a class meeting, one teaching partner confessed that because the intervention was new and due to the week break between classes, they had simply forgotten about that step in the intervention.

### 5.1.5 Pre-Class Stage

The next stage of interventions came pre-class, before the lesson started once all the big siblings had gathered to prepare. The two interventions were preparing materials, such as ordering and marking them clearly and preparing cue cards, and giving a quick debrief to go over the plans to ensure all big siblings understood intended class procedures. Again, when completed partners answered yes=1, or no=0 to result in the following chart.
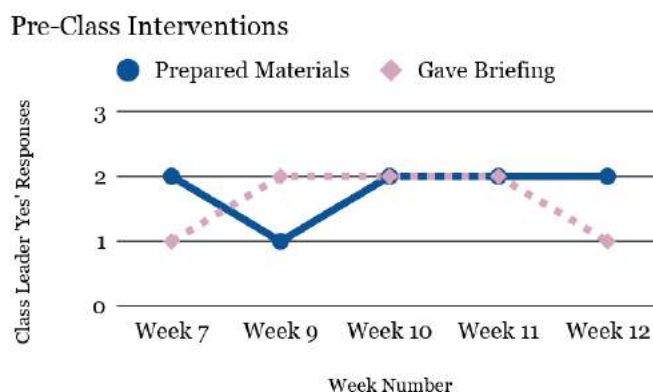


According to the chart, apart from week 8, we can see that each week both big siblings felt materials were prepared appropriately. However, holding a briefing session shows less consistency. Over the course of the mid-three weeks, we see that each time there pre-class debriefing held. The variations in weeks 7 and 12 can be accounted for through post-survey discussions. In week 7, one big sibling responded they did not debrief properly because at that time the intervention prescription was to hold a meeting with all big siblings at the same time, but this was not executed. In the same discussion regarding week 7, one of the teaching partners expressed her confusion about the nature of the prescribed debriefing method, thinking that individual discussions with each individual big sibling was sufficient. Due to this confusion, and natural tendencies of class leaders to gravitate towards individual class debriefs with big siblings, the intervention was adapted to include individual meetings, resulting in improved and consistent execution. The divergence in week 12 was due to the circumstances during the Thursday class where only one class leader was present, and the guest big siblings were unaware of the intervention, resulting in a poor execution of the intervention.

### 5.1.6 In-Class Stage

The next stage of intervention was executed during class. The first requirement was to quickly complete initial tasks. If the class leaders felt they completed initial tasks well, they responded yes=1, or no=0 to produce the following data.

Quick Completion of Initial Tasks
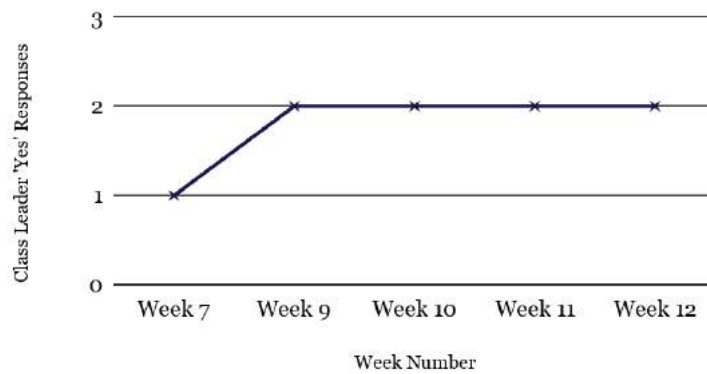


As seen in the chart, save for week 7, where one of the two partners did not feel the initial tasks were completed in a quick manner, in all other weeks, both partners agreed initial tasks were completed in a timely manner. For week 7, one partner commented:

> I let the first task get away from me. I wanted to go through all the pictures, but students were slow to engage with the first task, and by the time they got rolling I did not want to stop even though we had a lot to do. I didn't want to break the flow.- A.M., Wk 7

After this one variation however, the ability for both partners to move through initial tasks quickly improved and became a consistent trend.

The next intervention during class was the delivering of verbal time updates regarding how much time was left for each task. Each partner rated their own ability to deliver timing updates during the class on a 5-point scale, with 1 corresponding to not at all, and 5 corresponding to frequently in terms of rating.

Frequency of Verbal Timing Updates
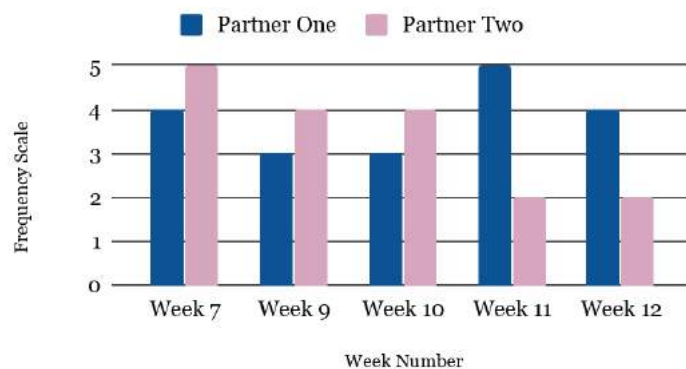


One noticeable pattern that can be observed is that each week, we see a tendency for at least one big sibling to give far more timing updates than the other in terms of frequency. In addition, rather than seeing a general increase in updates, we see a more general downward trend in the data. Compared to week 7, the first week of intervention where the big siblings gave the most frequent updates, weeks 11

and 12 we saw a deep decline in frequency with some big siblings only rating their verbal updates at a 2. From class leaders we find the following reflections:

> Shouting out time and music did not catch the students attention because they were very engaged in their tasks most of the time.-J.E., Wk 7

> In regard to timing...harder to vocalize timing when the class was silent ...I felt that by making announcements I was interrupting their flow...hard to keep running to the front of the class...trying to give feedback and work with students at the same time. - A.M., Wk 10

In these two cases, the class leaders were uncertain if calling timer reminders was an effective for of intervention. In both cases, student engagement with task and materials made it hard to grab their attention and update them on time. These perceptions may have carried on in later weeks as well.

### 5.1.7 Self-Evaluation

After addressing their implementation and the success of each individual intervention, class leaders were asked to rate their own time management ability for the week. In this case, scores of 1 indicate time management could improve, where 5 indicates their time management was well done.
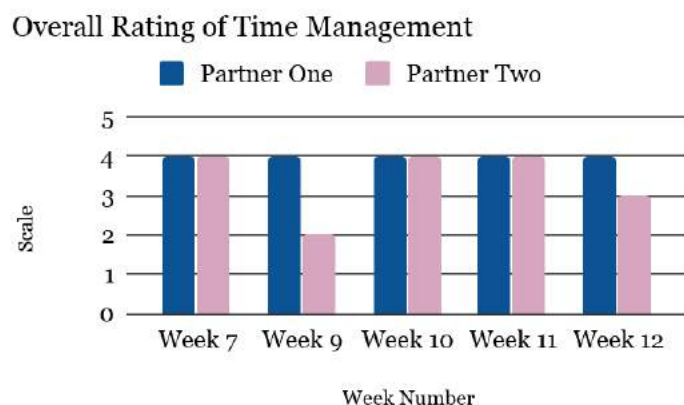


Across the weeks, despite variation within individual interventions, the general trend observed is that class leaders consistently rated their ability to manage time at a rating of 4. We can see some common reflections that may be responsible for the consistent good, but not perfect scores each week.

> Planned well, executed not quite as well.-A.M., Wk 7

> Writing first draft of their cover letter required more time and we cut the discussion session at the end.-J.E., Wk 10

> The use of embedded timers...kept the tasks moving along...still somehow ran short of time...modified the lesson plan to add more time to reading and feedback time but ...we also need to stay flexible...make any necessary modifications to our time table.-C.W., Wk 11

With such comments, and backed by in-class discussion, initial intervention stages taken before the class happens, compared to the lesson plan execution were often times very different. Though planning became increasingly easy to do, and interventions became natural for big siblings to work with, once class started there was no guarantee careful planning would make for a well-timed class. In all comments made by J.E. and C.W., there needed to be some sacrifice and real-time adjustment to the lesson plan during class. Therefore, the intervention was well executed, but in practice due to consistent need to adjust, no big sibling felt they ever reached a 5-rating.

One clear variation comes once in week 9, and again in week 12 with the same big sibling H.L.'s ratings. In week 9, since the Halloween party resulted in going 5 minutes over time on Tuesday the partner scored herself very poorly despite having done well across all other interventions. In a discussion she felt that going so far over-time was a direct result of her poor time management. Again in week 12 is an observed lower rating. In this case, H.L. explained this was due to the fact that they were less involved in the week's classes since the exams on Thursday took her away from leading the class. Additionally, on Tuesday when she was an active class leader, the first task was poorly timed, which further resulted in a low score.

## 5.2 Weekly Group Leader Results

In addition to the class leaders, there was an additional weekly survey from the group leaders collected during the five weeks of intervention. The group leaders were required to respond how frequently they kept track of time and intervened for each intervention week on a scale of 1 to 5, what type of tasks took the most time, and what methods of intervention they used.

## 5.2.1 Frequency of Actions

The first questions corresponded to checking the frequency in which group leaders checked the time, and intervened if their group was falling behind.
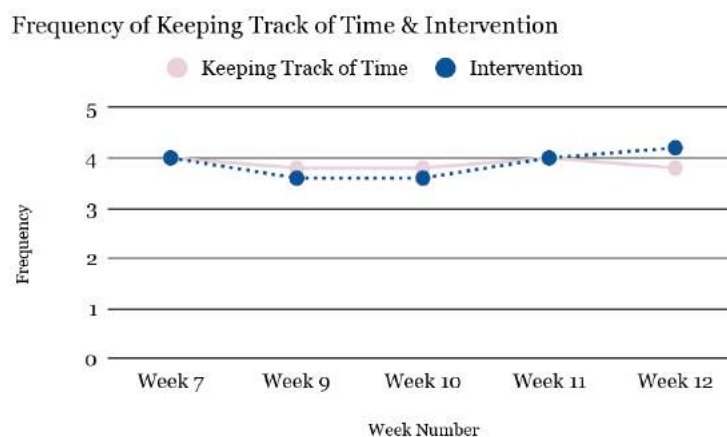


As shown in this graph, the overall frequency of keeping track of time and intervention over the five weeks shows a consistent trend that both frequency rate for each intervention weeks presented around

4. In relation to keeping track of time, the average of five group leaders' frequency in week 7 was rated at 4, however it decreased to 3.8 in week 9 and week 10. The frequency of intervention also decreased from 4 to 3.6 in week 9 and 10 as well. Although there has been a decrease in week 9 and 10 with both frequency of time tracking and intervention, they are still near 4, which means that they were good overall.

According to reflections of big siblings, the reason for decline in both keeping track of time and intervention is because of the nature of week 9 class which was a special Halloween party. On Tuesday, especially the students had to move to another classroom to decorating the classroom and trick or treating, thus there was more jobs for class leaders to manage the time and students rather than group leaders. On Thursday, one group leader mentioned that she didn't have to remind them time frequently because the students completed the task in time. Another group leader said that she couldn't track of time frequently, since she was busy with giving feedback.

> I was so wrapped up in reading my students work and giving feedback I often forgot
> to check the timer- A.M, Wk 9
> Since my little sisters completed all the task relatively on time this week, I didn't have
> to make them rush to do the task so consequently I reminded of time just moderately.-
> J.W, Wk 9

The decrease of frequency of both aspects in week 10 can be explained with the atmosphere of classroom and the nature of the task. In week 10 the students write a cover letter individually with their laptop. According to the reflection of big siblings, it was more silent than other classes we had before, and students were so concentrated on their own writing.

> In regard to timing updates, it was almost harder to vocalize timing when the class
> was silent as compared to the fashion week when everyone was talking. I felt that by
> making announcements I was interrupting their flow. -A.M., Wk 10
> I tried but people were too engrossed in writing their letters. - S.V., Wk10

However, in week 11 the frequency of keeping track of time and intervention both increased back to 4, which means the group leaders kept their pace of giving intervention and tracking time. However, in week 12 the frequency of intervention went up to 4.2, while the frequency of keeping track of time went down to 3.8. The main reason for the decrease of frequency in tracking time is because that we had only one class on week 12. From the survey, we also noticed that one of the group leaders rated markedly low on frequency of keeping track of time, because she was distracted by the comprehensive exam.

> We only met once for the week, and on Tuesday I felt I did a poor job of watching the
> time and reminding students to keep moving along. I also did not really need to
> intervene at all since they were pretty much completing each task without much
> prompting. I think the looming exam was also distracting me that class, so I was not
> as aware as normal. - A.M Week 12

**5.2.2 Methods of Intervention**

To further understand how big siblings intervened when they noticed their group was falling behind time completing each task, each group leader was asked to reflect on which interventions they most often used each week.

Methods of intervention
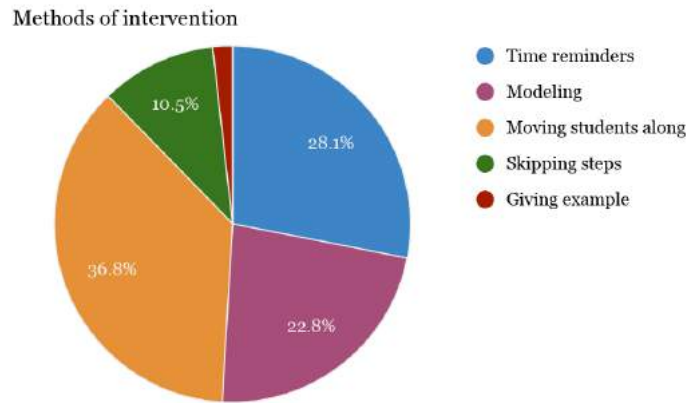


According to this graph, over the whole five weeks of intervention the main methods that the group leaders used to intervene are moving students along, time reminders, modeling. As the chart above demonstrates, intervening by moving students along was the most frequently used intervention strategies rated at 21. The following mostly used strategy was reminding time of time remaining rated at 16 and modeling was the third most used strategy rated at 13. That means that moving students along and time reminders were used almost all the time during the whole five weeks to manage time. On the other hand, some strategies, such as skipping steps and giving example, were not used as the main intervention strategy, since both of them were rated relatively low.  Six of the group leaders chose skipping steps to intervening in their group and only one of the group leaders chose giving example to intervene in her group.

Based on the data collected from the survey and reflection, we found that moving along strategy was particularly used when the students keep holding their writing until they are satisfied with it, or when they are so much into the topic and cannot stop talking about the topic during the brainstorming or discussion session.

They now seem to be aware that the different tasks have a time limit and work within

that for the most part. But, I also make sure to remind them and nudge them along

when they need it.-C.W., Wk 12

I was able to keep my little sisters moving along and watched the time so we never

ran out.-A.M., Wk 12

There were lots of reasons they came up with and still they liked to talk more about

the topic than starting writing until I move them along.-H.L., Wk 11

Usually my group tends to take time until they are satisfied with their own work, so I

had to move them along to get them in time.-J.E, week 9

In relation to the method of modeling, one of the group leader used this method to help the students to easily generate their own ideas.

> I had to model some possible questions first to get them thinking, but after that they were able to generate their own ideas fairly easily.-A.M., Wk 11
> Modeling initiated the students to write a draft faster and help them from struggling with getting ideas to write.-J.W., Wk 9

### 5.2.3 Task Completion

The next area that group leaders were asked to reflect on was which on the writing tasks took the most time to complete each week. Based on the trends, the following graph shows the top 4 tasks that took most time for students to complete during the class over the five weeks.

**Tasks That Took The Most Time**
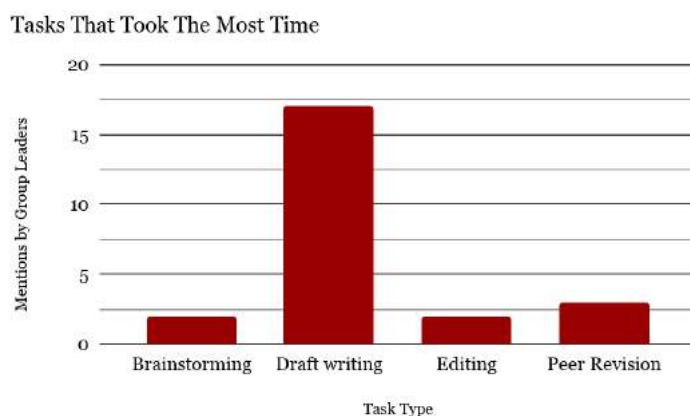


As we see from the graph above, we can find writing a draft is the most time-consuming task for the students to complete in the writing process. Among 25 responses from the group leaders over the five weeks, 17 responses were telling draft writing took the most time for the students, which is significantly high. The main reason was that there are a lot of things to write and it takes time to process when actually writing. Especially in the body section, some students who are writing the body took especially longer than other students who took care of the introduction and conclusion, because the body is the part where the most information is required.

There were several other tasks, such as writing a thesis statement, making a story based on the cartoon, and watching the video, however these responses were from week 12 which is a special week that the big siblings had exams on Thursday of that week. Therefore, we had to respond based on the Tuesday class only.

> Requires much contents in body paragraph and have a lot to write about.-J.E, Wk 9
> Ss who wrote body took longer time because they need to write all information they've got and there was lots of description about types of many different candies. -J.W., Wk 9

> They had to figure out what to do and how to do it. Even though they know the format from HW, they have to spend time processing when they actually do the writing.-C.W., Wk 10

Additionally, not enough preparation for writing, such as a strong outline or research for the topic caused lack of time.

> They were not really prepared. They had no plan when they wrote and had to very painstaking put it together as they wrote. We need clearer and better defined stages in the writing process that they are more aware of. They need to plan more formally. And we can't hope they will do some of this at home. At least one of my little sisters admitted to not even looking for a job in the interim days.-S.V., Wk 10

> Writing cover letter was quite tough for them because one of my little sisters was not very clear on what position and company she wants to apply for.-J.W., Wk 10

Since our class is very short for writing a full essay for each students, we had to make them write collaboratively by dividing the paragraph into four so that students can work on each paragraph and combine them at the end. However, some groups had more than 4 students which required them co-write with one paragraph. Thus, collaborative writing was another reason for delaying time for draft writing.

> The students had to co-write a single essay so each sentence had to be collaborated before written, and all 3 students decided to work together. It made their progress much slower.-A.M., Wk 11

> I think when they write in pairs, it takes more time because they tend to be too careful about throwing out ideas and cutting off sentences and it seemed like they cared a lot about each other's feeling, worrying about hurting the other's feeling or looking bossy. I think some students are better at pair writing, some are better at individual writing.-J.H, Wk 11

Moreover, especially in week 7, we had technological problem with using laptop for writing. It was not only the technological problem, but also the first time of using laptop in writing process. Therefore, the students took longer time for writing draft in week 7.

> It was a new type of task so maybe just less familiarity with the new process took time -S.V., Wk 7

> One of the laptops in my group didn't work very well, so we dealt with only one laptop, which was so time-consuming and hard to separate their jobs. I think we lost a lot of time writing a draft, because of technology problem. Therefore, it affect final writing and we ran out of time alloted in the final writing.-J.W., Wk 7

The second most time consuming task was peer revision, although it is remarkably lower than draft writing. Providing peer revision seems to take long time because the students usually hesitate and feel uncomfortable to give feedback on others' writing. Also, some students feel uncertainty of their feedback or peer's feedback, thus they ask for additional feedback from the big siblings.

> As for giving feedback, students seemed to be reluctant to say their opinion, thinking
> that it might offense others. For example, when they have to choose which sentences
> to put in and which to exclude, it takes time for a student to say it out.-J.H., Wk 7
>  The students had a lot of questions and wanted me to also give additional feedback. -
> A.M., Wk 9

Brainstorming and editing come for the last as being rated at a 2 at the same time, which means that they took the least time to complete. In regard to brainstorming, although they have to come up with creative ideas and as much information as possible, it is relatively done quickly than draft writing and peer revision. As well as editing, it is quite straightforward to do as the students are simply rewriting their original work based on the feedback.

## 5.3 Post-Survey Results

In order to obtain final observations, comments, and insight regarding time management interventions, all big siblings answered a post-intervention survey. This final survey was designed to help big siblings reflect on their overall time management and any perceived changes over the five-week intervention.

### 5.3.1 Perceptions of Improvement

The first inquiry made was about their overall perception if their time management improved. A score of 1 indicates they felt no improvement at all, where a 5 indicated a lot of improvement.

Overall Perception of Improvement
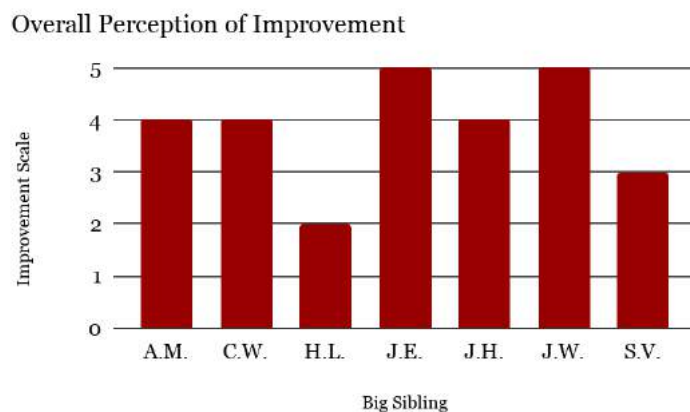
To demonstrate these perceptions of change, the big siblings also rated their initial time management abilities and their current level. In this case, 1 corresponds to very poor, where a 5 rating is very good.
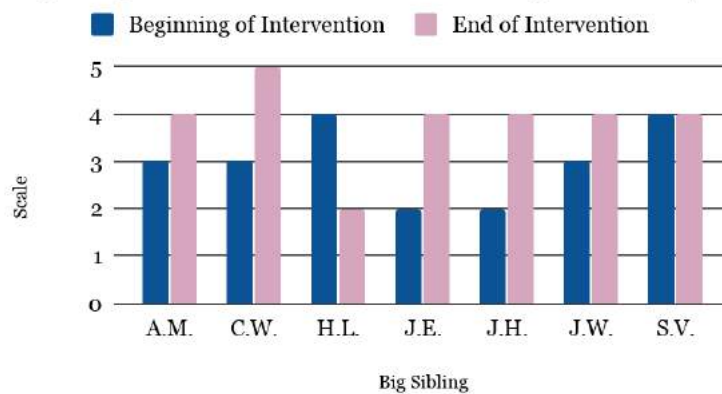
Based off perceptions of improvement, out of the seven big siblings, five of them rated their improvement at a 4 or 5.  Looking at the chart comparing their initial and final ratings of time management ability, across the board such improvement is clearly demonstrated.  Some corresponding comments include:

> We had strategies in place we all became familiar with using and by doing so became
> more aware of our time management in class.-C.W.

> I'm more aware of planning time much more carefully and being able to adjust the
> lessons during class when I notice things don't go as well as I had hoped during
> planning.  I have also found the value in certain strategies of helping move students
> along that work for my group which has made timing easier as the weeks have gone
> by. - A.M.

> At first, I was shy to hurry students or didn't pay attention to time. Now, I find myself
> checking time constantly and pushing students to work faster.-J.H.

For many big siblings increasing time awareness and ability to intervene effectively when in both the class and group leader position aided in the feeling of increased time management ability.  Through practice, intervention, and increased awareness, the majority felt they improved over time.

However, there are two cases where the big siblings did not see such an improvement.  S.V., the professor who runs the class, rated time management improvement at a 3, and before and after the intervention their score remained a 4.  Due to years of class and time management, five additional weeks of an intervention may not have been sufficient time to make a change in a more experienced teacher compared to the other big siblings who were experiencing this teaching context for the first time.

The other variation is in H.L.'s responses.  Their perception of improvement was only a 2, and her ability to manage time dropped from a 4 to a 2.  When asked to comment she replied:

> Even though I became more aware of the importance of time keeping, whenever I
> lead the class, it is so hard to manage time and finish tasks according to scheduled

time because it is totally depend on the level of difficulty of tasks. Thus, I don't think

I have fully improved in managing time over the intervention weeks in class. -H.L.

In additional discussions with H.L., she explained that she had high expectations of her own development, but felt no such change occurred.  Rather than encouraging her students, even by the end of the intervention she was still hesitant to intervene and move students along, preferring to give them more time.  In conjunction with the elements focused on in this intervention, H.L. also considered a number of additional classroom management strategies as part of her overall timekeeping ability.  It is in her perceptions of a lack control regarding variables such as keeping on exact task, and reining in conversations between little sisters, and maintaining exact timing that her overall regard for her time management decreased.  It should be noted however, that though her perceptions of herself demonstrated high expectations of her own ability, no other big sibling as group or class leader noticed her group not finishing tasks.  Therefore, contrary to the critical view of her own ability, her little sisters constantly performed well and completed class tasks, indicating that even if she did not intervene, the presence of other strategies still helped keep her students on time for tasks.

### 5.3.2 Intervention Strategy Effectiveness

The final inquiry made concerned the effectiveness of the different interventions employed over the past 5 weeks.  Each big sibling was asked to select any and all interventions they felt were very effective in time management, and which they felt were the most ineffective.  The big siblings were asked to select as many interventions as they felt were either effective, or not effective to collect the following data.



Perception of Effective & Ineffective Interventions
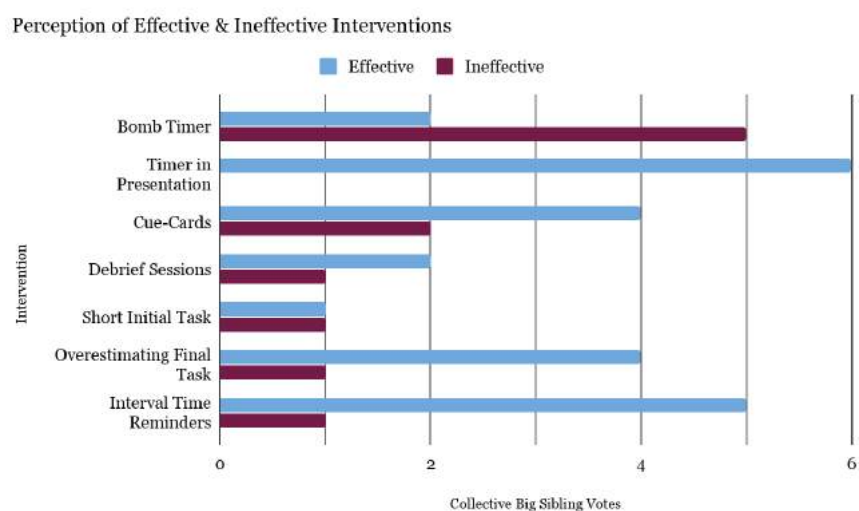
One major trend we see is that when asked, 6 of the 7 big siblings responded that the timer embedded in the presentation was the most effective means of helping manage time.

The embedded timers simply served as an easy access time check. They were very

convenient.-C.W.

> I felt the visual countdown was great for all parties so long as it was started on time.-A.M.

> Timer in ppt is a good reminder whenever I needed to see how much time left.-J.E.

Following the timer on the slides, giving interval time reminders, preparing cue cards, and overestimating final task times during lesson planning were the next top three interventions with four or five big siblings reflecting on their usefulness.

> Time reminders and timer in ppt is definitely useful to keep track of time frequently. Using cue-card was also useful to move the students along.-J.W.

> The cue cards along with materials prep made it easy to visualize what came next and plan accordingly, so I wasn't scrambling to find the right stuff for my students...overplanning at the end so that you had less to sacrifice when timing went over in class made sure we lost less interaction and sharing time than if we didn't.-A.M.

> Class leaders themselves checking time and reminding students and group leaders were helpful.-J.H.

> I guess reminders with the voice are more useful than visual aids because students were more aware of time.-H.L.

As noted through their comments, different siblings could perceive different forms of usefulness in effective interventions. A tendency in effectiveness can be tied to visual aids, such as the timer and the cue cards, audio assistance, also in the timer and with interval time reminders, and finally in planning accordingly.

> Though many interventions were successful in facilitating improvement of time management, there were a few less favored. Generally, as reflected in more weekly reflections, the bomb timer was noted as one of the least useful. Some recurring comments included:

> The bomb timer caused a loop where we couldn't see the ppt and vice versa with the timer so it was distracting and worked counter to time management.-C.W.

> Bomb timer was not bad, but wasn't that useful compare to timer embedded in the ppt timer.-J.W.

These issues with the bomb timer were addressed early in the intervention as well. Following the bomb timer, no other interventions reached a majority vote for ineffectiveness. However, cue cards were the next least-effective time management strategy receiving votes from 2 big siblings while all other interventions scored only single votes. For the two big siblings who felt it was ineffective, we received the following feedback:

> Cue cards helped a bit but still checking students' comprehension was more important than fixed and allocated time in the lesson plan.-H.L.

> If the group leader needs or has time to look at/fumble through cue cards then she is already a bit lost. It's a compensatory strategy and hopefully one we don't need.-S.V.

I response to the cue cards, their dependency on them to keep time rather than paying attention to student demands was a concern brought up. After cue cards, depending on each big sibling, the responses of what they found ineffective varied. Additional comments included:

> Planning short initial tasks became less practical as the weeks went on, and especially on Thursday where we generally skipped a warm-up because time was already too crunched.-A.M.

> Debrief sessions were helpful for group leaders to understand each task well and facilitate, but didn't directly affect students' performance.-J.H.

In other cases, impracticality and ineffectiveness of helping students were common concerns brought up when perceiving the ineffectiveness of various interventions.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Over the course of the time management intervention, big siblings were challenged to each week ensure times and tasks were completed and met in an efficient manner. Timing, and planning accordingly, took place on multiple levels and depended on the cooperation of a number of participating parties. The class leaders were required to design a lesson that could be executed in the time frame of the class, as well as manage the movement from task to task and ensure the group leaders were able to facilitate well. The group leaders worked more directly with the students, executing the plan made by class leaders, and ensuring the students completed tasks in a timely manner.

### 6.1 Rising to the occasion

A major development of note is that in the class leader weekly surveys, the majority of big siblings consistently rated their weekly ability to manage time at a 4; however in the post-survey, they also felt that their ability improved over the full 5-week intervention. According to Drucker (2006), one of the most important principle of time management is knowing where the time goes to assure the executor to make more effective use of his/her time. Since the big siblings continued to track their time and knew how they spent time on facilitating on a weekly basis, they showed the improvement in time management ability at the end. Within the course design, the writing tasks and demands become increasingly complex and difficult to complete each subsequent week, demanding that both students and class leaders push their ability to design and execute tasks well. In week 7, the class was in the paragraph stage, and starting week 9, the students were required to write full collaborative essays. Paragraphs were a collection of individual student writings that worked towards a common goal, where essays demanded more comprehensive connectivity between individual students, and for them to work towards a shared goal. As the weeks continued to involve more complex procedures, the class leaders continued to meet demands and execute well-timed lessons. Each week, though the

demand was greater than the last, class leaders consistently completed tasks and managed to end Tuesday lessons on time, and Thursday lessons only one- to two-minutes late.  In the group leader weekly surveys, it was noted that the group leaders' intervention and time-tracking showed a consistent frequency rated around 4, which is relatively high. Moreover at the final intervention week, week 12, the frequency of their intervention increased to over 4. This may be attributed to the variety of interventions, weekly reflections on how to improve each class, and surveys that aided developing awareness of time and how to manage it more effectively.

## 6.2 Importance of preparedness

Preparing materials and reviewing tasks before each class was beneficial for all parties involved, as it ensured that all big siblings were aware of their roles and what needed to be done, and allowed them to preview what materials they were working with beforehand.  As Graziano, and Navarrete (2012) discussed the importance of communication in collaborative teaching, using time to discuss and clear any confusion before the class began helped set a confident tone for the big siblings right before the little sisters arrived.  Going into each lesson with clear goals, objectives, responsibilities, and tasks in mind allowed the group leaders to function more autonomously within their groups, also allowing class leaders to visit groups within their own time to ensure things were going well.

On the flip side of big sibling preparedness came the little sister preparedness factor.  On days where students had completed homework assignments, and the homework itself facilitated learning and preparing students for the tasks ahead enabled class to run more smoothly.  Though not a central focus of the intervention, this was noted by big siblings in reflections:

> In my group, I had one little sister who did not do her research and so she did not much help in her group to write the paragraph in time. -H.L., Wk 7
>
> Writing cover letter was quite tough task for the students, because they weren't really ready to apply for a job yet. Most of my students didn't researched much...it took long to write a draft.... -J.W., Wk 10
>
> Despite having sent out homework Wednesday morning for the girls to read, and making sure they were short articles because I knew they wouldn't read them at all if they were too long, only one of the six girls in my group did any reading' on top of that it was one of my visiting little sisters. -A.M., Wk 11

Little sister preparedness became an issue as weeks went on and they were required to do more research outside the classroom.  For groups where little sisters did their required reading or research, writing went well; however this was not always the case.  Especially in week 10, as J.W. commented, other big siblings also discussed that the students who came unprepared took significantly longer to write the first draft and brainstorm ideas, slowing the entire process down.

## 6.3 A shift in responsibility

A trend that started to emerge during this intervention is a shift in time reminder responsibility. Looking at the data collected from class leaders, generally, and gradually over the course of the intervention, delivering verbal updates decreased in frequency. In comparison, group leaders maintained a steadier, and eventually higher frequency of keeping track of time within their own groups. This demonstrates a shift in responsibility. Where at the beginning of the intervention, the time reminders were heavily reliant on class leaders for delivery, eventually it was more common for the group leaders to give them. A number of reasons may account for this shift. For one, by week 11, the fourth week of the intervention, all the big siblings, not including the professor, had lead the class at least once if not two times already. This experience may have lead big siblings to begin to internalize the importance of the reminders in both roles, not just when acting as the class leader. According to the collected data, giving time reminders was the second most often used intervention to keep or get students back on task to finish on time. Another reason may be that there was a perceived lack of effectiveness when delivering time reminders to the whole class. Group leaders may have begun to pick up the responsibility of the reminders in lieu of the ineffectiveness of addressing a classroom of 30 individuals collaborating and speaking at the same time. During discussions, this became a common consideration if and when the verbal time reminders were heard or paid attention to. Part of increasing the effectiveness of one's time management also comes from having a reflective attitude, which is supported by trends seen in big sibling time management development (Chu, 2017). During reflections, as some big siblings expressed concern that class leader reminders were not enough, this also likely attributed in the shift for group leaders to take on a bigger role with time updates as awareness increased. This is also supported by the fact we saw in the group leader surveys a steady increase in intervention use over the course of the 5-week study. Increased awareness and effectiveness of group leader intervention over the class leader intervention may be attributed to this change of responsibility.

### 6.4 Writing takes time

Consistently over the course of the intervention, there were multiple learning curves. Big siblings needed to learn to work together, understand their little sisters and their levels, and learn how to create and facilitate a lesson effectively. At the same time, little sisters were learning how to write collaboratively, engage in meaningful peer feedback, work with higher order writing skills and conventions, learn the writing process, and begin to identify and use different tools and strategies across different genres of writing. For many little sisters this class was an entirely new experience, just as much as it was for the big siblings. Recalling that this intervention started around a shift in writing paragraph-level products to essay-level, this learning process and development of skills may have attributed to the need for more time. One big sibling commented:

> One problem that occurred...I needed to take time to teach my group how to form an
> outline. I asked them if they knew what an outline was, and they all replied they had

no clue. Luckily outlines are easy to figure out, so they caught on quickly...-A.M.,

Wk 9

Taking time to assist the development of certain writing skills and strategies was not uncommon, particularly in earlier weeks in the essay-stage of the course. These moments where students needed to learn and adapt to new strategies may have attributed to early time issues as well.

