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【Research paper】
Exploring the Transportability of the Rationale and Principles behind the *J-POSTL* to a Japanese Educational Context

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Abstract

The *EPOSTL* (*European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*) (Newby et al. 2007) is a reflection tool for language teachers in a European context, while the *J-POSTL* (*Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*) (JACET SIG on English Language Education, 2014) is the adaptation of the *EPOSTL* to a Japanese context. The *J-POSTL* is consequently underpinned by the European views of language and language education, i.e. the rational and principles behind the *EPOSTL*. In order to successfully contextualize the *J-POSTL* in Japanese educational settings, it is critically important to assess what elements of this document are transportable and which are not. This paper explores the transportability of the European views of language teaching and learning underlying the *J-POSTL* in the context of current foreign language policy implemented by the Japanese government. To do so, this paper offers an overview of the rationale and principles of European language education by reviewing the relevant recent publications. Recent policy trends of foreign (mainly English) language education in Japan are reviewed on the basis of government documents. Finally, the present context of language education in Japan is discussed to identify the challenges of contextualization, implementation and dissemination of the *J-POSTL*.

Keywords
intercultural competence, action-oriented approach,
interaction, reflection, autonomous learning

1. Introduction

The idea of writing this article stems from rapporteur's comments at the Japan-Netherlands-Australia symposium at AILA 2014 Conference. The three presenters from Japan, including the author, talked about the reasons for and the process of adapting the *EPOSTL* for the *J-POSTL* through various surveys, and the challenges of disseminating it in the Japanese context. The other two presenters from Netherlands and Australia described teacher competences needed for literacy-diverse classrooms and for linguistic and cultural diversity in their own contexts respectively. Based on differences in educational contexts highlighted by these presentations, Heugh, as a

rapporteur, focused on international implications of language teacher interventions. She identified common themes: sharing expertise and practices in the global context, and significance of interventions for the building of reflexivity and teacher autonomy. One of her main topics of discussion was on the transportability of models from one context to another. Taking the *CEFR* and the *J-POSTL* for example, she raised questions 'to what extent are the needs similar' to those in a European context in terms of systematicity, parallelism, and standardization in relation to provision of language teaching, learning & assessment in education. She also wondered about the purposes of 'mobility of Japanese speakers of English' in contrast with 'mobility of people for educational and economic purposes within EU & elsewhere.'

These comments require reconsideration about why it might benefit Japanese teachers of languages to know about the rationale and principles behind the *J-POSTL* and which aspects should be mediated. Accordingly, this paper aims to discuss the challenges of contextualization, implementation and dissemination of the *J-POSTL*.

This requires a review of the previous studies related to European language policy reports and studies relevant to the development of *J-POSTL*, and documents pertaining to the recent trends of Japanese foreign (mainly English) language in Japan.

2．Overview of European Views of Language Education

2.1 Rationale behind European Language Policy
2.1.1 Council of Europe Language Education Policy. Language education policies of the Council (hereafter COE) aim to promote plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, mutual understanding, democratic citizenship, and social cohesion (COE, 2006). Each of these five concepts is an integral part of European language education, and they are mutually complementary. However, among these five aims, COE puts particular importance on "the development of plurilingualism – the lifelong enrichment of the individual's plurilingual repertoire." Another important concept necessary for this discussion is mutual understanding: COE states, "the opportunity to learn other languages is an essential condition for intercultural communication and acceptance of cultural differences." Judging from the recent publications of the *CEFR* in Japan, both plurilingualism and intercultural competences or pluriculturalism are by-products of the rationale behind the *CEFR*. It is thus worthwhile to examine the interpretations of these two concepts in the Japanese context.

2.1.2 Plurilingualism and Intercultural Competences. A number of foreign language education researchers (Nishiyama, 2010: 22-34 ; Hosokawa, 2010:148-159; Ohki, 2011: 3-20) have advocated that the Japanese should study not only English but also another

foreign language in order to promote multicultural coexistence and participation in democratic processes of globalization. Understanding the difference between multilingalism and plurilingalism is important. Multilingalism refers to the knowledge of two or more languages or the coexistence of more than one variety of language in a society, whereas plurilingalism does not refer to the knowledge, but it emphasizes the individual person's linguistic experience (*CEFR*, pp. 4-5). An individual's plurilingual competence can be developed or used when "different languages are not learned in isolation and can influence each other both in the learning process and communicative use (COE, 2006)." In Japan, too much emphasis has been placed on English language education. Teaching and learning only English as a foreign language would not be enough to help learners develop respect for cultural and linguistic identity and diversity, or to advance better mutual understanding. Since language and culture are intertwined, the more languages people would learn, the better they could understand other cultures, which will help them observe their own culture from a relativistic standpoint and then respect pluralistic cultural identities and diversity. In this respect, the purpose of foreign language education is to make students not near-native speakers but intercultural communicators who interact "in a number of languages across linguistic and cultural boundaries (COE, 2006)." Oka also suggests that the notion of 'partial competence' in plurilingualism should be a key element in the reformed English teaching in Japan (Oka, 2016).

Intercultural competence or interculturality, on the other hand, has recently replaced the term 'pluriculturalism' (Hosokawa, 2015: 6). Carton states that intercultuality is more dynamic than multiculture, and it arises when different cultures interact. He defines 'intercultural' as "involving or containing rapports, contacts, interactions, exchanges, or relationships between two or more cultures or groups of people from different countries or cultures (Carton, 2015: 9)." Interculturality, both in theory and pedagogical practice, differs from the traditional views of cross-cultural understanding in which different cultures exist on the outside as comprehensible entities. In intercultural education, another culture is not necessarily considered intelligible. It is sometimes beyond an individual person's understanding. This is where intercultural competence comes in. This competence is acquired through learning to adopt appropriate attitudes towards an unintelligible or inscrutable target. (see Nishiyama, 2015: 66-67 for details) It is, therefore, very important to elaborate approaches or methods of teaching and learning foreign languages in which intercultural competence can be developed.

2.2 The Learner Perspective and View of Language of the *CEFR*
In his review of recent trends in language teaching methodologies, Newby, one of the writers of the original *EPOSTL*, points out that the prevalent approach shifted from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered view of teaching and learning. Regarding the

rationale behind the *CEFR*, the following three aspects of a learner-centered view are particularly significant:
- Linguistic: the learner as a language user,
- Educational: the learner as a life-long learner,
- Socio-political: the learner as a social agent. (Newby, 2011: 73)

2.2.1 The Learner as a Language User—an Action-oriented Approach. In the 1970s, the Communicative Approach or communication-based theories of language use initiated by Hymes, Halliday, Austin and Searle brought about revolutionary changes in language teaching. "This view of language as a system of use was at the heart of an early Council of Europe publication, the *Threshold Level* (1975, revised in 1991) … and continues to be the view underlying the *CEFR*'s 'action-oriented' view of language (Newby, 2011: 74)." Since 1975, the categories of communication have "not only served as a basis for curriculum design in many European countries but its notional and functional categories provided essential theoretical input to the Communicative Approach to language teaching (Newby, 2012: 9)." The *CEFR*'s action-oriented approach, which built on the rationale and extended the scope of the *Threshold Level*, includes both communicative language competence and the categories of general competences which consist of the ability to learn languages and various types of cultural competence. As a result, learner/user competences are specified in six reference levels (A1-C2) in the form of 'can-do' descriptors.

When it comes to curriculum design, traditional specifications are language-based and therefore language specific. Curricula for an individual language need to be separately designed. However, notions or functions are not language specific. Pragmatic functions of language such as greetings, suggestions, apologies, invitations, etc. are independent of the linguistic form. Therefore, curriculum can be designed in the same framework for any language that is taught. In some European countries, skill-based descriptors of expected outcomes, taken directly from the *CEFR*, are listed in their school curriculum. The introduction of 'can-do' descriptors has also brought with it radical changes in testing and assessment as well as ways of teaching and learning. In Austria, for example, the final school leaving examination has been completely reformed so that it conforms to a skill-based rationale. (see Newby, 2011: 76-77 for details)

2.2.2 The Learner as a Life-long Learner—Autonomous Learner. The concept of life-long learning entails, by its very definition, an adherence to an autonomous view of learning. The *CEFR* states as follows:

> *… once teaching stops, further learning has to be autonomous. Autonomous learning can be promoted if 'learning to lean' is regarded as an integral part of*

> *language learning, so that learners become increasingly aware of the way they learn,*
> *the options open to them and the options that best suit them.*   (*CEFR*, p.141)

Life-long learning may be considered a rather empty term by many classroom teachers. At the practical level, the most common application of the term is in connection with 'learning to learn'. There are three aspects which contribute to life-long learning:

- ・ the ability to reflect on one's language and one's learning and draw relevant conclusions,
- ・ the development of learning to learn strategies,
- ・ the ability to take responsibility for one's own learning.   (Newby, 2011, 78-79)

The intervention devices to help promote and facilitate autonomous learning were developed in the form of two kinds of portfolio: the ELP (European Language Portfolio) for learners and the *EPOSTL* for language teachers. The pedagogical principles behind the ELP underlying the *EPOSTL* are learner involvement, learner reflection and appropriate target language use. These three principles are interrelated. "… we cannot engage learners in reflection unless we also involve them in their own learning and draw them into particular modes of target language use－reflection is, after all, a kind of discourse (Little et al., 2007: 15)." Reflection is also accompanied by self-assessment.

2.2.3 The Learner as a Social Agent—Plurilingalism. The action-oriented approach "views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents' i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action (*CEFR*, p.9)." As is seen in 2.1.2. the difference between plurilingalism and multilingualism is of particular importance for the *CEFR*. "Languages that have been learnt, and related cultural manifestations, are seen not as separate entities but as an integrated whole, as what might be termed the personal linguistic and cultural *habitus* of the student (Newby, 2011: 80)." Therefore, it is essential to help the learner build up "a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact (*CEFR*, p.4)."

2.3 Key Competencies
The conceptual framework of key competencies is somewhat European judging from the process in which it was elaborated. The DeSeCo Project (the Definition and Selection of Key Competencies Project) initiated by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) in 1997 was carried out under the leadership of Switzerland and linked to PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). After the First International Symposium in 1999, OECD invited member countries to participate in the consultation process. Twelve countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark,

Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the US) prepared and presented their reports at the 2nd Symposium in 2002. (see OECD, 2001:7 & 2003: 5 for details) The final report was released in 2003.