The writing process as noted by C.W. in previous comments, does not fit neatly into a 75-minute window of time. Each week on Thursdays the class struggled to end on time; mainly because writing took longer than typically allocated. However, in the following two weeks post-intervention, there was a shift in the class again. In both cases, the writing process began on Tuesday, instead of doing everything on Thursday. In week 13, as much as a full first draft was completed by the first day, allowing multiple revisions and types of peer feedback to be given and discussed. Week 14, brainstorming and outlining was completed before the first class's end, allowing students to begin writing right away the second day. What this demonstrates is that as the writing tasks became longer, distributing them across days was more effective since keeping the entire writing process in one 75-minute class was not always feasible.

## 6.6 Difference in perceptions

There has been some discussion about the effectiveness of verbal time intervals. Where some big siblings perceived them as useful, others did not. It is possible that when tasks are highly engaging, the ability to recognize an additional voice speaking about time may be lower than in a silent or less engaging task. During class when there are approximately 30 individuals discussing the tasks and working on writing, identifying a single call for time remaining may be more difficult to do.

Perception in team preparedness, implementation of intervention strategies, and defining successful time management proved to be a common discussion point. Across the data, particularly related to class leader surveys, partners were just as often at odds with each other in perceiving what had been done as they were in sync with how the class had proceeded. We see this most clearly between the class leaders partners in weeks 7 and 10, where across both instances the differences in perception resulted in polarizing intervention completion results. During discussions, the two class leaders, though having worked together well, had different notions of what some of the interventions meant.

A similar problem with unclear interventions had presented itself early in the process. Originally, debrief sessions were meant to be held in a full group, but many big siblings did not understand this and talked to each individual big sibling instead. After some discussion the intervention was adapted to be open to both full-group and one-on-one discussions so long as they were held. Across these differences in perception, additional discussions, reflecting on each week, and updating strategies became a part of each week. As the big siblings learned to work together and communicate more effectively, so too the time management proceed smoother. In post-intervention

weeks 13 and 14 classes went by exceedingly well. In both cases, big siblings discussed that they felt they finally found what worked for time management, lesson planning, and communicating and working with fellow facilitators and little sisters.

## 6.7 Technology

The most popular time keeping method employed was the timer embedded into Google Slides. Once learned, this process of adding a timer video to the slide was noted as both easy to do, and went over well with the little sisters and group leaders alike. The visual nature of the timer situated next to the instructions for each task ensured that it was visible, and with each glance at the PowerPoint, students and big siblings were reminded of time. The audio cues such as sirens and warning bells also served to regain attention at the end of each task. One issue that we had with this timer was that if the screen is maximized, minimized, or the pages changed, the timer resets. This was a small hiccup in this method, but one class leaders learned to work with.

The bomb timer, as discussed earlier was phased out due to the inconvenient nature where only the instructions or the timer could be displayed at any one time. Visually, the bomb timer was larger and also accompanied by a loud sound, but the sacrifice of instruction for time was not agreeable.

Unexpected difficulties arose with the Microsoft PowerPoint adaptation as well. On Google Slides, a offline version may be saved as a Microsoft PowerPoint slide. When this happens, occasionally layouts may not carry over from platforms, but the timers largely remained unaffected. However, J.H. experimented with embedding timers in Microsoft PowerPoint without starting in Google slides. She discovered that the process is much more complicated to get a functioning video timer embedded into the PowerPoint. Upon later inspection, it was found that the timer is a link to an internet video, and would sometimes open a new page, rather than starting a video on the slide itself. This method was not explored further since it was used the final day of the intervention, but demonstrated the need to adapt and work with technology does not always facilitate time management strategies well.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

Based off of the results of the following study, there are a number of lessons regarding time management in the classroom that may be addressed. Implications of timers, audio cues, collaboration, and the writing process as a whole may be derived from the findings of this study.

## 7.1 Usefulness of timers

Having a visual record of time, particularly in reference to task time remaining, can be very useful for all classroom parties. The class leaders, group leaders, and students are all aware of the

time requirements and how much time they have for each task. Big siblings continuously praised easy to see and use timers and their effectiveness in helping keep time. Some students had also commented on how they too liked the timers on the PowerPoint, for they were useful to refer to when writing and they knew how much time they had left to complete their writing task. However, there is a stage in using timers that requires some technology experimentation to find what works. Bomb timers are large and loud, but take up the entire screen; if instructions are not needed to be simultaneously displayed, this is an effective and easily used method. Google Slide timers can be adjusted for size and varied in color, duration, and sound based on what videos are available online; however, they are dependent on an internet connection, and if slides are minimized or changed the timer stops. Microsoft PowerPoint timers may be more complicated, requiring more time to adapt and adjust, but under more experimentation and use fit the same style and flexibility as Google Slides. Depending on context and time however, timers are useful across the board for all classroom participants.

### 7.2 Usefulness of audio cues

Audio cues can be helpful as well. Having a buzzer, explosion, or siren sound indicating the end of time works well to grab attention and redirect the focus from the task at hand, to the front of the classroom for additional instruction. On more than one occasion, we saw both students and group leaders' focus taken out of a task and redirected to the class leaders under certain timer volumes and sounds. One note to make is that volume checks are always important, for without them sometimes the timer is too loud, others not loud enough. These observations showed effective audio cues work well at regaining attention and pulling student focus away from their task. Verbal time reminders are also helpful in tracking time; though success and efficiency may depending more specifically on individuals giving and hearing the reminders. Giving more consistent reminders helps keep the process going smoothly, as checking in allows for a real-time progress check and adaptation of what is being done if necessary.

### 7.3 Team players

Time management when there are multiple parties involved is no small task. There were effectively seven people of various backgrounds and experiences working together at any time to facilitate this particular class. These dynamics, though unique to the context, meant that communication and clear instruction were essential to making sure things went well. Graziano and Navarrete (2012) had stated that to make a classroom with two-teachers successful, boundaries and communication was essential. The same was found in this context. As the big siblings grew closer and became more effective at communicating, each week they were able to take the writing process and consequent tasks to the next level of complicatedness and difficulty. Ugwulashi (2013) also denotes that success in the classroom is dependent on the time management capabilities of the teacher

in charge.  As each week progressed, the big siblings became better at time management and were able to overcome issues with greater ease.  The development of both relationships in a co-teaching type context and development of time management skills facilitate overall smoother classroom management.

### 7.4 Writing requires time

This semester has demonstrated the importance of being prepared on all fronts for writing classes.  It is not enough to have students come to class unprepared and write.  The completion of homework, quick and concise delivery of instruction, and facilitation of the big siblings were key components of making each class progress successfully.  Days where students came unprepared were the hardest on timing.  This means preparing students fully, and making sure there is always time for more writing is important in a writing course.  Rushing processes will not help students develop the earlier skills such as brainstorming and outlining to a more automated degree if they are constantly rushed.  The process takes time to develop from beginning to end; only when students are comfortable with earlier stages of the process will they be able to and have the energy to focus more attention on the writing and revision stages. Furthermore, as we found in this research that draft writing and outlining takes the most time for the students during the writing process, allotting longer time in those two stages will help the students put perfection as much as they can in their work.

## 8. CONCLUSION

### 8.1 Concluding Remarks

In this action research, we have examined how time management strategies effectively affect in a recently shortened writing class period. In the *English Action Writing* course, we went through a five-week intervention cycle in order to address issues that affected academic learning time, and deduced positive outcomes through deploying the blended intervention strategies; time keeping and time saving strategies. As a result, both big siblings and little sisters developed not only their awareness of time management but also ability to deal with academic learning time effectively.  These developments as noted by Drucker (Chu, 2017) and Ugwulashi (2013) are key for success in completing tasks set before anyone, especially in the classroom context.

### 8.2 Limitations

There were a number of limitations to the following action research.  For one, this action research cycle was done in a very short period of time, meaning that there was not enough development to make strong claims and to notice any emerging patterns.  Despite the first cycle having been planned for 5 total weeks, multiple interruptions made collecting and finding consistent data difficult.  For example, the first week of the intervention began on week 7 of the class, but in

week 8 students had midterm exams, interrupting the flow of the cycle; we effectively had to restart week 9. Week 9 however was a scheduled Halloween party for Tuesday, meaning that any interventions were secondary to the theme of the class, making it difficult to receive good feedback from the week. Weeks 10 and 11 proceeded as normal, but in week 12, five of the big siblings were not present in the Thursday class due to practical exams. This meant that data for that week was mainly collected for Tuesday class proceedings. Drucker notes that for time management strategies to become the most effective and to start having greater influence, at least 3-straight weeks of practice are recommended (Chu, 2017). We saw the truth in this claim in post-intervention weeks 13 and 14 where time management was at an all-time high; the practices of time management had finally been implemented long enough and consistently enough to show greater management of class time.

**8.3 Future Cycles**

This was a single cycle of a very complex action research intervention. Five weeks was only the beginning of the process of improving big sibling time management. In consequent cycles of this action research, we would propose the following adaptations or extensions of research regarding time management.

One, that the effectiveness of verbal timing updates be better tracked via big sibling and little sister observation. By checking the actual effectiveness of this intervention with the perceptions of the little sisters, it may give a better demonstration of how and when such verbal time reminders are useful. It would also be interesting to see if delivering full-class time reminders, or if giving time updates to individual groups proves to be more effective in grabbing both group leader and student attention. In reflections the following two notes were made:

> I did not notice if and when the class leaders gave updates as much. I don't know if I was that absorbed in the process, but interval reminders don't seem to be quite as effective as I hoped.-A.M., Wk 11
>
> There were lots of reasons they came up with and still they liked to talk more than starting writing until Jiwon came to our group to stop talking and start writing. -H.L., Wk 11

With these notes in mind, it is possible that despite delivering verbal updates to the full class seemed ineffective as notes by one group leader A.M., another group leader H.L. demonstrated the usefulness in moving students along when class leaders came to the group directly.

Another intervention that was not used to its full potential is the group chats. Though they had been used occasionally as reminders and to deliver updates about homework, they were not used to their full potential this cycle. Eliciting more feedback, encouragement, discussion, and review via the group chats may have proven to even further assist in class-time management. In a second or complementary cycle of research, tracking the effectiveness of this intervention via both big sibling and little sister feedback would provide better data on this concept of extending the classroom.

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# APPENDIX

*Pre-Intervention Student Technology Survey (print)*

Name:_____                    Team:_____

1. Would you like to have a way to contact your team members and big siblings outside of class?

      yes    /   no

2. If yes, how would you best like to be contacted?

   email  /  kakao  /  text  /  other _____

3.a. Please provide information for method selected.

      email:_____                    kakao:_____

      phone:_____                    other:_____

*Weekly Group Leader Survey (Google Forms)*

Team Name

How often did you keep track of time in your own group?

not at all     1     2     3     4     5     frequently

How often did you intervene when you noticed your group was not on schedule?

not at all     1     2     3     4     5     frequently

What      methods      did      you      use      to      intervene?

❏ time reminders

❏ modeling

❏ moving students along

❏ skipping steps

❏ Other:

What task(s) did you feel took the most time for students to complete? (short answer)

Why do you think the task took extra time to complete? (short answer)

Additional time management comments? (optional)

### Weekly Class Leader Survey (Google Forms)

Week                                                                                                Number

❏ 9

❏ 10

❏ 11

❏ 12

❏ 13

❏ 14

Tuesday Start Time      __:__

Thursday Start Time     __:__

Tuesday End Time       __:__

Thursday End Time      __:__

*Time Keeping Method: Questions about selection of time keeping strategies*

What      main      method      of      time      keeping      did      you      use?

❏ Bomb timer

❏ Phone alarm

❏ Watch the clock

❏ Microsoft ppt timer

❏ Google slides timer

❏ Other:

How easy to prepare would you rate this method?

difficult 1      2      3      4      5      easy

How easy to use would you rate this method?

difficult 1      2      3      4      5      easy

Would              you              use              this              method              again?

❏ Yes                    ❏ No                    ❏ Maybe

Additional comments about timer use? (optional)

*Steps taken during planning stages for time management*

Did              you              create              short              initial              tasks?

❏ Yes                              ❏ No

Did   you   overestimate   time   needed   for   final   tasks   by   at   least   5   minutes?

❏ Yes                              ❏ No

Additional planning comments? (optional)

*Pre-Class: Steps taken before class started*

Did you prepare cue-cards/cheat sheets , materials, and mark everything appropriately?

❏  Yes                                    ❏  No

Did            you            hold            a            briefing            session?

❏  Yes                                    ❏  No

Additional pre-class comments? (optional)

*In-Class: Habits during the actual class*

Did you run through warm-ups and initial tasks quickly and leave more time for later activities?

❏  Yes                                    ❏  No

How often did you give timing updates?

not at all          1          2          3          4          5          frequently

Additional in-class comments? (optional)

*Overall: Final thoughts for time management*

Overall, how would you rate your time-management?

could be better          1          2          3          4          5          well done

Final comments about time management? (optional)

### Cue-Card Template

| | |
|---|---|
| Task:<br>Time:<br>Materials:<br>Instructions: | Task:<br>Time:<br>Materials:<br>Instructions: |
| Task:<br>Time:<br>Materials:<br>Instructions: | Task:<br>Time:<br>Materials:<br>Instructions: |

### Post-Intervention Survey (Google Forms)

Do you feel your time management improved over the past few weeks?

not at all          1          2          3          4          5          a lot

If so, please explain changes you noticed. (short answer)

How would you have rated your time keeping ability in the beginning of the intervention?

very poor          1          2          3          4          5          very good

How would you rate your current time keeping ability?

very poor          1          2          3          4          5          very good

What methods of time management did you find most useful (check all that apply).

- ❏ bomb timer
- ❏ timer in ppt
- ❏ cue cards
- ❏ pre-class debrief sessions
- ❏ planning short initial tasks
- ❏ overestimating time needed for final tasks
- ❏ giving interval time reminders
- ❏ Other:

Please explain. (short answer)

What methods of time management did you find the least useful (check all that apply).

- ❏ bomb timer
- ❏ timer in ppt
- ❏ cue cards
- ❏ pre-class debrief sessions
- ❏ planning short initial tasks
- ❏ overestimating time needed for final tasks
- ❏ giving interval time reminders
- ❏ Other:

Please explain. (short answer)

Additional Comments? (optional)

# A Review of the Korean College Scholastic Ability Test
# With Proposed Modifications

*Darren Rushbrook*

*Principles of Language Testing*

### *Abstract*

*This paper reviews the English language component of the Korean College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) in terms of its reliability, validity, and the practicalities of its implementation. It finds that the test exhibits shortcomings in reliability and validity that ultimately undermine its purpose. Modifications to the test that are supported by research and theory relating to language learning and testing are proposed as a means of addressing these shortcomings. These modifications relate to the need for more authenticity in the test with regards to both texts and tasks, the need for the test to assess both receptive and productive language skills, and the need for enhanced test item quality.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLEGE SCHOLASTIC ABILITY TEST

Since 1994, on a single day in November of each year in excess of half a million tenth grade high school students have taken the eight-hour long College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) in South Korea (Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation, 2018a), which is informally referred to as the *Suneung* (수능) exam. It is a nationwide standardised test, meaning that its target population is comprised of a diverse range of male and female Korean learners in their late teens from various regions of the country, with different socioeconomic backgrounds, educational experiences and personal interests. The test consists of several subject areas: Korean, mathematics, English, Korean history, one or two subjects test-takers have selected from the disciplines of either the natural sciences or social sciences, and a second foreign language (Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation, 2018b). The English language section of the test is comprised of 45 multiple-choice questions (17 in the listening/speaking section and 28 in the reading/writing section) which have a collective value of 100 points. The degree of weighting highlights the English language section's placement among the three "major papers" of the test, alongside Korean and mathematics (S. C. S., 2013). Students are typically required to perform well in the CSAT to gain admittance into their desired higher education institutions (Lee, 2015), highlighting the relative importance of the English component.

It is apparent that a key purpose of the CSAT is to operate as a proficiency test for deciding admittance to higher education institutions. A primary function of the CSAT as a whole is "to enhance

the function of selecting the students who are properly disposed for college-level studying [by providing] the official, objective data for student selection" (Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, 2001, p. 32). The English language portion of the test has a further purpose of assessing whether learners possess an English language proficiency that is required for learning in university (Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, 2001). While these objectives indicate that the CSAT is a proficiency test, in facilitating learners to demonstrate their proficiencies it is considered that test items "should match the content and level of the high school curriculum in order to measure the ability learned through the experiences of school education" (Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, 2001, p. 33). This evaluation of how much learners have accomplished with respect to curriculum objectives indicates that the CSAT is also intended to offer a measure of learner achievement. This strongly implies that the learning objectives of the curriculum are relevant to the learner competencies required for university learning. Hence, although the CSAT is a proficiency test, it should be aligned to the content of the high school curriculum.

A consistency between high school curriculum objectives and university requirements can be considered to be rooted in English's broader political and sociocultural significance in Korea. English has been described as a "national religion" (Demick, 2002). Past social policy has even reflected a desire to establish English as the second official language (Shim, 2003). The fusion of English and Korean language is deemed to show modernity (Lee, 2006). An individual's ability to use English is considered to reflect personal competence and high socioeconomic status (Choi, 2007). English use is considered beneficial for both the individual and the collective. Chung and Choi (2016) highlight that "English proficiency is perceived to be an indispensable tool in helping individuals and the country as a whole gain competitiveness in today's globalised world" (p. 282). This has ensured that education policy in Korea has emphasised developing the English communicative competence of the population to facilitate Korea's emergence as a leader in regional and global markets (Gibson, 2015).

Reflecting this approach towards English education, the general high school curriculum specifies the following as a key objective:

> [Students will be able to] develop qualities and attitudes of a democratic citizen connected to the global society and fulfil the ethics of caring and sharing based upon a sense of responsibility to the national community.
>
> (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 6)

In addition, the high school English curriculum highlights learning goals in which students will be able to:

(1) Understand the necessity to communicate in English.

(2) Effectively communicate in daily life about general topics.

(3) Understand diverse foreign information in English, and put it into practical use.

(4) Through English education, appreciate diverse cultures and introduce [Korean] culture in English.

(Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008, p. 44)

These goals seem to emphasise the practical use of English as a lingua franca to develop learners' intercultural communicative competence. In supporting learners in achieving these goals, the curriculum focuses on learner development of the four traditional language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the ability to integrate them (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008).

Following on from these curriculum learning objectives, an emphasis on developing learner competence in using English communicatively seems to be promoted for classroom instruction. This is illustrated by the implementation of the Teaching English in English (TEE) scheme for in-service teachers to promote communicative teaching at the individual classroom level (Chung & Choi, 2016). Furthermore, research has found that high school curriculum textbook materials prioritise functional English use over an explicit focus on grammatical knowledge (Yuasa, 2010; Wook, 2016) and provide
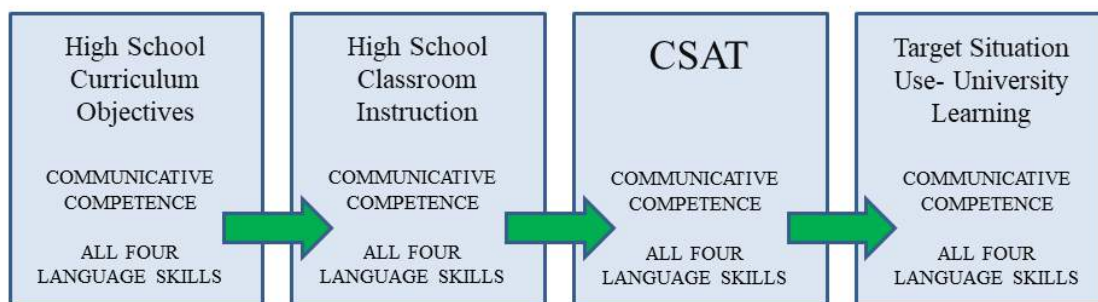


Figure 1: The purpose of the CSAT

activities for the development of all four language skills (Wook, 2016). This indicates that measures are in place to support classroom instruction in reflecting the pursuit of the curriculum goals of fostering communicative competence through a multi-skilled approach to language learning.

This focus on skills development and intercultural communicative competence apparently correlates with the need for students enrolling into Korean universities to possess the agency to continue developing all four English language skills, with there being an increasing focus on productive abilities in light of Korean universities' pursuit of internationalisation (Williams, 2016). In consideration of the outlined learning objectives, the CSAT can be reasonably expected to sit in alignment with high school curriculum objectives supported by communicative classroom instruction and the English language proficiency requirements of the target situation of learning at a Korean university, thereby demonstrating the consistency across learning objectives, classroom instruction and language assessment advocated by Katz (2012). Figure 1 (above) represents the relationship of these components. The CSAT's purpose is

to test learner attainment of the high school curriculum learning objectives so that they have the proficiency to perform effectively at university, and to reflect this attainment in the form of a summative score.

## 2. A REVIEW OF THE RELIABILITY, VALIDITY & PRACTICALITY OF THE CSAT
### 2.1 Reliability

The degree of reliability of a test can be considered "the extent to which a test produces consistent scores" (Farhady, 2012, p. 39). The consistency of test scores can be considered to be effected by a range of factors including the test scoring procedures, the test administration procedures, the mental and physical conditions of test-takers, the number of the test items, and the quality and precision of the test items (Farhady, 2012). The reliability of the CSAT therefore needs to be reviewed in light of such factors.

On the face of it, the CSAT could be considered to be a generally reliable test. The testing method requires students to answer multiple-choice questions by selecting one of five given answers. The scoring system is computerised, and is operated and overseen by a vast number of computer experts and education officials (Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, 2001). The CSAT could therefore be deemed a reliable test in terms of score consistency because it provides an objective score free from rater interpretation or bias, allowing the CSAT to provide the required objective benchmark for university admission. As a result, the government's educational policy continues to place greater emphasis on CSAT scores as being the most reliable and fairest means of deciding university admissions (Sung & Chung, 2018).

Strong efforts are also made to ensure that test-takers sit the test under highly-comparable conditions despite test sittings simultaneously taking place the length and breadth of Korea. Strict administration procedures are adhered to which place a strong emphasis on test paper security, testing environment and timing (Choi H. M., CSAT invigilator, personal correspondence; Kwon, Lee & Shin, 2015). Two parallel forms of the test paper featuring the same test items are administered to reduce the prospect of cheating. Wider social measures are also taken to enhance score reliability, including steps taken to reduce traffic to ensure test-takers arrive to the test on time, and the grounding of flights for the listening portion of the test to ensure that all students have to same opportunity to hear the audio text (Park, 2017). In addition, the English component of the CSAT provides instructions in the learner's L1 as a means of enhancing procedural clarity and reducing the cognitive burden upon them so that they can focus their attention on interpreting the L2 input (Lee, 2011). These measures contribute to test reliability because they aim to ensure a situation in which comparable groups of the target population completing the test at different sittings achieve consistent scores. Therefore, both the scoring and the administration of the test seem to emphasise reliability in the test outcomes.

Nevertheless, there are some features of the CSAT that have the potential to undermine its

reliability. A significant one is test anxiety. The CSAT is a colossal event in a young Korean person's life. The outcome of the test is considered by many to impact the trajectory of an individual's entire life, including job prospects and marriage (Park, 2017). Preparation for the test is considered by many to start in infancy rather than at secondary school (Diamond, 2016). It is therefore a high-stakes exam that places test-takers under a huge amount of pressure. In extreme instances, this pressure has resulted in the development of mental health issues for test-takers and (attempted) suicides (Bonanomi, 2017). Such potentially debilitating pressure can be reasonably expected to negatively impact the test performance of many learners. The level of test anxiety that accompanies the CSAT simply cannot be overlooked as a threat to the reliability of its scores.

The length of the CSAT is another factor that can negatively impact reliability. If a test is too short, it could be considered an unreliable indicator of a test-taker's abilities. It is necessary for a test to be long enough to cover an appropriate sample of the content to be tested (Lunz, 2009). In light of this, amendments to the English listening portion of the CSAT to include more test items in 1996 and then again in 1997 have potentially increased the reliability of the scores it provides (Ryu, 2018). However, when considering that seemingly for practicality issues all CSAT subjects are tested on one day, the reality is that learners engage in a total of eight hours of testing. The English component of the test features third in an itinerary of five subjects (Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, 2001). Some learners may be fatigued by this stage, and it could be suggested that the English listening portion of the test is an area in which an adverse effect on reliability is more likely to occur. This is due to the test broadly adopting a general single play policy for the transient input of audio text. Although learners are afforded a second playing for set-items (where more than one question corresponds to a specific passage of input), this only occurs once per test (Kwon & Park, 2017). This means that learners are required to take on a relatively high cognitive burden when there is a prospect that many of them are fatigued. Learner fatigue that arises from the length of the CSAT can therefore be considered a threat to score consistency.

The quality and precision of test items can be considered to have a larger impact on test reliability than the number of items and length of the test (Lunz, 2009). Since 1993, the CSAT incorporated a broader choice of five options for test-takers to select from when responding to the multiple-choice items (Lee, 2011). This could be deemed a measure that has enhanced score reliability because it potentially limits the probability of students identifying the correct answers through guesswork alone. Nevertheless, it has been highlighted that the multiple-choice format of the CSAT test items reflect the similar styles of other tests that are prevalent in Korea and that learners can call upon "test-wise" strategies they have developed through their testing experience to enhance their performance in the CSAT (Lee, 2011; Ko, 2016; Lee, 2017). This introduces a further concern that undermines the CSAT's arrival at a reliable score for English language ability.

It is further apparent that the CSAT has not been consistent in featuring precise test items. For

example, the English portion of the 2015 CSAT featured a multiple-choice item that was clearly unreliable (Taylor, 2014). One of the distractors provided a correct answer in addition to the option intended to be the correct answer, resulting in a non-functioning item (Farhady, 2012). This highlights that there is potential for choice distribution in CSAT items to be a source of unreliability. This potential is further underlined by the formulation of test items to resemble English learning materials provided by Korea's Educational Broadcasting Service (EBS), which have in fact been found to feature numerous errors (Finch, 2004). It seems necessary to note that the example given above did not significantly impact reliability as the test scoring process counted both viable options to be correct (Kwon, Lee & Shin, 2015). However, this was only after the issue was raised by test-takers. This gives rise to the possibility that instances of nonfunctioning or malfunctioning items in the CSAT that are not highlighted by test-takers may go unnoticed, negatively impacting the reliability of test scores.

### 2.2 Validity

Validity can be considered the most important aspect of a test. Even if a test were deemed reliable, if it were not also valid "a test can be consistently telling us something that is either just wrong, or is not what we think it is" (O'Sullivan, 2012, p. 17). Hence, "if there is no validity, there is no test" (Akbari, 2012). Akbari (2012) breaks validity down into four overlapping components: face validity, criterion-related validity, content validity, and construct validity. The CSAT will now be reviewed in relation to each of these components.

The face validity of a test is the perception of stakeholders that the test appears to measure what it is supposed to (Farhady, 2012). Despite instances of test items being of poor precision being made public (as discussed in section 2.1 above), the CSAT seemingly enjoys strong face validity. The CSAT's adoption of the multiple-choice format can be expected to afford it face validity among test-takers because it is a test format that is common in Korea. In addition to the familiarity of the format, the size and officiality of the occasion of the CSAT, the efforts invested in preparation for it and the perceived consequences of the scores attained means that it is apparently afforded strong face validity among its stakeholders.

A more objective form of assessing a test's validity is to consider whether it has been validated against any other pre-validated tests that fulfil a comparable function. This is termed "criterion-related validity" (Akbari, 2012). It is not clear whether the CSAT has been officially validated in relation to any other test. Among proficiency tests commonly applied in Korea, research has identified the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to be the test that demonstrates the strongest predictive validity. It has been found to correlate with university students' English grade point average (GPA) scores (Lee & Lee, 2003), as well as their conversational classroom performance (Lee & Lee, 2004). However, learners who score well on the CSAT have often been found not to achieve a comparable score on the TOEFL (Kim, 2012, cited in Ko, 2016). Research has indicated that this is because test-takers apply

significantly different strategies to negotiate each test (Ko, 2016). If the CSAT and TOEFL are considered to be comparable tests, these finding indicate the CSAT's objective validity as a proficiency test could be questioned.

Content validity requires that "the content of the test should be a reasonable and representative sample of the total content to be tested" (Farhady, 2012, p. 38). However, it seems that the CSAT demonstrates little content validity. While the high school curriculum does not specify the certain topics in which content ought to be presented to learners, it does outline language functions and provide samples of language chunks that can fulfil those functions. A broad range of functions are specified including expressing imagination, persuading, expressing sympathy, confirming facts, ending or continuing conversations, checking comprehension, and expressing interest (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008). Such functional language content reflects the curriculum's learning objectives of developing learner competence in practical communicative English use. This linguistic content is presented through a broad range of topics in high school textbooks. These topics are wide-ranging and include careers, sports, human rights, travel, different cultures, IT ethics, literature, and school life (Wook, 2016). However, the CSAT does not seem to offer a sample of either this range of topics or the varieties of functional language items that can be expected from classroom instruction that is compatible with curriculum learning goals. This is illustrated by the observation that "almost half of the spoken items are related to schools, morality, giving useful information and offering help" (Lee, 2017). It has been found that at least some test-takers believe that the CSAT items generally do not reflect everyday life scenarios which relate to the learning objectives of developing communicative English use (Hwang, 2006).

A consideration of content validity should also consider whether it accurately measures "the sample of behaviour it sets out to measure" (Akbari, 2012). The learning objectives of the curriculum and textbooks for classroom instruction indicate that learners should be tested on their use of all four language skills to demonstrate aspects of communicative competence. Communicative classroom tasks specified by the curriculum include learner participation in role plays and presentations. The textbooks for classroom instruction support the classroom implementation of such tasks (Wook, 2016) with an emphasis on developing communicative competence (Yuasa, 2010). The CSAT therefore seemingly has to measure behaviours that demonstrate aspects of communicative competence for it to validly fulfil its purpose.

The types of test items of which the CSAT is comprised do not appear to measure the requisite behaviours for it to be considered a valid test. The CSAT relies upon the use of multiple-choice test items to test all four language skills. The test is divided into two sections: listening and speaking, and reading and writing. However, the selected-response nature of the multiple-choice items makes them suitable for only assessing linguistic knowledge or the receptive skills of listening and speaking, and not functional for assessing productive language skills (Brown, 2012). Combining a direct approach for

assessing receptive skills with attempts to indirectly assess productive skills using the same selected-response items therefore seems to result in speaking and writing capabilities not being measured validly by the CSAT.

Steps had been taken to redress this lack of validity in the CSAT's assessment of productive skills by introducing the National English Ability Test (NEAT) as a replacement for the English portion of the CSAT. The NEAT was to incorporate a broader range of task items to assess learners' use of all four language skills (Bachman, 2013). However, partly due to the impracticalities of administering and scoring the communicative test on such a large scale, the NEAT was not implemented to replace the English section of the CSAT (Oh, 2013). It would appear that reliability concerns also affected this decision. The scores of the existing English component of the CSAT were felt to be less prone to being influenced by the relative affluence of learners in comparison to NEAT scoring, which it is believed would have given an unfair advantage to more affluent learners who had easier access to additional private education. This seems to demonstrate an emphasis on practicality and reliability over validity. The permanent shelving of NEAT meant that education authorities reverted back to the endorsement of the English component of the CSAT without taking further steps to enhance the validity with which it assesses productive skills (Jung & Jung, 2014).

The validity of the CSAT's testing of receptive skills can also be called into question due to the nature of the input texts used. CSAT reading texts have been found to be of more difficult readability levels than texts found in high school textbooks (Kim & Ma, 2012). Furthermore, although it has been observed that modifications to the listening section of the English CSAT has resulted in a broader range of language functions being incorporated in the test over time (Chung, 2008), and this can be considered to have a positive impact on its content validity, the listening texts used in the assessment cannot be deemed authentic, nor do they exemplify authentic features of speech (Lee, 2017). This lack of authenticity seems to undermine the construct validity of the CSAT.

Construct validity "asks the question of what it means to know a language and what the nature of that knowledge is" (Akbari, 2012). The test therefore needs to be based on defensible language learning theory. In light of the high school curriculum objectives for learners to develop a communicative competence in using all four language skills, the appropriate grounding for the CSAT would appear to be a communicative approach to language learning. This approach holds that language is acquired through its use (Prabhu, 1987), which indicates that competence can be assessed by measuring language performance (Morrow, 2012). A valid measure of a test-taker's communicative competence would require input samples that reflect authenticity, which can be considered absent from the CSAT listening texts (Lee, 2017). Furthermore, the validity of reading texts used in the CSAT is questionable due to their length not being representative of typical academic texts and the degree of text cohesion not reflecting that found in authentic written academic text (Kim, 2016). The construct validity of the CSAT therefore seems to be undermined by the lack of authenticity in receptive test items in

addition to productive language skills not being directly tested.

Given the huge cultural and social importance of the CSAT to individual test-takers and the country as a whole, it seems that the test's consequential validity should also be considered. This brings issues of social consequences and fairness into considerations of validity (Messick, 1996). The CSAT has been found to influence classroom instruction in a way that provides a strong example of negative washback, which damages consequential validity (Messick, 1996). Negative washback is evident when a test "impedes… the accomplishment of educational goals" (Bailey, 1996, p. 268). Findings that Korean students demonstrate only a moderate English ability despite a strong desire to develop a high proficiency suggest that the educational goal of communicative competence has not been fully nurtured in classrooms (Education First, 2017).

The social and cultural importance of the CSAT means that its lack of content validity undermines the requirement that classroom instruction aims to achieve curriculum learning objectives. Preparing to obtain a good score on the CSAT seemingly takes priority over language learning. Both students and teachers have expressed views that high school textbook materials do not adequately prepare test-takers to score optimally on the CSAT (Hwang, 2006). In the high school classroom, textbooks are typically not taught in their entirety, with only parts deemed by the teacher as being directly related to the CSAT being covered (Hwang, 2006) and EBS materials being used for instruction instead because they are directly comparable to CSAT test items (Finch, 2004). The instructional aim in many classrooms therefore becomes the teaching of CSAT test-taking skills rather than English language skills development (Hwang, 2006). Measures such as the TEE scheme and communicative textbook activities to promote a communicative language teaching approach in the classroom are consequently subverted, as are curriculum evaluation guidelines highlighting that "performance testing" ought to be carried out in the classroom as a means of assessing productive language skills (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008, p. 25). Furthermore, Williams (2016) found that negative washback from the CSAT encourages "passive agency" among learners. This passive agency results in students graduating from high school not possessing the learning skills required to support their use of English language skills at university (Williams, 2016). Hence, rather than the CSAT having the desired function outlined in Figure 1, its actual impact appears to be better represented by Figure 2.
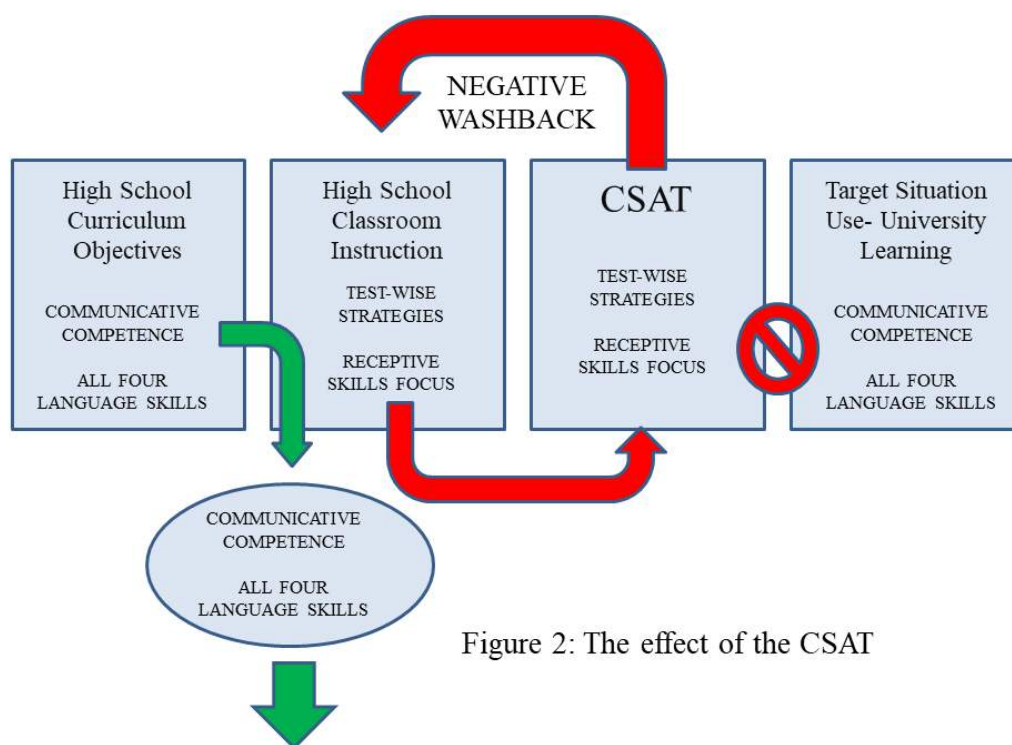
Figure 2: The effect of the CSAT

One measure taken to make the interpretation of English CSAT outcomes fairer was the introduction of absolute grading rather than norm-referenced scoring (Sung & Baek, 2015). This meant that scores ought to be viewed as a reflection of learner actual test performance rather than a test-taker's performance relative to the testing population as a whole. Although this can be deemed a fairer measure, consequential validity remains undermined by CSAT's lack of cohesion with the high school curriculum resulting in it seemingly purporting to measure competences that it does not.