Key Competencies are composed of three interrelated broad categories (see Chart 1). Each of these categories reflects the rationale behind the *CEFR*: an action-oriented view of language, plurilingalism & pluriculturalism, and life-long learning or autonomous learning respectively. There is also a philosophical concept in common with the ELP and the *EPOSTL* as well as the *CEFR* found in an underlying part of this framework: that is, reflection, reflectiveness, or reflective thought and action. It is important to the discussion in this paper to note the definition of reflectiveness in Key Competencies. It is as follows:

Use tools interactively (*e.g.* language, technology)

Interact in heterogeneous groups

Act autonomously

OECD/PISA (2003)

Chart 1 Key Competencies

"... reflectiveness implies the use of metacognitive skills (thinking about thinking), creative abilities and taking a critical stance. It is not just about how individuals think, but also about how they construct experience more generally, including their thoughts, feelings and social relations. This requires individuals to reach a level of social maturity that allows them to distance themselves from social pressures, take different perspectives, make independent judgments and take responsibility for their actions (OECD/PISA, 2003: 9)."

2.4 The *European Profile for Language Teacher Education: A Frame of Reference* (the *Profile*)

One of the European documents the *EPOSTL* builds on is the *Profile*. It was developed by researchers at the University of Southampton, UK. During the compilation process, language educators and stakeholders from over 32 European countries were involved. It is designed as a voluntary frame of reference for their existing programmes and needs, and presents a toolkit of 40 items regarding the necessary skills and knowledge as well as other professional competencies of language teachers. (the *Profile*, p.3)

Newby believes that the *Profile* and the *EPOSTL*, in some ways, take a similar direction in providing a framework necessary for language teacher education. However, they differ from each other in certain important respects. The targets of the *Profile* are teacher educators in general and teacher training curriculum developers in particular. Therefore, "it takes a *top-down* view of teacher education. The *EPOSTL,* on the other hand, takes a *bottom-up* view, targeting student teachers and focusing on specific

competencies which trainee teachers need to develop (Newby, 2012: 13-14)."

3. Recent Trends of English Language Education Reformation Policy in Japan

3.1 Reforms in English Language Education
3.1.1 Foreign Language Policy—English-centered View of Language Education.
Recent language policy and institutional designs build on the principle of the *Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities* (MEXT, 2003) (hereafter *Action Plan*). Following the *Action Plan*, revised *Course of Study* (2009) was implemented, the *Five Proposals and Specific Measures for Developing Proficiency in English for International Communication* (2011) (hereafter *Five Proposals*) was proposed to complement or re-enforce the concepts of the *Action Plan*, the *Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development* (2012a) (hereafter *Global Human Resources*) was introduced, and the *Guide for Setting Learning Goals in the Form of Can-do Lists* (2013) (hereafter *Guide for Can-do*) was released to promote one of the specific measures presented in the *Five Proposals*. In these documents, the primary focus is on the enhancement of English ability. The term 'foreign languages' is only perfunctorily used. This reflects the common perception that English is dominant in foreign language education and it is substantially a compulsory subject in secondary and tertiary education in Japan. However, as Terasawa (2014) indicates, both the process of defining English as a required subject and the purpose of English language education have remained ambiguous. At present, the description found in the Introduction of the *Five Proposals* 'Enhancing the Ability of English as an International Lingua Franca: the Challenge of the Whole Society (translated by the author)' is widely viewed by the educators and policy makers as the cornerstone principle of the reforms of foreign (particularly English) language education policy. It states as follows:

> *English and other foreign languages are important tools for Japanese youth living in a globalized world to deepen their potential, and, at the same time, they play an important role in increasing the global competitiveness of our country.* (MEXT, 2011; translated by the author)

3.1.2 Aims of English Language Education in Japan. The *Action Plan*, putting the emphasis on the communicative ability in English, sets the proficiency targets as follows: end of lower secondary education – STEP (Society for Testing English Proficiency) 3rd grade (approximately equivalent to *CEFR* A1 level), and end of upper-secondary education – STEP pre-2nd or 2nd grade (approximately equivalent to *CEFR* A2 or B1 level). Also, it proposes that English language teachers should strive to acquire STEP pre-1st or higher level (approximately equivalent to *CEFR* B2 or higher level) of English proficiency and that foreign language classes at elementary schools,

though not formerly assessed, be conducted in a more effective fashion.

A phrase found in the *Course of Study* for upper-secondary education echoes that of a proposal in the *Action Plan*: "classes, in principle, should be conducted in English." This guideline has created much controversy among in-service Japanese teachers of English and the academics because it represents a departure from the traditional way of teaching English. The overall objective of foreign language education stipulated in the *Course of Study* also stresses the development of communicative abilities. At the center of these abilities is the competence of "accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc." which is clearly linked with "understanding of language and culture" and "a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages." The section of 'Foreign Languages' is the virtually identical in content and language to that of 'English' .   (see MEXT, 2009 for details)

3.1.3 Definition of Foreign Language Ability. The *Five Proposals* defines it as follows:

> *The foreign language ability required in a globalized society is the ability to communicate effectively with people from different countries or cultures by using a foreign language as a tool. This includes, for example, a positive attitude toward communication with people from different countries or cultures without being afraid of making mistakes, and competences to accurately understand the intentions or ideas of the interlocutors taking their cultural and social backgrounds into account; and ability to engage in a logical, persuasive discussion or explanation.* (MEXT, 2011: 1-2; translated by the author)

The document further stresses the necessity to transform the traditional teaching methodology based on grammar-translation into a more language-centric approach focused on speech, presentation, discussion and debate. At the same time, the guidelines urge schools to nurture this ability through Japanese language teaching and other subject areas. It is expected that the improvement of foreign language classes will lead to the betterment of the quality of school education as a whole. The release of the *Five Proposals* was followed by the requirement to set and announce learning goals in the form of *can-do* lists.

3.1.4 Learning Goals in the Form of Can-do Lists. The main instructions related to this measure as described in the *Guide for Can-do* (2013) are:

· Each school should make transparent the competences the students strive to attain, and urge the teachers to make use of them for the improvement of instruction and

assessment.

- Learning targets should be set in the form of can-do descriptors to correspond with comprehensive, four-skills-integrated classroom instruction, as suggested in the Course of Study.
- Teachers and students should share the same goals of language learning. This will help raise students' awareness of the meaning and value of learning a language through can-do descriptors and help them develop as autonomous learners, which is needed for language acquisition. It is also expected that a sense of attainment realized from using can-do lists will motivate students to study harder. (MEXT, 2013:3-4; translated by the author)

3.1.5 Skills Required of Global Human Resources. The notion of 'global human resources' was conceived by the government of Japan to underscore the need for Japan to be more competitive in the increasingly globalized economy and society. This concept comprises three factors. The first one in particular is of relevance to the discussion of this paper – communication skills. Qualification standards for communication are presented in levels (from beginner to advanced) as follows:
(1) Communication skills for overseas travel.
(2) Communication skills for daily interactions on non-professional topics.
(3) Communication skills for work-related interactions.
(4) Negotiation skills in bilateral settings.
(5) Negotiation skills in multilateral settings.

The government report states that the number of English learners in Japan who are at the levels (1), (2) and (3) has been on a steady increase; however, to develop and retain an adequate number of speakers who are at levels (4) and (5) is of great importance for Japan's economic and social advancement in the international arena in the future. (see Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011: 7-8; MEXT, 2012b: 8-9 for more details)

3.2 Core Competences of English Language Teachers.
Since the publication of *Action Plan* (2003), the government has highlighted two skills as a benchmark of English language teachers: one is the English proficiency level of STEP pre-1st or higher grade (see 4.3.1 for the current reality) and the other the didactic competence to teach English in English. In addition to this, *Five Proposals* (2011) suggests that teachers be required to acquire the competence to teach in line with the *Course of Study*, namely follow a balanced four-skills curriculum in English classes, with a focus on reading and writing. Teachers are encouraged to engage in professional development (PD) activities. Obviously, systematic PD opportunities need to be provided for further enhancement of teachers' didactic competences, and the curriculum

of the teacher training programs at universities and colleges should reflect these policy objectives.

4. Discussion on the Present Context of Language Education in Japan

4.1 Knowledge about the CEFR

4.1.1 Identified Challenges of Using the CEFR in Japan. Sakai conducted a survey on the awareness of the *CEFR* terminology, among English teachers, the possibility of practical implementation of this taxonomy, and teachers' attitude towards the theoretical principles underpinning this mechanism.

Results suggest that the understanding of the CEFR is largely limited to *can-do* statements. Respondents further show willingness to adopt the relevant principles provided they could gain a thorough guidance on their use. Respondents also indicate that lack of human resources and limited EFL proficiency of students represent a significant obstacle to the implementation of the CEFR rationale and principles (for full discussion, see Sakai 2011 & 2014). Most of the respondents to Sakai's survey may be university English teachers because they are JACET members. It is estimated that the knowledge about the *CEFR* among secondary school teachers and other stakeholders will be much more limited. This is a challenge not only for Japan. Similar context is observed even in European countries.

According to Newby (2011), "many school teachers are relatively unaware of the content of the CEFR even though it may be incorporated in their national curriculum. Teachers will usually be aware of the levels (A1 – C2) but will often know little else about it." Newby suggests that the complexity of the document and its comprehensive nature may impede understanding and practical use. What he adds to this suggestion can be one of the significant challenges for the adoption of the *CEFR* to a Japanese context.

> *If teachers are to understand the CEFR properly, then support materials and in-service teaching seminars are essential measures. It seems to me that an awareness of the rationale – language, cultural, educational, etc. – underlying the CEFR is more important than a detailed knowledge of the text itself. In implementing the CEFR and devising support measures language policy makers should therefore consider exactly why it might benefit teachers to know about the CEFR and which aspects should be mediated.* (Newby, 2011: 81)

4.1.2 *CEFR* and *CEFR-J*. The Japanese translation of the *CEFR* (Yoshijima & Ohashi eds., 2004) has become widely known to teachers and other stakeholders of secondary school education by the name of the *CEFR-J* (Tono ed. 2013). However, the *CEFR-J* is

not the Japanese version of the *CEFR* as Beacco indicates:

> *The title of CEFR-J may be misleading. The only one "common" document between Japan and Europe is the CEFR itself. However, the targets of the CEFR-J are limited to Japanese teachers and other stakeholders. Actually, the CEFR-J is nothing but the curriculum of English language education in Japan based on the CEFR. The CEFR per se is not a curriculum but a tool to develop a curriculum.* (Beacco, 2015: 14; unofficial translation)

Beacco points out that the model designed by the *CEFR-J* is not so different from the traditional four-skill model; the levels of competence correspond to third year of elementary school through third year of senior high school; it deals only with Chapter four of the *CEFR*; and ignores the cultural and intercultural aspects of language learning.

The *CEFR-J* had a considerable influence on the making processes of the *Five Proposals* and the *Guide for Can-do Lists*. In fact, many members of editorial staff of the *CEFR-J* were also on the advisory committee for the *Guide for Can-do*. This may be because the Ministry of Education considers that there is much merit in using the *CEFR-J* to improve English language education. Beacco offers the following insight on this:

> *The application method of the CEFR (as seen in the CEFR-J) appears to be decided within the context peculiar to Japanese school education. They have applied the CEFR-J to the present school curriculum and what teachers think important, and tried to implement it with consideration for not hurting the existing education system. However, this new document, the CEFR-J, will not be able to be effectively used until several conditions have been satisfied.* (ibid.: 15)

Beacco maintains that the *CEFR-J* will not be transportable without due consideration for the contents and terms defined in the *CEFR* such as the user/learners' competences, models of specific language learning processes to cope with tasks in a foreign language, language skills profile (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and interaction), etc. His suggestion may be associated with Newby's (see 4.1.1).

4.2 EFL Proficiency and Learning Conditions of 3rd-year Senior High School Students – a National Survey Conducted by MEXT

MEXT released the *Executive Summary of the Survey Results* (hereafter *Executive Summary*) to the media on May 26, 2015. This national survey was conducted jointly with an English language-testing society as a strategic step to improve English

education in Japan. The participants were about 70,000 3rd-year senior high school students from about 480 schools. The survey is composed of three parts: an English examination to find out whether the four English skills are acquired in a good balance, the questionnaire on the English learning conditions, and the questionnaire for the teachers. The English examination is designed to measure *CEFR* levels A1 – B2 which, the MEXT indicates, are 'the world standards'. This section discusses the results of the English examination and the English learning conditions. The responses from the teachers are discussed in 4.3.2.

4.2.1 EFL Proficiency of Participating Students. Table 1 shows that the results of 'writing' and 'speaking' skills in particular present a bigger challenge. However, judging from the learning targets set in the *Action Plan*, the other two skills need to be much more enhanced. According to the correspondence list between *CEFR* and STEP levels found in the *Executive Summary*, the *CEFR* levels A2 and B1 are considered equivalent to STEP pre-2nd and 2nd grade respectively, both of which are targets at the end of upper secondary school in the *Action Plan*.

Table 1 Students' English Ability 　　　(%)

N=Reading, Listening: 68,854,
Writing: 69,052, Speaking16,583

CEFR Levels		Reading	Listening	Writing	Speaking
B	B2	0.2	0.3	0	--
	B1	2.0	2.0	0.7	1.7
A	A2	25.1	21.8	12.8	11.1
	A1	72.7	75.9	86.5	87.2

(MEXT, 2015 : Adapted from the *Executive Summary*)

Apart from the results, what attracts attention in the *Executive Summary* is that the MEXT has adopted *CEFR* reference levels to the measurement criteria as the 'world standards', although they have never been mentioned as the levels of learning targets in any other document. The *CEFR* is a framework of reference for learning, teaching and assessment. The students should not be assessed on *CEFR* levels as criteria until the curriculum, textbooks, didactic methods, tests, etc. have been elaborated based on the *CEFR* and implemented in school education. If the levels were used only for assessment, they would become mere substitutes for TOEIC or TOEFL test results, and lose their significance. There is a table of reference levels found attached to the *Executive Summary*. It is actually the 'global scale' or a simple 'global' representation which "will make it easier to communicate the system to non-specialist users and will also provide teachers and curriculum planners with orientation points (*CEFR*, p. 24)."

Regarding the improvement measures described in the *Executive Summary*, we find recommendations similar to those of the *Guide for Can-do* (see 3.1.4): to encourage students to realize a sense of attainment by setting specific learning goals including their motivation for and attitudes to independent learning in the form of *can-do* lists. This idea may be drawn from the action-oriented view of language learning (see 2.2.1) and

autonomous learning (see 2.2.2) in the *CEFR*. It is doubtful, however, whether setting *can-do* lists as learning goals without any other intervention will automatically lead to the enhancement of students' motivation and the development of autonomous learners. In Europe, ELP has been elaborated as a reflection, self-assessment tool and implemented in schools. While the system is in place, challenges remain partly because the fundamental principles and terminological context of the *CEFR* have not achieved the necessary visibility. Beacco raises an alarm on this matter:

> *A new approach to learning-goal setting of this kind must be theoretically analyzed. It is necessary to introduce it step by step by using learning materials and textbooks which are appropriate for the educational context. Top-down enforcement by the government must be avoided. If not, the CEFR will become fossilized as is found in some European countries.* (Beacco, 2015: 17; unofficial translation)

4.2.2 The English Learning Conditions. This survey focused on the EFL classroom environment (see MEXT 2015 for details). The results reveal that: ① more than half of the students do not like English; ② the desire to learn to use English is commensurate with the English ability; and ③amount of English spoken or written in class is very limited. General comments by teachers support these numerical results.

Based on these survey results, the *Executive Summary* offers some improvement measures focusing on learning motivation and attitudes, and language activities in the classroom. These measures mirror those of the *Five Proposals*, the *Guide for Can-do*, and the *Global Human Resources*. Most of the recommendations which focus on the development of interactional competence in English appear to be preaching to the converted, i.e. directed at the learners already highly motivated.

The *Global Human Resources* report estimates that potential candidates will be approximately 10% (i.e., around 110,000) of those in the same age group for the next decade (Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011: 9; MEXT, 2012b: 10). Ohki believes that MEXT has given up the principle of equality and begun to work seriously on the elite training (Ohki, 2014:49). However, the problem is what to do with the learning goals of English as a compulsory subject for 90 % of the students and how to motivate them to study English. This problem should be discussed from the perspectives of (1) subjects of general interest to students and (2) the concept of interaction.

(1) Subjects of General Interest to Students. The responses to question "How proficient do you want to become in English?" of the questionnaire and the results of the survey conducted by Ohki (2014) provide a useful reference. Table 2 shows the

results of the questionnaire.

Table 2 The Distribution of Students' Desire on English Use

Options	Rates
① I want to play an active part in the global community by using English.	8.9%
② I want to be exposed to English as a medium of instruction at university.	3.3%
③ I want to enter an overseas university after graduation.	0.9%
④ I want to attend classes at overseas high schools while I am a high school student.	0.6%
⑤ I want to enjoy staying with a family overseas or study-abroad programs.	5.0%
⑥ I want to have everyday conversation in English and enjoy interactions while traveling overseas.	36.7%
⑦ I want to acquire sufficient English ability to challenge successfully entrance examinations to universities.	19.6%
⑧ I don't have any idea of using English except for English classes at school.	25.0%

(Adapted from MEXT 2015)

In essence, more than 80% of the students are separate from the mainstream of English language education which focuses on the development of the global human resources.

On the other hand, Ohki (2014) conducted an open-ended questionnaire about the reasons for learning English mainly among the freshmen at the Faculty of Engineering of Kyoto University. The results show that a significant ratio of respondents is learning English for practical purposes, centered on the perceived need for English-based interaction. These results parallel the principles of language education espoused by the Council of Europe and suggest that the rationale for CEFR is applicable to the educational context in Japan. (Ohki, 2014: 67)

The results above may suggest that it is important to motivate all the learners to learn to use English for practical purposes in, what the *CEFR* terms, the personal domain which "comprises family relations and individual social practices (*CEFR*, p. 15)."

(2) Interaction. Language skills have traditionally been divided into four skills. Language skills profile of the *CEFR* (pp.26*t*-27*t*) includes 'spoken interaction', a category not reflected in the traditional four-skill approach advocated by MEXT.

The *CEFR* classifies language activities into reception, production, interaction and mediation (in particular interpreting or translating). Both reception and production are required for interaction. In the *EPOSTL*, there are sections 'Speaking / Spoken interaction' and 'Writing / Written interaction.' Activities such as 'presentations, debates, and negotiations,' 'using integrated-skills,' and 'exchanging ideas and feelings'

recommended by the *Executive Summary* are closely related to the concept of interaction, which the *CEFR* describes as follows:

> *Not only may two interlocutors be speaking and yet listening to each other simultaneously. Even where turn-taking is strictly respected, the listener is generally already forecasting the remainder of the speaker's message and preparing a response. Learning to interact thus involves more than learning to receive and to produce utterances. High importance is generally attributed to interaction in language use and learning in view of its central role in communication.* (*CEFR*, p.14)

If the concept of spoken interaction were adapted to language education in Japan, it could be replaced by the Japanese term '*taiwa*' which literally means 'a dialogue'. Thus, '*taiwa ryoku*' (dialogue skill) could be added to traditional four skills. This idea stems from Hirata (2012), an active educator as well as an outstanding play-write and director, who indicates that the concept of *taiwa* is not understood or appreciated in Japanese society (p.99). He continues to define the 'spirit of *taiwa*' as follows:

> *'The spirit of taiwa' refers to the attitude that you have the grace to admit that your beliefs can change by meeting other people with different values; or, if possible, you feel even the joy in finding your beliefs changing by meeting and having discussions with other people with different values* (Hirata, 2012: 103, translated by the author).

Developing this 'spirit of *taiwa*' can be essential for all the learners regardless of the levels of qualification standards specified in the *Global Human Resources*, since 'dialogue skills' or interaction is considered as the fundamental communicative competence.