**2.3 Practicality**

For a test the size and scale of the CSAT, practicality is a key concern. The effective practical implementation of a test includes a consideration of the logistics relating to the test-taking environment and the scoring procedure (Farhady, 2012). The measures taken to support the test's scoring and administration procedures, as well as broader social measures taken to enhance practicality, were referenced in the above review of the CSAT's reliability (see section 3.1). The CSAT's social and cultural significance supports its practical implementation in that much of the country comes to a stand-still to make the test run as smoothly as possible (Park, 2017).

It is also important to note that (as outlined in section 2.2 above) one of the reasons for the shelving of the NEAT was concerns of the practicality of scoring such a large volume of productive communicative tasks. It could be suggested that to make such scoring practical, the power and responsibility for scoring would have to be devolved to locally-based education officials. A lack of centralisation could result in the perception of scores becoming less consistent and reliable. Furthermore,

advocating such delegation of power in a society that has high power distance as an inherent cultural characteristic, particularly in the spheres of education and work (Buja, 2016), can be deemed unlikely to be successful. Thus, any recommendation for modifications of the CSAT with the aim of improving reliability or validity has to be balanced with the practicalities of implementing such a large-scale test in the specific cultural context. As Weigle and Jensen (1997) note, "practicality can be a major limiting factor in creating an instrument that incorporates all the other aspects of test usefulness" (p. 205).

## 3. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND MODIFICATION PROPOSALS

The prior review has highlighted some apparent shortcomings in the CSAT when it comes to reliability and validity. It would seem that in addressing these shortcomings there are particular areas for improvement that could be prioritsed. These interrelated areas can be identified as the need for more authenticity, the need to assess use of both receptive and productive language skills, and the need for enhanced item quality. Each of these areas will now be addressed in turn. Their importance to enhancing reliability and/or validity is outlined and relevant modification proposals relating to each area of improvement are offered with justifications.

### 3.1 The need for more authenticity

Weigle and Jensen (1997) identify authenticity as being a paramount consideration for assessment development. Authenticity can be deemed worthy of prioritisation because it can be considered a central facet of developing communicative competence. Two aspects of authenticity in communicative language teaching could be deemed *authenticity of task* and *authenticity of text*.

The CSAT appears to demonstrate little authentic application of English due to its current format and content (Hwang, 2006). To support the curriculum objective of developing the communicative competence of learners, it can be deemed essential that classroom tasks strive to simulate real life contexts within which learners can develop their competent use of English. This in turn requires the CSAT to take steps to incorporate authentic tasks to reflect curriculum and instructional aims and enhance its content and construct validity. The CSAT's inclusion of such test items would enhance its consequential validity and increase the prospects of test washback having a positive effect by promoting communicative language instruction in the classroom.

The same effects could result from the CSAT's inclusion of input texts that are more authentic. This can place more emphasis on the use of such texts in the classroom. As with authentic tasks, authentic texts can be considered essential in facilitating the development of communicative competence. Lee (2017) highlights that by "[b]eing exposed to elements in authentic texts, learners can gain the necessary language resources with which they can communicate in real situations" (p. 231). Authentic texts therefore provide learners with the linguistic resources to perform in authentic tasks in order to foster their communicative competence.

CSAT speaking and listening texts have been found to lack authenticity in a number of ways. It has been observed that the texts often contain inauthentic expressions, intonation and speed, and also sometimes feature incomplete transactions (Lee, 2017). In addition, the context of monologue texts have been found to be unclear, with information such as the purpose and recipient of the communication not being made explicit (Lee, 2017). A lack of authentic context and content means that test items accompanying such texts cannot be valid in measuring students' discoursal and sociolinguistic competencies, which can be considered central pillars of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Thus, the CSAT can be considered to not assess test-takers' competence in decoding and interpreting authentic English speech and therefore not produce a valid measure of their communicative competence. Issues relating to the authenticity of text content and context therefore seemingly warrant attention in the interests of test validity.

However, in ensuring validity it is essential that input texts are comprehensible to the learner (Krashen, 1982). Completely authentic texts are likely to be largely incomprehensible to test-takers in light of their English proficiency levels, thus being an unfair tool for assessment. Thus, it is advocated that contextualised contrived texts containing more authentic linguistic features are employed to satisfy the need for both authenticity and comprehensibility to assess students' communicative competence.

Listening is often interactional in real life. It is a skill that is typically used during verbal exchange. A need for authenticity suggests that listening should be assessed in such an interactive integrated skills setting. However, to measure listening through students engaging in interactive tasks in the particular testing context of the CSAT would raise concerns relating to reliability and practicality similar to those that prevented the adoption of the NEAT. An alternative and more practical way of enhancing validity would be relaxing the single play policy for particular types of listening texts. If a text is one in which the test-taker would be able to assume an interactive role in the authentic context, double play of the text ought to be provided in light of practicalities preventing test-takers from interacting with the speaker to ask for repetition or clarification. The opportunity to listen again in these contexts can be considered more reflective of real life language use and therefore a fairer and more valid means of measuring a test-taker's communicative competence. It could also help to address the threat of test-taker fatigue to score reliability by reducing the cognitive burden on test-takers.

CSAT reading texts have also been found to lack authenticity, resulting from their lack of cohesion and elaboration in comparison to authentic news and academic texts (Kim, 2016). This has led to observations that CSAT texts are too difficult for test-takers to comprehend (Hwang, 2006). It has further been indicated that accompanying test items are relatively easy, resulting in a situation where test-takers can rely on vocabulary knowledge to correctly answer reading test items without engaging with the text (Hwang, 2006). This suggests that the items do not carry validity in measuring reading competence. It can be suggested that to enhance test validity in this respect test item quality has to be improved (see section 3.3 below) and reading texts are made more coherent and of an appropriate length

to reflect the authenticity that would require test-takers to engage with them.

In summary, with respect to the authenticity of CSAT texts the proposed modifications are:

(1) CSAT listening and speaking texts should contain linguistic features that are more reflective of authentic language use while still being at the appropriate level of comprehensibility for the test-taker.

(2) Sufficient context should be provided for CSAT input texts from which purpose and appropriacy can be recognised by test-takers.

(3) The CSAT should incorporate a double play policy for listening texts whereby the context dictates that more than a single exposure to the input would be more representative of real life interactive language use.

(4) CSAT reading texts should be more authentic in terms of their cohesion and length in order to facilitate test-taker engagement with them.

For addressing the issue of incorporating authentic tasks into language assessments, Weigle and Jensen (1997, p. 211) offer the following recommendations:

- Both receptive and productive skills should be tested.

- Listening and reading (receptive skills) should precede writing and/or speaking (productive skills).

- Composition and speaking tasks should sythesise information from reading and listening passages.

- The content of the exam should be directly connected to content that has been covered in class.

These recommendations highlight an overlap between the need for authenticity of task and the need to assess both receptive and productive language skills. These issues will therefore be considered when the proposed measures to facilitate the CSAT's measurement of all four language skills are addressed in the following section.

## 3.2 The need to assess use of both receptive and productive language skills

In light of the high school curriculum's adoption of a communicative approach, the need to assess all four language skills can be deemed a priority for the CSAT if it is to function with enhanced validity. Communicative competence requires learners to use the language as well as understand it. The ability to produce with English is therefore an integral part of measuring the communicative competence of test-takers. An effective assessment of all fours skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing by

the CSAT would better represent learning objectives and enhance the potential for positive washback on classroom instruction to enhance learner communicative competence, thus enhancing the test's consequential validity.

As has been outlined in section 2.2, the CSAT does not appear to validly assess speaking and writing because of its reliance on selected-response items. An inclusion of product-response test items would appear vital to the CSAT assessing productive language ability. It is therefore proposed that items of this character that can be balanced with the practicalities of administering and scoring the CSAT are incorporated into the test to improve its content and construct validity.

The practicalities of the CSAT context and the need for consistent and objective scoring can be considered to dictate that any test of speaking is required to be an indirect test. Folse (2006) highlights that dialogue fill-in tasks can be used as productive indirect test items for speaking. Productive-response tasks where test-takers are required to fill-in aspects of "authenticised" speech transcripts can be considered to offer a more valid reflection of the four pillars of communicative competence-grammatical, discoursal, sociolinguistic and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)- than the current selected-response CSAT items. In completing such items, test-takers can be required to consider aspects of grammar, discourse, appropriacy, and the application of expressions for strategic functions. This approach to assessing speaking ability does not include the direct speaking element of classroom tasks specified in the curriculum, such as role plays and presentations, indicating that content validity would still be somewhat undermined. However, it still offers a more effective measurement of speaking skills and can still be considered to enhance the CSAT's construct validity.

The potential for the CSAT's testing of the productive skill of writing is also restricted by practicalities relating to test administration and scoring. The high school curriculum specifies writing tasks such as summarising, note-taking and writing short accounts. However, the strict time schedule for the test's administration and the relatively short time afforded to each subject suggest that assessing writing through test-takers' writing of accounts is impractical. It can be further suggested that writing under such timed conditions does not demonstrate authentic language use (Weigle, 2012). In addition, the time and labour involved in assessing such compositions can be considered impractical. Reliability concerns relating to consistent and objective scoring also arise from the prospects of scoring written compositions. In this respect, content validity is seemingly necessarily undermined by reliability and practicality concerns.

However, it seems that it would be possible to incorporate writing into the CSAT through integrated skills test items that reflect curriculum-specified tasks of notetaking the key ideas from a speech, noting-down memos and telephone messages, and recording daily routines. These can all be considered to potentially take the form of authentic tasks reflecting Weigle and Jensen's (1997) recommendations that a productive task follows a receptive one and sythesises information from input texts (as outlined in section 3.2). This reflection of real life language use can be deemed to provide a

more valid measure of test-takers' communicative competence, indicating enhanced construct validity in addition to greater content validity.

An important part of communicative competence is grammatical competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). While the use of the type integrative skill items alluded to above may demonstrate a degree of authenticity, note-taking may not reflect a test-taker's grammatical competence. Thus, to further improve the CSAT's construct validity grammatical competence seemingly needs to be assessed. Rather than relying on multiple-choice selected-response items, it would seem more valid to use productive-response items such as cloze tests or gap-fills. Such test items can be considered to offer a more valid measure of grammatical competence than multiple-choice questions because they assess grammatical ability rather than grammatical knowledge (Jones, 2012). Hence, a test-taker's competence in appropriately using grammar is assessed instead of merely testing for grammar items that have been stored in their long-term memory, focusing on real life use and thus enhancing the CSAT's construct validity.

The construct validity of CSAT items that measure the use of receptive skills can also be increased by enhancing their authenticity. In addition to productive and integrated skills test items, receptive skills items should offer a realistic purpose for listening rather than reflecting an approach where the purpose for listening or reading is just to get a good score (Hubley, 2012). This authenticity provides a better measure of communicative competence, as outlined in the previous section.

Hence, the modification proposals with regard to addressing the need for both receptive and productive skills to be assessed are:

(1) The CSAT should include a variety of test item types where selected-response items are used to test receptive skills and productive-response items are used to test productive and integrated skills.

(2) The CSAT should incorporate some integrated skills items.

(3) CSAT items should reflect authentic use of English, as far as is practicable.

### 3.3 The need for enhanced item quality

The inclusion of productive-response items on the CSAT gives rise to concerns of the practicality and reliability of scoring. Such items can encourage variable answers. This has to be balanced with the practical concerns of test papers being scored efficiently and, where possible, electronically and the reliability concerns of reaching consistent and objective scores. Insisting on one particular set answer could be considered unfair if other answers are viable (Madsen, 1983), indicating that a degree of answer variability ought to be tolerated. It could be suggested that balancing this with practicality and reliability concerns could be tackled in two ways. Firstly, an exhaustive list of possible answers could be prepared as scoring criteria and the use of any one of those answers is scored correctly. This would appear to be the fairest and most valid measure for indirect speaking items (Madsen, 1983). Secondly, items can be constructed for which only one possible correct answer can be given. This would

seem to be most workable for the implementation of cloze tests to assess grammatical competence (Madsen, 1983). It seems that there needs to be items for which some limited answer variability is tolerated so that practicality and reliability concerns can be balanced with the need for improved test validity.

It appears that the precision of receptive skills test items featured in the CSAT can be enhanced to improve validity and reliability. Although the introduction of five response choices for CSAT multiple-choice items could be seen as a measure to prevent test-takers relying on guesswork to achieve correct answers, it can be suggested that this has been undermined by the quality of the distractors. The task of having to create an item with more distractors can be considered to enhance the risk of items being non-functioning or malfunctioning. As has been shown, instances have arisen where there have been more than one correct answer for a CSAT item (Taylor, 2014) and research has demonstrated that test-wise strategies or vocabulary knowledge have been applied to negotiate the items rather than the application of any broader reading or listening competence (Lee, 2011; Ko, 2016; Lee, 2017). It can be suggested that to have fewer distractors of higher quality would enhance validity by ensuring that learners are required to apply their understanding of English and promote reliability due to the consistency of scores not being undermined by some learners relying on test-wise strategies or vocabulary knowledge to achieve correct answers (Lee, 2011).

To achieve this, it seems important that each distractor in a multiple-choice item has particular and varying reasons why it may or may not be a plausible answer. Hubley (2012) refers to this as being the "Goldilocks formula" for writing multiple test items. This formula could be applied to support the development of CSAT multiple-choice items to prevent the occurrence of non-functioning or malfunctioning items and ensure that learners cannot rely solely on test wise strategies or vocabulary knowledge to answer correctly. Such modifications would require learners to rely on their listening and reading competencies, consequently enhancing the CSAT's validity as well as its reliability.

Thus, the proposed modifications with regards to enhancing item quality are:

(1) There should be a tolerance of answer variability within limited parameters for certain product-response items.

(2) Any multiple-choice selections to be made by test takers should feature fewer distractors as a means of ensuring that they all have a functioning purpose.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The CSAT can be considered to have a number of shortcomings in providing a valid and reliable assessment of the communicative competence of test-takers that require addressing. It has been proposed that enhancing the authenticity of test items in terms of both the texts used and the tasks students are required to complete can help to enhance validity. The need for a variety of test items so

that productive use of language can be assessed in addition to receptive skills also seems essential in making the test more valid. In addition, the quality of the test items themselves should demonstrate the precision to accurately and reliably assess such capabilities.

This paper has offered proposals for general modifications to the CSAT to enhance their reliability and/or validity. Rushbrook (2019) further provides suggestions as to how these modifications can be realised within the CSAT assessment context by applying them to sample CSAT items. Validity, reliability and practicality in this context are finely balanced. However, it is also necessary to bear in mind that a disregard for validity can result in the undermining of learning objectives. The negative washback provided by the current CSAT format seems to exemplify this. The suggested modifications therefore aim to provide a basis upon which its washback effect can be a positive one that encourages communicative language teaching in the classroom, as is required by the high school curriculum, classroom instruction materials and learners' target situations. This can allow the CSAT to effectively fulfil its intended purpose. Without an enhancement of the CSAT's validity, it would seem that this objective cannot be achieved.

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# Being Polite or Appropriate? The Sociolinguistic Aspect of Politeness in Speech Acts and a Pedagogical Approach for Pragmatic Awareness and Strategies Focused on Refusal

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***Abstract***

*The Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) is widely considered to be a universally valid model, although it has not gone unchallenged. This paper seeks to define the sociolinguistic perspective of being polite in speech acts, including requesting, apologizing, and refusing, by reviewing several studies and identifying multiple social and cultural parameters, such as distance, power, age, and gender within cultural settings. This informs the identification of a pedagogical approach for pragmatic awareness and strategy use focused on the speech act of refusal, which requires a high level of pragmatic competence in being able to recognize appropriate norms in a given context. With regards to learning a second or foreign language, appropriateness seems to be adequately replaceable and politeness as a form of behavior could be decided by the value of context. Moreover, it is suggested that in EFL settings explicit instruction in raising pragmatic awareness and learning strategies focused on refusal is required to account for social variables such as cultural values which could naturally lead to differing ways of expressing excuses and reasons.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

To become a communicatively competent speaker in a second language (L2), we should be able to convey the intended meaning of our speech to the interlocutor. Pragmatic ability encompasses both having knowledge about pragmatics and the ability to apply it (Cohen, 2010). In other words, when someone has pragmatic ability, it means that he or she has an understanding beyond the literal meaning of a certain utterance and is capable of interpreting the intended meaning. This intended meaning is based on the assumption of typical linguistic and non-linguistic behavior within a particular speech community, or on beliefs about how people should behave (Shimanoff, 1980). From this sociolinguistic point of view, meaning plays a crucial role in speech acts because they entail specific social functions, such as requesting, refusing, inviting, complementing, and so on (Cohen, 2010). According to Austin's speech act theory (1962), there is locutionary meaning, which refers to the literal meaning of an utterance, illocutionary meaning, which refers to the social-functional

meaning, and perlocutionary force, which drives the result or effect of the utterance in the specific context.

Among speech acts, behavior expressing refusal is typically not a comfortable communicative social action because it is an act of saying "no." If we have to do this in our L2, it becomes much more stressful and harder because of the complexities of the social situation requiring a high level of pragmatic competence (Chen, 1995). For instance, when I was working for a German company, a visit by our Asian headquarters superiors was scheduled. After a big presentation, all of us went to celebrate our business success and had dinner together. The president of the Asian headquarters offered some food to my colleague who was sitting right next to him, and she said, "No, I don't want it!" She said it in a very loud voice and with a certain intonation. His face looked embarrassed and surprised. Her English was not superior, but I thought she could speak fluently enough that she would know how to refuse politely or appropriately. She might have known to say "No, thanks. I am full," but she was nervous because someone at the top of the hierarchy was sitting right next to her. Nevertheless, she did not have the particular pragmatic knowledge or awareness of how strong "I don't want it!" sounds. This type of pragmatic failure happens due to a lack of social practice in the context of the target language. As many researchers have stressed (Cohen and Olshtain 1981; House 1982; Wolfson 1981; Blum-Kulka 1982; Thomas 1983), pragmatic failure happens even to a grammatically and lexically advanced L2 learner because of the cross-linguistic difference (Widdowson, 1978) in the speech act. Performing appropriate speech acts in the target language is challenging since learners use their prior or shared knowledge (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) that has been developed in an L1 context and try to apply it to an L2 context. In the L1, it would be relatively easy to process the pragmatic difference between literal meaning and hidden meaning, whereas learners need to process how to apply this shared knowledge in the L2, which makes it really hard without social practice in an L2 context.

As shown by the above example, the utterance my colleague made did not mean to be sarcastic or make the president upset, but she caused him to lose face without realizing that she was being impolite. How could anyone confidently argue a certain expression is polite or not when it comes to a second language? Additionally, how could we learn to refuse politely or appropriately? This paper asks:

(1) How is politeness defined from a sociolinguistic point of view, and how is this perception applied in the speech acts of requesting, apologizing, and refusing?

(2) What would be an effective pedagogical approach to L2 learning when it comes to raising pragmatic awareness of the speech act of refusing?

First, politeness is defined by reviewing several works of literature. Then, the extent to which politeness features in the speech acts of requesting, apologizing, and refusing is analyzed with

reference to existing research. Thereafter, three pedagogical studies focused on raising pragmatic awareness of the speech act of refusing are closely reviewed, and the review is concluded with a discussion of the implications.

## 2. Being polite vs. appropriateness

Brown and Levinson (1987) explain the notion of politeness with reference to "face." Face works as a universal concept which is based on self-image and trying to maintain or save one's face during interaction, while not threatening the face of others. Goffman (1967) describes face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (1967, p. 5). He regarded face as an individual image in an event and that it is judged by others in a social context. Therefore, face becomes a public image that has to accompany the socially agreed image. He calls the effort people make to save their own face, "face work." In relation to the same concept, Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to "face-threatening acts" (FTA) which lead to linguistic behaviors of finding speech strategies to minimize or eliminate these threats while we interact in the contexts of ordering, suggesting, advising, etc. Brown and Levinson also argue that there are two kinds of face: positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to the desire to be appreciated and pleased by others, and negative face refers to one's want to be unobstructed by others (1987, p. 61).

Although Brown and Levinson (1987) have influenced many scholars, and a vast amount of research indicates politeness as being a fundamental aspect of socio-communicative verbal interaction (Locher & Watts, 2005), there have been challenges to this being a universally valid model of politeness. According to Mao (1994), the notion of face can be characterized by public and self. This researcher claims that Goffman's definition of face indicates that it comes from the individual self becoming public, which stresses the public influence on the need to do face-work, whereas Brown and Levinson's face is characterized as more individual and self-oriented. Therefore, Mao asserts that Brown and Levinson's universal "face-saving" should be reviewed as discourse behaviors in other non-Western cultures where relationships between speakers and speech strategies are focused upon (Held, 1989). Moreover, Locher and Watts claim that "Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory is not, in fact, a theory of politeness, but rather a theory of facework, dealing only with the mitigation of FTA"(2005, p. 10). Furthermore, as Locher (2004) indicated, polite interaction encompasses both appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behavior, and politeness is a more interpersonal level of communication (Halliday, 1978). Meier (1997) also added to the framework of Brown and Levinson that there are no features that have the same value or the same function across languages by giving the example of the Japanese *sumimasen* as a multi-purpose *excuse me*, which is used in situations where *excuse me* would not be used in English" (1997, p. 22). Meier also proposed that appropriateness be used as a substitutional definition for politeness in ESL/EFL pedagogy. She raised the question of the

necessity of teaching students how to perform speech acts appropriately and what would be inappropriate.

How appropriate your speech is would decide whether you have communicative competence. Appropriateness determines how your utterances fit the context and whether they have pragmatic effectiveness with regards to relationships and specific sociocultural activities (Hymes, 1972). Because Brown and Levinson's framework (1987) is explained by focusing on the strategies of mitigating threats to face and using face-work to avoid face loss, judging whether some behavior is polite or impolite by considering appropriateness would be necessary (Locher & Watts, 2005). Meier (1997) criticizes the face-work of Brown and Levinson because it cannot be disregarded that positive or negative face constitutes various meanings across cultures. As for indirectness, Bialystok (1993) suggests that languages themselves may differ in directness, and that relationships decide the extent of politeness in language. With all of the disputes between politeness and appropriateness, cross-linguistic variation needs to be studied through an examination of the use of patterns in speech acts. More about politeness and appropriateness can be found out through reviewing studies relating to the speech acts of requesting, apologizing, and refusing.

## 2.1. Requesting

The act of requesting is concerned with politeness and indirectness. Lee (1983, p. 108) suggests that given the sample propositional content, it is possible "to increase the degree of politeness by using a more and more indirect kind of illocution." According to the study of indirectness and politeness in Blum-Kulka (1987), politeness and indirectness are very much linked in conventional indirectness, but not always in unconventional indirectness. Moreover, the aspects of these associations will also change cross-culturally. Blum-Kulka's (1987) study examined native speakers' perceptions of politeness and indirectness in English and Hebrew and they used a typology of request patterns developed within Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP). The results showed a cross-cultural validity of the directness and politeness in request strategies, which meant speakers of both languages showed that there is a distinction between directness and politeness, and that politeness is perceived differently from indirectness. This differs from Brown and Levinson's model (1987) which focused on the strong link between politeness and indirectness, and the universal validity of consequent face-work. It could be suggested that politeness is not merely a function of redressive action, but is also subjected to the cultural variations embedded in speech acts, indicating that politeness it is not universal.

There are further studies in various languages, including French (Held, 1989), Chinese (Lee-Wong, 1994), Persian (Eslamirasekh, 1993), and Spanish (Mir, 1993), concerning the relationship between indirectness and politeness. They challenge the linear relationship between indirectness and politeness by showing directness can be appropriate or polite in making a request, or that some

cultures value directness. Additionally, Beebe and Takahashi (1989) questioned the stereotypical characterization of the Japanese as being indirect, and House (1989) also showed that even *please* could be considered less polite because it escalates the directness of request by making the force more noticeable. In a study of Korean students' perception of politeness (Suh, 2009), Korean students could not even distinguish between politeness strategies of native speakers in the situation of requests being made between intimate friends. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) support this result by claiming that while perceiving the linguistic difference between native and target languages is challenging, it is more challenging to produce what is perceived even if perceptions are precise.

## 2.2 Apologizing

Apologizing is the behavior of expressing regret and an acknowledgment of responsibility on the part of the offender (Olshtain & Cohen, 1989). According to Searle (1979):

> [A] person who apologizes for doing A expresses regret at having done A. Thus, the apology act takes place only if the speaker believes that some act A has been performed prior to the time of speaking and that this act A has resulted in an infraction which affected another person who is deserving of an apology. (p. 4)

Therefore, performing an apology speech act is a quite personal and individually oriented behavior which is culturally derived. As Coulmas (1979) points out, even with a social situation of a universal nature, an apology should not be considered performed within a set of fully equivalent formulae because cultures are different and this might lead to different requirements and ways of apologizing in particular situations.

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) investigated cross-cultural aspects of speech act realization patterns and compared the realization patterns of two speech acts across languages. These speech acts were requests and apologies performed by native and non-native speakers. Focusing on apologies, there were a number of factors affecting the speaker's decision to apologize, and the most significant factor was the degree of violation or the seriousness of the offense (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). Additionally, there are also cultural, individual, and contextual elements to consider when making apologies. For instance, coming late to a meeting could be regarded as more serious in an American setting than an Israeli one. Therefore, if an Israeli person comes late for a meeting in an American context and does not apologize appropriately, then he or she might get into trouble. On the other hand, some people might apologize more than others at a different individual level of apology. At a contextual level, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) explain that the physical setting where the offense happens was perceived as being highly relevant. For example, bumping into someone in a crowd can be considered a lesser offense than bumping into someone in open space. As Faerch and Kasper (1984) suggest, the degree of offense in terms of the extent to which it violates norms of behavior in a given

socio-cultural context reflect on the speaker's' role and relationships. Apologizing appropriately is highly affected by social parameters such as distance, power, age, and gender within the cultural setting.

## 2.3 Refusing

The act of refusing is a complex one requiring a high level of pragmatic competence (Chen, 1995), as it is the speech act of saying *no* directly or indirectly to an interlocutor in response to an initiating act (i.e., a request, invitation, or offer). Therefore, refusals are regarded as FTAs (Chen, 1995) in that they require face-saving properties and the nature of the linguistic form is indirect in performance. Moreover, due to the face-threatening nature of a refusal, it involves lengthy negotiation which makes it more complex. Therefore, it would be much more challenging for non-native speakers (NNSs) to perform (Salazr et al., 2009). According to Kasper (2006), politeness is regarded as a form of linguistic behavior which is determined by the value of the context. Kasper's dynamic view of interplay in a social context indicates that norms of appropriateness in given contexts would vary across cultures and speech communities.

In the study of Salaza, Safont, and Codina-Espurz (2009), a taxonomy was presented for the analysis of learner refusals by adopting a conversational perspective. The taxonomy was based on a sizeable repertoire of routines (Coulmas, 1981). It was found that language learners should realize refusals in natural conversation in order to increase their pragmatic competence and appropriate use of them within a social situation. Although an original taxonomy was formulated by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), Salaza (et al., 2009) proposed a modified taxonomy from a discourse perspective based on Kasper's (2006) interlanguage pragmatics. Through conversation analysis, it was found that those making initial refusals in face-to-face conversations ended up accepting after lengthy negotiations if the petitioner was persistent. Other studies including Sadler and Eröz (2002), Kwon (2004), and Fe´lix-Brasdefer (2003), show how politeness could be perceived similarly or differently in light of cross-cultural factors.

Sadler and Eröz (2002) investigated American, Lao, and Turkish refusals using the taxonomy developed by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990). The most common strategies of refusal by American NSs of English were found to be giving excuses or reasons, and then making statements of regret. They did not favor direct responses like *no* or the same type of responses showed by Lao and Turkish students. According to Kwon's (2004) study, American speakers sounded more direct in their tone of refusal than Korean speakers because Koreans used more mitigation devices such as the softening of refusals by giving more diverse and longer reasons than American English speakers did. One highly effective factor was power relations in interaction, along with sensitivity to status and hierarchy. Fe´lix-Brasdefer (2003) also found that Americans speaking English were more direct when refusing while Latin Americans showed a lesser degree of directness. Moreover, Latin

Americans who were advanced learners could not provide a direct *no* to a person making an invitation, which implies that indirect refusal was preferred to save face. The results of these studies imply that refusing directly is not preferred, but there are differences in the degree of refusing indirectly which require socially built knowledge of politeness and appropriateness. This knowledge provides a variable in performing speech acts regardless of language proficiency level (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998).

## 3. Strategies and the effect of instruction upon learner pragmatic awareness of refusing

Allami and Naeimi (2011) investigated the issue of refusal production by Iranian EFL learners by exploring the frequency, shift, and content of semantic formulas with regards to learners' language proficiencies (lower-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate), the status of interlocutors (lower, equal and higher), types of eliciting acts (requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions), and realization of strategies. Thirty Iranian EFL learners and 31 native speakers of Persian participated in the study. Thirty-seven American speakers were also part of the study as a means of observing the difference in strategies employed to make refusals and examine if the L2 proficiency of Iranian learners affect their possible pragmatic transfer. The students were given a DCT (discourse completion task) and had to respond quickly for 20 to 30 minutes in the researchers' presence. The responses were reviewed to determine which language forms (semantic formulas) were present or absent when compared with the responses of the 31 native Persian speakers' and those of the 37 native speakers' of English.

The results show that the most common semantic formulas used by Iranian learners with regard to the context, including the status of interlocutors and the types of eliciting, were varied in detail. The frequency of semantic formula expressing excuse and reason was expected to be higher in interactions with interlocutors of higher and equal status than in those with lower status in all cases. Refusals by the Americans typically started with expressing a pause filler or direct refusal, then expressed regret, and finally gave an excuse (e.g., Umm, I'm sorry. I have already made other plans. I can't reschedule on such short notice.) Iranian speakers typically used the order of regret preceding excuse and reason, especially when refusing a higher-status person with an elaborate reason (e.g., Sorry, I need my notes. I have promised to give them to someone else). Americans gave excuses and reasons directly, while Iranians resorted to referencing their poor physical wellbeing. In terms of refusing offers, Iranians comparably used the statement of regret (e.g. Sorry, I feel comfortable here.) more frequently than Americans did (especially to interlocutors of a higher status). Americans gave a statement of gratitude, but refused more directly by giving negative willingness (e.g., It sounds great, but I really don't want to move away).

As the results indicate, refusals tended to be sensitive to contextual variables. Moreover, Iranian EFL learners normally used a greater proportion of semantic formulas and more polite

strategies per response than native speakers of American English. This means that Iranian cultural norms and social variables, including status and relationships, tended to soften the impact of the refusal assertion because, just like in Japanese culture, a refusal means not only "no" to a request but also "no" to a personal relationship (Kanemoto, 1993). Finally, in terms of the issue of the effect of language proficiency on possible pragmatic transfer, a positive correlation existed because a lack of linguistic resources was found to prevent possible pragmatic transfer to the target language. From this study, we could learn that refusal strategies function to reassure the interlocutor that he or she is still approved of but there are some necessary reasons for the refusal, and also that proficiency level has a positive correlation with pragmatic transfer.

Alco´n and Pitarch (2010) investigated how teaching acts of refusal at discourse level is effective with regards to learners' awareness and execution of refusals. Ninety-nine students who were enrolled in a degree in translation at a university participated in the study, and bilingual English and Spanish students were excluded. They used different audiovisual sources such as excerpted scenes from the series *Stargate* featuring the target speech act type (refusing requests) and required social distance (and power difference). The pedagogical model employed included four optional steps: Step one was *Identifying refusals in interaction*; Step two was *Explaining the speech act set*; Step three was *Noticing and understanding refusal sequences*; Step four was *Negotiating and exploring learners' use of refusals.* Steps one to three were used during the instructional period, and step four was used thereafter.

Step one, *Identifying refusals in interaction*, was planned as a teacher-led activity in the classroom to help learners to become aware that speech acts are co-constructed by two or more interactants over multiple turns. Learners watched selected sequences from the series *Stargate* in English to identify the refusal sequences. Step two, *Explaining the speech act set*, was also planned as a teacher-led activity in the classroom to provide pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic information related to the issue of directness and use of mitigation in the performance of refusals. The teacher provided explicit instruction of speech act sets indicating the power, social distance and degree of imposition involved in the situation of both direct and indirect ways of refusing. Step three, *Noticing and understanding refusal sequences*, focused on having learners pay attention to the performance of refusals from a discourse approach. Learners answered awareness-raising questions which consisted of an exploration of the issues presented in steps one and two. After self-correcting their answers, they watched the film sequence again.

The results of the study focused on verbal reports through pre-tests and post-tests, and paid attention to linguistics (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation), pragmalinguistics (finding a way to refuse the request), and sociopragmatics (mitigating the refusal taking into account contextual factors such as the power of the interlocutor and social distance). The results showed that pedagogical intervention had a great deal of influence in the execution of refusals and the cognitive change observed after the treatment. Additionally, the learners' awareness of pragmalinguistics and

sociopragmatics increased after the instructional treatment. The study shows that the process was understood as three underlying concepts of intention, attention, and awareness. In addition, it indicates that explicit instruction using audiovisual input was effective in raising awareness of speech acts of refusal. Learners not only increased their awareness level of pragmatics but also developed interpersonal skills through the study because they realized communication is not a one-way process, it is always a two-way process of identifying and understanding an interlocutors' feelings, approval, and concern for new information.

Kondo (2008) investigated whether EFL learners' use of refusal strategies changed after explicit instruction, and what kinds of pragmatic aspects the learners become aware of. Thirty-eight Japanese English learners (JEB) of intermediate-low proficiency participated in this study. A further group was comprised of 46 Americans (AE) who were from California or Arizona. The Japanese participants were divided into two groups. Both received instruction on speech acts once a week for 12 weeks. The instruction covered different types of speech acts- not only refusals but also complaints, apologies, proposals, and so on. The procedure of speech act instruction had five phases: (1) *Feeling (warm-up) phase*; (2) *Doing phase (DCT, roleplay)*; (3) *Thinking phase (Exposure to speech acts)*; (4) *Understanding phase (cross-cultural communication notes)*; (5) *Using phase (DCT and roleplay for new situations)*. After completing the first four phases with sufficient exposure to the vocabulary and expressions that can be used in performing the speech act, students were encouraged to practice what they had learnt in the fifth phase.