4.3 English Teachers' Competences – Transportability of the *J-POSTL*
4.3.1 EFL Proficiency of English Teachers in Japan. A five-year project carried out in the *Action Plan* required about 60,000 secondary English language teachers nationwide to participate in one of the retraining seminars for the enhancement of their English ability. On the results of this policy, *Five Proposals* maintains that *Action Plan* has so far been moderately successful, but enhancing the EFL proficiency of both students and teachers remains a stumbling block (MEXT, 2011: 1). In fact, the ratio of public school teachers who obtained STEP pre-1st or higher grade was 24% at lower-secondary level and 49% of upper-secondary school teachers in 2011, while in 2014 that was 27.9% and 52.7% respectively. These percentages are far below the expected 70%, the government stipulated (MEXT, 2014).

The exit levels of language proficiency in Austria, on the other hand, are set as follows:

CEFR A2 at the end of lower secondary, B2 at the end of upper-secondary, C1 at the end of Bachelor Degree, and C2 at the end of Master Degree (Newby, 2011: 76). In short, the language ability of language teachers is considered as at least C1 or higher (equivalent to STEP 1st grade or higher). Language distance between Japanese and English may partially explain the gap in proficiency. However, it cannot be ignored in terms of the transportability of the *CEFR* and the *EPOSTL* to a Japanese context.

4.3.2 The Attitudes of Teachers towards Foreign Language Activities. The conclusion of the *Executive Summary* indicates that the skills-integrated language activities are very limited in the English classrooms in Japan (see MEXT 2015 for more detail). To remedy this situation, recommendations are made to expose pre- and in-service English teachers to interactive activities at all levels of training and professional development; to incorporate such activities into classroom instruction and to construct assessment mechanisms measuring speaking and writing proficiencies. At the micro level, these suggestions entail greater implementation of pair and group work in the classroom.

The measures suggested in the *Executive Summary* as well as the *Five Proposals* appear appropriate for the improvement of the classroom English instructions. However, specific intermediary tools are necessary to translate policy recommendations into effective classroom practice. In several European countries, ELP for learners and the *EPOSTL* for teachers perform this role. Interesting to note that in Austria the *EPOSTL* has not only been used in the teacher training course but also for on-site training (Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2011: 33-35). In Iceland, mentors were involved in a university education program to learn how to use it and then used it with their student teachers on-site (Ingvarsóttir, 2011: 63-70).

In Japan, too, it is reported that an in-service teacher has successfully used the *J-POSTL* during his PD activities. Fuminori Koide, a lower-secondary school teacher with over ten years of teaching experience was exposed to *J-POSTL* during his professional re-training course. This helped him understand the importance of J-POSTL as a reflection tool. He further realized the value of *J-POSTL* for discussions with colleagues, novice teachers or student teachers. The problem is, he comments, whether it can be effectively used for on-site PD activities within time as well as physical constraints (Koide, 2015: 34-36).

This report suggests the possibility that the *J-POSTL* can be transportable to in-service teacher education. Learning practical classroom methodologies may be essential for PD programs. At the same time, the implementation of a reflection or self-assessment tool like the *J-POSTL* will help teachers realize the meaning and value of *can-do* descriptors.

Knowledge and skills acquired during PD activities can be catalysts for change in the English classroom.

4.3.3 Didactic Competences of English Teachers. The national survey results conducted by the JACET SIG on English language education (hereafter the SIG) show that the didactic competences of English teachers particularly in the categories of 'culture' and 'independent learning' are not sufficient for effective classroom instruction (see SIG, 2013: 9-62; Hisamura, 2014a: 5-14 for full discussion). This survey is based on the *EPOSTL* descriptors considered necessary for in-service language educators. Hisamura (2015) re-analyzed the results to identify gaps in didactic competence among the four categories: skills-, assessment-, culture-, and independent-learning-related descriptors (see Chart 2). These descriptors used in this survey contain a large number

of terms reflecting European views of language and language education. In the categories of culture and independent learning in particular, the descriptors which are probably unfamiliar or unrecognizable to the respondents are quite noticeable; for example, 'socio-cultural competence', 'otherness', 'norm of behavior', 'learner autonomy', 'project and portfolio work', 'virtual learning by ICT resources', etc.

Chart 2 Distribution of Four Categories   N=5,631
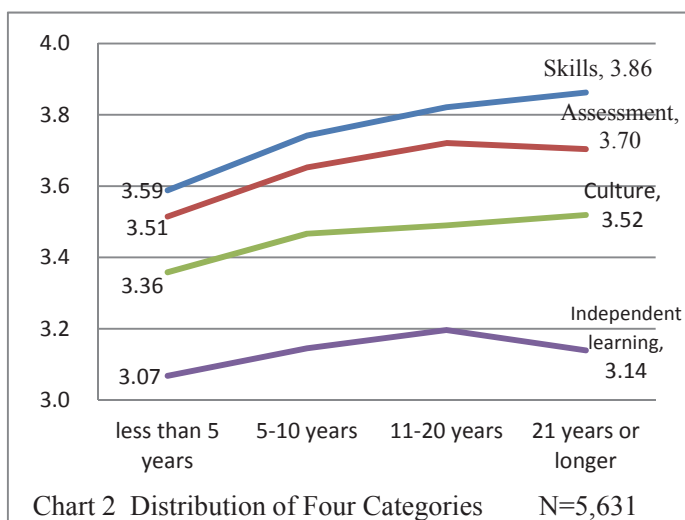
As well as these findings above, the detailed analysis on culture-related descriptors reveals that overseas experience (OE) and teaching culture-related materials (TC) are co-related and teachers with OE are more confident in TC than teachers without OE who show no significant development of intercultural didactic competences regardless of the length of their teaching career (Hisamura, 2014b: 26-34). This result supports the recommendation presented in *Five Proposals* that bilateral and multilateral teacher exchanges should be expanded as well as opportunities for overseas training for pre- and in-service language educators should be made more accessible to by national and local governments.

The descriptors on independent learning relate to individual and group activities aiming to encourage learners to become reflective and autonomous. It is unlikely that many Japanese language educators, especially those with a long teaching record, have been exposed to such activities during their per-service training or PD sessions. In order to

develop autonomous learners, teachers themselves have to be reflective and autonomous learners. Again, the *J-POSTL,* as a reflection tool, will be effective for the development of teacher autonomy.

4.3.4 Opportunities for Dissemination of the *J-POSTL* as a Reflection Tool for Language Teacher Education. This paper has made it clear that 'reflection' is an integral component for the betterment of the quality of English classrooms in Japan. While in documents such as the *Action Plan*, the *Course of Study*, the *Five Proposals* this term is absent, it is used repeatedly as a necessary element for the enhancement of teachers' competences in the report from the Central Council for Education *On a Comprehensive Measure for the Enhancement of Teachers' Didactic Competences through the Whole Teaching Career* (MEXT, 2012b).This explicit acknowledgment of the importance of reflection suggests that the concept has been accepted in the Japanese educational policy realm.

At the same time, in the academic field of English language education, terms such as *reflective approach, reflective practice*, and *reflective cycl*e have been widely recognized and applied to teacher training and PD programs (Ishida, Jimbo, Hisamura, Sakai, 2011: 195-198). The *J-POSTL*, therefore, can be used as an intervention tool in these programs, if of course not accepted by all. A number of academics argue that since the descriptors provide a systematic way of considering and evaluating competences, they represent little more than a numerical checklist which is rigid, arbitrary, beyond the capacity of most students, and incapable of adequately espousing the breadth and depth of the complexity of knowledge required of teaching professionals (Kanatani, 2014; Kizuka, 2014:60-62; Heugh, 2014). As the work on the elaboration and dissemination of *J-POSTL* continues, this critique will have to be addressed. The following is an episode related to this matter.

An electronic portfolio system was being developed as one of the ECML (European Centre for Modern Languages) projects. The system developed at the University of Bremen, Germany, incorporated an on-line version of the *EPOSTL*. At the ECML conference held on February 18, 2014, the *EPOSTL* authors and project coordinators had a heated discussion on the didactic applications of the system (Newby, 2014). The authors expressed their deep concern about a danger of digitizing competences and then regarding self-assessment descriptors as merely a check list.

5. Conclusion

This paper has discussed the transportability of the *J-POSTL* to a Japanese context by reviewing the rationale, principles and important concepts found mainly in the literature

on the European language policy and the present context of Japanese language education provided. At the heart of the rationale underlying the European views of language and language education is the principle 'plurilingualism'. The spread of the *J-POSTL* depends on how well these terms and concepts will be understood in a Japanese educational context.

Language learners will be able to interact in a group of people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds by accumulating their experience of language and culture. They are social agents who are performing some tasks in society. They are expected to learn to reflect on their experience by means of portfolio, develop learning to learn strategies, acquire some practical skills of languages through action-oriented approach, and become a life-long learner i.e. autonomous learner. This is considered as a basic idea of the European language policy. In essence, it aims not only to promote national interests but to encourage the mobility of people in the region and to promote the education of European citizens who contribute to peace and harmony of society.

On the other hand, the priority of the Japanese language policy lies in the improvement of '*international competitiveness*' and English language education in a narrow sense. This approach has been the object of academic criticism (see Yamada 2005: 96; in terms of his comments to the strategic design for the *Action Plan* for more discussion). Language education in many European countries is conceived on a multidisciplinary platform whereas in Japan it is confined to just one subject. As a result, some studies claim that the notion of *Global Human Resources*, espoused in several policy documents in Japan, is not clearly understood by academic institutions thus perpetuating a very limited vision of the evolution of foreign language education (Ohki, 2015).

At present, 'more than one foreign language' education policy may not be transportable. However, it would be possible to help learners appreciate the plurality of languages and cultures through English education. The concepts underpinning plurilingualism can be adapted to a Japanese context by means of educational intervention including portfolios and research projects. The *Action Plan* states that learning English as a lingua franca in the globalized world is of great importance not only for the future of children but also for the further development of our country. The *Course of Study* stipulates that understanding language and culture and positive attitudes towards communication are the important factors of foreign language learning. Also, the *Five Proposals* makes it a prerequisite to the development of the communication ability to understand the ideas and intentions of the interlocutors by taking their cultural and social backgrounds into consideration. The *Guide for Can-do* refers to autonomous learning as an integral element of language acquisition. The concepts and terms found in these documents are corresponding   to   'social   agent'   'intercultural   competence'   'interaction'

'action-orientedness', and 'autonomous learners with reflective thought and action' which comprise European views of language and language education. Therefore, the purpose of foreign language education in Japan can be defined in this way: to educate the citizens who promote multicultural coexistence – mutual understanding, democratic citizenship, social cohesion – and contribute to the establishing of peace and harmony of the world. All the stakeholders from the government, the academics, to in-service teachers and students themselves should cooperate in this complex process and ensure that these ideals can be fully understood, shared and adopted within the socio-cultural parameters of Japan, more generally, and Japanese educational constraints, in particular.

The government of Japan, taking a top-down approach, is now requesting each school across the country to set its own learning goal in the form of *can-do* lists. In a few years, foreign language activities will be implemented in the 3rd-4th grades, and English will become a formal subject in the 5th-6th grades of elementary school curriculum. Taking these projected developments into account, now is the right time to turn the traditional paradigm of language education into a new one based on the cross-curricular approach. It is equally important to promote the standardization of didactic competences of teachers as well as language proficiency of learners as suggested by prominent academics (see Otani, Sugitani, Hashiuchi, Hayashi eds., 2015). Consequently, the *J-POSTL,* as a bottom-up approach, can play a pivotal role as a springboard to reform language education in Japan. The expectations are that the keywords of this paper 'intercultural competence', 'action-oriented approach', 'interaction', 'reflection', and 'autonomous learning' will be successfully contextualized in Japanese educational settings in the near future.

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【Research paper】

Encouraging English Teachers' Autonomous Reflection

Kiyota, Yoichi

Abstract

While it is advisable for EFL teachers to autonomously enhance their professional development, they scarcely have the opportunity to engage in such activities, including reflective practice, due to time constraints. In this context, the author conceived a project in support of improving classroom teaching as an opportunity for language educators to analyze their teaching. The project used two types of portfolio: *My Learning Mate* (MLM), a language learning portfolio for students, and a J-POSTL (Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages), a tool for Japanese teachers to reflect on their didactic abilities. This research paper analyzes and discusses the process by which teachers developed their awareness of their didactic competences through their reflections on the project. The findings obtained in this study may help to provide teachers with appropriate suggestions for autonomous professional development.

Keywords

reflection of didactic abilities, teacher autonomy, language portfolio

1. Background of the Research

1.1 Professional Development

Continuous professional development is important for educators because it may significantly affect their students' learning. If teachers successfully improve their didactic skills through effective professional development, they may be in the position to handle challenges of their students' learning. Even experienced teachers confront major challenges including improving their instructional skills in order to understand students' needs and enhancing students' learning attitudes. In other words, teachers who do not engage in effective professional development do not improve their classroom teaching, which may negatively impact their students' learning outcomes.

Many countries are concerned about teachers' qualifications. The OECD reported that "almost all countries report concerns about "qualitative" shortfalls: whether enough teachers have the knowledge and skills to meet school needs (OECD, 2005: 4)."

Japanese authorities also share this concern. Regional boards of education provide official teacher training in line with teachers' professional experiences. However, several problems related to this training have been pointed out. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT) regards necessary qualifications for teachers as "responsibility to the teaching profession, ability of inquiry, and continuous attitudes to learn spontaneously throughout their teaching careers (Central Council for Education, 2012: 1, translated by the author)." However, MEXT reported that the environment to support teachers' learning is insufficient, and the following suggestion was made:

Teacher training for student teachers at their universities and training for in-service teachers are separated, which suggests that the environment for in-service teachers to continue their learning is insufficient. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a system which enables in-service teachers to retain motivation for continuous learning. (Central Council for Education, 2012: 1, translated by the author)

Considering this kind of training environment, it is advisable for in-service teachers to be supported to engage in a relevant project which can promote their awareness of didactic competences as a means of professional development. For example, a project aiming to improve students' English learning in their classes may be appropriate because it its likely to change their teaching routine since such improvement requires teachers to engage in new teaching activities and to effectively promote self-reflection after their teaching practices.

For this research, a project was developed that aimed to improve students' English learning using a language learning portfolio. The portfolio included: (a) lesson goals as a form of short-term self-evaluation and (b) can-do statements related to English language functions as a form of long-term reflection. Students were able to evaluate their own attainment in language learning using this portfolio and this evaluation and recording of their learning process was expected to enhance their learning autonomy. Together with the students' learning portfolio, teachers also used their own portfolios to reflect on their teaching practices and evaluate their didactic abilities. This research paper discusses how the project influenced teachers' self-reflections through their use of the language learning portfolio.

1.2 Portfolios
1.2.1 English Language Learning Portfolio. The students' portfolio comprised a language portfolio component which included can-do descriptors. The original idea stems from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001),   and the European Language Portfolio (ELP, 2004). The latter was developed as a personal tool to encourage autonomous language learning in accordance with CEFR taxonomy. ELP has three obligatory components: a Language Passport, a Language Biography, and a Dossier. The *Language Passport* summarizes the owner's linguistic identity and his or her experience of learning and using second/foreign languages. The *Language Biography* supports goal setting and self-assessment in relation to specific learning objectives, and encourages reflection on learning styles, strategies and intercultural experience. The *Dossier* is where the owner collects evidence of his or her second/foreign language proficiency and intercultural experience; in some implementations it also has a strongly developed pedagogical function (2004).

The development of learner autonomy is central to ELP's pedagogical function. Little (2012), a leading editor of ELP, quoted Holec's characterization of learner autonomy in foreign language learning as 'the ability to take charge of one's learning' as follows:

  · determining the objectives;
  · defining the contents and progressions;
  · selecting the methods and techniques to be used;
  · monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place,

etc.);
· evaluating what has been acquired.   (Holec, 1981: 3)

Little (2012) mentions, "Clearly, the ELP can be used to support this version of learner autonomy. In particular, the checklist of 'I can' descriptors can help learners to select learning targets and materials, monitor their progress, and evaluate learning outcomes." ELP aims to enhance learning autonomy through self-access language learning under three pedagogical principles: learner involvement, learner reflection and appropriate target language use. (Little, et al. 2007). This concept to enhance learner autonomy in foreign language learning of ELP can be adapted to a Japanese educational context.

However, ELP was developed within the European the educational context which has some fundamental differences from the Japanese language educational context. For example, a junior version of ELP suggests its users reflect on their experiences of using several languages they know in "My Language Biography". Learning several languages simultaneously is unusual for children in Japan. The portfolio also suggests its users write about "Things I notice about language and culture", which is also considered to be difficult because children in Japan seldom have chances to compare their mother tongue with other languages. As a matter of fact, this junior version of the ELP translated into Japanese was once introduced in a private junior high school. However, students could not use the portfolio effectively because many questions did not bear relevance to their past experiences.

Concerning the enhancement of language learner autonomy in, foreign language classes at secondary institutions in Japan are generally conducted using textbooks authorized by MEXT in Japan. Students evaluated their attainment in each lesson with reference to the lesson goals. Furthermore, they worked on their reflection with reference to a related can-do list, aimed at encouraging students to develop their awareness as target language users. This process was expected to make learners recognize how their daily learning was related to enhancing their practical English competence, which is a necessary long-term goal of English language users.

Considering this educational context in Japan, the author developed an English language learning portfolio, MLM. The author's first aim in developing MLM was to change learners' attitudes to English learning in order to enhance learner autonomy through reflection on their language learning.

It was expected that learners' autonomous English learning would be promoted over the course of the project using MLM, mainly through productive activities, for instance expressing their opinions in English, and that their learning performances would be evaluated according to the can-do descriptors listed in MLM. For example, at the beginning of the portfolio work, students confirmed their needs and goals for English learning. Following this confirmation, they worked on their learning with the aim of attaining their cited goals and evaluating their attainment. Through this procedure, they were expected to establish a learning cycle suitable to their own needs.

By using MLM, teachers could avoid undesirable classroom practices, such as limiting their instruction just to their perceived narrow areas of strengths, while ignoring lesson goals which may require more advanced, or simply different teaching skills.

Sharing visualized lesson goals and a related can-do list of learning attainments for the academic year were expected to promote communication between students and teachers, or teachers and other teachers. Teachers themselves could gain more opportunities to cooperate out of the classroom and assist in each other's professional development because they share lesson goals with their peers.

For this research, the subjects examined lesson goals together with the author while developing the portfolio. Through this examination, it was expected that the subjects would review their current teaching methods and introduce learning activities that they had not previously conducted in their classes. The main framework of MLM is as follows:

- Items that encourage learners' understanding of their needs for English learning by considering their own interests and expected career needs in the future.
- Descriptors for self-evaluation of attainment from each lesson and related can-do list for the academic year.

1.2.2 Portfolio for Evaluating Didactic Competence. When teachers evaluate their own competences, they require an objective benchmark. Kyoikumondai-kenkyukai, a special interest group of JACET, developed J-POSTL, a tool to encourage teachers' autonomous professional development. J-POSTL was used for this research as a reflection tool to provide the subjects with standards of didactic competence. It is an adaptation of EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) (Newby et al., 2007), developed for the Japanese educational context, that allows Japanese teachers of English to advance their professional growth through reflection and dialogue. There are three versions of J-POSTL: "Full-length version," "Pre-service English teacher education version," and "In-service English teacher education version." The subjects used the "In-service English teacher education version" for their reflection.

J-POSTL is divided into seven categories, each of which is further divided into sub-categories. For this project, the author selected the categories of Teaching Methodology and Independent Learning. From the category of Teaching Methodology, the focus was on speaking and writing activities, while from the category of Independent Learning, autonomous learning and portfolio learning were selected. The author focused on speaking and writing activities because MLM encourages learners to promote the productive activities of self-expression and interaction. The following is a sample descriptor and a five-point self-evaluation of J-POSTL.
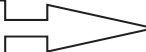
Figure 1. A sample Five-point self-evaluation used in J-POSTL

4. I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners use the typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others.

The subjects evaluated their didactic competences using this portfolio at the beginning and end of the project.