The results show that there were differences in the strategy choices on the AEs and JEBs. Interestingly, as demonstrated by the Iranian EFL learners in Allami and Naeimi's study (2011), Japanese learners preferred expressing regret by using expressions such as 'I'm sorry', more so than Americans. On the other hand, Americans preferred to use utterances classified as 'Positive Opinion', 'Gratitude' and 'Future Acceptance' more often than the JEBs. This means that Americans tended to use positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987). One significant finding was that pragmatic strategies are not likely to be used by learners unless they are explicitly taught. In addition, the length of utterance was found to have something to do with attending to the face of an interlocutor, and longer utterances and the use of various speech act strategies were used by Americans to show politeness. Therefore, Japanese learners' short responses could have been considered impolite by the Americans. This study not only shows the procedure for a pedagogical approach for developing student awareness, but also shows how the use of specific strategies vary with social norms, suggesting that many formulaic expressions have highly social functions (Kondo, 2008).

## 4. Discussion and Implications

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987) has been widely used in empirical studies of speech acts, although it has been criticized in light of its weaknesses (Meier, 1995). The first criticism is the notion of the universality of politeness with reference face-threatening acts, face-work and

indirectness. It is difficult to define this as a precise phenomenon because face and the extent of indirectness vary across cultures, leading to different ways of performing speech acts (Meier, 1997). In a socio-cultural context, appropriateness seems to be adequately replaceable in second and foreign language acquisition. The most important and common feature found in many literature reviews about the three speech acts of refusing, requesting, and apologizing is that face-work or indirectness in politeness is not universal. Rather, they differ not only at a cultural level, but also at an individual and contextual level. With regards to the speech act of requesting, Blum-Kulka (1987) criticized the universality of the politeness framework as research results showed that politeness and indirectness differed in request strategies, which validates the cross-cultural perspective. In relation to apologizing, multiple factors including cultural, individual, and contextual elements affect the selection of apology strategy, in addition to the level of violence or seriousness of the offense. The nature of refusing means that face is always threatened, and the behavior which demonstrates politeness is decided by the value of context. Kasper (2006) adds that appropriateness varies across cultures and speech communities. As learnt from a few studies regarding refusals (Sadler & Eröz 2002; Kwon 2004; Fe´lix-Brasdefer 2003), politeness could be perceived with similarities and dissimilarities cross-culturally. Koreans gave more excuses and reasons for refusal using indirect forms, whereas Americans used less indirect refusals. Moreover, Latin Americans could not even say *no* directly. Another point worthy of note is that individual and contextual levels of politeness differ across cultures, leading Takahashi (1989) to stress that perceiving such linguistic differences is tough, and it gets tougher when you have to produce them, even if you clearly perceive them.

In terms of a pedagogical approach and teaching strategies for the speech act of refusing, there are a few points to learn and apply for future teaching in the pragmatic classroom. Firstly, a teaching procedure to develop a pragmatic awareness of refusal is needed. In Alco´n and Pitarch's (2010) and Kondo's (2008) studies, an identify, explain, notice and explore process seems to be introduced as a teaching approach, along with the requirement that instruction is explicit. Even though learning and becoming more strategic in terms of using patterns is important, it is also necessary to be aware of the social variables that exist that could lead to variance between social groups. Moreover, acknowledging that the extent or level of expressing excuses and reasons could vary is also crucial to communication as a process of identifying and understanding interlocutors' feelings, approval, and concern for new information (Alco´n & Pitarch, 2010). Therefore, in light of the complex process of considering cultural values, situations, interlocutors, and other variables, learners need to be taught about these variances in language use by providing them with dynamic and diverse pragmatic awareness so that they can create their own interlanguage (Kondo, 2008).

In conclusion, despite its influence, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model can be criticized, and the notion of politeness seems to be regarded as a function of repair work. Speech acts are highly influenced by cultural variation and other variable factors including gender, status, distance, and relationships. Therefore, when learning a second or foreign language being appropriate would be

more suitable than being polite. Since appropriateness is highly situation-dependent, contextual factors are most important in being appropriate (Meier, 1997). Also, it would be crucial to acknowledge and understand that what a speaker perceives as being a positive context in one culture may be negative in another since values and interpretations of specific utterances vary. Lastly, teachers should keep conducting research to support the planning and implementation of a cross-cultural pedagogy to help EFL students develop pragmatic awareness and appropriate language use.

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# SLA Interactionist Theory in Computer-Mediated Language Learning

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***Abstract***

*SLA (second language acquisition) interactionist theory emphasizes* the role of interaction in language acquisition. *According to the theory, interaction can play an essential role in language learning by providing a rich linguistic environment for learners.* The theory *can be reflected in both designing CALL (computer-assisted language learning) tasks and evaluating performance by providing hypotheses about what constitutes meaningful interactions. The purpose of this study is to explore how the theory is used in second language education and CALL research. Specifically, this review focuses on how SLA interactionist theory is reflected in CALL design and evaluation, and aims to understand relationships among theory, design, and evaluation. In relation to SLA interactionist theory, the findings of the three studies reviewed in this paper indicate that computer-mediated communication is an effective tool for promoting student interaction and thereby facilitates language development.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Interactionist SLA theory offers an evaluative perspective for designing tasks and evaluating performance by providing hypotheses about what constitutes meaningful interactions (Chapelle, 2004). Interaction plays a significant role in second language (L2) learning by providing a rich linguistic environment for language learners. The characteristics and benefits of interaction have been described by many researchers and the descriptions seem to be very similar. Sim, Har, and Luan (2010) mention that:

> [T]he most useful interactions are those with occurrences of negotiation of meaning that help learners to comprehend the semantics and syntax of the input, and the comprehensibility of their own linguistic output, as well as those that offer ample opportunities for a focus on form. (p.62)

According to Smith (2003), the benefits of meaning negotiation include making input more comprehensible through input modifications, eliciting pushed output, providing feedback, and enabling learners to focus more attention on certain aspects of linguistic forms. Chapelle (2004) also states that:

> [A]lthough the benefits of the various types of interaction would not be expected to be mutually exclusive, the three types of benefit might be characterized as opportunities for

negotiation of meaning, obtaining enhanced input, and direction attention to linguistic form. (p.2)

The findings of many previous studies have revealed that communication that is mediated by technology can provide learners with increased opportunities to engage in meaningful negotiations (Cheon, 2003). Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is defined as "communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers" (Herring, 1996, p.1). Many researchers have pointed out the benefits of CMC as a way to promote interaction. According to Kitade (2000), CMC is beneficial for L2 learning because of its ability to provide collaborative native speaker to non-native speaker interaction, including contextualized communicative interaction. In addition, as Youngs, Ducate, and Arnold (2011) mention, CMC can provide the opportunities for students to be engaged in large amounts of authentic input. Synchronous forms of CMC combine aspects of oral and written discourse, as well as unique features, to provide a communicative environment with new rules, demands, and expectations. CMC also creates opportunities for student participation as well as monitoring. As documented by many studies, learners tend to produce more output in CMC than the amount produced face-to-face in the classroom (Beauvois, 1998; Chun, 1994). Youngs et al. (2011) point out that output often leads to negotiated interaction. During interaction, participants engage in the negotiation of meaning, making modifications in order to communicate successfully. In other words, modifications occur in an attempt to make utterances comprehensible to interlocutors.

According to Ellis (1999), interaction is generally "used to refer to the interpersonal activity that arises during face-to-face communication. However, it can also refer to the intrapersonal activity involved in mental processing" (p.3). Intrapersonal interaction occurs not only during face-to-face communication but also through computer-mediated communication (Chapelle, 2005). He also mentions that "the intrapersonal interaction that takes place in the learner's mind is expected to engage the type of deep mental processing that may promote acquisition" (p.3). Chapelle (1998) states, "it is useful to view multimedia design from the perspective of the input it can provide to learners, the output it allows them to produce, the interactions they are able to engage in, and the L2 tasks it supports" (p.26).

In the present study, the role of SLA interactionist theory in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) studies has been selected for exploration. The important role of interactionist theory in second language learning has been proved by many researchers. I have a particular interest in SLA interactionist theory because it is related to many other SLA theories and principles, such as collaborative learning, the input hypothesis and the output hypothesis. However, I only have slight knowledge of how interactionist theory can be linked to CALL activity design and evaluation. Hence, the aim of this study is to find out how main principles of interactionist SLA guide CALL task design, and how teachers can use these principles for CALL evaluation. The study attempts to look at these

research questions:

1)  How is SLA interactionist theory reflected in CALL activity design?
2)  How is SLA interactionist theory reflected in CALL evaluation?

It was assumed that tasks in each of the studies subsequently reviewed would reflect SLA interactionist theory in different ways. The reason behind this assumption was that there are many different principles that are relevant to the theory and various aspects to look at, including the negotiation of meaning, the provision of salient input, and the production of comprehensible output. It was also assumed that the theory would be reflected in the evaluation processes used in all three studies.

This paper is organized into three parts. This introduction has offered a brief explanation of SLA interactionist theory and its relation to CALL. The following literature review introduces and examines three studies on CALL tasks that reflect SLA interactionist theory. Each study review briefly explains the tasks and how they are related to SLA interactionist theory. It then gives a detailed description of the points of the study that are related to the research questions and how the study offers informative answers. In the final conclusion and discussion section, the research question is revisited, and how the tasks and information from the research can be applied in the classroom is discussed.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Kon (2002), a listening task was designed in an attempt to examine students' incidental vocabulary acquisition via a web-based listening activity. The researcher drew her idea from SLA interactionist theory. She specifically focused on the roles of input and interaction during incidental vocabulary learning when designing the task. In discussing SLA interactionist theory, Kon stated that "input is apperceived when learners notice salient input, which they then comprehend through semantic and syntactic processing" (p.6). This also coincides with one of Chapelle's (1998) seven features of instructional design which suggests making key linguistic characteristics of input salient. According to Kon, "focus on form is in effect when a student encounters a comprehension problem during a listening activity and examines the linguistic element which is the source of the problem" (p.7). This is related to one of the principles of task-based language learning illustrated by Doughty and Long (2003) which is referred to as "focus on form." This is also relevant to the negotiation of meaning since the examination of linguistic elements comes in the form of interactional modification.

In terms of procedure, the participants were asked to listen to an academic lecture. In addition to the lecture, they were also provided with different modes of presentation of the input including overhead transparency notes and picture slides. After listening to the lecture, the students were asked to complete a dictation posttest, a delayed posttest, and a set of multiple choice listening

comprehension questions. Kon (2002) evaluated the effectiveness of a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) listening comprehension activity in terms of students' incidental vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. Specifically, she examined the students' actions based on their interactional modifications and the learning strategies they employed. She also examined to what extent the students' learning could be accounted for by aspects of the input and interaction.

The results of the study showed that the listening comprehension activity had a positive effect on incidental vocabulary acquisition as evidenced by the increase in students' mean scores on both the posttest and delayed posttest. In addition, the results also showed that the visual aids such as overhead transparency notes and picture slides provided sufficient opportunities for students in terms of incidental vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension. Kon (2002) states that the validity of the study would have been improved if the learners had been provided with enough time to complete the CALL activity, and if she had gathered a larger sample of students.

In terms of the research questions, this study indicates that SLA interactionist theory was reflected in the CALL task design since the tasks encouraged learners to focus on form, negotiate meaning, and notice salient input. The evaluation process also reflected SLA interactionist theory. The researcher examined the students' actions in terms of their interactional modifications. She also examined to what extent the students' learning could be accounted for by aspects of the input and interaction.

Canto, Jauregi, and van den Bergh (2013) designed five interactive tasks in digital environments in order to create opportunities for authentic social interaction for language learners. The participants of the study were 36 language students and they were randomly assigned to one of three research conditions: video-web communication, a voice-enabled 3D virtual world (*Second Life*), or a control group. The participants were asked to carry out five tasks at the rate of once a week. The five tasks included exchanging cultural information triggered by pictures, planning a holiday and reflecting on past holiday experiences, role-playing, impersonating different characters, and playing a cultural game-style television contest. The *Second Life* group could, for example, virtually go on a skiing holiday together or play cultural games, whereas the video-web communication group was able to do the same tasks with a native speaker using pictures and video as a medium, and by sharing information. The control group, however, could use pictures and video to contextualize tasks but had no native interlocutors playing the expert role.

This study emphasized the creation of a rich linguistic environment for language learners, which is an essential part of L2 learning. This is the focus of SLA interactionist theory whereby social interaction promotes learner-internal processes that lead to L2 learning. The study used synchronous forms of CMC which combined aspects of spoken and written discourse. CMC also provided a communicative environment where the learners could produce output. Canto et al. (2013) state that learners produce more output during CMC than when communicating face-to-face in the classroom. As highlighted by Youngs, Ducate, and Arnold (2011), output is important since it can lead to

negotiated interaction. The modifications that interlocutors make in order to communicate successfully during interaction promote language learning, and this process is also known as the negotiation of meaning.

According to Canto et al. (2013), the video-web communication environment facilitated distant spoken and written interaction among students. While seeing each other through the web-cam and communicating, the students were able to work collaboratively. In the voice-enabled 3D virtual environment, the students participated as avatars and engaged in textual and voiced interactions with other avatars while collaborating to reach a common goal. As Canto et al. (2013) state, the virtual world technology offered an "intensifying interaction in language leaning processes" (p.106).

Canto et al. (2013) further point out that CMC can allow language learners to communicate in the target language synchronously with their teacher, peers, other learners of the target language, or even with native speakers using a computer as a medium. In relation to SLA theories, the tasks helped the students achieve intercultural communicative competence as they could experiment and interact with a variety of norms of social interaction (Canto et al., 2013). The learners were afforded "the opportunity to experience life-like social interaction while at the same time engaging in meaningful learning activities" (Canto et al., 2013, p.107). In addition, the realistic nature of the environment offered the students authentic learning conditions that are not available in tradition classroom settings. This coincides with Youngs, Ducate, & Arnold's (2011) idea that "[o]ne of CALL's strengths is the ability to provide learners with large amounts of authentic input" (p.25).

In this study, the data was collected using pre-oral and post-oral tests. The language learners were tested on their communicative language competence. The tests assessed students in terms of their range of language, grammatical accuracy, fluency, thematic development, and coherence in order to measure communicative growth. Each student sat in front of a computer and orally answered a set of questions recorded by a native speaker teacher. The way the students were evaluated does not reflect SLA interactionist theory. There was no meaningful interaction in the evaluation process. The evaluation would have been more effective if students were asked to communicate synchronously with each other, with a teacher or with a computer

In relation to the research question, the study demonstrates a good reflection of SLA interactionist theory by including task designs that provided an environment where students could negotiate meaning. However, the evaluation methods did not reflect SLA interactionist theory because they did not test students' meaningful interaction.

In Yanguas' (2010) study, SLA interactionist theory was reflected in both activity design and evaluation, as it was in Kon (2002). Yanguas investigated the effectiveness of task-based, synchronous oral CMC among intermediate-level learners of Spanish. The participants of the study were randomly assigned to one of three groups: a video CMC group, an audio CMC group, and a face-to-face control group. The video and audio groups used Skype online communication software to carry out the task. Yanguas' study focused on how learners in the video and audio CMC groups negotiated for meaning,

and how the oral CMC method was different from traditional face-to-face communication. The study was conducted from an interactionist perspective. Yanguas specifically focused on the negotiation of meaning. He included a new context for the investigation of negotiated interaction by examining how L2 learners interacted with one another using audio-conferencing and video-conferencing. Each group was asked to complete a jigsaw task. Jigsaw tasks were advantageous in that they allowed the participants to share information equally to achieve a particular goal.

The findings of the study showed that the video and audio CMC groups negotiated meaning while interacting with one another through the online communication tool. However, the way the audio CMC group carried out the negotiations was different from how the video group negotiated meaning. The researcher describes the reason behind this as being mainly due to the lack of visual contact for the audio group. There were no significant differences between the video and the face-to-face groups.

Regarding SLA interactionist theory, Yanguas (2010) applied several principles based on interactionist SLA theory to both activity design and evaluation. The findings show that task-based negotiated interaction with oral CMC helped the learners with the initial steps of lexical acquisition. According to Yanguas, this is because the task enabled the learners to not only focus on input but also produce output, and this may have led them to processing language more deeply. In addition, the learners were provided with opportunities to address the problems that they were engaged in during the task, and this may have allowed them to focus more closely on form. Doughty and Long (2003) also mention a focus on form as being one of the seven principles that can be used to guide decision-making for interactive task design in CALL. Yanguas designed a task and used it to elicit interactions from students. This also coincides with Doughty and Long's idea to use tasks as the unit for analysis. In addition, in terms of SLA interactionist theory, the idea of giving opportunities to produce output coincides with one of Chapelle's (1998) principles for instructional design which suggests providing opportunities for comprehensible out. During the task, the students were able to produce comprehensible output while they were engaged in the process of negotiating meaning.

With regards to the research questions, SLA interactionist theory was not only reflected well in the task design in Yanguas' study (2010), but also in the evaluation process. The researcher used the transcripts of the students' conversations to evaluate them. This way of evaluating the participants allowed him to examine their interaction precisely. He could also explore whether and how the learners negotiated for meaning in the multimedia context.

## 3. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore SLA interactionist theory in CALL research. Specifically, the study examined how the theory was reflected in task design and task evaluation. The findings show that SLA interactionist theory was reflected in the studies of Kon (2002), Canto, Jauregi, and van den

Bergh (2013), and Yanguas (2010) in different ways, as was initially hypothesized. When Kon designed her tasks, she took input and interaction into consideration. SLA interactionist theory was also reflected in the task designs of Canto et al. and Yanguas. The tasks in both of these studies provided a positive environment for the students where they could interact and negotiate for meaning (e.g. online communication and virtual worlds).

In terms of evaluation, SLA interactionist theory was reflected in the studies of Kon (2002) and Yanguas (2002). Kon examined the learners' actions in term of negotiation for meaning and whether their language acquisition could be accounted for by aspects of the interaction. Yanguas also examined participants' interactions precisely to find out whether and how the learners negotiated for meaning in the multimedia context. However, Canto et al. (2013) did not seem to take SLA interactionist theory into consideration when evaluating the students' performance.

The findings of the three reviewed studies indicate that computer-mediated communication is an effective tool for promoting student interaction, which can help second language learners with their language learning. I now wonder how students could be evaluated in terms of interaction and their learning progress if they were to use online communication tools and virtual worlds outside the classroom. Would the use of transcripts be the most effective way? In future research, I want to find out if there are more effective ways to examine student performance in relation to the aspects of interactionist theory when CMC is implemented outside the classroom.

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# The Effects of Self-Esteem and Teacher Intervention on Student Behavior, Thinking, and Academic Achievement

Cheonsook Kim

Special needs in ELT

***Abstract***

*The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of self-esteem on behavioral problems, irrational belief systems and low-achievement in academic learning, along with the role of the teacher. This study examines literature relating to how self-esteem can enhance students' cognitive development, social development, and cultural development to promote English learning. Next, it analyzes and examines the activities that my students have done in light of the information garnered from the literature review. The description of these activities is divided into three parts: teaching methodology, the process of learning and changes in self-esteem, and individual study results. To find out changes in the learners through their engagement in the English learning activities, I interviewed them using three short questions. Question one was related to the degree of difficulty in learning. Question two was about student interest in activities they were doing, and question three was to check the effect of the activities. Finally, the research findings indicate that if students gain social approval and the teacher's encouragement, the self-esteem of students can be enhanced by creating self-image and an appropriate atmosphere of cultural involvement. A large number of studies reveal that students' self-esteem can influence their behaviors, thoughts and achievements. Likewise, this study demonstrates consistency with such studies by referring to my personal experience as a teacher and analyzing the activities completed by students whom I have taught.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many people around the world learn foreign languages. Since English is the most commonly-used language in the world, it is one of the main subjects for students to learn in Korea, and plenty of methods of learning have been researched and practiced in the Korean English education system. In this context, the learning of students depends on the social environment and culture. Many studies have shown that students can gain confidence and become highly motivated to learn by having their self-esteem enhanced through a well-organized learning environment and appropriate interventions by the teacher. If teachers consider cultural aspects that are effective for learning other languages properly, and they feel good about themselves, they can play a significant role in having a positive effect on their students. Therefore, this paper investigates three different studies to find out how

student self-esteem and teacher intervention work as critical variables, leading to a change in student behaviors, thinking, and academic performance. If a teacher creates a desirable learning environment that considers the cultural differences that are reflected in a language, I believe that students will concentrate on their learning without disturbance, which is conducive to reaching their learning goals. In particular, this issue is significantly related to self-esteem.

Self-esteem refers to the positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem) feelings that we have about ourselves. We experience the positive feelings of high self-esteem when we believe that we are good and worthy and that others view us positively. We experience the negative feelings of low self-esteem when we believe that we are inadequate and less worthy than others (Rosenberg, 1965).

If so many people, particularly in individualistic cultures, report having relatively high self-esteem, an interesting question is why this might be. Perhaps some cultures place more importance on developing higher self-esteem than others, and people correspondingly feel more pressure to report feeling good about themselves. Although Asian students achieve high scores in international studies, they tend to have relatively lower self-confidence and self-esteem when compared to Western students (e.g., Leung & Wong, 1997). Previous studies of Asian educational systems focused on academic, rather than non-academic, achievement by Asian students. This can lead to students' adherence to high academic achievement while experiencing low self-esteem. (Cheng, 1997; Ho, 2000; Shen et. al., 1994).

To sum up, I will explore the degree of self-esteem that students have, and how self-esteem affects behavioral problems, irrational belief systems and low-achievement in academic learning, along with the role of the teacher. I support my study and teaching experience by referring to literature on the topic. In doing so, this study attempts to find answers to the following two research questions:

1. What are the effects of self-esteem on students' behavioral problems, irrational belief systems and low-achievement in academic learning?

2. What efforts are required by teachers and students to enhance self-esteem to affect behaviors, belief systems and performance?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Self-esteem, self-image, and looking-glass self

Regarding self-esteem, Maslow's (1943) refers to the process of self-actualization. He argues that a hierarchy of needs starting at the bottom up shows that "humans as beings… have psychological needs, safety and security needs, love and belonging needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs." Students' self-esteem is a significant factor in the process of cognitive

development, social development, cultural development, and learning. According to Maslow's hierarchy (1943), self-actualization is the final stage of reaching human needs. At this stage, creativity, spontaneity, acceptance, and the fulfillment of inner potential are realized, which can be developed further in terms of cognition, social feature, and cultural understanding. In application to teaching and learning, if teachers and students feel that they deserve praise, they have no self-esteem problems; but if they believe that what they do is not worthy of praise or recognition, then they might have a low-esteem problem. Therefore, if teachers encourage students to have positive self-esteem, they can grow from their mistakes without the fear of rejection.

Braden (1969) identified three vital components of self-esteem; thoughts, feelings, and behavioral dispositions and activities, showing that self-esteem is based on our beliefs and self-consciousness. Students who do not have a positive image about themselves due to discouragement resulting from a lack of parental support or the deficiency of administrative support or unmanageable classrooms, show problems in their behavior, beliefs, and performance. As Rosenberg (1965) mentioned, positive image is highly significant in self-esteem because it is related to prudent thoughts, moderate feelings, and high achievement.

Strategies for enhancing students' self-esteem that are fit for various classroom situations are required. To enhance self-esteem, we can assume a different condition or another self, which helps us make a better judgment. This strategy, which is used by English teachers, can lead to self-promotion, which is related to the sensitivity of a teacher. In this regard, we can ask the question: "Do we assume a different condition or another self to help us make a better judgment?"

Charles Cooley (1902) in his "looking-glass self" theory proposed that we humans are inclined to judge ourselves according to how we believe others to perceive us. Hence, the concept of self-esteem includes the influence of others. Robert White (1963) linked self-esteem to competence and mastery. Coppersmith (1967) published the book *The Antecedents of Self-Esteem,* where he regarded self-esteem as "a personal judgment of worthiness" (p. 4) that is affected by our success, value, aspiration, and defenses. Later on, Branden (1969) incorporated two interrelated aspects, stating that self-esteem entails a sense of personal efficacy and a sense of personal worth. The looking-glass self is a concept that describes the development of one's self and of one's identity through one's interpersonal interactions within the context of society (McIntyre, 2006). Cooley (1902) clarified that society is interwoven and the mental condition of different people works within this.

Many studies mention the intervention of teachers, and emphasize their role and the limitations of it. Reddy et al. (2003) indicate that teachers' support and involvement can result in learners' higher self-esteem. Along the same line, Muhamad et al. (2013) indicate that teachers who have a positive self-concept can provide a good role model for pupils, and through positive demonstration, they help pupils with building up a positive self-concept.

For a better understanding of teacher perceptions and the interpretation of teachers' behavior,

this study applies a qualitative approach. As Cohen et al. (2013) remark, a qualitative approach allows informants to speak up, and it seeks different definitions, patterns, themes, categories and regularities that underlie human behavior. Apart from a specified conceptual framework, a qualitative approach affords flexibility in presenting and explaining experiences and meanings (Preissle, 2006).

Teachers can use intervening strategies to help students to improve their low esteem. Self-esteem undergoes a change, depending on students' efforts or willingness to change. In this sense, teachers play an important role. The strong bond and mutual trust between students and a teacher can contribute to enhancing the self-esteem of students. Teachers can intervene in the process of improving students' self-esteem. Emotional support and the consistent and stable attitudes of teachers are required as intervening strategies.

# 3. METHODOLOGY

With the looking-glass self in mind, this study utilized Spiderman and Helen Keller movies and manuscripts as materials alongside textbooks to encourage students in the fourth and fifth grades of a Korean elementary school to take an interest in English learning. Children who were not interested in English also showed a low interest in other subjects and they were lacking in confidence and self-esteem.

Spiderman is a very individualistic and changeable character that helps children visualize their own image as being better than the current situation. Peter Parker (Spiderman) is a very ordinary character and has been bullied by his colleagues. But when he wears a web shooter, he has super powers and enhanced intelligence. Spiderman takes the lead in defeating a villain. During the course of studying, students expressed interest in this story. The confidence of students in revealing their self-esteem improved a lot after class. Strong social and personal identification increases performance and a development of self-reliance. Strong social and personal identity of students can enhance their performance and help them mature. I found that students could continue to redefine themselves as a better self. As Patterson (2007) pointed out, students are able to continue to redefine themselves, even when they have some problems.

## 3. 1. Three Lessons that relate to the literature reviews

Three different lessons with different activities are addressed in this study. The description of these lessons is divided into three parts: teaching methodology, the process of learning and changes in self-esteem, and individual study results or outcomes. The chart below shows the composition of the participating students' proficiency levels. Six intermediate students and two beginners took part in the three lessons.
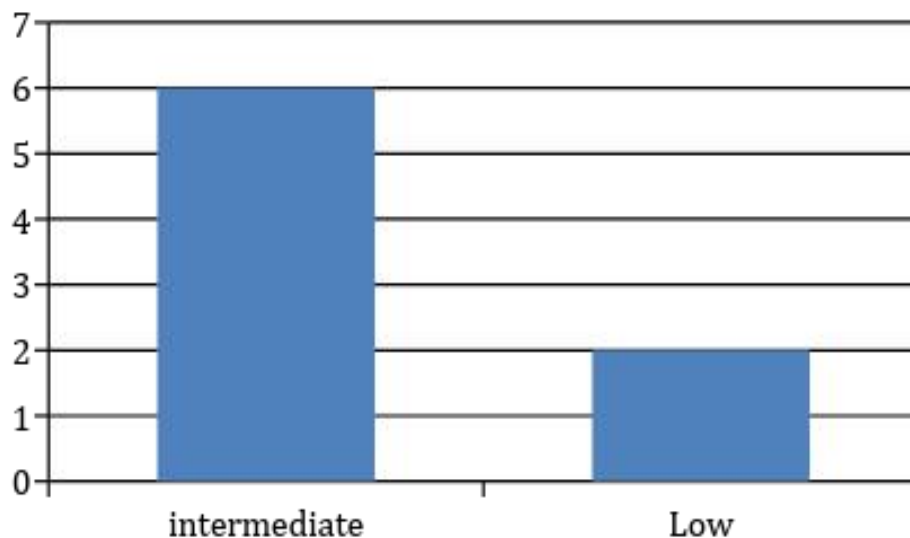
Chart 1: Number of students by proficiency level

| Step to be taken | Procedures | Period |
|---|---|---|
| Preparation | To select participants<br><br>To set the topic<br><br>To make a lesson plan | November 10, 2018 |
| Application | To be performed<br><br>To do the experiment | November 10-<br><br>December 7, 2018 |
| Analysis | To conduct an analysis of data<br><br>To conclude | December 14, 2018 |

Table 1: The steps of the learning process, procedures, and periods for activities

### 3.1.1 Activity 1

This study intended to find out the change in students through by motivating students to possess the interests and spontaneity shown in the ultimate self-actualization stage of Maslow's hierarchy (1943). Self-image is a lower stage that precedes self-actualization. To improve students' self-esteem and help them study better, activity-relevant factors were input as variables.

<u>Activity-relevant factors</u>

Topic: My favorite character

Date: November 9, 2018

Participants: A mixture of eight male fourth and fifth grade elementary school students of intermediate proficiency

Objectives: Students learn new words and write a scenario about their favorite hero: Spiderman.

<u>Steps taken to fulfil the activity</u>

*Step 1: Introduction*

Step 1-1: After greeting and reviewing, students were shown a video clip for them to guess what they were about to study.

Step 1-2: Some new words concerning the story of Spiderman were presented to students.

Word list: ordinary, radioactive, parachute, alert, menace, tentacle, slip through, gritty, reptile, commit a crime, fiend, etc.

*Step 2: Development*

Step 2-1: Students were divided into two groups of four. They were given material to read.

Step 2-2: A video clip of Walt Disney's *Spiderman* was shown to the students for fifteen minutes. Students watched the movie imagining that they were Spiderman.

Step 2-3: Ideas and feedback were exchanged.

- Students exchanged ideas to assist comprehension.
- Students discussed the Spiderman story**.**

Step 2-4: Students were asked to either draw a picture of the Spiderman story or write a new scenario (see Appendix A). They then selected the best picture/scenario and the student who created the selected work gave a presentation in front of the other students.

*Step 3: Closing*

After the activity, the teacher gave assignments to the students.

**3.1.2 Activity 2**

<u>Activity-relevant factors</u>

Topic: My favorite character

Date: November 16, 2018

Participants: A mixture of eight male fourth and fifth grade elementary school students of intermediate proficiency

Objectives: Students make inventions by completing this activity, in which science and English can be combined. This activity aims to improve students' creativity and motivate them to study and explore something inventive**.**

<u>Steps taken to fulfil the activity</u>

*Step 1: Introduction*

Step 1-1: After greeting and reviewing, students were shown a video clip for them to guess what they were about to study.

The video clip can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4zm30yeHHE

Step 1-2: Some new words concerning the story of Spiderman were presented to students.

Word list: ordinary, radioactive, parachute, alert, menace, tentacle, slip through, gritty, reptile, commit a crime, fiend, etc.

*Step 2: Development*

Step 2-1: Students were divided into two groups of four. They were given material to read.

Step 2-2: Groups were given comprehension questions to answer. Answers were elicited from each group**.**

Step 2-2: A video clip of Walt Disney's *Amazing Spiderman* was shown to the students for fifteen minutes. Students then read a story titled *Amazing Spiderman* and thought about the particular powers and skills the main characters have.

Step 2-4: Students discussed the main characters' special powers in their groups. Students answered questions and drew inventions they wanted to make (see Appendix B).

*Step 3: Closing*

After the activity, the teacher gave assignments to the students.

### 3.1.3 Activity 3

<u>Activity-relevant factors</u>

Topic:  The story of Helen Keller

Date: December 7, 2018

Participants: A mixture of eight male fourth and fifth grade elementary school students of intermediate proficiency

Objectives: Students learn past forms of verbs and the way of writing book reports.

Creativity: Empathizing

The methodology and three steps for performing the activities (reading the material, drawing, and giving a presentation) are described below. Finally, during conversation and discussion, the teacher intervened to motivate students to continue sharing their stories.

<u>Steps taken to fulfil the activity</u>

*Step 1: Introduction*

Step 1-1: After greeting and reviewing, students were shown a video clip of Helen Keller's photo album for them to guess what they were about to study.

The video clip can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTRH_cgL7H0

Step 1-2:  New words concerning the story of Helen Keller were explored.

Word list: blind, deaf, wild, punish, recognize, memorize, spell, graduate, education, the disabled, career

*Step 2: Development*

Step 2-1: Students were divided into two groups of four. They are given material to read.

Step 2-2: A video clip of Walt Disney's *Helen Keller* was shown to the students for fifteen minutes. Students understood the difficulties of Helen Keller while watching the video. The video clip can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kle85Z1dJ2g

Step 2-3: Ideas and feedback were shared.

- Students exchanged ideas to assist their comprehension and answer the questions.

- Students discussed the Helen Keller story and were ask to think about why she was great.

Step 2-4: Presentation and feedback. The students made presentations. At the end of the presentation session, they were asked to rate one another's pictures and written work that were included in the process of presenting. The teacher intervened in the students' discussions to encourage them to talk and stay on track. The results and outcome of the activities (creative writing (review), drawing, and presentation and feedback) can be found in Appendices C and D.

*Step 3: Closing*

After the activity, the teacher gave assignments to the students.

### 3. INTERVIEWS & DISCUSSIONS

To find out changes in the students' learning of English, the teacher interviewed students using three short questions. Question one was related to the degree of difficulty in learning (cognitive development). Question two was about the students' interest in activities they were doing (motivation for the sake of a better self), and question three was to check the effect of the three activities (redefinition of a self). Table 2 displays the specific questions asked and Chart 2 quantifies the students' responses.

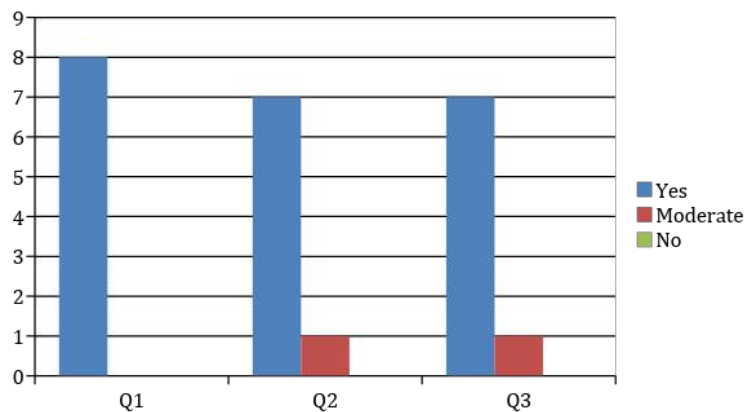| No | Questions |
|----|-----------|
| 1 | Are you participating hard in activities during class? |
| 2 | Do you like to study English? |
| 3 | Do you like to study English more than before after these lessons? |

Table 2: Questions related to activities



Chart 2 Student responses to the questions

In response to the questions, seven of the eight students answered that the content-based instructions was very interesting. They then said that they would like to take a movie or story-based lesson once a week. In this respect, it can be seen that finding a variety of activities considering the diversity and talents of students is necessary for English teachers. However, it cannot be ignored that there are students who are also indifferent to lessons oriented by stories and movies.

In the questionnaire survey, only one student gave a moderate response, and this was in response to questions two and three only. This student's grade tends to be good. However, the teacher who carried out the three activities faced a barrier in teaching practical English or conversation to this student, although she paid attention to textbook learning in preparation for the exam. This student was diagnosed with separation disorder in the first grade of elementary school. From a teacher's perspective, this student needs to think independently of her parents and a lot of effort is required to help to improve her self-esteem. The efforts of the teacher contribute to this.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

The research findings suggest that student self-esteem can be enhanced by creating self-image and an appropriate atmosphere of cultural involvement. A large number of studies reveal that if students gain social approval and teacher encouragement, their self-esteem influences their behaviors, thoughts and achievements. In addition, self-esteem is important for future success in teaching, and teacher self-esteem positively affects student self-esteem, thus enhancing learning.

Actually, many teachers have long known that when students feel good about themselves, they are more likely to be higher achievers in the classroom. Promoting student confidence and often offering positive feedback along with process praise is therefore an essential tool for teachers to use in the classroom. The more confident students are about themselves, the better they feel about themselves and display their potential to the full. If students have an appropriate degree of self-esteem, it is much easier to motivate them to become academically excellent.

Self-esteem is an important factor in almost everything that students do. It not only helps with academic achievement, but also supports social skills. Eventually, students become more actively involved with peers and teachers through development of healthy self-esteem. This study indicates that English teachers should be more patient and think more deeply about student behavior, leading to changes in their belief systems.

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# APPENDIX A

<u>*Spider-man 4, The emergence of the deadly monster*</u>

*( Creative scenario)*

*Written by Hee-Jin Roh*

*At night in New York City, a monster, Carnage appears to eat people, causing New Yorkers to be frightened. Spider-Man goes looking for this monster every night without informing his aunt. Then one night he witnesses the monster eating people, and Peter, the Spider-man attacks it, but he fails to defeat the monster at that time.*

*On the other hand, his aunt sees the spider-man clothes in Peter's closet and finds that Peter is the spider-man. On this night, his aunt convinces Peter to return to the ordinary person, but Peter doesn't listen to her.*

*A few days later, Carnage, the monster threatens Spiderman with the lives of tens of thousands of New Yorkers. At that time his aunt persuaded him not to go to the carnage, but he slips out to save the people at midnight without knowing his aunt..*

*Spider-man finally defeats the monster using monster's weaknesses because he is afraid of the sound of the metallic scratch and the fire.*

*He pushes the strong and sharp iron into monster's ears and mouth, and finally kills the monster, and fortunately, he rescues tens of thousands of New Yorkers.*

*The spider-man is the real hero who can save our world!.*

**APPENDIX B**

_**Students' Work (the inventions that they want to make)**_

A Diving Ball!

spider man is hard to fight in the water.
The diving ball will make him stronger in the water.

There are a lot of small and powerful motors
beneath the carpet.... so he can fly on this carpet.

magic carpet
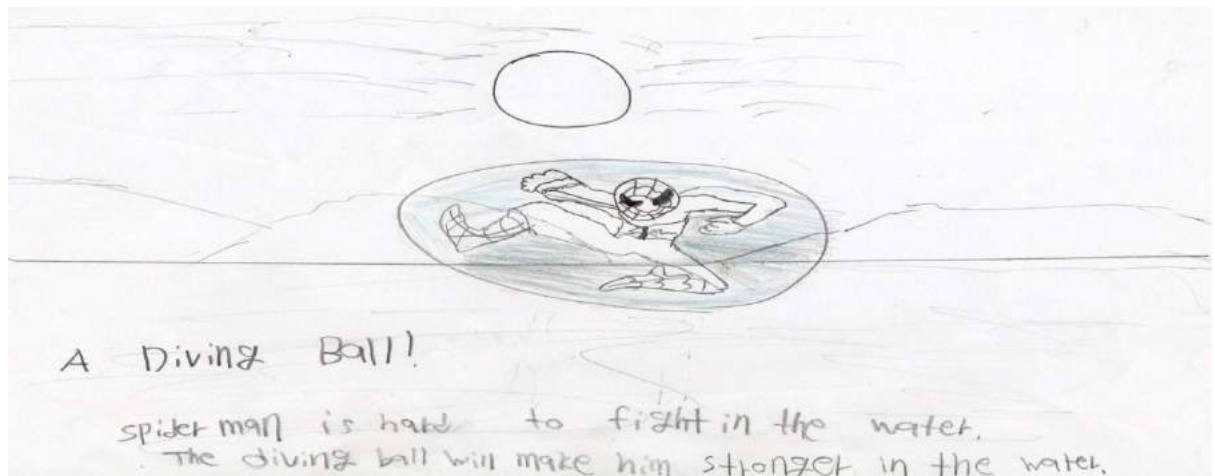
**APPENDIX C**

*After reading the book titled " Helen Keller"*

*Yeon Park*

*One of the most impressive sentences is "We can't let her think that she can do whatever she wants just because she is blind and deaf." After reading this part, I thought that maybe Helen's parents had a prejudice against disabled people like 'Disabled people are different kinds of people from us, so they are not able to do as much as non-disabled people.' We just learned that disabled people are the same as us. Another impressive part of this book is the title of one of the Helen's articles. It is "If I had Three Days to See." Helen wrote that she would look at her house, her books and her dogs. And she would go for a long walk in the woods and look at all the new things there. She wished she could see children playing. She would look at the sunset and stare at the moon and the stars. She also wanted to see a stage play and a movie. After reading this part, I thought that we have something in common in that Helen wants to see something good, interesting, and new like us. The story makes me have the mind to give my thanks to everything I see and everyone I meet.*

# APPENDIX D

# Phonology and the Usage-based Theory of Language

Kathleen Deane

Introduction to Linguistics

***Abstract***

*In the vein of cognitive linguistics and from a usage-based perspective of language, this paper seeks to understand how language sounds may be more effectively introduced to and learned by English language learners. The literature review serves to contrast traditional with usage-based linguistic approaches to areas of study that have impacted the teaching of language sounds; namely, phonetics and phonology. From a usage-based perspective, language sounds and a language user's ability to perceive and produce sounds is possible through experience of those sounds in context. To account for how experience of these sounds is collected and used by language users, this paper reviews exemplar theory and the model of articulatory phonology as they appear in the usage-based model, to show the way in which language sounds are accounted for in a usage-based understanding of language and in turn how these theories may provide an English language teacher with a new approach when introducing students to language sounds. Based on the exemplar model together with articulatory phonology, an activity was designed which focused on students learning and using the language in the context in which they would need it to communicate. The idea was to move away from traditional decontextualized teaching approaches to sounds and instead create an experience-based activity that would drive the sounds to be introduced to the students. As a result of this paper, a teaching approach from a usage-based perspective which takes into account exemplar theory as well as theory from the model of articulatory phonology will most likely be an effective way to introduce English language learners to English language sounds.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, this paper seeks to understand language sounds and how they might be explained from a usage-based model of language. Bybee (2001), explains that in generative theory, "sounds are physically distinct but nonetheless taken to be the 'same'" (p. 19) and that these sounds of a given word or morpheme are understood to be organized and dealt with according to phonological rules that originate in the mental lexicon. Furthermore, phonetic or physical aspects of sounds are thus seen as properties of words, and "'post-lexical rules'" (Kiparsky, 1982, as cited in Bybee, 2001, p. 65) in that they are understood to be universal to every different language. In contrast to these views, Bybee (2001)'s work on phonology and language use takes the usage-based

approach to language sounds and phonological structures. The usage-based model understands language as being an emergent structure that human beings continually learn by way of their physical and cognitive systems. In this way, experience and use of linguistic forms "both in productive and perception affects their representation in memory" (Bybee, p. 6). This is the perspective that will be adopted in this paper. Sounds are a fundamental part of language; their combinations are ascribed with conceptual meaning through lived experience of language. This paper is therefore not interested in how a person may come to understand sounds in terms of their orthographic representations, but rather how a person may come to know language sounds through a combination of physical and cognitive processes. The research questions that will addressed in this paper are: 1) How does the usage-based model of language account for language sounds; and 2) From an English language learning perspective, how might this account of sounds influence EFL/ESL teaching pedagogies?

This topic thus falls in the area of English language teaching and learning. For all language teachers, assisting their students with learning a new language requires that they somehow introduce the learners to what should be, in initial input stages, meaningful sounds from the target language that can be perceived and eventually produced. Traditional methods of teaching language sounds to second or foreign language learners are somewhat in line with traditional linguistic models; the focus is largely on individual sounds or phonemes as abstracted from the larger context of use. Furthermore, sounds are often taught in reference to notational forms as evidenced by the phonics system which is the "the study of the relationship between sounds and letters" (International Literacy Association, 2018). This system may be useful to L1 learners, but can often be troublesome for learners whose L2 is English. This is because English sounds, especially vowel sounds, have very little representation in the forms used in English orthography. From a usage-based perspective, this paper will therefore discuss how sounds are perceived and produced by a language user, and in turn how this may inform how to introduce English sounds to EFL learners.

In order to answer the research questions proposed above, the literature that will be reviewed in this paper is work centers on Bybee (2001, 2010)'s work on a usage-based theory of language, specifically in the area of articulatory phonology and the exemplar model. Background authors include De Boer (2001) and Oudeyer (2006) and Pierrehumbert (2001) amongst others.

The literature review will be laid out as follows. Firstly, the need for orthographic knowledge specifically in the area of spelling will be explained so as to draw a distinction between knowing sounds and knowing how to spell words. Secondly, traditional studies of phonetics of phonology will be distinguished between so as to create a bridge between traditional or generative studies of sounds and a cognitive, usage-based study of sounds. Thirdly, Bybee (2001)'s introduction to a usage-based perspective on phonological knowledge will be summarized before going into the usage-based take on the model of articulatory phonology as first proposed by Browman and Goldstein (1986, 1992) which is presented as an alternative and possibly more likely explanation as to the mechanisms behind the

perception and in turn production of sounds. Finally, the exemplar model as it is employed by the usage-based perspective will be discussed for its implication on storage of sounds in memory. In the final section, a possible usage-based approach to introducing students to English sounds as well as activities within the framework of such an approach will be discussed in chapter three of this paper.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Orthographic knowledge: Spelling

The focus of this discussion is on how language users store and use sounds and so a distinction must be made between orthographic knowledge, specifically in the area of spelling, and the knowledge of language sounds. In Dildine (1994)'s paper on spelling acquisition superficially in the elementary ESL classroom, the author explains that spelling is a cognitive skill which demonstrates a person's knowledge and awareness of phonetic, phonological and phonotactic detail as they are encoded in a language's orthographic system. The author explains that spelling is "intuitive" (p. 10). This view echoes Durand and Laks (2002) work on phonetics, phonology and cognition, in that "alphabetic writing systems can be argued to rest on some kind of 'phonetic intuition'" (p. 11), however, knowledge of alphabet letters does not imply knowledge of the language sounds they may represent. In this sense, once a child has knowledge of the linguistic workings of a language, that child can make assumptions about or intuit how it should be encoded or spelled using alphabet letters.

Following this explanation of how a person spells, in order to spell, the person must already have knowledge of the language sounds and how they are encoded by the groupings of letters that are used to represent them in the English orthographic system. Knowledge of sounds is therefore assumed to presuppose knowledge of orthography. Dirven and Verspoor (2004) explain that in a language like English which has 26 letters but over 40 speech sounds, the phonemic link between a given letter and its possible sound is low and therefore without extended knowledge of links between a form or group of forms and possible sounds, a person would not be able to produce language. For a foreign language student, how can there be a relationship between letter and sound if the student has little no mental representation of the English sounds and represented forms? The most likely answer is, there cannot be a relationship. This problem is, according to Bybee (2001) related to the "restrictions imposed by alphabetic notation – the representation and, thus, the conceptualization of the domain of phonological phenomena as the segment" (p. 69). Traditional views of linguistics separated the two areas of study devoted to language sounds: phonetics and phonology, where phonetics was a separate science altogether. The discussion will now briefly refer to each field as they are studied in traditional linguistics to make way for an explanation of the more emergent, cognitive model of language sounds.

### 2.2 Traditionally, phonetics and phonology

In linguistics, the study of language sounds has been traditionally divided into two streams; phonetics and phonology. According to De Boer (2001), phonetics is not concerned with the function or meaning of speech sounds in language but rather the "physical properties of speech sounds [and phoneticians use the IPA] to show that symbols represent physically measurable signals or actions [which are] place between square brackets [ ]" (p. 6). Phonologists however are concerned with the meaning of different speech sounds as they "distinguish the meanings of words" (p. 6). In order to analyze the sounds in a stream of speech, phonologists use "*phonemes* [or] minimal speech sounds [that are] written with a subset of the IPA … between slashes / /" (p. 6). The separation of these two aspects to speech sounds has thus created a divide between the sounds themselves; how they are produced and the language and meaning they represent. This separation has therefore has created a divide between the language user, the mechanisms they control to create the sounds and the language that is produced. The usage-based theory of language proposes a different model for sounds which will be discussed after a general introduction into usage-based phonology.

**2.3 Phonology: a usage-based understanding**

Bybee (2001) explains that phonology is the "procedure for producing and understanding language" (p. 14). When people produce language in its basic form, they speak it, they make meaningful noises. The author compares learning to speak a language with learning to play the piano; after much repetition and practice, the hands and fingers, much like the human vocal tract, builds on experience and is able to play better and more difficult pieces of music, or in the case of language, the human being is able to learn phonological properties of language that would allow her to speak it. Learning a language therefore requires repetitive experiences of language use which would allow the person to develop patterns between linguistic units. Over time, the experiences of said units in use would become influenced or structured by varying phonological sequences that are based on experience (Bybee, 2001). As mentioned previously, experience drives production and perception of the units' presentation in memory (Bybee, 2001). Bybee (2001)'s approach to phonology starts from the view that in order to make generalizations about phonological structure, there should first be many examples from which such a generalization can be made. These generalizations are formed based on a person's experience; a person's reaction to an item or percept is such that if that item is similar to an item already experienced, it will be "mapped onto [that] representation" (p. 20) of similar items stored in memory. This rich memory storage contains both encyclopedic or nonlinguisic knowledge as well as linguistic knowledge which is emergent from an exemplar model in which "tokens of words or constructions are represented in memory along with the situations they have been associated with in experience" (Bybee, 2013, p. 64).

From these stored experiences emerge patterns of use. For example, sounds predict other sounds. Bybee, (2001) explains that this is evidenced by case of vowel length in some English dialects;

a long vowel is followed by a voiced consonant and a short vowel is followed by a voiceless consonant. These percepts, after time, become predictable elements or patterns of speech that a language user learns. Sounds are similar to each other in that they frequently occur together, or in the same unit, in speech. Thus, "similarities observable in linguistic items are used to structure storage" (p. 21) and by extension are produced in speech.

## 2.4 Articulatory Phonology

In Oudeyer (2006)'s work on speech, Browman and Goldstein (1986)'s model of articulatory phonology is a main feature. The author states that in the model of articulatory phonology, the hypothesis is "gestures and their coordination are represented in the brain not only for controlling the production but also perception of sounds" (p. 20). In speech production, commands are sent to the organs in the vocal tract and those commands are then translated into necessary constrictions within the vocal tract required to produce the speech sound (Oudeyer, 2006). As Motor Theory of Speech Perception (Liberman and Mattingly, 1985) explains, speech production is related to speech perception in that the brain perceives a sound and is able to "reconstruct the configurations of constrictions which produced it … [and so] should be capable of transforming gestural representations into muscular representations" (as cited in Oudeyer, 2006, p.21) or movements directed to the production of sounds. Furthermore, gestures or combinations of gestures are explained to give rise to phonological structure such as syllables (Oudeyer, 2006) which is implies that a distinction cannot be made between sounds and the structure of sounds. According to Bybee (2001), the articulatory approach to phonological structure upholds both the generalizability and cognitive (or cognitive encapsulation) commitment of the usage-based model in that it recognizes "speech is an activity … and that phonological knowledge is procedural knowledge rather than static knowledge" (p. 70). In this way, phonological knowledge is "subject to the same forces that modify other motor skills, and that affect their memory storage and access" (p. 71).

From a usage-based perspective then articulatory phonological knowledge is learned from experience. A human being's cognitive processes allow for gestures or sounds to be perceived and translated into produced gestures or sounds. These (groups of) frequently experienced gestures or sounds are represented in memory storage as phonological structures which in turn inform phonotactic patterns about a given language. According to Oudeyer (2006), in contrast to writing systems, the language user has the ability to produce innumerable syllables using a smaller number of gestures, lending to the idea that it is a discrete and selected number of combined gestures rather than phonemes that underlie phonological structure in a given language (Oudeyer, 2006). Learning a language then is based in part on learning what are at first unpredictable gestural or sound patterns. From this standpoint, articulatorily-phonological knowledge is therefore accumulated during experience as a result of cognitive mechanisms which assist with perception, storage and production. Phonetics and

phonology are therefore united in a usage-based approach. It seems poignant to now move onto a model for storage which in the usage-based theory of language is the exemplar model.

## 2.5 The exemplar model

Pierrehumbert (2000)'s paper on exemplar models provides a good overview of the aspects of such a model as they are applicable to the usage-based model of language. The exemplar model accounts for both linguistic perception and production as resulting from experienced linguistic units or tokens being categorized according to the similarity and regularity and in turn stored as such in exemplar representations in memory. The experienced tokens are remembered and mapped onto each other so that similar tokens are stored closer together whilst dissimilar ones are further apart (Pierrehumbert, 2010). The author explains that the process of storing an experienced token in an exemplar model this way is termed "perceptual encoding" (p. 4). Perception of a given sound may then be varied due to a number of factors which are listed by the author as resulting from "dialect differences, speaker differences, and random variation in production" (p. 4). These variations in perception are explained as being represented in the exemplar too, and account for a language user's implicit phonetic knowledge of linguistic units of a given language (Pierrehumbert, 2000). Bybee (2010) too echoes when she states that an exemplar model may contain all possible aspects of a language experience.

According to the author, the exemplar model provides a way to account for and use frequency effects: "frequency [of language] is built in to the very mechanism by which memories of categories are stored and new examples are classified" (p. 7). In language production, exemplars are activated by an experience, an exemplar is chosen and language is produced (Pierrehumbert, 2000). According to the author, the strength of representation of a given exemplar will determine whether it is produced. Exemplars are therefore gradient which as Bybee (2010) explains will result in "lexically specific variation and patterned variation across lexical items" (p. 20). This is significant in that it accounts for sound variation and change as resultant from continued language use. This leads on to the area of language production in an exemplar model. According to Pierrehumbert (2000) language production emerges out of perception and so the exemplar model is in a "perception-production loop" (p. 3). It is important to say here that the loop would not be closed, but open in order to account for language growth and change. Having reviewed the literature for both sound production and possible storage of sounds, the discussion may now turn to how the usage-based approach may account for exemplar representations of sounds or gestures in memory.

## 2.6 The exemplar model and sound representation

As noted above, Oudeyer (2006) explains that the brain is able to convert perceptual knowledge of gestures into speech production. Bybee (2001), may say this is because "perceptual

effects must be registered in storage" (p. 75) by way of memory. The exemplar model accounts for the effects of individual experiences on a person's cognitive representation. In an exemplar model, experiences of language are stored as in memory as exemplars. As mentioned previously, this information spans from perception or gestural knowledge to pragmatic and context-based knowledge which may account for the way in which language users understand and produce language.

According to Bybee (2001), type and token frequency effects result in significant shifts in the way linguistic units are represented in the exemplar. These linguistic units may range in size from phonemes which, according to the model of articulatory phonology are gestures, to groups of meaning linguistic units or words. Token frequency in particular causes phonetic changes to phonological structure which indicates that token frequency structures phonetic categories for words or groups of sounds. Studies show that these phonetic categories have a "rich internal structure" (Miller, 1994, as cited in Bybee, 2001, p. 51) in that speakers can distinguish between the best phonetic representation of a given concept. In an exemplar model this distinction is based on context and is therefore context-dependent; research shows that in a given context "the best exemplars of the perceptual category correspond closely to the way in which context alters the relevant acoustic properties during production" (Miller, 1994, p. 278). As this research suggests, any given sound in language can be realized in numerous ways. In an exemplar model these varied perception and production experiences of sounds are stored in memory from infancy and eventually, language is produced. Furthermore, given that language use is most likely evident in almost all experiences of a human being, the exemplar model suggests that a language user is therefore always learning language. From this perspective then, if language use suggests the potential for new seemingly unpredictable sounds to become familiar both on the levels of perception and articulation, then the implication is that a human being can learn any given second language over time. In concluding the review of literature, this paper will now turn to a pedagogical approach for the introduction of English L2 sounds to beginner foreign language English learners whose L1 is Korea after discussing some of the factors that may hinder the learner's perception and production of sound input.

# 3. PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

## 3.1 Learners

The context of the learners should be taken into account when designing any kind of pedagogical approach. Nation and Newton (2009), discuss factors that many may affect the learning of another language's sound system. Students are heavily influenced by feelings of embarrassment when using the L2 due to criticism from teachers and their peers. This may lead to less experience using the L2 and in turn learning new sounds may be hindered. It is therefore important that the teacher create an environment free from test-like implications associated with making mistakes. Another factor is the

learner's L1. The learner's L1 may have very different sounds to those of the L2. To put this in the context of this paper, Korean speakers will need to learn English sounds that require new and often unfamiliar gestures, for example, the fricative consonant sounds which are different depending on whether they are voiced or unvoiced (Van Vlack, 2002). The final factor relates to how the sound system of the L2 is taught and therefore how it is learned (Nation *et al.*, 2009). Whilst the other factors are important in that they relate to the students, this is the most important factor in that utilizing an effective approach when teaching L2 sounds and developing meaning activities that may be used in the English language classroom is the purpose of this paper. Hammerly (1982) echoes what is mentioned in previous sections which is for languages with a misleading spelling system, learning pronunciation through imitation is more effective than learning pronunciation through reading (as cited in Nation *et al.*, 2009). It is from this point that the discussion will move into a possible approach for introducing students to English sounds.

### 3.2 An approach

Traditionally, approaches to introducing students to language sounds has been to place students outside of the sounds; students often receive input are required to produce sounds separate from the experience in which they would actually use the sounds to communicate. In these approaches, the sounds are taken out of context and are often practiced as individual phonemes, exposing students to very little language use. Techniques include continuous drilling and repetition which often involves decontextualized input and by extension output of the sound with a focus on mastery over meaningful production. Taking into account the needs of the learner whose L1 is Korean, as well as the usage-based theory presented in chapter two of this paper, the approach that will be taken in this paper will be to introduce students to English sounds embedded in the context of language use so that they may experience language, build networks and create meaningful memories associated with use. The way this may be done is to help students experience the sounds. In order to create an experience in which the students can use the sounds meaningfully, the sounds would need to first be practiced as they occur in varied environments in constructions. These constructions may be lexical items or strings of lexical items. Students need therefore need to receive input in the lesson that is both variant with regards to the range of environments a sound may occur in, and meaningful in terms of the context in which the students may experience the target sounds in use. The teacher's pronunciation as well as the pronunciation of people who children are exposed to through multi-media platforms such as video and song, should therefore be varied so as to create varied examples of sounds. From meaningful input, students would be given the chance to produce output that would further build the memory if language in use.

The sounds that will be emphasized will be driven by the context of the experience-based activity. Emphasizing a particular sound out of context may be necessary due to the absence of the

English sound in students' L1. After a brief comparative analysis, some sounds can be predicted to be problematic for speakers of Korean. These sounds include the 14 or 15 (depending on the dialect) vowel sounds, the /r/ and /l/ consonant sounds, and the fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, /f/ and /v/, /s/ and /z/, and /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ sounds (van Vlack, 2002).

### 3.3 The activity

Based on the approach above, the activity aims to give students the experience of shopping. The following list of constructions and lexical items identified in the frame of shopping at a market or convenient store. The beginner level of the students has been taken into account in the identifying of the language that may occur in use during a shopping experience.

1) One / two / three / four / five / six / seven / eight / nine / ten dollar(s)

2) Hello, can I help you?

3) Yes, please. I want to buy this bike / kite / doll / toy car.

4) That'll be one / two / three / four / five / six / seven / eight / nine / ten dollar(s), please.

The activity will be divided into four parts to be laid out below.

### 3.3.1 Part 1

Each student will be given an envelope with ten fake one dollar U.S notes inside as well as blank cards, please see Appendix 1. The cards will have a space and dollar sign on them. Please see Appendix 1 for cards. Students will then be given some time to look at the money in their envelope. The teacher will then ask how much money they have and practice speaking the English numbers and the world dollar(s) as in 1). In doing this, the students have meaningful input of the lexical items above. The possible problem areas in pronunciation, /θri/, /fɔr/, /faɪv/, /sɪks/ and /sɛvən/, will be focused on and students will practice speaking the numbers whilst counting the notes.

### 3.3.2 Part 2

The students will watch a video of a shopping scene using the dialogue consisting of 2), 3) and 4) above. The video will have no subtitles so as to not confuse orthography with sounds. After watching the video once, the students will watch the video once more, this time pausing after each sentence. The students will repeat after the video, and then repeat after the teacher. The teacher will change the intonation to focus on providing the students with varied input of the sounds for example, *I want to buy THIS bike* or *I want to buy this BIKE*.

### 3.3.2 Part 3

After reviewing the items with pictures, please see appendix 2, students will draw a picture of the target lexical item on each of their cards and write their chosen price between one and ten dollars. The teacher will give students the opportunity to draw a different lexical item of something they have

bought in the past after which the teacher can tell the student the word in English. In this part, students are using their own knowledge of each of the lexical items and producing it in a picture. After drawing the items and writing the price, the students watch with the video once more and practice speaking along with the video and the teacher will demonstrate that students should accompany their speaking with the actions made the people in the video. During this practice, the teacher will identify and address problem areas in the dialogue which may be the vowel coloring by the postvocalic /l/ consonant (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, & Griner, 2010) in /dɔl/.

### 3.3.3 Part 4

In the final part, the students will be given the chance to buy and sell the item pictures from one another reinforcing their experiences with the sounds in the dialogue. The focus of part four is for students to activate the memory of shopping and combine re-categorize by creating new experiences which in the case of this activity, include shopping and English language use. In this way, new meaningful memories of a stored experience may be stored in English, too.

## 4. DISCUSSION

With regards to answering the first research question posed in this paper which sought to understand how a usage-based model may account for language sounds, this question was answered in the following ways. From a usage-based perspective, gestural mechanisms that produce sounds create the underlying phonological structures of language. A language user's cognitive processes work together with physical and biological attributes of the vocal system to allow for perception and production of sounds, of language. An exemplar model accounts for human beings' ability to do this. Language is repetitively experienced, and in an exemplar model, repetitive experiences of language allow for massive storage of language that is both gradient and variant due to frequency of use. Experience tokens create multiple exemplars which are categorized according to their similarity. Furthermore, an exemplar model allows for a language user's perceptual experience of sounds to create gestural representations of sounds in memory which in turn creates sound production, or language use. The implication here is that sounds are not learned separate from use and so, for a language learner, sounds should not be learned separate from use or through other symbolic mediums such as orthography. Language is a system of communication which in its early stages of development in human beings is only a system of sounds or gestures and their referential objects.

With regards to research question two, which sought to investigate how this approach may influence EFL/ESL teaching pedagogies, the lesson plan designed took into account the findings from question; that sounds should not be introduced without context in which they may be used. Furthermore, orthographic representations of sounds are not helpful in creating communicative

contexts for students whose knowledge of the English writing system is limited. The approach underpinning the design of the shopping activity in chapter three thus focused on introducing students to sounds in a meaningful communicative context in which they would be given an opportunity to experience language. This was done with the knowledge gained from the Motor Theory of Speech Perception (Liberman and Mattingly, 1985) which explains that speech production is directly related to speech perception and vice versa and that in order to create meaningful memories of sounds in use, the sounds would need to be experienced in numerous, varied and authentic environments to provide the language learner with examples from which categories can be created. This approach is therefore centered on Bybee's (2001, 2013) work in usage-based phonology and representation of sounds in exemplar categories. The aim of the activity was therefore to bring student's experienced knowledge and create new memories which include meaningful English language use.

This usage-based approach to sounds has significant implications for ESL and EFL teaching pedagogies. An EFL teacher may treat the learning process of her students as being similar to that of an infant learning a native language. However, in the case of elementary school students, the language learner already has exemplars of sound structures in their native language. From the generative perspective language is a closed system and so having knowledge of other more stable phonemes, learning new phonemes or sounds may be seen as difficult or impossible. However, from a usage-based perspective which posits that vast language experience creates vast interconnected ever-emerging networks of language exemplars, there need be no more challenge. Repetitive experiences of similar language use which may eventually be varied based on experience should allow for students to perceive frequently co-occurring gestures, establish necessary phonological patterns in exemplar representation, and be able to produce meaningful language as triggered by re-occurring contexts.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The question of how a person may learn sounds first became important to me from my experiences in my English classroom here in Korea. In a Korean public elementary school, the English language learner's (ELL's) curriculum is ordered in such a way that students learn the English alphabet, specifically the letter names, and then from the letters the sounds associated with the letters. In this case, it is expected that letter or orthographic knowledge presupposes sound knowledge. Speech communication usually comes before any kind of orthographic representation of concepts. In my experience, issues have arisen in that students struggle with sound perception and inevitably, sound production. The interference, as Bybee (2001) puts it, is on the level of alphabetic notation which is used to represent sounds when in fact, sounds are referents for experience. Sounds are therefore unpredictable to learners who experience language sounds in this way. They are not able to learn gestures in context but in isolation, away from context. This paper sought to understand sounds from a usage-based perspective and in turn how this knowledge may influence EFL/ESL teaching pedagogies.

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## APPENDIX A

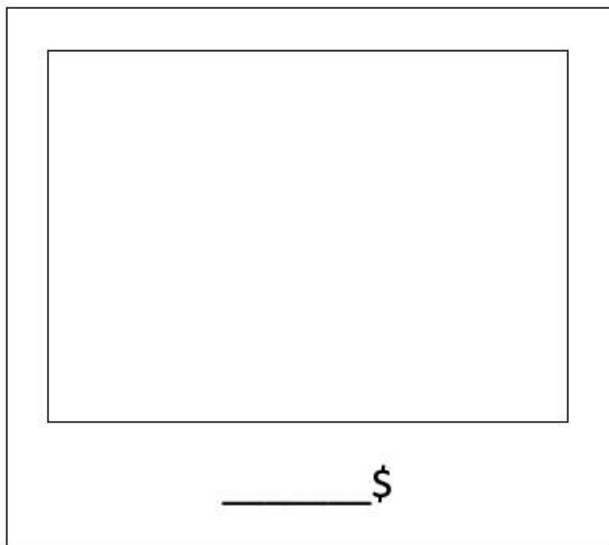Materials to be used in the shopping activity.

**APPENDIX A**

Materials to be used in the shopping activity.

U.S. dollar note.



Blank card.

# APPENDIX B

Item picture cards for review (to be printed in a big size).

# ESL Education for Learned Helplessness Students

Junghyun Sung

***Abstract***

*This thesis relates to ongoing research designed to explore symptoms of learned helpless students and way to help them overcome those symptoms. At this time, 2 students have participated in this methodology for in depth observation. Several methods, chunking and phonological awareness training, were used as Avoiding Helplessness strategies reflected in the lessons and the teacher was able to observe students' behavior change.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose and motivation

Many parents and English teachers in Korea focus on improving their children's English skills, but they often overlook the children's psychological state which is a fundamental factor in learning. Even though there has been unprecedented English intensive education in Korea compared to other countries, still Korean students' satisfaction and confidence toward English is very low. Tremendous amounts of English input itself doesn't seem to offer students successful English education. Some of them fail to accomplish their aim to study English and are often overwhelmed. English education customized to more challenged students because of their emotional and intellectual state should be thought by English educators. Learning English as a language involves various aspects of children's self-expectation, either making it better or worse. In this reciprocal interaction between psychology and language, children go through both accomplishment and failure, which will affect children's self-efficacy. It is a teacher's duty to help children acquire language along with their self-efficacy so that they can move on to better learn English.

Students who repeatedly experience failure on their tasks will learn helplessness, often losing their motivation. Their factors and symptoms of learned helplessness will be closely observed in the following sections of this report. Furthermore, several strategies will be examined to help students overcoming learned helplessness.

### 1.2 Research questions

-Does learned helpless in students also show low achievement on their language learning?

-Are the symptoms of learned helplessness students improved through Avoiding Helplessness strategies reflected in lessons?

-How can Avoiding Helplessness strategies reflected in lessons affect learned helplessness students' motivation?

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Helplessness

### 2.1.1 Learned helplessness

Children who experienced failure continuously or who lack rewards often feel that their achievements are based on luck, so they cannot control the circumstances surrounding them. Unlike children who have mastery belief, in which they believe their own efforts can make difference on the result, children who feel helplessness easily give up completing tasks. As Maier, S. F., & Seligman, M. E. (1976) reviews literature in which they examined effects of exposing organisms to aversive events which they cannot control. Motivational, cognitive, and emotional effects of uncontrollability are examined. It is hypothesized that when events are uncontrollable the organism learns that its behavior and outcomes are independent, and this learning produces the motivational, cognitive, and emotional effects of uncontrollability. Research which supports this learned helplessness hypothesis is described along with alternative hypotheses which have been offered as explanations of the learned helplessness effect. Different beliefs about achievement are fixed or variable and affect children's academic achievement, participation or other physical activities; furthermore affecting children's self-esteem and career anticipation (Bandura et al., 2001; Champman, Skinner, & Baltes, 1990; Heyman & Dweck, 1998). They find reason to fail rather than find reason to keep trying and success since they more come up with past experiences that they couldn't achieve (Dweck, 1991; Erdley et al., 1997). However, teachers can help children overcome their helplessness. Children who learned how they can change their brain by learning and how self-cognition can influence performance show progress on their achievement when provided with teacher's guidance how to study (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007).

### 2.1.2 Reformulation of learned helplessness

Even though the first definition of learned helplessness emerged by Seligman (1967), there has been a critique about it whether it can be adopted to humans in the same way it was to animals, Separation between Universal and Personal helplessness was presented by Hiroto's experiment (1974). Helpless subjects commonly consider their outcome would depend on external factors rather than internal factors. However, the relation between the concepts of external control and uncontrollability might be more complex than implied by the old learned helplessness hypothesis (Abramson & Seligman, 1978). If the subjects feel like they cannot solve a task but they believe someone can solve it, it is referred as personal helplessness. Alternatively, if a subject believes no one can solve the task including itself, it is referred to as universal helplessness. Distinguishing these

Helplessness may offer clue how to approach students' helplessness to the teachers.

| Universal helplessness | Personal helplessness |
|---|---|
| external locus of control | internal locus of control |
| Thinks that no one can solve the task | Thinks that someone can solve the task (but I can't) |

Helpless children would have different self-esteem depends on their helplessness type. Since a major determinant of attitudes toward the self is comparison with other (Clark & Clark, 1939; Festinger, 1954; Morse & Gergen, 1970; Rosenberg, 1965), children going through personal helplessness are more likely to deficit self-esteem.

For children, acknowledging that their difficulty might be general for others can be help children's self-esteem deficit.

## 2.2 The cause of learned helplessness

### 2.2.1 Learned helplessness children who have difficulty in learning

The importance of knowing how learning-disabled students interpret failure experiences has particular relevance for understanding and remediating the performance problems of children with attentional deficits. If, as suggested by Meichenbaum (1997), these children are deficient in cognitive self-control, it may also be that they do not attribute academic outcomes to factors within their control. (Canino, 2001)

Helpless subjects focused on the cause of their failure, whereas mastery-oriented subjects engaged in ways to overcome subsequent failure. Moreover, mastery-oriented subjects exhibited more self-instruction, greater self-monitoring, and maintained a better attitude towards the task and the future. Little is known, however, about the extent to which learning-disabled students experience similar information-processing deficiencies (Diener and Dweck,1978).