1.3 Research Framework

1.3.1 Reflection to Promote Teachers' Professional Development. Generally, student teachers first learn the theories and methods of teaching, and then practice what they have learned. However, in-service teachers generally adjust what they have already learned to their current pedagogical reality. Farrell refers to in-service teachers' reflection as follows:

> *From Practices to Principles may sound like a strange way to order the development of principles or theory. Usually, teachers are educated and encouraged to access their theory or principles first and then look at how these can be transformed into practice; or work from theory to practice. I agree that this is a good way for novice teachers to approach their teaching. However, what happens when teachers have spent many years in the classroom and have only focused on refining their practices rather than articulating their principles?* (Farrell, 2013: 2-3)

In this quote, Farrell claims that "from practice to theory" is a reasonable order for in-service teachers. Schön (1983) also points out that a practitioner can identify and criticize the tacit understandings that have developed around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice through reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.

Together with this view on reflection, action research also encourages in-service teachers to identify problems and solutions in their teaching practice as a mode of self-training for professional development. Hisamura (2011: 196), for example, indicates that a process of problem-solution type action-research would involve evaluating the effectiveness of teaching practice utilizing field notes, teaching logs, and journals rather than quantitative data. At a graduate school class for in-service teachers, Tamai (2009:120) also indicated that recording and analyzing classroom occurrences would lead to better understanding of the causes of occurrences as they related to teaching. Moreover, reflection on the recorded notes promotes the teacher's professional development.

However, teachers who have taught for many years and who have already established their own teaching style require opportunities that will enable them to springboard out of their fixed teaching routines. Kubanyiova (2012) thus proposed the integrated model of Language Teacher Conceptual Change, which promotes change in teachers' fixed teaching views. By developing this model, she analyzed the process whereby language teachers change their teaching concept when faced with an unusual situation that causes certain strains in their self-image as language teachers. Kubanyiova suggests the possibility of teachers' conceptual change as follows:

> *Not only does the teacher education content need to be in line with her relevant possible selves as a basic prerequisite for conceptual change to occur, but the teacher must also experience the dissonance emotions which are a result of the discrepancy between her actual and ideal/ought-to selves and which have been acknowledged across disciplines as the primary trigger of conceptual change.* (Kubanyiova ,2012: 61-62)

In the normal context of teachers' current teaching, they rarely find any opportunity to

improve their basic pedagogical approaches and underlying values. Thus, a conceptual change would occur as a by-product of a different classroom situation.

Fernner (2012) also mentioned that students can allow themselves to be more critical and analytical through reflections and discussion. Then, EPOSTL can be used as a reflection tool for student-teachers' course as follows:

> *As the descriptors can be seen as covering a whole range of potential situations related to each topic category, the EPOSTL can, if used as a basis for discussion, create a link between theory and practice.* (Fenner, 2012: 43)

To make teachers' reflection effective, this research project included a challenging situation, requiring practices that the subject had not previously tried and reflection on their teaching as a means to promote teacher autonomy. Considering two theories above, the author established the following framework of the research project:

・effective as a springboard to promote changes in teaching concept
・visualization of learning goals that can be shared with students and colleagues, which can be used as a basis for discussion
・introducing benchmarks against which teachers can objectively evaluate their didactic competences

2. Objective

The objective of the research was to investigate the effectiveness of a project to develop teachers' awareness of their didactic competence through autonomous reflection using two types of portfolio: a language portfolio for students and a self-evaluation portfolio for teachers.

3. Research Procedures

3.1 Outline of the Case Study

This research comprised a case study focusing on teachers' autonomous professional development though self-reflection. The subjects of the research were two senior high school teachers in Tokyo in Japan. It was expected that their professional development would be enhanced through their engagement in a project requiring teaching practices that they had not previously tried as well as self-reflection on their teaching practices. Both teachers taught a class called "English Communication I," a compulsory subject for senior high school students focusing on the four skills in an integrated way. The subjects reflected on their teaching practices and evaluated their improvement in didactic competence on two occasions – at the beginning of the project in April 2014 and at the end in March 2015. After each self-evaluation, follow-up interviews were conducted by the author. At the beginning of the project, the subjects were asked for their basic attitudes toward English language education and their practical plans for the project procedure. At the end, they were asked about changes in their evaluation and how they now reflected on their practices, with reference to their self-evaluation records.

3.2 Subjects and Data
The subjects were two senior high school teachers: a male teacher with eight years' teaching experience as Subject A and a female teacher with 17 years' teaching experience as Subject B. Both worked in a girls' school in the Tokyo area. In this school, many students have difficulties learning English and their low motivation often proves an obstacle to continuing learning because of unsuccessful English learning in their junior high schools.

The data to be examined comprised a self-evaluation of their didactic competences, which were evaluated on a five-point scale, in addition to follow-up interviews regarding the evaluation. The five-point scale evaluation was analyzed as an estimation of changes in the evaluation of didactic competences for each subject, not as quantitative data, because the evaluation was executed according to the standards of the subjects. The interviews were analyzed mainly through a reflection of their teaching experiences throughout the project. In order to maintain the validity of the data, the author paid careful attention to changes in the practices and attitudes of the subjects.

3.2.1 Male Teacher with Eight Years' Teaching Experience. This subject considered it necessary to acquire more advanced basic knowledge of English grammar in order to conduct communicative activities in class. At the time of the interview, the teacher felt dissatisfied with his own performance in class and expressed a desire to improve his teaching style.

3.2.2 Class Observation. The author observed the subject's class immediately prior to the project. The lesson procedure was as follows: the teacher spent more than 20 minutes on a dictation activity, having students write down textbook passages while listening to a model reading on a CD player. He then explained the target grammar in Japanese, without interacting with the students.

3.2.3 Female Teacher with 17 Years' Teaching Experience. This subject believed in a communication-oriented attitude to English teaching and aimed to conduct learning activities using expressions and grammar that students learned from their textbooks. She also conducted her lessons in English as far as students could understand. However, her way of designing lessons was not clearly defined, which meant that she did not have a clear concept and methodology for designing learning activities.

3.2.4 Class Observation. The subject aimed to promote interaction in English with her students by using English in class, exemplified by the instructions she gave and the questions she asked. This style was rather exceptional as in Japanese schools, teacher-centered classroom style with limited student-teacher or student – student interaction is common. Students also seemed to enjoy working on presentation as the goal activity of their textbook. However, they only said what they had prepared in English, which meant that the students' activities didn't lead to enhancing practical language abilities for their purposes. Although the subject was aware of this problem, she was unable to find a solution.

4. Results

The changes in self-evaluation of the two subject teachers will first be introduced and individual changes will then be reported. The comprehensive changes in each case will be discussed because changes of standards and views of the evaluation of each subject are significant. First, the standards of each subject's self-evaluation using J-POSTL will be reported. The method of evaluating own didactic competences is an important element for teachers' professional growth.

4.1 Subject A
Subject A judged his standards on the five-point self-evaluation scale as follows:
(concerning each teaching activity)
1: didn't try or prepare
2: tried, but could not complete
3: could complete in a satisfactory way
4–5: completed with a varying degree of success

4.1.1 Speaking/Spoken Interaction
(1) All descriptors

Table 1. J-POSTL descriptors in Speaking/Spoken interaction

	Descriptor	Apr.	Mar.
1*	I can create a supportive atmosphere and provide a specific situation for language use that invites learners to actively partake in speaking activities.	2	4
2*	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, cultural backgrounds, identities, etc.	2	5
3	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to help learners to develop competencies for presentation, discussion, etc.	3	3
4	I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to use typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others.	1	2
5	I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm, and intonation.	2	3
6	I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, etc.).	4	4
7	I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities (visual aids, texts, authentic materials, etc.).	3	4
8	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners of differing abilities to participate.	2	4
9	I can evaluate and select activities that help learners to participate in ongoing spoken exchanges (conversations, transactions, etc.) and to initiate or respond to utterances appropriately.	2	4
10	I can help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks, etc.) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification, etc.) when engaging in spoken interaction.	3	4
11	I can evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types (telephone conversations, transactions, speeches, etc.).	1	2

Descriptors with * are for student-teachers and novice teachers. Shaded numbers show improvements of more than two points. The subject evaluated #1 and #2, which were

originally designed for student-teachers and novice teachers, because he wished to evaluate these basic competences.

The evaluation improved on nine out of eleven items. Items 1, 2, 8 and 9 improved by two points or more

(2) Illustrative comments on improved items
Descriptions in ( ) provide additional information on interview responses and focused items.

(3) Comment on items highly evaluated both at the start and end of the project
Concerning a descriptor of J-POSTL, "#6. I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, etc.)," the subject evaluated his competence as 4 both at the start and end of the project. He commented as follows:
"Now, I have noticed that I couldn't understand fully what this descriptor meant when I evaluated this one year ago."

"(Responding on how he considered the meaning of the term 'to develop accuracy' (vocabulary, grammar, etc.)) Actually, I was unable to evaluate speaking ability before. I regarded the ability to read English sentences aloud in grammatical drills to be one of appropriate speaking abilities."

"(Responding as to whether he considered students were able to speak somewhat in English if they solved drills and read them aloud) Yes, I thought if my students were able to solve drills well, they must have some speaking ability. (Responding as to whether he had a clear concept of enhancing speaking ability) Through language activities such as presentations and speaking performance tests guided by the MLM project, I learned that what I had considered so far was not speaking ability at all. When I attended a session of an English education academic conference, I understood that reading aloud was an input activity not an output activity. I had thought that reading aloud was also an output activity. Now, I have learned that speaking ability should be an activity like conveying what a speaker wants to say."

The subject became aware of the need to promote genuine speaking ability through presentations and related activities after professional development sessions.

(4) Comment on items poorly evaluated both at the start and end of the project
Concerning a descriptor of J-POSTL, "#4. I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to use typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others" and "#11. I can evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types (telephone conversations, transactions, speeches, etc.)," He evaluated items 4 and 11 poorly because he was unable to design and conduct learning activities that related well to these descriptors.

(5) Comment on all speaking activities
"I emphasized activities that were expected to enhance students' speaking abilities along

with descriptors of *My Learning Mate*. What changed most for me is the concept of speaking ability in English. I had thought reading English passages of textbooks correctly was a speaking ability. However, that is not communication. I noticed that conveying what speakers want to express to others is a real speaking ability. So, I designed my lessons according to this concept."

The project made the subject more aware of the need to introduce communicative / interactive activities in order to enhance students' speaking abilities. His concept changed into the one which indicates speaking ability should involve interactive activities.