### 2.2.2 Parenting style of learned helplessness children's parents

The internalized representation of the parent as uncaring, undependable, and harshly critical, as well as of the self as vulnerable, weak, and ineffective, is re-experienced in other relationships, leading to generalized feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. McCranie and Bass (1984) explored how relationships with controlling parents in childhood can produce dependent or self-critical depressive experiences. Controlling parents "view the child as an agent for satisfying their own needs for love and recognition rather than as an autonomous, self-willed entity. Methods of controlling the child are predominantly negative, exhibiting elements of strictness combined with inconsistent expressions of love and affection reflecting conditional acceptance" (p. 4). McCranie and Bass administered the DEQ the Strict Control, Conformity, and Achievement Control scales

from the Parental Behavior Form (PBF), the Parental Inconsistency of Love scale (Schwarz & Zuroff, 1979), and the Schwarz-Getter Interparental Influence scale to female nursing students. Dependent subjects described their mothers as the dominating, controlling parent, impeding the child's separation and individuation from her. Self-critical subjects, in contrast, described their parents as equally dominant, suggesting that they were no longer simply tied to the mother alone, and that self-criticism involved ambivalent feelings about both parents and especially about their parents' attempts to maintain control. Dependent women reported that their mothers emphasized conformity, while self-critical women reported parental emphasis on achievement and performance. The parents of self-critical, but not dependent, women were also reported to demonstrate love inconsistently. These findings are congruent with earlier reports (Jacobson et al., 1975; Lamont & Gottlieb, 1975; Lamont et al., 1976; Parker, 1979a, 1979b; Raskin et al., 1971; Schwarz & Zuroff, 1979), indicating "that depression proneness in general is influenced by parental childrearing practices that combine elements of rejection, inconsistent expression of affection, and strict control. Such behaviors could be expected to hinder the development of normal self-esteem in the child, resulting in an increased vulnerability to generalized feelings of helplessness and failure" (McCranie & Bass, 1984, p. 7).

### 2.2.3 Domestic economic situation of learned helpless children

One reason many students seem unmotivated is because of lack of hope and optimism. Low socioeconomic status and the accompanying financial hardships are correlated with depressive symptoms (Butterworth, Olesen, & Leach, 2012). Moreover, the passive "I give up" posture may actually be learned helplessness, shown for decades in the research as a symptom of a stress disorder and depression. Research from 60 high poverty schools tells us that the primary factor in student motivation and achievement isn't the student's home environment; it's the school and the teacher (Irvin, Meece, Byun, Farmer, & Hutchins, 2011).

### 2.2.4 Lack of interaction between the teacher and peers

The lack of opportunities to respond to academic requests in classrooms for students may also have a behavioral disorders (BD), contributing to learned helplessness behavior patterns. Students who are repeatedly exposed to school failure are particularly at risk for the development of learned helplessness response styles (Licht & Kistner, 1986). Interactions between teachers and students may contribute to learned helplessness not because reinforcement is nonexistent for correct responding, but because reinforcement occurs so infrequently that a student has difficulty recognizing the response–reinforcement contingency. Learned helplessness, as it relates to students with BD, appears to differ from the negative reinforcement cycle in two important ways. First, whereas the negative reinforcement cycle posits that ineffective academic instruction is aversive to

students with BD, often leading to inappropriate classroom behavior in order to escape and/or avoid that instruction, students exhibiting learned helplessness might not necessarily exhibit disruptive behavior to avoid academic tasks. For example, these students may complete academic tasks, although with lessened achievement efforts, without exhibiting inappropriate classroom behavior. As a result, teachers may focus their attention on students with more overtly pressing needs (i.e., disruptive, challenging behaviors), while students with learned helplessness continue to achieve at levels discrepant to their actual ability.

Classroom research suggests that students with BD have low rates of correct responding and receive low rates of reinforcement, most often represented in the research by rates of teacher praise (Gable, Hendrickson, Young, Shores, & Stowitschek, 1983; Shores et al., 1993; Sutherland & Wehby, 2001a; Van Acker et al., 1996; Wehby, Symons, & Shores, 1995), potentially putting them at greater risk for developing learned helplessness behaviors. Taken in sum, low rates of OTR, correct responding, and reinforcement for correct responding might place students with BD at heightened risk for developing learned helplessness behavior patterns. In addition, characteristics of students with BD, such as depression and anxiety disorders, further Students with BD might have low perceptions of their cognitive competence, which might lead to learned helplessness behavior patterns as the students lessen their achievement efforts to cushion academic failure. Harter, Whitesell, and Junkin (1998) investigated the perceived self-worth of students with BD, students with a learning disability (LD), and typically achieving high school students. Results indicated that students with BD felt significantly worse about their general intellectual ability than did typically achieving students. Although the negative reinforcement cycle may have led to the students' disruptive behavior, learned helplessness—resulting from the prior exposure to a task that was too difficult to complete—may explain their decreased task engagement.

Burhans and Dweck(1995) noted that children who exhibit learned helplessness may view their self-worth not as contingent on their ability, but on the approval of or positive feedback from others. Unfortunately, evidence suggests that children with lower confidence may be more likely to avoid the possibility of future failure than increase their efforts in the hopes of success (Burhans & Dweck,1995). In summary, the literature reviewed here provides some insight into the relationship between feedback and the development of learned helplessness. Findings suggest that children who receive person criticism or praise, future attribution feedback, or noncontingent reinforcement may be more likely to develop behavioral patterns characteristic of learned helplessness. These findings provide important information for practitioners who work with students who have histories of academic failure, such as students with BD, and for researchers interested in examining the relationship between the academic failure of students with BD and learned helplessness.

In Firmin's experiment (2004), they give students two different tests. One has difficult questions prior to easy question, and the other has easy questions prior to difficult questions.

According to the helplessness hypothesis, students who had hard questions before the easy questions would tend to give up on the easy questions due to frustration, but their performance on the hard questions would not be affected, their manipulation of item difficulty order had created a negative impact on the student's ability to respond correctly.

## 3. CHILDREN GOING THROUGH LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

### 3.1 Achievement and learned helplessness

Some research suggests it is useful to think of helplessness as a domain-specific construct, particularly in terms of academic performance. Consistent with such a possibility is the research indicating that academic self-concept (including feelings of efficacy, the mirror image of helplessness) is best conceptualized as a domain-specific construct. Self-concept in one domain is related to performance in that domain but is unrelated to performance in another domain (e.g., Marsh, 1990). In terms of intellectual helplessness, Sedek and McIntosh (1998) found that intellectual helplessness had an important domain-specific component, Feelings of helplessness in language were negatively related to language grade. Relationships between feelings of intellectual helplessness and performance were domain-specific.

Some evidence was obtained to suggest that test anxiety and learned helplessness are related to academic achievement in the third grade, a set of relations that is firmly established by the fifth grade. The more consistent relation found in the fifth grade appears to support the prediction that test anxiety and helplessness are more strongly related to achievement with increasing age.

Theories of learned helplessness support a link between positive self-evaluations and performance. According to the model of learned helplessness, when faced with unfavorable circumstances, individuals with a positive, optimistic explanatory style will be less likely to display motivational deficits (i.e., lower their effort, withdraw from task-oriented behaviors), whereas those with a pessimistic explanatory style will display symptoms of helplessness (Peterson & Seligman, 1984).

### 3.2 Emotion and self-regulation of learned helpless children

Students with learned helplessness seem to feel more negative feelings than positive feelings. It is likely that they felt more negative feelings in the past and this influenced their learning helplessness. There are several factors that children learn helplessness and their failure of regulating emotion could be one major factor of learned helplessness. Teachers should help children to regulate their negative feeling when they are given tasks so they don't experience feeling of failure. Preschool and elementary age children who express a lot of anger, hostility, and other negative emotions show poorer social competence in school and are isolated from or rejected by peers

(Eisenberg et al., 1997; Fabes et al. 2002; Hubbard, 2001). The evidence linking emotion regulation and later social development continues to mount, not only for children in the United Sates but also for those in other cultures (Eisenberg, Pidada, & Liew,2001). When parents become distressed at their children's display of negative emotions and punish them, children later tend to express more anger and hostility and have more behavior problems and poorer social functioning in school (Eisenberg Fabes et al., 1999; Fabes, Leonard et al. 2002). These findings need to be considered within the context of the child's temperament style. However, care giver's reaction and interaction with children affect children's emotion regulation. Another factor that affect children's emotion regulation is self-regulation. Children who have high self-regulation handle frustration and temptation and tolerate stress and cope with social and personal problems, even when their intellectual performance is similar to that of peers (Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989; Shoda, Mischel, & Peake, 1990).

### 4. Other problematic behaviors that can lead student to learned helplessness

What is problematic behavior for the student and to the teacher? Can the certain students' behavior be considered to be disturbing? If the students keep feeling disturbed by something and can't focus on the task, it will lead them to get low achievement, which can make them feel they can't control their situation eventually.

A comparison was made to determine which behaviors listed by the State departments of education as behavioral characteristics of emotional disturbance, and as disturbing behaviors by Wickman (1928) and as maladaptive, inappropriate behaviors by Walker and Rankin (unpublished).

One set of instructions asked school personnel to respond to each of the behavioral items indicating how characteristic the behavior is of "emotional disturbance." The other set of instructions asked school personnel to respond to each of the behavioral items indicating how "disturbing" the behavior is in working with children.

Ratings set by Roberta S.Ramsey(1982) in 'Perceptions of disturbed and disturbing behavioral characteristics by school personnel'(p45-68) following:

Ratings were marked on a scaled continuum ranging from one to five, with coding for "disturbed" and for "disturbing" instructions: (1) coded as not very characteristic of emotional disturbance (NVC-ED) and (5) as very characteristic of emotional disturbance (VC-ED); and (1) coded as not very disturbing (NVD) and (5) as very disturbing (VD)

Behavioral Clusters:

Behavioral Items

1. Emotionally Withdrawn

    a. Is acutely shy or withdrawn; avoids social contact.

    b. Displays a pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

c. Daydreams to a significant degree.

d. Is unresponsive to others; ignores social initiations by peers.

e. Maintains an aloofness from others.

f. Displays a disinterest in the environment; appears to be unmotivated, lethargic.

2. Weak Self-Control

a. Lacks self-control; indicates poor impulse control.

b. Has impulsive, compulsive behaviors (excessive movement); appears unable to perceive consequences.

c. Displays restless, hyperactive behaviors; is constantly moving.

d. Has difficulty listening and/or paying attention; is easily distracted.

e. Appears restless; displays a short attention span.

3. Appropriate Socialization

a. Is polite, respectful of others.

b. Takes his/her turn appropriately.

c. Is truthful, honest with others.

d. Shares materials with others in a work situation.

e. Seeks teacher attention at appropriate times.

f. Demonstrates self-reliance, independence.

g. Appears happy and cheerful; seems good natured.

h. Produces work of acceptable quality given his/her skill level.

i . Uses free time appropriately.

j. Cooperates with peers in group activities or situations.

k. Follows established classroom rules.

1. Attempts to answer a question when called on by the teacher.

m. Ignores the distractions or interruptions of other students during academic activities,

n. Resolves peer conflicts or problems adequately on his/her own.

o. Compliments peers regarding some attribute or behavior,

p. Has a close friend(s); initiates conversation.

4. Inadequacy- Immaturity

a. Complains of physical illnesses or impairments.

b. Demands excessive attention; engages in silly, attention seeking behavior.

c. Has frequent temper tantrums.

d. Expresses feelings of inferiority; debases personal feats.

e. Has a slovenly appearance.

f. Is deficient in self-help skills; demands excessive individual attention and/or

assistance.

g. Acts in a childish, immature manner; whines, sulks, pouts,

h. Displays high levels of dependence; lacks self-confidence,

i. Is unreliable or irresponsible when asked to perform.

j. Acts easily frightened, fearful, intimidated by events or other persons,

k. Is overly sensitive, over-reacts; is easily discouraged.

5. Poor Academics

a. Seems unable to learn commensurate with intellectual, sensory, or physical development.

b. Starts but does not complete tasks.

c. Demonstrates poor academic achievement, non- commensurate with ability.

d. Appears frustrated by tasks or school routine.

e. Procrastinates; delays beginning tasks or activities.

6. Personality Problems

a. Shows inappropriate types of behaviors, feelings, and/or responses under normal circumstances.

b. Exhibits a poor self-concept.

c. Engages in behavior considered dangerous to himself/ herself and/or to others.

d. Engages in bizarre behaviors and/or speech.

e. Shows extreme interest in the morbid.

f. Fantasizes or exaggerates occurrences.

6. Personality Problems--Continued

a. Engages in repetitive, stereotyped motor behavior,

b. Acts in a self-derogatory manner; is physically and/or verbally abusive toward self,

c. Has inappropriate vocalizations, unusual language context; babbles,

d. Self-stimulates; masturbates.

e. Is suspicious of others; acts paranoid,

f. Engages in inappropriate sexual behavior.

7. Poor Relations

a. Is unable to build or to maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships.

b. Lacks effective communication skills; has speech problems.

c. Manipulates other persons and/or situations to get his/her way.

d. Is overly affectionate toward peers and/or adults.

8. Acting Out

a. Talks incessantly, out of turn.

b. Reacts negatively" to instructions or commands; refuses to correct mistakes, complete

work.

    c. Exhibits severe acting out behavior; is physically aggressive toward others.

    d. Resists, defies authority or structure; challenges teacher-imposed limitations; acts

defiant.

    e. Disrupts the classroom; creates a disturbance during class activities.

    f. Demonstrates angry, temperamental, irritable behaviors.

    g. Is verbally aggressive toward others.

    h. Makes irrelevant remarks and/or asks irrelevant questions,

    i. Forces the submission of peers by being dominant, bossy, and/or overbearing,

    j. Interrupts the teacher when engaged in a presentation or activity,

    k. Uses property of others without asking permission.

9.Socialized Delinquency

    a. Is truant, tardy, or absent excessively.

    b. Is destructive of personal property; damages property of others.

    c. Uses profane, obscene language, gestures.

    d. Lies, distorts the truth.

    e. Cheats; copies work of others.

    f. Steals; takes property belonging to others.

    g. Does not follow rules; is willfully disobedient.

These emotional disturbance behaviors might prevent students from active engagement in learning at the classroom, which also leads students' low achievement. It can be used as an effective measurement of students' psychological state.

## 5. OVERCOMING LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

### 5.1 Overcoming learned helplessness strategy

### 5.1.1 Positive psychology education

    The prevalence of depression among young people is shockingly high worldwide. Nearly 20% of youth experience an episode of clinical depression by the end of high school (Lewinsohn et al., 1993). By some estimates depression is about ten times more common now than it was 50 years ago (Wickramaratne et al., 1989). In addition, several studies suggest that the age of first onset has decreased from adulthood to adolescence (Weissman, 1987; Lewinsohn et al., 1993). Although researchers debate whether these findings reflect increases in rates of depression, increased awareness of depression, or methodological problems such as memory biases (see Costello et al., 2006), virtually all investigators are dismayed by how much depression there is now and how mostly

it goes untreated (Twenge & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2002; Costello et al., 2006). They conclude that, were it possible, well-being should be taught in school on three grounds: as an antidote to depression, as a vehicle for increasing life satisfaction, and as an aid to better learning and more creative thinking. Because most young people attend school, schools provide the opportunity to reach them and enhance their well-being on a wide scale.

These are the example of exercise used in the program.

*Three Good Things:* We instruct the students to write down three good things that happened each day for a week. The three things students list can be relatively small in importance ('I answered a really hard question right in Language Arts today') or relatively large in importance ('The guy I've liked for months, asked me out!!!'). Next to each positive event listed, they write a reflection on one of the following questions: 'Why did this good thing happen?', 'What does this mean to you?', 'How can you increase the likelihood of having more of this good thing in the future?'

*Using Signature Strengths in a New Way:* We believe that students can get more satisfaction out of life if they learn to identify which of these character strengths they possess in abundance and then use them as much as possible in school, in hobbies, with friends and family. Students take the VIA Signature Strengths test for children (www.authentichappiness.org) and several lessons in the curriculum focus on helping students to identify characters' strengths in themselves and others, using strengths to overcome challenges, and applying strengths in new ways.

*Engagement in learning, enjoyment of school, and achievement:* The positive psychology programme increased students' reports of enjoyment and engagement in school. According to teacher reports, the positive psychology programme improved strengths related to learning and engagement in school (e.g., curiosity, love of learning, creativity) These findings are especially encouraging because teachers who completed measures did not deliver the positive psychology curriculum and were blind to whether students participated in the programme or the control classes. Effects on these outcomes were particularly strong for students in regular(non-Honors) classes. Among students in non-honors classes, the positive psychology programme increased Language Arts achievement through 11th grade. It is important that increasing the skills of well-being does not antagonize the traditional goals of classroom learning, but rather enhances them.

## 5.1.2 Self efficiency increasing education

According to Bandura (1997), academic self-efficacy determines most choices that children and adolescents make thereafter, including choice of peers with whom to "hang out," choice of career, and even choice of life partners. Academic self-efficacy impacts assessment of self. Menezes-Filho (2007) also found that parents' schooling was also a contributing factor for student achievement and retention.

Learned helplessness and self-efficacy are inversely related; increment in self-efficacy results in automatic decrease of helplessness. Thus, it seems safe to infer that it is possible to address self-efficacy without considering the learned helplessness theory. However, a better understanding of the origin of helpless behaviors may contribute to the identification of more effective strategies to increase and sustain a positive sense of efficacy.

Kerr (2001) highlights that, in academic settings, helplessness manifests itself as low self-efficacy, low self-esteem, low performance, low curiosity, low expectations, low engagement level, lack of motivation, lack of persistency, and lack of willingness to take risks.

According to Bandura (1977, 1978, 1997), personal exposure to success and tangible evidences of personal competence acquired through enactive mastery are the most effective sources of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy consists of two types of expectancies: efficacy expectancies are related to the individuals' beliefs in his personal capacity to undertake the particular actions necessary to achieve a given outcome; whereas, outcome expectancies are related to the individual's beliefs that his actions may produce the desired outcome (Bandura, 1978). Efficacy and outcome expectancies may be independent from one another but both impact motivation to initiate and sustain a course of actions (Bandura, 1997).

Students who believe in their capacity to master academic content and exert control over their learning experience less peer rejection, display greater self-confidence, and more pro-social behaviors (Bandura, 1997). Students with low academic efficacy struggle with self-doubt and may choose isolation, excluding themselves from some social circles. They are afraid of exposing their incapacity to perform therefore, they tend to develop avoidant, aggressive, and transgressive behaviors. Bandura (1997) warns that, "The negative impact of perceived cognitive inefficacy on the course of social development becomes stronger as children grow older and gravitate to peer groups that can get them into all kinds of trouble" (p. 176). Later in life, academic self-efficacy also determines the individuals' career and choice of significant other, which affect the type and quality of their lives forever. Bandura's (1997) and Soares's (2008) works lead one to conclude that schools cannot neglect the important role of offering safe and stimulating environments for students' psycho-social development. Both Bandura (1997) and Soares (2008) concur that the defining function of the school is to provide opportunities for individuals to develop cognitive competencies and intellectual skills.

Helplessness derives from the individual's perception of lack of control and self-efficacy derives from the individual's perception of capacity to exercise control (Abramson et al., 1978; Bandura, 1978, 1993, 1997). As both learned helplessness and self-efficacy have the exercise of control as an essential contingency, one can infer that behavioral interventions which facilitate control may mitigate helplessness and increase self-efficacy because, from the perspective of

personal control, these two constructs are mutually exclusive (Bandura, 1997; Sahoo, 2002; Wells, 2008).

### 5.1.3 Education for enhancing motivation

The sense of personal efficacy, derived from experiences of success, generates expectations of future efficacy, leading to higher motivation to start and sustain action. According to Bandura (1977, 1978, 1997), personal exposure to success and tangible evidences of personal competence acquired through enactive mastery are the most effective sources of self-efficacy.

Planning, monitoring, and control of thoughts before, during, and after tasks foster focus, engagement and active participation. It also provides empowerment and increases interest, self-efficacy, and motivation, which results in decreased helplessness (Bandura, 1997; Reeve & Brown, 1984; Sahoo, 2002; Seligman, 2006).

Thompson et al.'s (2004) work is congruent with Jones's (2009) MUSIC Model of Academic Motivation which prescribes that teachers should plan their lessons in such a way that (**M**) they can e**M**power students by allowing them to exert some control over their learning; (**U**) inform students about the **U**sefulness of what they are learning; (**S**) promote students' **S**uccess within their developmental level; (**I**) raise students' **I**nterests in the subject matter or, at least, in the topic of that particular lesson; and (**C**) demonstrate that they **C**are about the students' development and success in the discipline.

### 5.2 Overcoming helplessness strategy reflected in lessons

Increasing experiences of success and getting rid of setbacks for achievement are very crucial for overcoming helplessness. We can condition students for how they can deal with failure and accomplishment when they encounter difficulties.

### 5.2.1 Strategies for overcoming learned helplessness

1. **Schedule: Increase Predictability** (Kern & Clemens, 2007). When students know the "content, duration, and/or consequences of future events" (Kern & Clemens, 2007; p. 67), their level of engagement rises and problem behaviors decline—a good definition of motivation. A strategy to increase the predictability of events for individual students or an entire classroom is to post or otherwise provide a schedule outlining the day's classroom activities. In simplest form, such a schedule lists a title and brief description for each scheduled activity, along with the start and end times for that activity. Teachers may wish to add information to the schedule, such as helpful reminders of what work materials a student might need for each event. Students who have difficulty interpreting a written schedule may benefit from having their schedules read aloud and/or from having pictorial equivalents included in their schedules.

2. **Work Break: Make It Available on Request** (Majeika et al., 2011). Sometimes misbehavior is an attempt by the student to engineer a break from an academic task. The teacher can choose an alternative method for the student to use to communicate that he or she would like a brief break, such as requesting that break verbally or pulling out a color-coded break card. Of course, the student will also require clear guidelines on how long the requested break will last and what activities are acceptable for the student to engage in during that break.

3. **Checklist for Academic Skills: Make the Complicated Simple** (Alter, Wyrick, Brown, & Lingo, 2008). When the student must apply several steps to complete a complex academic task, the teacher can give the student a checklist detailing each step and instructions for completing it. Before the activity, the student is prompted to preview the checklist; after the activity, the student uses the checklist to review the work.

4. **Checklist for Challenging Situations: Script Transition Times** (McCoy, Mathur, & Czoka, 2010). Students often struggle with the complexity of managing multi-step routines such as transitioning between classroom activities or moving to different locations within the school. Teachers can assist by making up step-by-step checklists that 'walk' the student incrementally through the routine. Instructors can use these checklists as guides to teach and measure student success in navigating transitions. Just as important, the student can use the checklist as a prompt and guide to follow the expected steps.

5. **Choice-Making: Allow for Student Preference** (Green, Mays, & Jolivette, 2011). Students find it motivating to have opportunities to choose how they structure or carry out their academic tasks. Teachers can allow choice on any of a variety of dimensions of a classroom activity, such as where the activity takes place; who the child works with; what materials to work with (e.g., choosing a book from several options); when to begin or end the activity; or how long to engage in the activity.

6. **Fix-Up Skills: Foster Work Independence** (Rosenshine, 2008). During independent work, the student should know procedures to follow if stuck (e.g., cannot complete an item; does not understand a word in a reading passage). The teacher creates a routine for the student in how to apply 'fix-up' skills for independent assignments: e.g., "If I don't understand what I have read, I should (1) reread the paragraph; (2) slow my reading;(3) focus my *full* attention on what I am reading; (4) underline any words that I do not know and try to figure them out from the reading" (McCallum et al., 2010).

**7. Goal-Setting: Get a Commitment** (Martin et al., 2003). One tool to increase student motivation

to perform an academic task is to have that student choose a specific, measurable outcome goal before starting that task. At the end of the work session, the student compares the actual outcome to the previously selected goal to judge success. For example, a student about to begin a writing task may choose the goal of locating 3 primary sources for a term paper. Or a student starting an in-class reading assignment might come up with two questions that he would like to have answered from the reading.

8. **Response Effort: Reduce Task Difficulty** (Friman & Poling, 1995; Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). The teacher increases student engagement through any method that reduces the apparent difficulty ('response effort') of an academic task - so long as that method does not hold the student to a lesser academic standard than classmates. Examples of strategies that lower response effort include having students pair off to start homework in class and breaking larger academic tasks into smaller, more manageable 'chunks'.

9. **Performance Feedback: Information is Rewarding** (Conroy et al., 2009). When students receive timely feedback about their academic performance, this information can reinforce academic behavior and reduce misbehavior. Instructional feedback comes in many forms: e.g., teacher oral or written feedback; class discussion and review of an assignment; oral feedback from class peers; student self-directed completion of a rubric or problem-solving checklist during an independent assignment.

10. **Praise: Catch Them Being Good** (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Research suggests that teacher praise is one of the most powerful--yet underused-- of classroom management tools. When a student, group, or class displays an appropriate pro-social or pro-academic behavior, the teacher reinforces that behavior with a targeted praise statement containing two elements: (1) a specific description of the praiseworthy behavior, and (2) an expression of teacher approval (e.g., "You worked for the full independent-work period. Nice job!"; "I really appreciate the way that our student groups stayed on-task and completed their entire assignment.").

**5.3 Tasks**

**5.3.1 Chunking**

"Chunking is the process of organizing or clustering information into... compact thought units, such as phrases or clauses" (Valentine and Franks, 1979, p.48)

In speaking, phrasing is usually provided by the interlocutors through suprasegmentally cues-stress, intonation, and pauses (Graf and Torry, 1966; Stevens, 1983). By the analysis of three linguistic variables- juncture or pause, pitch, and stress-in oral reading in children, Clay and Imlach

(1971) found that the best readers seemed to read on the average 7 words between pauses, complete a sentence with a fall in pitch, and read 4.7 words per stress, whereas poor readers were more likely to read 1.3 words between pauses, use a rising or sustained pitch implying uncertainty in reading a sentence, and read 1.1 words per stress. These behavioral differences suggest that the best readers are processing the message in syntactic chunks, while poor readers are more controlled by word and partial word cues.

Graf and Torry (1966) were investigating the hypothesis that grouping words or phrases is necessary for the understanding of reading passages. They found that comprehension scores for reading passages which were broken at syntactic phrase boundaries were higher than those for passages broken in the middle of such groups. It showed that, just as acoustic pauses help to bring about structural organization in speech perception, division of written text into natural linguistic units enables the reader to see the grammatical organization of a passage.

Weaver (1979-80) tested the possibility of improving reading comprehension of third graders by training the children to point out how the words of sentence are related and then to encode information in meaningful chunks larger than the single word. Results of weaver's study showed that the experimental subjects were significantly more accurate and faster on the sentence construction test than the control group and, moreover, that training improved sentence construction performance, transferring most to the prompted sentence recall and cloze test, less to the timed sentence recognition test, and least to the passage-question test.

Much of language acquisition is in fact sequence learning and that abstract grammatical knowledge comes from analysis of sequence information. It demonstrates that a wide range of language learning abilities are determined by learners' short-term memory (STM), that is, their ability to remember simple verbal strings in order. It shows how interactions between short-term and long-term phonological memory systems allow chunking and the tuning of language systems better to represent structural information for particular languages. Below is a part of the argument structure that guides the sections of this essentially empiricist account of SLA (Ellis, 1996).

1. Language learning is the learning and analysis of sequences. The learner must acquire sound sequences in words. The learner must acquire word sequences in phrases.

1.1 Supporting evidence for these three components and their order of acquisition comes from studies of word association.

1.2 Learning word structure involves identifying the categorical units of speech perception, their particular sequences in particular words, and their general sequential probabilities in the language.

1.3 Learning discourse structure largely involves learning particular sequences of words in stock phrases and collocations. The idiom principle underlies much of fluent language use, and language learners need to acquire particular sequences of words in particular phrases and the general sequential probabilities of words in the language.

1.4 Learning the grammatical word class of a particular word, and learning grammatical structures more generally, involve in large part the automatic implicit analysis of the word's sequential position relative to other words in the learner's stock of known phrases that contain it.

2. Language learners differ in their sequencing ability.

3. These observations suggest chunking as a general process of SLA.

3.1 Repetition of sequences in phonological STM allows their consolidation in phonological long-term memory (LTM).

4. These general processes of sequence learning determine a range of particular aspects of SLA. Processes of acquisition are proposed for:

4.1. The acquisition of lexical form.

4.2. The acquisition of vocabulary meaning (because learning the phonological word-form label is a precursor to mapping meaning onto this label).

4.3. The acquisition of phrases, collocations and idioms.

4.4. The acquisition of grammar (because learning exemplar sequences of words in phrases is the precursor to implicit analysis of these exemplars for word class and regularities of grammar structure).

So what is the involvement of phonological memory in language learning? According to Melton's (1963) preference for a theoretical strategy that accepts STM and LTM as mediated by a single type of storage mechanism. In such a continuum, frequency of repetition appears to be the important independent variable, chunking seems to be the important intervening variable, and the slope of the retention curve is the important dependent variable, (p. 19)

*Sequencing in SLA* 107 The term "chunking" was coined by George Miller in his classical review of short-term memory (Miller, 1956). It is the development of permanent sets of associative connections in long-term storage and is the process that underlies the attainment of automaticity and fluency in language. Newell (1990) argues that it is the overarching principle of human cognition:

A chunk is a unit of memory organization, formed by bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them together into a larger unit. Chunking implies the ability to build up such structures recursively, this leading to a hierarchical organization of memory. Chunking appears to be a ubiquitous feature of human memory. Conceivably, it could form the basis for an equally ubiquitous law of practice.

Its role in language acquisition is reviewed by McLaughlin (1987) and Schmidt (1992). Melton based his conclusions on data concerning the learning of letter or digit sequences: The more stimuli are repeated in STM, the greater the LTM for these items and, in turn, the easier they are to repeat as sequences in STM.

Newell (1990; Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981) formally demonstrated that the following three assumptions of chunking as a learning mechanism could lead to the power law of practice: (a)

People chunk at a constant rate: Every time they get more experience, they build additional chunks; (b) performance on the task is faster, the more chunks that have been built that are relevant to the task; (c) the structure of the environment implies that higher level chunks recur more rarely. Chunks describe environmental situations. The higher the chunk in the hierarchy, the more sub patterns it has, and the more sub patterns, the less chance there is of it being true of the current situation.

Attended sequences of language in working memory are automatically chunked: The repetition of sequences in working memory results in the consolidation of long-term representations of this sequence information. There can be implicit

learning at least to the degree that the learner is not aware that long-term representations are being tuned by regularities and relative frequencies in the relevant perceptual domain (Berry & Diennes, 1993; N. C. Ellis, 1994c, in press; Reber, 1993).

### 5.3.1 Phonological Awareness Training

According to Perfetti (1986), "acquisition of the alphabetic code is a critical component— indeed, the definitive component— of reading in an alphabetic language" (p. 57). Gough and Tunmer (1986) proposed that the common denominator in reading disability is the inability to decode. As Rack et al. pointed out, however, many factors (environmental and intrinsic) contribute to the degree of the coding deficit, and individual differences must be considered. To further evaluate decoding deficits, Felton and Wood (1992) utilized a reading level match design and compared nonword reading skills in third and fifth-grade poor readers who were matched to first graders on word identification skills. The poor readers were significantly more impaired than first graders on all measures of nonword reading. These results were not related to verbal IQ level within the poor reader groups; that is, children whose reading was *not* discrepant from IQ were as impaired on nonword reading as those children whose reading was discrepant from IQ. In addition, although most of the poor readers showed some improvement in nonword reading during elementary school, the majority remained quite impaired by fifth grade. By conventional discrepancy-based definitions of learning disabilities, below-average intellectual ability is ruled out as the cause of the failure of individuals with specific reading disabilities to develop basic reading skills. Thus, research has focused on determining the core, or domain-specific, cognitive deficits (distinct from those measured on IQ tests) responsible for reading disability (see Stanovich, 1988, 1991, for further discussion). In a recent review of this literature, Wagner and Torgesen (1987) stated, *"Phonological processing* refers to the use of phonological information (i.e., the sounds of one's language) in processing written and oral language" (p. 192). Another area of difficulty for individuals with reading disabilities involves encoding, or representing phonological information in working memory, often measured by memory span tasks. Retrieval of phonological information from memory is a third type of phonological processing problem associated with impaired reading acquisition. Although the

precise nature of the relationship between phonological processing deficits and reading disability is not fully understood, our research (e.g., Felton & Brown, 1990; Felton & Wood, 1989) suggests that phonological awareness and retrieval of phonological information from long-term memory are particularly important processes in the development of beginning reading skills. Given that the majority of children with reading disabilities fail to develop adequate decoding skills and that this failure appears to be strongly related to deficits in some type or types of phonological-processing skills, it is important to consider possible mechanisms for these relationships. For a number of years, Liberman and her colleagues at the Haskins Laboratories have been demonstrating the importance of understanding how the sounds of language map onto letters in an alphabetic reading system (Shankweiler & Liberman, 1989). Jorm and Share (1983) proposed that a child's ability to accurately decode words functions as a self-teaching mechanism; each correct identification of a word constitutes a successful learning trial that leads to the eventual identification of the word as a "sight word" (i.e., through the visual route). Ehri and Robbins (1992) recently proposed that phonological skills assist beginning readers by enabling them to (a) segment words into onset and rime and (b) store words in memory by forming connections between sounds More recently, researchers have focused on the impact of early training in phonological awareness on later acquisition of reading skills, and several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of such training (e.g., Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Lie, 1991; Olofsson & Lundberg, 1985). In addition, Ball and Blachman (1991) demonstrated that phoneme awareness instruction in combination with explicit instruction in letter-sound knowledge is very effective in promoting early reading and spelling skills. The Brown and Felton (1990) study indicates that children with phonological- processing problems can develop decoding skills. Problems in awareness were manifested in difficulties with tasks involving analysis of words into parts (e.g., rhyming, segmenting words into syllables or phonemes, recognition of beginning and ending sounds in words) and manipulating sounds within sequences, as measured by the Lindamood Auditory Conceptualization Test (Lindamood & Lindamood, 1979). Retrieval problems were manifested in difficulties in rapid naming, as measured by the Rapid Automatized Naming Test (Denckla & Rudel, 1976) and the Rapid Alternating Stimuli Test (Wolf, 1984).

Rebecca H. Felton(1993) concluded that the following elements are critical to the success of a beginning reading program for at risk children:

1. Provide direct instruction in language analysis.

2. Provide direct teaching of the alphabetic code.

3. Reading instruction must be intensive.

4. Reading and spelling should be taught in coordination.


Following is an example of revised class material for phonological awareness focused tasks.

| Diary | Library | |
|-------|---------|---|
| Itch | Itchy | |
| Fell | Felt | |

| 일기 | Diary | Library |
|------|-------|---------|
| 간지러운 | Itch | Itchy |
| 느꼈다 | Fell | Felt |

| | |
|---|---|
| I f____t it_____ all over t_____y.<br><br>나는 오늘 여기저기가 간지러웠다. | 알맞은 알파벳 써넣기 |
| I **took/take** a **bath/bad**.<br><br>나는 목욕을 했다. | 알맞은 단어 고르기 |

# 6. METHODOLOGY

## 6.1 Introduction and overview of the section

In the previous section, I described symptoms of learned helplessness and its causes. Based on learned helplessness symptoms, I found two of my students going through learned helplessness, and am currently finding factors that caused the students' learned helplessness, as well as what should be done to help those students to overcome learned helplessness.

According to Maier, S. F., & Seligman, M. E. (1976), Children who experienced failure continuously or who are lack of reward often feel that their achievements are based on luck so they can't control circumstance surrounding them. Unlike children who have mastery belief, in which they believe their own efforts can make difference on the result, children who feel helplessness easily give up completing tasks. For those learned helpless children, motivational, cognitive, and emotional effects of uncontrollability are examined. Thus, students will face with unfavorable circumstances, individuals with a positive, optimistic explanatory style will be less likely to display motivational deficits (i.e., lower their effort, withdraw from task-oriented behaviors), whereas those with a pessimistic explanatory style will display symptoms of helplessness (Peterson & Seligman, 1984). Preschooler and elementary age children who express a lot of anger, hostility, and other negative emotions like emotional disturbances show poorer social competence in school and are isolated from or rejected by peers (Eisenberg et al., 1997; Fabes et al. 2002; Hubbard, 2001).

Therefore, I would like to find the answers to these questions:

-Does learned helpless in students also show low achievement on their language learning?

-Are the symptoms of learned helplessness students improved through Avoiding Helplessness strategies reflected in lessons?

-How can Avoiding Helplessness strategies reflected in lessons affect learned helplessness students' motivation?

## 6.2 Description of the students

One elementary student and one middle school student participated in this research. Each student shares a similar problem: learned helplessness. The reason I think believe this is that they have typical symptom of learned helplessness, which involves emotional problems like lack of motivation, low achievement, and low self-efficacy. They often give up their tasks even before they start to do it.

| Students | Students' utterances & attitude |
|---|---|
| Student 1 | Student 1 is in their second grade of middle school. He has trouble memorizing and understanding English and math. His achievement in school test is usually poor. |
| Student 2 | Student 2 is a 4th grader in elementary school. She has one brother and it seems that they don't like each other. She whines a lot when given a task. She hates memorizing because she says that memorizing over 3 words at once is difficult for her. She likes to have conversations with the teacher so she hardly leaves the teacher's side during the class. She often tries to start a conversation with a topic out of the text book. She hardly accomplishes one day's task, so the teacher makes her finish half of the one-day task. |

Overall, students assumed to go through learned helplessness seem to have low achievement on their learning English.

## 6.3 Description of the class for each students
### 6.3.1 Student 1

Student 1's goal to learn English is to perform well in his school English exam, which evaluates grammatical and reading proficiency. His English text book focuses on learning grammar and improving reading skill as seen in the picture 1 (below). Student 1 attends my tutoring four times a week and each class has the same routine, which focuses on preparing his school English test

(Table 1). I consider his frequent frowning face during the class as a problematic behavior derived from his learned helplessness. I found that his frowning face while he is answering to my questioning and solving problems in the text book.

| Greeting | 1-5 minutes | |
| Checking Homework | | |
| Solving English problems - listening to the teacher's explanation | 20 minutes | Frowning face/ not looking at the teacher |
| Memorizing vocabulary in the text – Verbal vocabulary test | 10 minutes | Frowning face/not looking at the teacher |
| Given a Homework by the teacher | 5 minutes | |
| Wrapping up the class | | |

Table 1 - Lesson flow of student 1
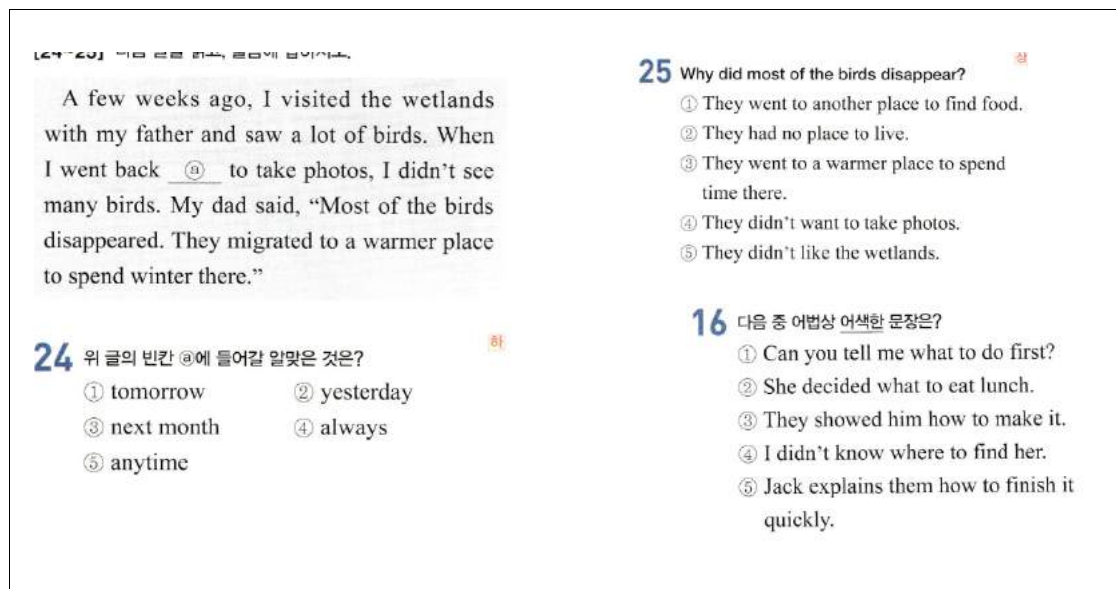


Picture 1

I used to use a text book full of questions requiring his grammatical knowledge and reading skill (picture 1), but now I require him to read the text in units of chunks, and if possible, memorize the chunk (picture2) so that I can minimize my explanation and instruction for problems in the text book.

After using this chunking method, I found that his problematic behavior reduced and he seems to be more comfortable making more eye contact than before. However, he sometimes frowns when the unit of the chunk is long, which requires my long explanation and instruction. Short chunks are effective for him to study English.

Picture 2 – Breaking the text into chunks

| Greeting | 1-5 minutes | Rare frowning face/ Making eye contact with the teacher |
|---|---|---|
| Checking Homework | | |
| Reading chunks and verbal practicing and checking | 20 minutes | |
| Given a Homework by the teacher | 5 minutes | |
| Wrapping up the class | | |

Table 2 – Overall flow of class using Chunks

**6.3.2 Student 2**

Student 2's goal to learn English is just to improving her English. She was brought to the academy by her mother, and she often show lack of motivation learning not only in English but other subjects like swimming, ballet, cooking. Her mother lets her daughter find interest in something but it doesn't seem to be successful. Student 2 often starts a conversation about why a person needs to attend school or how busy she is because of the extra-curricular activities. Student 2 attends the class from Monday to Friday for 40-45 minutes in each day. During the lesson, she is required to read out the story, to solve English-Korean translation questions and to memorize some vocabulary used in

that day. When I check her reading, she starts to talk about something out of the textbook and generally fails at fixing her pronunciation despite several cases of teacher correction.

I believe her symptoms of learned helplessness appears through her distracting behaviors, which prevent her from successful achievement in her tasks. Her distracting behavioral clusters are below according to Wickman (1928):

Behavioral Items

1. Emotionally Withdrawn

    a. Daydreams to a significant degree.

    b. Displays a disinterest in the environment; appears to be unmotivated, lethargic.

2. Weak Self-Control

    a. Has difficulty listening and/or paying attention; is easily distracted.

    b. Appears restless; displays a short attention span.

3. Inadequacy- Immaturity

    a. Demands excessive attention; engages in silly, attention seeking behavior.

    b. Is deficient in self-help skills; demands excessive individual attention and/or assistance.

    c. Is unreliable or irresponsible when asked to perform.

4. Poor Academics

    a. Starts but does not complete tasks.

    b. Appears frustrated by tasks or school routine.

5. Personality Problems

    a. Shows inappropriate types of behaviors, feelings, and/or responses under normal

    circumstances.

6. Personality Problems--Continued

    a. Engages in repetitive, stereotyped motor behavior,

7. Poor Relations

    a. Is unable to build or to maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships.

    b. Is overly affectionate toward peers and/or adults.

    c. Interrupts the teacher when engaged in a presentation or activity,

9. Socialized Delinquency

    a. Does not follow rules; is willfully disobedient.


The factors of her behavioral clusters like family background and her temperance can be discussed, however, I assume that most of these symptoms can improve if the task is easy for her to focus on.   I used easy books to teach her. Since the I found that the student 2 has difficulty focusing on story-based book (picture 3), now I use text book that aims learning sentence structure and has very simple questions (Picture 4).

However, the student 2's problematic behavior did seem to decrease for a while. As she continues to study with this book, her symptoms reduced. Her topic during the class is now most about the contents of the class or academic achievement and she talks about it only beginning and the last of the class since she is busy with her tasks during the class (Table 4).

The differences between story book and sentence book are:

1. The sentence book has only short sentences and.

       -Make the complicate simple

       -Reduce task difficulty(chunk)

2. The sentence book used fixed vocabulary with its picture (visual aid).

       -Fix up skills

3. The sentence book provides action verbs that she can easily imagine.

4. The sentence book involves questions that requires student's short span of attention (short instruction).

       -Work break: the student can have break between each section since the task is divided into vocabulary, phrases, sentence part.

5. The student can easily measure one-day assigned task and daily progress

       -Goal setting & getting a commitment

       -Increase predictability

       -Praise: The teacher can easy to praise.

She slowly became to finish one-day task. finishing solving whole question on the sentence book. I gave her compliment with a candy if she finishes her one-day task in time, also we have conversation while she eats her candy. She seems to learn if she really focuses on the task, it is not that difficult and it finishes earlier than usual.
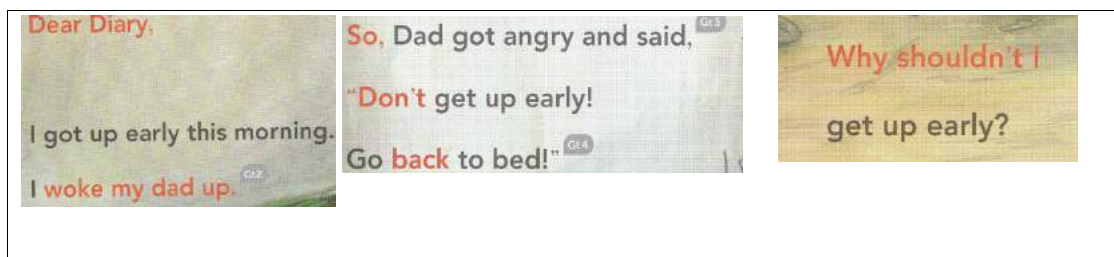


Picture 3 – Story book (for one day's story)

| Greeting | 1-5 minutes | Conversation |
|---|---|---|
| Checking Homework | | |
| Listening to the story and practicing reading | 10 minutes | |
| The teacher's checking student 2's reading the | 10 minutes | Conversation |

| story | | |
|---|---|---|
| Solving English problems | 10 minutes | |
| Giving homework | 5 minutes | Conversation |
| Wrapping up the class | | |

Table 2- Overall flow of class using Story book

Picture 4 - Sentence book

| Greeting | 1-5 minutes | Conversation |
|---|---|---|
| Checking Homework | | |
| Learning vocabulary for the text (The teacher teaches meaning of the vocabulary and its pronounce.) | 5 minutes | |
| Solving English problems and teacher's checking | 15 minutes | |
| Learning new vocabulary out of the text (The teacher uses other vocabulary books to make her memorize vocabulary.) | 10 minutes | |
| Giving homework | 5 minutes | Conversation |
| Wrapping up the class | | |

Table 3 – Overall flow of the class using Sentence book

## 7. RESULT

Student 2 is making progress on her school work and attitude in the classroom. Her frequency of pronunciation error remarkably dropped, which her mother and the student herself noticed and are proud of. The reason she was able to make process on her pronunciation error in a short time seems to be that her pronunciation error was not because of her lack of knowledge but lack of her attention toward the words.

Frequent conversation and distraction in the class was only allowed in the beginning and the last of the class, in that way, her frequent conversation and distraction in the class was slowly reduced.

On the other hand, student 1 still has difficulty in his school work, and had no significant difference in his achievement. However, he said that he was able to understand the text on the book, and memorize vocabulary on his self reflection.

It will take more time to make progress on overcoming learned helplessness for student 1.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Learned helplessness by Seligman,M. E.(1976) can involve students' indifference, lack of motivation and feeling of uncontrollability toward tasks, however, diagnosing symptoms of learned helplessness can be arbitrary and difficult because its causes and symptoms of students vary and that's why the teacher's close observation is required.

Overcoming learned helplessness is an ongoing process for the students who struggle with breaking the chain of failure. Learned helpless students pile the experiences of achievement and success one by one and step by step with the teacher. It's a long way and requires patience of both student and the teacher. Further study about learned helplessness and research about students in learned helplessness will be taken for application of overcoming learned helplessness strategy reflected lesson.

## APPENDIX

**1. Survey Questions for the measurement of learned helplessness scale**

| Questions | agree ← → disagree | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. If I study harder, I can improve my English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I am good at English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Learning English is exciting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I will be able to use English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Other classmates is better at English than me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I know how to improve my English skill. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. My parents support me to learn English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. My surrounding helps me to study English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. I can manage to study English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Learning English is not stressful to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**2. General Interview questions**

On the interview, students will be asked about their family, achievement, interest.

| Main topic | Sub topic | Questions |
|---|---|---|
| Experience of English Education | Difficulties in learning English | Have you ever had difficult time studying English? If so, what was the most difficult part of it? |
| | Experience of failing or overcoming difficulties | Did you overcome difficulties in learning English? and How? |
| Interest and motivation of learning English | Purpose of learning English | Why do you think learning English is important? Is it the reason why you study English? |
| | Interest of English | Is learning English fun? If so, what is the most exciting English activities? |
| Relationship with parents | Encouragement of parents | Do your parents encourage you when you good at or poor at English? |
| | Conversation with parents | |
| | Time spend with parents | Do you have conversation with your parents? If so, what is about it? |
| | | Do you spend much time with your |

| | | parents? If so, what do you and your parents usually do? |
|---|---|---|

**3. Interview for the students. Individual interview questions.**

Q, 1: About general perceptions of the teacher in English class.

       a) What kind of aspect do you want from the teacher?

       b) What do you want the teacher to do for the students?

       c) Do you think the teacher's attitude in the class affect your English study?

Q, 2: About students' motivation and self efficacy

       a) Why do you think you have to learn English?

       b) Have ever feel like you can't improve yourself in learning English?

       c) Do you think you can be better at English?

Q, 3: About activities and contents use in the class

       a) What do you think of the contents you use when you study English?

       b) Do you think you can understand the contents well?

       c) Is there any specific difficult part when you use your textbook?

Q, 4: About family relationship

       a) Do you talk with your family members?

       b) What do you talk about with your family?

       c) Do you like to spend your time with your family?

| Student 1's interview | | |
|---|---|---|
| General academical interest | Do you enjoy your school work? | I think I do, except for Science or history. |
| | Which subject is more interesting among other subjects? | Math and English is more interesting than other subjects because I study them at academy. |
| Teacher's attitude toward the student | Are your school teachers good to you? | They are fine. |
| | What about your English teacher at school? Is she nice to you or isn't she scary? | She is not scary at all. |
| | Who do you think a good English teacher is? | If I don't know something well, a good English teacher teaches me well and nicely |

| | | not the scary way. |
|---|---|---|
| | What about me? Am I a scary teacher? | No, I think you are fine. |
| | What if I shout at you? | I guess you have to shout when I don't focus on my study. |
| Motivation & Self Efficacy | Is it fun to learn English to you? | Learning English isn't boring, It's just fine. |
| | Then, why do you think you have to learn English? | I can use English when I become an adult, when I go abroad, and when I speak with foreigners. |
| | Do you think your English will be improved if you study more? | I think it's possible if I try harder. |
| | Then, how will you try to study English harder? | By focusing on the task. |
| Contents used in the class | Do you think you are focusing on the study? | Yes, I focus on the study better than before. |
| | Do you like studying method that you're studying with? | I feel easier when I translate English at school. |
| Relationship with parents | What do you do when you get back to home? | I wash, have dinner, watch TV and study a little bit before bad. |
| | Your mother will make a delicious dinner? | <No, answer> |
| | What will you do tomorrow? | I will play with my friends. |
| | What do you do when you hang out with your friends? | I just run around or go to the Karaoke (singing room). |
| | Do you go there with your family? | My family don't hang out. |
| | Have you ever gone on a picnic together? | I've never gone on a picnic as I remember. |
| | What about your mother? Does your mother work? Is your father busy? | My mom is a house keeper and my family rarely spend time together. |

| | Then, when do your family spend time together? | When my father wants to travel, we have a trip. |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | What is you're the most memorable family trip? | We went to the sea at Gangwon province. |
| | Have your family gone on a trip many times? | No |
| | How many times did you went to a family trip? | Two or three times? |
| | Do you talk with your parent? | Yes, we talk a lot, when we go somewhere. |
| | About what do your family talk about? | We talk about what I am going to be in the future or Whether I am studying hard. |
| | What do feel when you talk with your parents? | I'm not happy about it. |
| | Then, what do you want to talk about? | I want to talk about just other stuffs. |
| | Don't you spend time with your parents? | We spend time with each other nowadays. |
| | What about when you were a child? | Not really. |
| | Why? | My dad comes back home late at night, but I talk with my mom a lot. |
| | About what do you talk about your mother? | My mom told me to study harder. |

This is short Interview with Student 1 about his frowning.

| You've been alright lately but you frowned your face again today. Don't you feel uncomfortable because of your face when you study? | |
| --- | --- |
| Are you aware of your face frowning? | I'm just frowning because I feel uncomfortable. |
| Why are you uncomfortable? | Because of my nose. |
| Your nose? Why? | Because of my glasses |
| Your glasses just slip over your nose? | Sure, It's just because of my glasses. |
| You can use your hands if your glassed slips. | My nose hurts because my glasses slips on |

| | my nose. |
|---|---|
| As I observe, you often frown your face when you are tired.<br>I found that you are not always frown your face when you wear glasses.<br>Then you think it's just about your glasses? | Okay. |
| You are saying that It's nothing with my intonation? Are you 100 percent sure? | When I can't focus on the task or my nose hurts. |
| Why can't you focus on the task? | Because I am tired. |
| Why are you tired? | I played with my friend at his birthday party. |
| Then, you frown your face when you are tired? | Yes |
| I'm just worried about it. | Okay |

**4. Observation (frequency of the students' problematic behavior)**

How the students act when they are given challenging task and how they solve their challenging situation are closed observed? Thus, the teacher found that students' emotional state, attitude and, task time varies along with the task.

* The class was proceeded in Korean; the bold lettering is a sign that English was spoken.

| Conversation with student1 | Teacher's observation |
|---|---|
| Student1 is solving English grammar problem, and the teacher explain it in Korean. | Student 1 leans his head on his left hand and does not look at the teacher. |
| **T:** 'This one? Do you know the meaning of number 2 sentence? ' | (The student frowns) |
| 'Let's translate it. ' | (The students frowns) |
| **S1: 'I wash my hair.'** <br> **'I dry my hair.**' <br> **T:** 'Then, is it 'After washing my hair, I dry my hair?' or 'Before washing my hair, I dry my hair?' | |
| **S:** 'It's 'After washing my hair.' <br> **T:** 'Then, What's the answer of this question? What fits the blank? ' <br> **S1:** '**After?**' | (The students frowns) <br> Student 1 scratches his head with his both hands. |
| **T:** 'That's right. Then, you write A if **'After'** fits the blank and write B if **'Before**; fits the blank.  Then, you can see what the answers are at a glance.' | (The students frowns) |
| **S1:** 'Yes.' <br> **T:** 'Write letters in the blank.' | (The students frowns) |
| 'Otherwise, you might forget what fits the blank, while you translate other five sentences. Then, you have to translate all over again.' | |
| | He is pointing a word on the |

| | book. |
|---|---|
| **S1:** 'What is the meaning of '**warm**'?' | |
| | He is scratching his head with right hand. |
| **T:** 'It means that you prepare to exercise and the meaning of '**warm**' is heated.' | (The students frowns) |
| 'It means that it heats body. You heat your body before swimming.' | (The students frowns) |
| 'Then, this questions are all about '**After**' or '**Before**'. Let me see the next question.' | Student 1 keeps translating the sentences and writing 'A' or 'B' in the blanks and keeps listening the teacher. |

| Conversation with student 2 - 1 | Teacher's observation |
|---|---|
| The students are reading a story in front of the teacher and the teacher examine whether she reads it correctly. | |
| T: Let's read it clearly, from here. | |
| S2: **Then, my brother said.** | Her pronunciation of 'said' is wrong, |
| T: 'This word 'said' has no 'I' sound.' | so the teacher corrects it. |
| S2: **Then, my brother said.** | She corrects her pronunciation. |
| S2: **'Oh, my gudness!'** | She keeps reading and makes a |
| T: '**Oh, my goodness!**' | mistake. |
| S2: **'Did you take a bath?** | The teacher corrects her pronunciation. |
|     **Why I shouldn't take a bath?'** | She corrects her pronunciation. |

| | |
|---|---|
| T: **Why** | She keeps reading and makes a mistake. |
| **S2: Why I shouldn't take a bath?** | The teacher corrects her pronunciation. |
| | She corrects her pronunciation. |
| | She finishes the whole text. |
| | |
| | The teacher asks her to practice reading the text. |
| <Teacher> | |
| 'So, you practiced reading. | The teacher orders her to read the book. |
| Let's try one more time.' | |
| | |
| **S2: Dear library.** | 'She reads 'Dear diary' as 'Dear library'. |
| **T: Dear diary.** | |
| **S2: Dear diary.** | The teacher corrects it. |
| **S2: I felt itch all over today.** | |
| **T: I felt itchy all over today.** | She reads 'felt itchy' as 'felt itch'. |
| **S2: I felt itchy all over today.** | The teacher corrects it. |
| T: 'Why don't you practice reading it while | She keeps making errors, so the teacher asks her to practice reading. |
| listening record?' | She reads 'Dear diary' as 'Dear dibrary'. |
| | |
| S2: **Dear dibrary.** | The teacher corrects the error. |
| T: **Dear diary.** | She laughs. |
| T: 'Did you combine two words? | |
| You shouldn't do that; they are different words.**' |
| **S2: Dear diary. I felt itchy all over today.** | |
| **So I took a <bad>.** | While she is reading, she swings her body sitting on the chair. |
| **T: bath** | |
| **S2: Then, my brother said. Oh my <goss>.** | |
| **T: goodness** | |
| S2: **'Did you take a bad?** | |
| **T: bath** | |
| **S2: Stop take bather!** | |
| **T: bath** | |
| **S2: bath** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **S2: <What> shouldn't I take bath?**<br>**T: Why**<br>**S2: Why shouldn't I take a bath?** | She reads it again, and finishes reading the text. |
| S: 'You know what? It was my mom's birthday yesterday.'<br><br>T: 'Oh, was it? Did you do something for her?'<br><br>S2:<br>'Yes, I did, I bought her a nail polish.'<br>T: 'Oh, what color did you bought for her?'<br><br>S2: 'Pink.'<br><br>T: 'Your mom must have liked it.'<br><br>S2: 'Um......'<br><br>T: 'Why? Didn't your mother like it?'<br><br>S2: 'Um....'<br><br>T:'Now, let's skip to the next reading.' | She starts to talk about different topic. |
| Conversation with student 2 - 2 | Teacher's observation |

| | |
|---|---|
| S2: **Dear diary, I cleaned house today.** | She starts reading the story. |
| | She is sitting on the chair in crooked way. |
| T: Please sit straight and get the chair still." | The teacher let her sit straight. |
| S2: **Because it was dirty.** | She continues to read. |
| **Then, my family <shouted>.** | She reads 'shouted' wrong. |
| **Oh no what <dad> you do?** | Teacher corrects it. |
| T: did you do? | She reads it correctly and go on to read. |
| S2: What did you do? **Did you clean the house?** | |
| **Stop <cause> trouble!'** | She makes a pronounce error on cause'. |
| | The teacher corrects it. |
| | She corrects it. |
| S2: Stop cause trouble! | |
| **'Did I <cause> trouble?'** | She keeps reading and makes a mistake. |
| T: When you ask, you should make your intonation high in the end. | The teacher correct pronounce cause'. Then, she orders her to read it again several times. |
| S2: **'Did I cause trouble?'** | She read it with strange accent. |
| T: 'That sounds like a little drunk not asking. You have to practice reading more, so that you can get right intonation. | She laughs and changes topic. |
| S2: An intestinaloscopy is necessary?' | |
| T: 'Why? Does some say that you have to get intestinaloscopy?' | |
| S2: Not me, but my mom has to do it. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| T: 'Grown up people should do it, so did I.<br>If you get old, you have to do it.'<br><br>S2: 'My dad did it. too.'<br><br>T: 'You don't have to do it.<br>You are too young to do it.'<br><br>S2: 'The Christmas is coming soon.<br><br>T: 'You shouldn't crumble your book.'<br><br>S2: 'Teacher, I am going to eat it.<br>I bought it.'<br><br>T: 'What will you eat?<br>Why don't you finish your study and eat it?' 'You can have it after study.' | She crumbles her book.<br><br><br><br><br><br>She takes her book to her desk and get back to her seat and starts to study. |

**5. Students' problematic behavior frequency**

5.1 Table 1 Student 1's frowning face frequency

| Time | Teacher's action | Teacher's intonation |
|---|---|---|
| 00;2 | Before the conversation begins | - |
| 0:18 | When the teacher asks a question | High |
| 0:31 | Middle of the teacher's explanation | Normal |
| 0:33 | When the teacher asks a question | High |
| 0:43 | Middle of the teacher's explanation | Normal |
| 0:52 | Middle of the teacher's explanation | Normal |
| 1:05 | When the teacher asks a question | High |

The teacher thought that he frowned his face when the teacher's intonation is high.

After the observation, the frequency with high intonation and normal intonation has no difference, which indicates that the major factor of student1's frowning face is not the teacher's intonation.

| Behavior | Teacher's action | Reason of the student's behavior |
|---|---|---|
| FF | Before the conversation begins | |
| FF | When the teacher asks a question | |
| FF | Middle of the teacher's explanation | |
| FF | When the teacher asks a question | W1: Lack of confidence |
| FF | Middle of the teacher's explanation | W2: Lack of knowledge |
| FF | Middle of the teacher's explanation | |
| FF | When the teacher asks a question | |

5.2. Table 2. Student 2's distraction during the class

| Time of Student 2's pronunciation error | |
|---|---|
| 0:22 | |
| 0:40 | |
| 0:45 | The student doesn't seem to focus on the teacher's instruction and the text book. She looks distracted by something. |
| 1:01 | |
| 1:09 | |
| 1:12 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1:25 | |
| 1:30 | |
| 1:45 | |
| 1:57 | |
| 2:08 | |

| Time | Student2's topic | duration of the topic |
|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Reading the textbook | 88 seconds |
| 1:28 | Having an endoscopy procedure | 44 seconds |
| 2:14 | Dinner | 46 seconds |
| 3:00 | Start to study again | |
| Time | Student2's topic | duration of the topic |
| 6:35 | Reading the textbook | 75 seconds |
| 7:51 | Mom's birthday | 43 seconds |
| 8:34 | Start to study again | |

| Time of Student2's pronunciation error | Reason of the student's behavior |
|---|---|
| 0:22 | |
| 0:40 | |
| 0:45 | |
| 1:01 | |
| 1:09 | |
| 1:12 | W1: Phonological problem |
| 1:25 | W2: Wanting teacher's attention |
| 1:30 | |
| 1:45 | |
| 1:57 | |
| 2:08 | |

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# How to Teach Pragmatic Competence to EFL Learners

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## Abstract

*With a rise in intercommunicative issues in EFL, developing one's pragmatic competence, which includes sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence, has become an important aspect in the EFL classroom. This paper seeks to inform different approaches regarding the teaching of pragmatic competence, ranging from implicit versus explicit instruction to computer-mediated communication. It examines six research studies to provide various perspectives. This paper suggests that each approach is effective in some way, aside from a dichotomized point of view. In addition, it also sheds light on how to deal with some limitations in EFL settings. Finally, the paper identifies several further issues relating to pragmatic competence which can inform future discussion.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of language education, the concept of communicative competence has arisen as one of the essential issues to be dealt with in an EFL setting. Hymes (1972) highlights the importance of appropriate performance within sociocultural situations in addition to the linguistic competence focusing on grammar introduced by Chomsky (1965, as cited in Street and Leung, 2010). Savignon (2018) supports the concept of communicative competence that speakers need to learn not only grammatical structures of language but also the norms of their usage and appropriateness in a given social context.

Based on the Hymesian stance of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (as cited in Street and Leung, 2010) proposed four subcategories of communicative competence in the early 1980s: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Among those four areas, sociolinguistic competence mainly deals with appropriateness in a given context. Street and Leung (2010) explain that sociolinguistic competence refers to one's ability to manage appropriate form, meaning, and function in various sociolinguistic contexts. Focusing on the notion of "appropriateness," sociolinguistic competence can be broken-down into sociocultural ability (or sociopragmatic ability) and sociolinguistic ability (or pragmalinguisitc ability). Cohen (1996) considers both abilities to be prerequisites for appropriate language use. Sociocultural or sociopragmatic ability refers to how one can manage and select speech act strategies within a certain context focusing on function, whereas sociolinguistic or pragmalinguistic ability refers to how

one can choose appropriate linguistic forms to deliver one's intention or function without miscommunication.

This paper investigates sociolinguistic competence from Cohen's (1996) viewpoint of the concepts of sociocultural ability and sociolinguistic ability. This is because lots of EFL learners struggle with selecting appropriate language meaning and forms which causes them to lack communicative competence. EFL learners should acquire general pragmatic ability as well as linguistic knowledge in order to communicate with others in various contexts. Lots of researchers have referred to "pragmatic transfer," which affects sociolinguistic competence. Kasper (1992) defines pragmatic transfer as the influence exerted by a learner's pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than the L2 on his or her comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information. In other words, learners can transfer their L1 pragmatic knowledge when they produce their L2, which can lead to intercultural miscommunication as not all cultures share universal sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic domains. Ghaedrahmat, Alavi, and Bria (2016) point out that most of the problems that EFL learners face in communication processes are mainly interpragmatic. To prevent pragmatic failure during communication with others, it is essential for EFL learners to achieve pragmatic competence as part of their sociolinguistic competence. Therefore, this paper seeks to answer the following research question:

How can pragmatic (sociopragmatic and pragmalinguisitic) competence be taught to EFL learners?

This paper seeks to answer this question by reviewing six research articles. The effect of explicit instruction on pragmatic knowledge is explained first, with reference to the work of Bacelar de Silva (2003). The effect of collaborative dialogue activities on learners' pragmatic awareness and knowledge is elaborated on by looking at the study of Taguchi and Kim (2014). Koike and Pearson's (2005) study on the effect of implicit instruction and feedback in contrast to explicit methods is also considered. By reviewing Takimoto's (2007) study about the effects of input-based tasks, the dichotomy of explicit and implicit instruction is then discussed further. Lastly, moving onto the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC), studies by Cunningham (2016) and Sykes (2005) are reviewed to explore the effects of synchronous CMC on learning pragmatic knowledge. After a review of the articles, overall outcomes and general implications are discussed.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Whether language should be taught explicitly or implicitly always seems to be a significant issue among researchers when it comes to teaching EFL. Bacelar da Silva (2003) focused on the effects of focused/explicit instruction on ESL learners' pragmatic development, with a particular emphasis on refusal strategies. In this study, Bacelar da Silva introduced different tendencies of expressing refusal to invitations uttered by native speakers of American, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. He pointed out

that beginners in second language acquisition should be aware of different sociocultural domains so that they acquire interlanguage that incorporates pragmatic ability. He questioned whether explicit instruction on pragmatic development for ESL learners was effective or not.

The participants were 14 female learners of low-intermediate English proficiency from two classes of an English language study program at the University of Hawai'i. Bacelar da Silva (2003) divided the learners into two groups: a control group and a treatment group. After each intervention, he compared the pre-test and post-test performance of the groups, which took the form of role-play. It was found that the treatment group showed considerable improvement in their post-test when it came to their choice of appropriate refusal strategies (sociopragmatic ability) by using statements of regret, reason, and willingness, and using less verbal avoidance. These are considered as appropriate sociopragmatic domains in the norms of native English speakers. In contrast, the control group continued to use the partial repetition of invitations and verbal avoidance, which was similar to the results of their pretests, indicating a lack of progress in the development of their communicative competence.

When it came to lesson design for the treatment group, whole lessons were based on the idea of task based learning, which enabled learners to engage in problem-solving processes. The treatment group first watched three video segments from the sitcom *Friends* featuring invitation and refusal events. Participants were required to answer focus questions with explicit discussion of the sociopragmatics of the speech act and a comparison of their L1 and L2. For example, the question *How did Ross say "no" to his father's invitation?* made learners consider whether it was appropriate to focus on sociopragmatic aspects. In the second stage, the participants in the treatment group where given handouts for the inductive presentation of semantic formulae and modifiers by applying form-function mapping. For example, the handouts listed four different speech act strategies for a given form, such as *Gives an excuse, Says he feels bad, Hesitates*, and *Gives a positive opinion*.

Participants were also offered very explicit guidelines with examples for each of the four functions, such as *Put sorry at the beginning to show that you feel bad about the situation*. These activities raised learners' awareness of their sociopragmatic and pragmalinguisitic abilities. At the final stage of the intervention, Bacelar da Silva (2003) used role-playing activities as a measurement of participant's pragmatic knowledge improvement, as well as using them for learning activities. Specific results showed that one of the participants, "M," started to use refusals with hesitation (*Uhm.*), use positive feelings in response to a given invitation (*That looks fun.*), and express regret (*I'm sorry.*), which were not revealed in her pre-test result but featured in her post-test.

Aside from the pre- and post-tests, Bacelar da Silva (2003) conducted a retrospective recall questionnaire for the treatment group to investigate participants' thoughts and mediated act processes before and during their role playing performance. According to the data collected, all of the participants considered how to say *No* in a polite manner, which was related to their pragmalinguistic ability in the communication process. Also, the participants answered that they needed to think about

adjusting their refusal strategies to make them appropriate in the given contexts, which requires sociopragmatic ability. Bacelar da Silva suggests that participants in the treatment group raised their awareness of sociopragmatic norms of refusal in American English.

The study of Bacelar da Silva (2003) has obvious implications for the research question. It indicates that explicit instruction on pragmatic development can be significantly effective for EFL learner development of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic ability. Bacelar da Silva's study illustrates that explicit instruction raises learners' awareness of L2 sociopragmatics considerably as well as increasing learners' L2 pragmatic performance. This therefore highlights that learners' sociopragmatic and pragmalinguisitc ability can be taught by using explicit instruction alongside proper tasks.

Taguchi and Kim (2014) pointed out that although lots of researchers have compared the effects of implicit and explicit instruction, there are few studies which have investigated other explicit instructional approaches, including task-based teaching. Their study focused on the effects of task-based collaborative dialogue in teaching pragmatics. Taguchi and Kim investigated two research questions. The first question related to the effect of task-based pragmatic instruction on L2 pragmatic development with consideration of differences in learning the speech act of requesting between a collaborative and an individual group. The second question was about the differences in the frequency of pragmatic-related episodes (PREs) and the difference in the quality of task performance between the two groups.

The participants in the study were 74 second-grade EFL learners in a girls' junior high school in South Korea. Their English proficiencies were measured as being of high-beginner to intermediate levels. The participants were divided into three groups: a collaborative group, an individual group, and a control group. Taguchi and Kim (2014) aimed to teach the speech act of requesting in formal situations focusing on two pragmalinguisitc forms: request head acts such as mitigated preparatory forms (e.g. *I'm wondering if*), and internal and external modifications (e.g. *May I, possibly, really*). Before and after experiencing each intervention, the participants' performances were measured by discourse completion task (DCT). The results showed that both treatment groups (the collaborative and individual groups) performed better than the control group, and the collaborative group outperformed the individual group in the production of mitigated preparatory forms. However, there was no significant difference between the collaborative and individual group when it came to using any modifications.