4.1.2 Writing/Written Interaction
(1) All descriptors

Table 2. J-POSTL descriptors in Writing/Written interaction

	Descriptors	Apr.	Mar.
1*	I can help learners to gather and share information for their writing tasks.	3	3
2*	I can evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential.	3	3
3	I can evaluate and select activities that help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, etc.) and to initiate or respond to text appropriately.	2	2
4	I can help learners to plan and structure written texts (e.g., by using mind maps, outlines, etc.).	2	2
5	I can help learners to write a coherent paragraph or essay.	3	3
6	I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc.).	3	3
7	I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit, and improve their own writing.	4	5
8	I can evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing.	2	3
9	I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports, etc.).	2	2
10	I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids, etc.).	2	2
11	I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process.	3	3

Descriptors with * are those for student-teachers and novice teachers.

Just two out of eleven items improved for items seven and eleven.   In this section, the evaluation of most items did not change.

(2) Comment on improved items
"As a student evaluation activity, one of the descriptors asks if they can successfully write English, conveying their information to others. I intended to help students to be able to write in accordance with this suggestion. I think this intention improved my writing teaching. This is the reason why I changed my evaluation."

"(Concerning the few improvements in this category) I had thought that translating a Japanese sentence into an English sentence correctly was an adequate ability in writing. It's not paragraph writing, but just translating sentence by sentence. When I reflected on

my English writing instruction with reference to the writing category of J-POSTL, I noticed that my instruction was not sufficient to enhance students' ability for paragraph writing."

The comment, "As a student evaluation activity, the descriptors ask if they can successfully write English, conveying their information to others," indicates that he introduced an evaluation activity as a post-writing activity. He then considered that he was able to conduct writing lessons successfully, making students aware of "conveying their information to others." At the end of the project, the teacher indicated that he had become more conscious of the need to elicit creative written production and not to rely on Japanese – English translation as a convenient substitute.

4.1.3 Independent Learning
(1) All descriptors

Table 3. J-POSTL descriptors in Independent learning

	Descriptors	Apr.	Mar.
1 *	I can assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to their individual needs and interests.	2	3
2 *	I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes.	1	4
3	I can guide and assist learners in setting their own aims and objectives and in planning their own learning.	1	3
4	I can evaluate and select a variety of activities that help learners to reflect on their existing knowledge and competences.	1	3
5	I can evaluate and select a variety of activities that help learners to identify and reflect on individual learning processes and learning styles.	1	3
6	I can evaluate and select tasks that help learners to reflect on and develop specific learning strategies and study skills.	1	3

The shaded numbers improved by more than two points.

All six items improved, while five out of six items improved by two points or more.

(2) Comment on improved items
"(Concerning improvement of #2. 'I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes.') I thought learner independence was the most important goal for this project. If I could make students understand what each descriptor means, students would understand what they should do for themselves as a learning activity. If I could teach successfully, in that way, I would evaluate myself as the highest."

"I told my students to add their own goals to attain to their portfolios. Over the one-year project, some added them and some did not. I thought setting learning goals for themselves was meaningful for them. For example, 'I would like to get a good evaluation on my reading activity from my friend.' If students could set their learning goals independently, their learning would change into one more suitable for their needs."

"I would like to enhance their self-efficiency. I think the ability to express one's opinions and understand them through listening are real practical English competences. Although I myself was poor at these activities, I think they are being improved these days. When we communicate with others without flinching, we need self-confidence. In the future, I expect my students to grow as English users. In order to become English users, they need attitudes to try to communicate without hesitation. In that case, reflection using their learning portfolios would be useful to enhance their self-efficiency although it takes time."

The comments suggest that learners can add their own learning goals to the MLM portfolio besides the goals they have set already in consideration of their needs. The subject mentioned that he considered adding own goals to be effective as an independent activity. His comments also suggest that he recognized the importance of an affirmative attitude such as self-efficiency in communication as well as verbal language skills.

4.1.4 Portfolios
(1) All descriptors

Table 4. J-POSTL descriptors in Portfolios

	Descriptors	Apr.	Mar.
1	I can set specific aims and objectives of portfolio work.	1	4
2	I can plan and structure portfolio work.	1	4
3	I can supervise and give constructive feedback on portfolio work.	1	4
4	I can assess portfolios in relation to valid and transparent criteria.	1	4
5	I can encourage self- and peer assessment of portfolio work.	1	4

Shaded numbers improved by more than two points.

All five items improved by more than two points.

(2) Comment on improved items
"At the beginning of the project, I selected the lowest evaluation because I have never experienced activities using learning portfolios. I should have used MLM more efficiently in a way that promotes students' learning reflection more. When I analyzed the results of students' questionnaires about the MLM project, I found that students in Ms. K's class evaluated their learning more affirmatively than mine."

"I have been conducting my lessons expecting my students to be English users in the future. As the chances to use English increase further, they may have difficulties if they cannot express what they think and feel. I think enhancing their self-efficiency is necessary to be an English user because they cannot be successful in English communication if they think themselves poor users and avoid situations that need English."

Subject A commented that he never used the learning portfolios in his classes, which was why he selected the lowest evaluation. After the project, he improved his evaluation because he considered his teaching to be somewhat successful, despite some remaining

problems. He also commented that the result of the questionnaire by his colleague's students was more affirmative and more highly evaluated. He pointed this out as a problem to be solved in the future. Another comment, "I have been conducting my lessons expecting my students to be English users in the future," suggested that he recognized the necessity of acquiring practical language skills for the future. This comment indicates an important change in his teaching attitude. He also pointed out that he came to recognize the significance of enhancing self-efficiency to overcome negative attitudes toward English communication.

4.1.3 Comment on the Overall Project

"(After reflecting on the overall project) In short, I was able to design my classes with a consistent concept that was supported by the clear goals of the learning portfolio, MLM. This became a central pillar of my teaching and I conducted my lessons according to its guideline. Consequently, communication with Ms. K (his colleague) has markedly increased."

"(Concerning self-evaluation of own didactic competences) I'm sure that I didn't feel like reflecting on my classes at all before the project. I was at a loss, not knowing what kind of teaching I should conduct. I didn't have anything to reflect on at that time."

These comments suggest that with the support of MLM, he was able to design his classes with clear objectives, spend more time in communication with his colleague, and become more reflective of his professional practices.

4.2 Subject B

The subject's criteria for self-evaluation was how clearly she understood the meaning of each descriptor when she conducted her lessons. She evaluated her didactic competences of speaking and writing in August in addition to April, the start of the project, and March, the end of the project.

4.2.1 Speaking/Spoken Interaction

(1) All descriptors

Table 5. J-POSTL descriptors in Speaking/Spoken interaction

	Descriptors	Apr.	Aug.	Mar.
1*	I can create a supportive atmosphere and provide a specific situation for language use that invites learners to actively partake in speaking activities.	/	/	/
2*	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, cultural backgrounds, identities, etc.	/	/	/
3	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to help learners to develop competencies for presentation, discussion, etc.	3	3.5	4
4	I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to use typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others.	3	3.5	5
5	I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm, and intonation.	4	4.5	4.5

6	I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, etc.).	3	3	4
7	I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities (visual aids, texts, authentic materials, etc.).	2	3	3
8	I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners of differing abilities to participate.	4	4.5	4.5
9	I can evaluate and select activities that help learners to participate in ongoing spoken exchanges (conversations, transactions, etc.) and to initiate or respond to utterances appropriately.	2	4	5
10	I can help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks, etc.) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification, etc.) when engaging in spoken interaction.	3	3	4
11	I can evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types (telephone conversations, transactions, speeches, etc.).	4	2	3

Descriptors with * are for student-teachers. Shaded numbers improved by more than two points. The subject teacher did not evaluate #1 or #2 which are for student-teachers and novice teachers.

All the descriptors evaluated by the subject improved and items 4, 9, and 11 improved by two points.

(2) Comment on improved items
"(Concerning what awareness the subject teacher developed on teaching of speaking) Concerning almost all items, I learned a lot. Before the project, I had instructed my students under a vague concept of English speaking activities. I instructed them to read English books as much as they could or read English sentences aloud. However, I was able to design my teaching aims according to clear goals, for example, advising them to make supportive responses in order to promote communication. I thought my suggestion to students should be more objective because students evaluate their attainment along with the well-defined lesson goals of their learning portfolios."

"April, at the beginning of the project, I evaluated my competence as a point 3, and marked 4 in August. At the end of the project, I changed my evaluation to between 3 and 4. At first, I made a lot of suggestions about how to promote English conversation; however, I couldn't make as many as I had expected, which is the reason why I lowered my evaluation at the end of the project."

"I didn't have a clear concept about my teaching last year. As communication activities, what my students worked on were almost the same. However, I had to make the goals of my teaching more objective in order to make the students' self-evaluation efficient. In other words, students should understand their attainment more objectively."

"What I focused on this year were very simple points, such as pronouncing appropriately or how to use stress, rhythm, and intonation. Reflecting on my instruction, I noticed that I overemphasized these points, which made students' learning narrow."

"Considering various situations in English, I could have introduced activities to help

students to become aware of and use different communication types, for instance a telephone. Now, I'm thinking of how to solve my problems."

The subject B commented, "I was able to design my teaching aims according to clear goals, for example, presenting how to make supportive responses in order to promote communication. My suggestion to students had to be more objective because students evaluate their attainment along with the lesson goals of their learning portfolios." The comments suggest that the subject's teaching concepts became better planed and objective and that she became more aware of the need to clarify her teaching objectives to students to encourage their self-evaluation. The teacher also became conscious of her other deficiencies in the classroom and through a process of reflection became more willing to explore problem-solving strategies.

4.2.2 Writing/Written Interaction
(1) All descriptors

Table 6. J-POSTL descriptors in Writing/Written interaction

	Descriptors	Apr.	Aug.	Mar.
1*	I can help learners to gather and share information for their writing tasks.			
2*	I can evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential.	3	4	4
3	I can evaluate and select activities that help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, etc.) and to initiate or respond to text appropriately.	4	4	4
4	I can help learners to plan and structure written texts (e.g., by using mind maps, outlines, etc.).	1	3	4
5	I can help learners to write a coherent paragraph or essay.	1	2	3.5
6	I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc.).	4	4	4
7	I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit, and improve their own writing.	1	3	3
8	I can evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing.	4	4	4
9	I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports, etc.).	1	2	2
10	I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids, etc.).	2	2	2
11	I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process.	3	3	3

Descriptors with * are for student-teachers and novice teachers.