Looking into each intervention in detail, Taguchi and Kim (2014) conducted the instruction for both treatment groups which included the explanation of target pragmatic forms using written dialogue. They explicitly introduced pragmalinguistic forms and sociopragmatic variables in each dialogue based on Brown and Levinson's contextual factors (1987, as cited in Taguchi and Kim, 2014), which are power (P), distance (D), and degree of imposition (R). Participants in the treatment groups were required to finish dialogue construction tasks within given situations, which involved

completing drama scripts as scriptwriters. Taguchi and Kim contrasted two dialogues with contexts which were PDR-high and PDR-low situations. This introduced requests in both formal and informal situations to help the participants to better notice the pragmalinguistic differences. During the task, the collaborative group completed a dialogue construction activity in pairs, whereas the individual group completed the task individually. During the intervention, Taguchi and Kim also offered proper task modeling for each treatment group. For the collaborative group, they showed a video about how to perform a task collaboratively. On the other hand, the video for the individual group showed how to think aloud by oneself to solve a task. When it came to the measurement of each groups' performance, the written DCT instrument was conducted with regards to both formal and informal request situations. Participants were asked to fill out the appropriate speech acts in English according to the given DCT situation.

Taguchi and Kim's (2014) study responds to the research question by showing that collaborative dialogue tasks were beneficial for learners to learn pragmatic competence, suggesting that teachers can use this method for teaching pragmatic knowledge. Learners were able to consider both pragmalinguistics (request-making forms) and sociopragmatics (contextual factors, level of PDR) during their completion of tasks. In addition, although there were partial differences in the outcomes between the individual and collaborative groups, the collaborative dialogue activity can be considered more advantageous for increasing learners' metapragmatic awareness than individual activities due to learners contributing, negotiating, and offering feedback in pairs. Takimoto (2012, as cited in Taguchi and Kim, 2014) supports the benefits of collaborative dialogue which grants learners access to information about pragmatic features. This is less likely to be achieved by the use of individualized tasks. In summary, this study highlights collaborative dialogue tasks as one of the ways of teaching pragmatic competence, following on from the effects of explicit instruction and the idea of task-based learning.

Although the previous studies show the effects of explicitness of instruction on learners' pragmatic development, some researchers take a different stance that breaks the dichotomy of explicit versus implicit. In Koike and Pearson's (2005) study, feedback was added as a factor in the development of pragmatic competence. This was not incorporated in the previous two studies. Koike and Pearson aimed to examine the effectiveness of using explicit or implicit instruction and explicit or implicit feedback in teaching pragmatics of Spanish language. They addressed three research questions. They considered whether explicit pre-instruction is more effective than implicit instruction for learning the Spanish speech acts of making and responding to suggestions, and what kind of feedback – explicit, implicit, or none – is the most effective for guiding learners' use of pragmatic information. Lastly, they questioned the sustainability of each intervention.

The participants in the study were 99 adult native English speakers who were learning Spanish through university courses (third-semester Spanish classes) at the University of Texas and Bowling Green State University in the United States. Their Spanish proficiency was between novice-

high and intermediate-low, according to the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) scale. Koike and Pearson (2005) divided the participants into five groups according to explicit or implicit instruction and feedback as shown by Table 1 below.

| | Group1 (EPEF) | Group2 (EPIF) | Group3 (IPEF) | Group4 (IPIF) | Group5 (Control) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-instruction | Explicit | Explicit | Implicit | Implicit | None |
| Feedback | Explicit | Implicit | Explicit | Implicit | None |

Table 1. The group categorization according to instruction and feedback types

After fourteen weeks of instruction, Koike and Pearson (2005) conducted post-tests and delayed tests comprised of two task types: multiple choice tasks and open-ended dialogue tasks. The test scores of the control group were lower than any of the experimental groups. Among the treatment groups, it was revealed that EPEF learners showed the most considerable progress in multiple choice tasks. However, in open-ended dialogue sections, the mean score of the IPIF group was higher than any of the other groups. Koike and Pearson commented that IPIF participants were able to use mitigating explanations and thanking points appropriately in their responses.

With regards to the details of each pre-instruction and feedback, each group was led by graduate student instructors focusing on learning the speech acts of offering and responding to suggestions. All treatment groups were provided with three sample dialogues, and they also worked on multiple choice questions which made them aware of the issues of directness and pragmatic force. In addition, they had a discussion of how to suggest and respond in given dialogues on their own. After that, the participants learnt the functions of each dialogue. The two explicit instruction groups additionally learnt forms for making common suggestions and responses for each level of directness. For example, information such as *Tienes que hablar* being the most direct form for making suggestions and *¿No quieres ir?* being the least direct form was offered explicitly to these groups. For explicit feedback, the instructors of the EPEF and IPEF groups had to provide correct answers after the participants finished their responses. Also, they explained why the answer would be considered as the most appropriate response with some comments. On the other hand, in the EPIF and IPIF groups, the participants were only informed whether the answer was correct or not. The control group followed the original schedule without any interventions and only participated in the pretests and posttests with the other participants.

The results from the posttests suggested both explicit and implicit instruction had helped learners to improve their pragmatic knowledge of giving and responding to suggestions. Koike and Pearson (2005) explained the benefits of each of implicit and explicit instruction and feedback. When it came to raising learner awareness of pragmatic strategies and concepts, the explicit instruction and feedback appeared to be the most effective. This was indicated through the results of the multiple

choice tasks. It was also noted that implicit instruction and feedback also had noticeable effects on learner production of speech acts, as the IPIF group achieved the highest scores for the dialogue completion tasks.

Although Koike and Pearson (2005) analyzed the results focusing on the EPEF and IPIF groups rather than describing the effects according to each variation, their study offers several implications for the research question. First of all, it suggests that giving feedback plays a big role in developing learners' pragmatic competence, in addition to the type of instruction. This implies that EFL teachers should consider their methods of feedback when they teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. Fukuya and Zhang (2002, as cited in Koike and Pearson, 2005) found that implicit feedback could make it possible for learner internalization of cognitive mapping, which is needed to produce appropriate speech act forms. Koike and Pearson claimed that even negative implicit feedback may also cause learners to compare their L1 and L2 pragmatic resources and start concentrating on L2 pragmatic strategies. Secondly, this study refuted the idea that "explicitness is always right" by proving the effect and benefits of implicit instruction and feedback as being helpful for producing appropriate speech act strategies. It tells us that teachers do not always have to use explicit methods, but could also use implicit ways for teaching pragmatic competence.

Agreeing with Koike and Pearson's (2005) idea that both implicit and explicit instruction could be helpful, Takimoto (2007) conducted a study focusing on the effects of input-based tasks as well as explicit instruction on EFL learners' pragmatic competence development. Not only did Takimoto define both explicit and implicit instruction as awareness-oriented instruction, he also raised the issue of task types by looking at structured input and problem-solving tasks. Based on these factors, he examined relative effects of structured input with explicit instruction, problem-solving, and structured input without explicit information using a treatment group for each intervention alongside a control group.

Takimoto (2007) applied input-based approaches introduced by Ellis (2003) and selected structured input and problem-solving tasks among input-based tasks. Structured input tasks basically consisted of a stimulus that enabled learners' knowledge to be activated, and they entailed content which learners could relate themselves to with personal responses (Ellis, 2003, as cited in Takimoto, 2007). Problem solving tasks, as one kind of consciousness-raising task in input-based approaches, lead learners to think in a more overt way when it came to raising their awareness (Takimoto, 2007). Takimoto explained that he implemented these two types of tasks to compare a more overt way of raising awareness of learners' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic resources with less overt ways.

The participants in Takimoto's (2007) study were 60 Japanese EFL learners whose TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) score was between 500 and 700. They were assigned to four treatment groups which were: structured input with explicit information (SP), problem-solving (PS), structured input without explicit information (SI), and a control group. Takimoto designed the intervention focusing on teaching the speech act of requesting with the

appropriate use of downgraders (e.g. *would it be possible,* I *wonder if* ), as he pointed out that Japanese EFL learners tend to continue to use less clausal downgraders, lexical downgraders, and syntactic downgraders when they can in fact be considered to be more appropriate.

Each treatment group received four 40-minute sessions of the interventions. In terms of the details of each intervention, the SP group was provided with explicit information and experienced pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connection activities and reinforcement activities. The PS group, were guided through how to do pragmalinguistic-focused activities, sociopramatic-focused activities, pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connection activities, and took part in a metapragmatic discussion session without the provision of explicit information. The treatment for SI group was the same as the SP group, except that no explicit information was given. Lastly, the control group only did TOEIC reading comprehension exercises during the intervention sessions.

In the SP group intervention, the participants were offered materials of target downgraders with examples of structures accompanied by the teacher's explicit instruction. After that, they read dialogues set in a given situation and chose the most appropriate request forms in the connection activities. This was to make them focus on understanding the relationship between sociocultural context and the target sociolinguistic resources. In the reinforcement activities, participants read each dialogue aloud and listened to the audio files again to strengthen the connections by being exposed to more opportunities to observe the variable contexts. The SI group participants experienced the same process without the explicit instruction.

In completing the pragmalinguistic-focused activities, the PS group participants were required to copy and compare underlined request forms in two dialogues focusing on how they differ. Then, in the socipragmatic-focused activity, they answered questions about the relationship between the two characters and the difficulty of making requests in dialogues. In the pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connection activities, the participants were asked to measure the level of politeness of the given requests in the dialogues by indicating which requests were more polite than others. Lastly, in the metapragmatic discussion session, pairs of participants discussed the features of the target request structures. Takimoto (2007) explained that the first three activities in the PS group enabled learners to develop their explicit pragmatic competence by themselves. The implementation of metapragmatic discussions in pairs reflected Rose's (2005) suggestion that having metapragmatic discussion among students is more effective for improving their sociopragmatic distinctive features than giving teacher-oriented instruction.

Takimoto (2007) employed four types of tests: discourse completion tests, role-play tests, listening tests, and acceptability judgement tests. He conducted these four test types in 2 hours with participants as pre-tests, post-tests, and follow-up tests. By implementing four test types, Takimoto could measure participants' receptive competence through input-based tasks (the listening and acceptability tests) and their productive competence through output-based tasks (the discourse completion and role-play tests).

The discourse completion test results showed that the three treatment groups (SP, PS, SI) performed with noticeable progress in their acquisition of request forms and retention of them, and there were no significant differences between them. The role play test results showed the three treatment groups made outstanding improvements. This was found by comparing the results of their pre-tests to those of both the post-tests and follow-up tests. On the other hand, the control group showed less progress. Although the scores among the three treatment groups differed slightly in that the scores of the PS group were highest, followed by those of SI group and then the SP group, Takimoto interpreted the scores to indicate that there was no significant difference between them. Unlike the previous two tests, in the listening test, the PS group performed slightly better than other two treatment groups, according to their post-test scores. Despite this, there were still no statistically significant differences between the scores of the treatment groups. In the follow-up tests, however, the PS and SI group participants were found to have retained their pragmatic competence better than the SP group did. Finally, the results of the acceptability judgement tests were similar to those of the discourse completion and role play tests. In other words, all three treatment groups performed well without any significant difference between them at the post-test stage. Also, the results of the follow-up tests indicated that all three treatment groups maintained their pragmatic knowledge.

The results of this study offers an answer to the research question by showing that explicit instruction is not always necessarily required for EFL learners to improve their pragmatic competence. Instead, by designing tasks systemically, teachers can teach sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence to EFL learners through problem-solving group tasks. As long as the tasks are designed to activate learners' knowledge explicitly and they are implemented properly in the classroom, EFL learners can achieve pragmatic knowledge through solving the tasks step-by-step. Takimoto (2007) concluded that input-based tasks with or without explicit instruction and problem-solving tasks give rise to different awareness-raising processes to help learners achieve pragmatic knowledge, rather than the tasks types having different levels of effectiveness. Takimoto specifically compared the treatments and considered that the participants in the SP group were firstly given the explicit information and then were able to reinforce the information deductively, whereas those participants in the PS and SI groups were involved in the whole process of independently finding explicit information through inductive means.

In addition, being provided with explicit information in addition to the completion of structured input tasks did not have an outstanding effect, indicating the importance of learner-oriented classes for teaching pragmatic knowledge. Considering that even the SP group did not perform well in the listening follow-up test when compared to the PS and SI groups, giving learners enough opportunities to explore language use themselves is essential so that they can be intensively involved with various stimuli. To conclude, Takimoto's (2007) study highlights the role of tasks and their design on teaching pragmatic competence to EFL learners.

Various approaches to developing learners' pragmatic knowledge have been explored thus far.

However, one of the main goals of achieving pragmatic competence is communicating with other English speakers from various backgrounds. It is therefore necessary to consider how teachers and students can deal with communication issues with other learners and native speakers of English in an EFL context. Studies by Cunningham (2016) and Sykes (2005) provide some ideas relating to this issue.

Cunningham (2016) researched speech act production in telecollaborative exchanges. He aimed to find the effect of synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) on learner's pragmatic development. He examined learner performance of the speech act of requesting through their interactions with expert speakers and the implementation of explicit instruction for pragmatic competence development focusing on participant use of directness and internal and external modification. Unlike other studies, the participants in this study were American adults who were learning German as their second language (GSL). Cunningham provided two experimental environments using SCMC and found out that learner participation in telecollaboration affords opportunities to improve their pragmatic production (Belz and Kinginger, 2002, 2003, as cited in Cunningham, 2016), although participant performance between the experimental conditions did not significantly differ.

The participants of Cunningham's (2016) study were comprised of 17 learners who were proficient in German at university-level, as they had experience of learning German for specific purposes. Cunningham grouped them into two cohorts, and each cohort was guided by German experts. As a communication method, he implemented a desktop web-conferencing program named Adobe Connect Pro which basically offers audio-based interaction with visual support. Cunningham set two experimental conditions to compare the effect of interaction and explicit instruction separately. In the first condition, participants mainly interacted with German experts as they discussed prepared questions relating to the behavior of making requests. In the second condition, the participants additionally engaged in focused interaction as well as interaction with expert speakers.

The participants were required to discuss a set of 10~12 questions with German experts in two oral synchronous computer-mediated discussions, each lasting an hour. The first experimental condition was carried out in a professional or academic context, such as web-conferencing about the German educational system or project management at a multinational corporation. After participants finished the first condition, a focused instruction module was offered with three stages, which moved from implicit to more explicit instructional strategies. In the first stage, Cunningham (2016) conducted appropriateness judgement tasks to raise participants' awareness of appropriate request forms. In the second stage, participants figured out what parts are specifically considered to be appropriate by reviewing additional request sequences in their metalinguistic discussion session. In the third stage, participants were asked to change inappropriate request forms to appropriate forms. In the second experimental condition, participants followed the same procedures as the focused instruction module mentioned above.

Cunningham (2016) analyzed the results both qualitatively and quantitatively. In the qualitative analysis of participants' production data, some evidence came up which proved learners' development in appropriate request production. However, there were no significant differences between the two experimental conditions with regards to quantitative analysis. Overall, Cunningham concluded that interaction with experts and focused instruction did not significantly result in participants' directness when they used speech act of requesting, although several participants were affected by interaction and explicit instruction. He advocated that an interactional context in SCMC would have affected participants' choices of request forms, because production of complex indirect requests is not typical of oral SCMC.

Despite these tentative results, this study indicates there are possibilities for implementing SCMC to positively impact learners' pragmatic competence. Various studies, including Bacelar da Silva (2003) have proved the effect of explicit instruction. Furthermore, Taguchi and Kim (2014) and van Compernolle (2014, as cited in Cunningham, 2016) proved the effect of interaction and collaboration in pragmatic learning interventions. One of the variances in the study of Cunningham (2016) was that participants mainly had to depend on audio cues. Cunningham (2016) also pointed out that some paralinguistic cues such as eye contact should have been recognized as signals during the SCMC experiment. In other words, the results would have been clearer if the experimental condition had been conducted with a computer protocol video system where people could see each other's faces on a monitor.

Aside from the issue of SCMC methods, the results might have been clearer if the participants were divided into two treatment groups along the lines of an interaction group and an interaction plus focused instruction group, as other studies have. Also, the focused instruction module itself gradually moved from implicit to explicit instruction, and there were no pretests and posttests, so there might have been a lack of contrasting variance which could have led to significant differences during the experiment.

Despite several limitations, Cunningham's (2016) study tells us that implementation of SCMC offers the chance for EFL learners to communicate with people from other countries. This is particularly beneficial for Korean learners in light of the extremely low ratio of racial diversity in Korean classrooms. Therefore, as long as a system method in CMC could provide video-based face-to-face interaction and could be utilized with an appropriate intervention type, then pragmatic intervention using CMC would offer fruitful opportunities for EFL learners by providing more authentic materials and environments.

Sykes (2005) also aimed to examine the effects of SCMC on pragmatic development, but her study focused on different types of communication contexts by contrasting written chat and oral chat in SCMC with face-to-face discussion. Introducing the relationship between computer-mediated communication (CMC) and pragmatic development, Sykes pointed out SCMC could be a powerful tool for providing authentic communicative contexts and materials in the EFL classroom. She

investigated the research question of how each SCMC discussion type affects the production of head acts and supporting moves, particularly in Spanish refusal speech acts, when it comes to pragmalinguistic forms and pragmalinguistic/sociopragmatic features.

The participants in Sykes' (2005) study were 27 Spanish students whose first language was English. They were divided into nine groups of three people, and three groups were assigned to one of three different environments: three groups of written chat, three groups of oral chat, and three groups of face-to-face discussion. These groupings were set with reference to the results of personal surveys taken by the students about their basic computer skills. Each treatment was conducted for three days and the participants were required to do a pretest and posttest, both consisting of a face-to-face role play.

When it came to lesson design details, all the participants initially experienced face-to-face classroom instruction. They were then asked to access a web-based platform which contained two authentic model target dialogues. They were able to control the dialogue video by playing and rewinding it and they had access to a written script of the dialogue. Some focus questions were provided when all participants were exploring the conversations. After that, participants gathered into the small groups to which they had been assigned, which were written chat (WC), oral chat (OC), or face to face (FF). In their groups, students completed discussion reflection questions and performed practice dialogues. Sykes (2005) applied an LAN chat system and Wimba for each WC and OC group. For the FF group, the tasks were done in a standard classroom. During the discussion session, participants talked about contextual factors in given dialogues, such as formality issues in refusal speech acts.

The study results relating to the production of target speech act forms showed that the FF and OC groups' use of supporting moves for refusal was the only statistically significant comparison. Although the WC group performance was sandwiched between the other groups, Sykes (2005) noticed that the WC group did not feel pragmatic pressure despite the lack of verbal and nonverbal contextual factors in the written chat environment. She continued her point by mentioning that if the only variance between the WC and OC groups was verbal contextual factors, the WC group could have used lots of supporting moves to fill out the context, but they did not. In other words, according to her analysis, there must have been other factors during the interaction aside from tone of voice. A comparison of pre-test and post-test results showed that both the WC group and FF discussion group increased their use of supporting moves. This could be interpreted to suggest that they internalized how to soften their refusals to save the inviter's face.

Sykes' (2005) second research question entailed the effect on learners' sociopragmatic competence as well as their use of appropriate pragmalinguistic forms, reflecting how closely the participants internalized Spanish speakers' cultural norms of invitation and refusals. It was found that the WC group outperformed the other two groups in terms of the complexity of the target speech acts and the variety of strategies used among groups. The WC group doubled the variety of supporting

moves strategies in formal situations in their post-test. More specifically, it was revealed that the participants in the WC group and some of OC group started to use more serious and complex grounders such as important events or illness in their posttests. Considering the fact that most of them used to apply grounders such as school or work excuses, Sykes claimed that this change implies that participants learnt the sensitive nature of the refusal in Spanish culture.

The results of Sykes' (2005) study imply that SCMC can be utilized in pragmatic teaching as a valuable tool by providing a platform for communication and an authentic material resource. Although the participants of the referenced study were located in the same place, SCMC use can allow learners to freely engage in communication contexts without any physical place restrictions. Alongside Cunningham's (2016) study, Sykes' study also sheds light on the fact that teachers can search for authentic materials through web platforms, which can lead to learners being exposed to real intercommunicative situations.

### 3. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The concern of the research question is how to teach pragmatic (sociopragmatic and pragmalinguisitic) competence to EFL learners. To put it simply, we cannot pick one single perfect approach or method to teach pragmatic competence. The first two articles examined revealed that offering explicit instruction on pragmatic knowledge is more likely to facilitate learners' pragmatic ability, and set explicit or focused instruction as a fundamental setting. In Bacelar da Silva's (2003) study, explicitness of instruction was the only variance between the groups and it turned out that offering explicit instruction on pragmatic knowledge was more effective than implicit instruction. Taguchi and Kim (2014) and Cunningham (2016) also conducted their studies with specific implementation of explicit instruction, which means that we can teach pragmatic competence to learners through offering explicit instruction alongside activities such as having discussion sessions relating to different sociopragmatic situations, as Taguchi and Kim (2014) showed in their study.

On the contrary, the studies conducted by Koike and Pearson (2005) and Takimoto (2007) broke down the claims of explicitians by proving the effects of implicit instruction, implicit feedback, and different sets of input-based tasks. Koike and Pearson showed that both explicit instruction/feedback and implicit instruction/feedback led participants to learn pragmatic competence in particular ways and through engagement in particular processes. Takimoto moved on to researching input-based tasks and showed that explicit instruction is not the always best method in all classroom conditions. This provided me with new insight in that both implicit and explicit approaches should be considered as effective teaching methods according to different teaching contexts. Alcon (2005, as cited in Takimoto, 2007) supports the idea that learner awareness of target pragmatic features and speech act strategies can be developed by both types of awareness-oriented instruction, which are implicit and explicit instruction.

In addition, students can learn pragmatic knowledge more effectively through interaction and collaboration, as Taguchi and Kim (2014) and Cunningham (2016) insisted. As one's pragmatic knowledge is only meaningful within communication processes with others, teachers should apply collaborative work in pairs or groups in pragmatic instruction. It has already been shown to be effective in Taguchi and Kim's study, but van Compernolle (2014, as cited in Cunningham, 2016) also proved the effect of collaboration and interaction with peers, with a collaborative treatment group showing progress as a result of interaction with tutors. As illustrated by Cunningham's study in particular, the format of interaction can be varied with the help of computer-mediated communication (CMC) which makes it easier for learners to be exposed to more varied pragmatic sources. Therefore, teachers should teach pragmatic knowledge through collaborative tasks within interactive environments to activate the appropriate sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic changes in learners. They can also implement CMC methods in the classroom for a more diverse interactive atmosphere, so that learners can really use English for intercommunicative processes. Although Takimoto (2007) and Sykes (2005) did not stress the importance of interaction explicitly, the research designs which they conducted entailed discussion sessions that allowed learners to interact each other. Sykes in particular mentioned the negotiation of meaning among learners, with this kind of interaction being one of the characteristics of a synchronous CMC environment.

Aside from the issue of whether instruction should be explicit or implicit, Takimoto (2007) raises the issue of task design for teaching pragmatic competence in addition to the type of instruction. Reflecting Taguchi and Kim's (2014) suggestion of using dialogue collaboration tasks, Takimoto points out that learners' achievement of pragmatic competence strongly depends on how a given task drives them into exploring pragmatic features and enables them to process them. Additionally, classroom tasks have to fulfil the role of bridging instruction with learner interaction. As an example of this, although Takimoto did not specifically stress the role of interaction, the fact that problem-solving group tasks entail metapragmatic discussion implies that interaction is one of the essential factors in learning pragmatic competence.

In terms of particular problems we are facing in Korea, such as finding authentic materials and having less chance to talk with other EFL learners, the suggestion by Cunningham (2016) and Sykes (2005) to use SCMC environments seems particularly applicable to the Korean learning context. Lee, Ardeshiri, and Cummins (2016) support the idea of using CMC in Korea. They claim that learners need to be exposed to multicultural communication environments which enable them to expand their knowledge of meanings of various forms. Lee et al. also demonstrated the possibility of applying CMC in Korea by conducting research with Korean and Iranian participants using a computer-assisted multiliteracies program.

Overall, newly emerged notions relating to learners' pragmatic competence are metapragmatic awareness and metapragmatic knowledge. Metapragmatic awareness refers to learners' process of consciousness, awareness, or salience as they select a certain speech act strategy or form (Verschueren,

2000, as cited in Bacelar da Silva, 2003). By reviewing the articles above, I have noticed that the key to enhancing learners' pragmatic competence is metapragmatic awareness. In the study of Bacelar de Silva (2003), a retrospective recall questionnaire was implemented to check participants' levels of metapragmatic awareness during their role play performances.

In the study of Taguchi and Kim (2014), each participant in both the individual and collaborative groups had to follow a given model relating either to engaging in think aloud or collaborative procedures. Taguchi and Kim mentioned that the collaborative group had more chances to become conscious of what they were doing by negotiating and monitoring each other. Although the individual group showed less progress on the study, think aloud strategies enabled them to become deeply conscious of what they were doing to complete a task.

In the study of Koike and Pearson (2005), although they did not explicitly refer to metapragmatic awareness, they constantly highlighted the importance of raising learners' conscious awareness of pragmatic information by mentioning the effects of explicit/implicit instruction and feedback. For example, the idea that even negative implicit feedback may also cause learners to compare their L1 and L2 pragmatic resources and then start concentrating on L2 pragmatic strategies basically entails the idea of metapragmatic competence.

In Takimoto's (2007) study, metapragmatic knowledge came up again in the problem-solving (PS) treatment group. Considering that the PS group showed significant progress in their pragmatic competence, it cannot be denied that metapragmatic knowledge plays a crucial role in one's sociopramatic and pragmalinguistic competence.

Based on the idea of metapragmatic awareness, one of purposes of pragmatic instruction and tasks should be to activate learners' consciousness when they select sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic domains in communication. Now we have to consider how to blend metapragmatic awareness factors when designing instruction and tasks for teaching pragmatic competence.

I will use the findings of this review when it comes to developing teaching materials for speaking classes, as I will embark on the practicum course next semester. For example, I could teach students explicitly about different situations according to PDR level, and give discourse completion tasks for pairs to complete. Students could also check which forms are formal or less formal, and which seems to be more appropriate among given sentences in a conversation. They could determine the reasons why, and overtly discuss pragmatic speech acts and forms. Also, I could make use of the input-based tasks introduced by Takimoto (2007) depending on learner proficiency and the specific context of the course.

By reviewing the studies of Koike and Pearson (2005), Takimoto (2007), and Sykes (2005), I have become aware that we can take both explicit and implicit instruction and blend them when we teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. I was glad to read articles with different stances relating to explicit and implicit instruction, feedback, and task design that collectively demonstrate that all can be effective in some way for developing learners' pragmatic knowledge. Prior to reviewing the

research, I did not expect there to be various ways of teaching and learning pragmatic competence. What I have to recognize now is that, firstly, there is no best way to teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. I should select the teaching strategies and task types depending on learners' identities and what they expect from developing their pragmatic competence.

One issue for future discussion is that of providing feedback to learners regarding their pragmatic knowledge performance. Although Koike and Pearson (2005) indicated the importance of feedback in the development of pragmatic competence, they offer a very simplified definition of implicit feedback as answering "yes" or "no." When it comes to feedback in EFL teaching, how feedback is given (explicitly or implicitly), who gives feedback, and what aspects are offered as feedback constitute huge issues (Bailey, 2005).

In summary, a range of interventions for teaching pragmatics has been explored. This included explicit/implicit instruction, collaborative dialogue activities, input based tasks, and interaction and instruction using SCMC. The focus has been on how these interventions can affect learners' pragmatic competence as a means of preventing learners' pragmatic miscommunication.

By reviewing the articles on the effects of explicit instruction, implicit approaches and task-based approaches, I learnt that various approaches can be applied to teaching pragmatics, with each approach having its own particular beneficial effects. Prior to reviewing the research, I thought that explicit instruction was the optimal way of raising learner awareness for most EFL issues, including the development of pragmatic competence teaching. Furthermore, after exploring how SCMC can support pragmatic competence, I can view the EFL setting in Korea in a more positive light, as SCMC methods can be used to compensate for the lack of intercultural communicative settings in Korea.

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# Abstracts

# The Use of Applications for Learning Phrasal Verbs
# Among Adult Korean Learners

Hyunju Lee

The primary aim of this research study was to observe how adult Korean learners learn phrasal verbs using various applications. To keep track of the mobile assisted language learning progress, the researcher acted as a teacher and two adult Korean professionals who are of low intermediate level participated in the research study. They learned 65 high-frequency phrasal verbs using five different applications for a period of 10 weeks. This research adopted a case study methodology in order to answer three research questions. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods were used which consisted of nine different instruments for data collection and analysis. By using various data resources every week such as standardized forms and rubrics, and observations and recordings, the data was triangulated to describe natural phenomena and to discover the learners' patterns of behavior, strategy use and changes in perceptions. Firstly, patterns of use of the application suggested that repetition and familiarity of using the application can be important for learners in learning languages. The two participants actively utilized the applications in completing the activities as time passed. However, they hardly used them outside of the class due to a lack of spare time. Secondly, both of them utilized and developed certain strategies with regards to applications use and activities. They applied both internal strategies that made use of their personal insight, and external strategies that were developed with the help of outside influences like teachers and peers. The participants freely utilized needed functions to complete the activities over time. However, the way of handling applications differed depending on participants' usual habits and personal characteristics. Lastly, the participants underwent various changes of perceptions over time. They showed a lot of positive changes in learning attitudes and language cognition such as improvement in terms of vocabulary knowledge, and they wanted to continue using the applications as part of their English studies. The findings indicated that adults of low English proficiency were capable of using technology for learning languages. Technology can be more effectively and widely used in foreign language learning for all generations if aspects of functionality and user interface are considered. These aspects include supporting two versions of the application at the same time, such as a computer and mobile versions, L1 translation, the inclusion of a help box or chat box, and a consideration of the level of linguistic difficulty for language learners. These features also offer potential benefits to practical language teaching.

**Key words:** Application, Phrasal Verbs, High-frequency Words, Mobile-assisted Language Learning, Adult Korean learners

# L2 Motivational Strategies of Korean EFL Learners:
# Exploring Directed Motivational Currents

Hye Shin Kim

The purpose of this study was to explore the L2 motivational strategies of Korean EFL learners since there has been very little research on the motivational strategies of learners whereas the motivational strategies of teachers has extensively been studied in EFL education. To better understand L2 motivational strategies of Korea EFL learners, this study reports its relevance to key variables and to the dimensions of Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs). Research interviews were conducted with five adult participants with similar socio-economic status in Korea. They were given series of semi-structured questions to inquire about their motivational experiences and strategies in EFL learning. The results provide evident aspects that Korean EFL learners experienced the limitations of schools in Korea though; they actively used strategies to enhance the level of motivation in their EFL learning inside or outside classroom according to relevant variables. Additionally, they also experienced triggering stimuli, goal-setting, facilitative structures, and positive emotionality as dimensions of DMCs (Muir & Dörnyei, 2013; Dörnyei, Muir, & Ibrahim, 2015; Dörnyei, Henry & Muir, 2016).

**Key words:** L2 Motivation, Motivational Strategies, Motivational Variables, Dimensions of DMCs

# Identifying Motivational Factors in English Speaking through
# Examining Generation 1.5 Returnees: A Case Study

Danbi Lee

There is an abundance of research on factors that contribute to learner motivation. However, while these findings shed light on important aspects of motivation, many focus on classroom contexts, disregarding the importance of general language learning motivation outside of an educational environment. General motivation can influence an individual's desire to speak not only in a language learning classroom, but in other various contexts. Therefore, the goal of this study is to explore motivation in-depth, from a broader perspective, in and out of a language learning setting. This study examines five Generation 1.5 returnees through a case study. It is suggested in the findings that emerging themes such as Internal Cognitive State, Surrounding Context, Achieving Goals, and Metalinguistic Awareness are proven as imperative aspects of individual motivation in speaking. The current literature already reveals that adult Generation 1.5s resemble close to second language learners. As 1.5s

are also learners of high awareness, their recollected experiences can allude to important information that can be used to confront issues and propose possible solutions in second language learning environment such as that of South Korea.

**Key words:** Motivation, English Speaking, Generation 1.5, Returnees

# Using Lexical Chunks to Develop Pronunciation: A Case Study

Jimin Park

This is a case study examining the process of using a lexis chunks to develop participants' pronunciation among 6 undergraduate students in a TESL elective course, and the researcher in the study acts as a tutor in Teaching Pronunciation class offered as the course. The specific part of the class used for this research was a special project called the Pronunciation Tutor Project. The project essentially involves providing a regimen of practice for the development of English pronunciation by using lexical chunks. There are two different groups of participant hereafter names as Groups 1 and 2, and each group consists of three participants, and each group has one international student and two Koreans.

The aims for this thesis are to investigate whether lexical chunks has affected English pronunciation's development and to figure out how participants feel about lexical chunks depending on their groups.
In the end of study, the researcher identifies three things. Learning lexical chunks are much more effective and efficient to the low proficiency level students like Group 1 than Group2. The second identification is about personality, Group 1 that prefers to do team activities using lexical chunks than Group 2. Therefore, Group 1 students make progress in using lexical chunks in the end of project than Group 2. The last identification is that most of Group 2 participants who have high proficiency levels need to get corrective feedbacks about their pronunciations or using lexical chunks than Group1, low proficiency levels.

**Key words:** Lexis Chunks, Collocation, Chunk Learning, Pronunciation, Teaching Pronunciation

# The Effects of Subject-Based English Lessons (SBEL) on Students' Subject Content Understanding and Perceptions

Kyung-Won Sun

This study seeks to introduce subject-based English lessons (SBELs) to international school learners and to review learner perceptions, and improvement in content understanding and language skills after the lessons. This study explores the use of SBELs over a six-week period and examines their effectiveness for 22 students (four classes: grade 5, grade 6, classes 8 and 9, and classes 10 and 11 ) at an international school in Anyang. The results show that most learners perceived the SBELs in a positive light and that their classes on subject and language tests increased. Furthermore, they want to take the SBELs again. Even though there were differences among learners in different grade levels between the degree of outcomes and which aspects of the SBELs they perceived were most useful, most of them agreed that SBELs were effective for learning.

# What language do Korean-English bilinguals swear in?

Mayuk Oray

As a multipurpose communicative tool swearing has been the focus of various research and recent years have seen a surge in studies with bilinguals. the present study has investigated the L2 swear word usage of Korean-English bilinguals. The study has also examined emotionality differences between the participants different languages as well as the influence of personality variables on swearing.

A multi-method approach that include self-report measures and face-to-face interviews chosen due to the complex nature of the topic in question. A total of forty-one undergraduate students filled out the questionnaires. A follow up face-to-face interview took place with group of volunteers. The findings of the present study revealed that the participants displayed a preference towards their L1 when using swear words. also, swear words were found to have superior emotional force in their L1 compared to other language of the participants. The findings also showed despite the relatively high level of proficiency participants lack the necessary pragmatics knowledge to judge the offensiveness of some fairly common swear words. These findings contribute to an understanding of swear word use and perception among Korean-English bilinguals. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for future research specified.

# The Effect of Referential Questions on Improving the Students' Quality of Responses in English

Somin Park

This research study aimed to investigate the effects of referential questions on improving students' quality of responses in English and how these questions were perceived by learners. Three individual students participated in the study in the form of a one-on-one class setting. During the six-week study, all students had one to six sessions with experimental lessons involving story book reading. The data was gathered by means of classroom observations, student interviews, and teacher journals. The results revealed that all three students elicited more responses to referential questions than display questions. Students A, B, and C showed a 30%, 31.10%, and 120% increase in complexity as question types differed from display to referential. In terms of frequency, Students A, B, and C showed 0.91%, 66.33%, and 31.86% increase in average scores in referential questions over display questions. Through student interviews, it was revealed that students have a positive preference to referential questions compared to display questions. Overall, referential questions in "After the Story" sessions may affect some of the students' quality of responses compared to "Before the Story." The results of this study is expected to be used by English teachers and parents who wish to interact with children in a second language. Although this study is limited to the duration of the observation and a small sample size, an emphasis of this study is to introduce the positive effects of referential questions to educators on behalf of improving the students' quality of answers.

**Key words:** Referential Question, Student Responses, Story Reading