Five out of 10 items improved. Items 4, 5 and 7 improved by two points.

(2) Comment on improved items
 "(Concerning what awareness the subject teacher developed on teaching of speaking) I haven't taught English paragraph writing. So far, I have conducted my writing teaching on how to write short sentences not paragraphs. Through the project, I understand that my students have improved their writing abilities well enough to write English paragraphs."

"(Concerning "help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit, and improve their own writing") My students used to ask me, 'What does this mean in English?' or 'Please translate this Japanese sentence into English.' Through the project, students expressed in English what they wanted to say using expressions they had learned from their textbook. Successful experiences changed students' attitudes to searching for information in their textbook themselves and completing their paragraphs. They also reviewed what they had finished and referred to their classmates' paragraphs to improve their writing. I think I was able to encourage my students to develop awareness in their writing. Actually, I had rather emphasized mainly speaking activities and had not taught paragraph writing to my classes. But now, I have noticed the necessity of teaching how to organize their ideas as paragraph writings in order to enhance their thinking ability."

The subject mentioned that she designed and conducted lessons to teach paragraph writing because she evaluated her students' writing abilities as being sufficiently high. She also noticed that students' attitudes to writing activities became more autonomous, by which she recognized the significance of teaching paragraph writing in English.

4.2.3 Independent Learning
(1) All descriptors

Table 7. J-POSTL descriptors in Independent learning

	Descriptors	Apr.	Mar.
1 *	I can assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to their individual needs and interests.	3	3
2 *	I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes.	2	4
3	I can guide and assist learners in setting their own aims and objectives and in planning their own learning.	3	4
4	I can evaluate and select a variety of activities that help learners to reflect on their existing knowledge and competences.	2	4
5	I can evaluate and select a variety of activities that help learners to identify and reflect on individual learning processes and learning styles.	2	2
6	I can evaluate and select tasks that help learners to reflect on and develop specific learning strategies and study skills.	2	3

Shaded numbers improved by more than two points.

Four out of six items improved. Items 2 and 4 improved by two points.

(1) Comment on improved items
"So far, I had taught students how to do practice drills for their recovering weak points. However, I noticed that this instruction was not appropriate to enhance learner independence. All I told them was just simple solutions, which means they didn't have the chance to plan their own English learning. For example, I gave my students stickers to mark pages in their textbooks so that they could read outside the class. I expected them to learn for themselves. I didn't help them to organize their learning for themselves or to aim towards their own goals."

"(Concerning the awareness the subject has developed on learner independence)

Students have enhanced their motivation to attain their goals. Consequently, they were able to identify the problems they encountered in attaining their goals. I noticed how they could find their problems to be solved. Before starting each lesson, they confirmed their own learning goals and then worked on various activities. Through this learning process, they were able to find their problems for themselves, which guided them to learn what they should do to successfully attain their goals. As a result, my students taught me the process of being more autonomous. I think MLM promotes both the awareness of students and teachers about autonomous learning."

Subject's comment shows that she developed her awareness with regard to encouraging students' learner autonomy. Her comments further suggest that the subject teacher deepened her own awareness of learner autonomy through observing the changes of her students.

4.2.4 Portfolios
(1) All descriptors

Table 8. J-POSTL descriptors in Portfolios

	Descriptors	Apr.	Mar.
1	I can set specific aims and objectives for portfolio work.	4	5
2	I can plan and structure portfolio work.	4	5
3	I can supervise and give constructive feedback on portfolio work.	3	3
4	I can assess portfolios in relation to valid and transparent criteria.	3	3
5	I can encourage self- and peer assessment of portfolio work.	1	3

Shaded numbers improved by more than two points.

Three items out of five have improved. Item 5 improved by more than two points.

(2) Comment on improved items
"I had not used a learning portfolio at the beginning of the project. So, I learned a lot through the MLM project. I think I successfully used this learning portfolio because I understood well how to use it by confirming my questions before the project started. Item #3 alone, to 'supervise and give constructive feedback on portfolio work,' was not enough because I could have given them more constructive feedback on their portfolio work."

At first, the subject commented that she was able to develop her awareness on portfolio work through the project because she had never previously used a learning portfolio. Another comment, "I think I successfully used this learning portfolio because I understood well how to use it by confirming my questions before the project started," suggests that understanding the use of a learning portfolio is effective.

(3) Comment on the overall project
"I think MLM was a tool through which both students and teachers shared the same goals, which connected us like a bridge. In other words, what teachers expect students to attain corresponds to what students themselves want to attain using this tool. I didn't have to give advice to them, but students successfully found what they needed. Learning

activities to attain each goal of the portfolio guided their daily learning considering what they should do for themselves."

The comments, "suggest that the goals of lessons were shared by both students and teachers. The subject noticed that MLM acted as a bridge between students and the teacher. . By observing the efforts made by students along with the goals set in MLM, the subject realized the process of enhancing learner autonomy.

5. Discussion

The results of this study research, suggest that both subjects developed enhanced awareness of their teaching methods despite different levels of teaching experience and challenges they faced.

A distinctive change for subject A, was that his prior emphasis on grammar instruction turned to a teaching style which prioritizes practical communicative skills with the expectations that learners will need to utilize English in the future.

The results of self-evaluation of J-POSTL suggest that he considered his didactic competences to have progressed through the one-year project. During his eight years of teaching experience, the subject had constructed his own monolithic teaching style. However, he reviewed his teaching methods through the MLM project and became more aware of their limitations. Moreover, his comment on the importance of enhancing students' self-efficiency for communicative English learning suggests that he further developed his views on language learning education, not only on his individual teaching method.

By analyzing the subjects' comments, the English learning portfolio, MLM, was considered to play an important role as a main factor in these developments.

He also suggested to teachers to reflect on their didactic competences and do it after, completing a challenging teaching project. It is natural that teachers are not strongly motivated to reflect if they only expect evaluations to be low.

Subject B suggested that she was able to develop her communicative language teaching (CLT) -oriented teaching. Her admittedly vague aim was to conduct her lessons in a way that allowed her students to use English expressions learned in class in practical settings. She claimed that she was able to make her CLT concept more objective through the project.

She also commented that observing her students' growth in their autonomous learning attitudes led to her reviewing her concept of enhancing learner autonomy. Her comment is noteworthy because it indicates that students' growth in autonomous learning is related to the development of teacher autonomy. She also came to a realization that defining learning goals and the process of attaining them led to improvement in the relationship between students and teachers.

The comments of both teachers indicated that the English learning portfolio, MLM, promoted development of their awareness of teaching methods. In particular, sharing the learning goals of MLM encouraged teachers' efforts to conduct lessons in line with those learning goals, which was considered to form a desirable relationship between teachers and students.

When the subjects reflected on the project, they evaluated it highly because it effectively promoted their development as teachers. In order to make the project successful, the teachers themselves cooperated with each other, using creative attitudes to design their teaching. Such cooperation is considered effective in challenging projects because teachers can help each other when they try to overhaul their teaching method, which can sometimes make them uncertain about their teaching principles and practices.

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

MLM was effective in promoting teachers' autonomous reflection and developed their awareness regarding their didactic competences. In particular, MLM played an important role in enhancing teachers' reflection. The following is an image that describes the concept of this research.
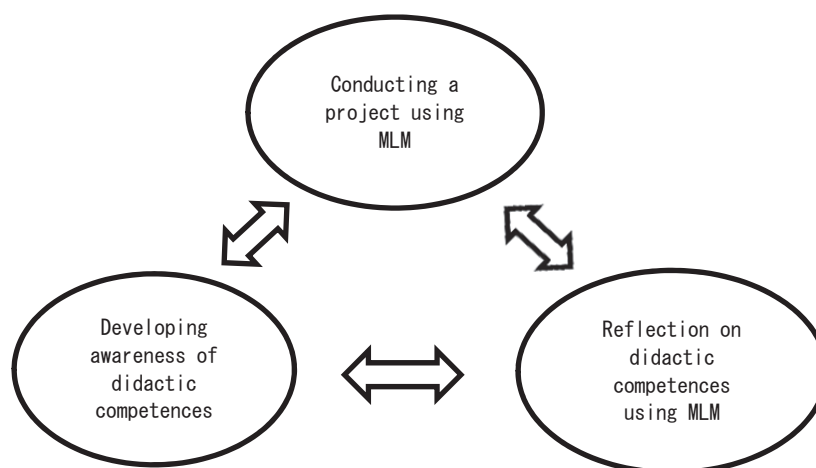
Figure 2: Cycle of encouraging teachers' autonomous reflection

This project has a number of important limitations which need to be addressed in further studies to render this method of teacher self-reflection viable and practical. The project was developed jointly by the author and subject teachers. Preparation of the project required frequent meetings to edit the portfolio and design lesson plans along with learning goals. If this type of portfolio is to be used as a large-scale systematic self-assessment instrument, teachers need to be able to develop it without any outside support. In order to encourage such projects, a guideline that includes know-how about the development of an English learning portfolio and guidance regarding how to conduct lessons along with the portfolio should be developed. This would enable any school to work on projects according to their individual educational environment. Another limitation of the project is that only two subjects were involved. In order to be able to generalize about the suitability and applicability of this approach it will be

advisable to conduct further studies with a larger number of subjects in diverse educational settings nationwide.

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【Research Note】

Review of the Theoretical Background of Reflection as a Philosophical Concept: Toward Developing a More Meaningful Paradigm in Japanese Foreign Language Education

Hori, Shinya

Abstract

In recent years, one of the objectives of foreign language education in Japan has been to nurture autonomous learners, and to this end, many classroom / pedagogical activities that encourage reflection through the use of portfolios have been conceived and implemented. The concept of reflection itself is one of the fundamental principles of modern Western thought, and is not a well-established concept in Japanese educational context. Its origin dates back to the era of Descartes and John Locke, before being introduced into pedagogy by John Dewey and Donald Schön in the 20th century. Reflective practice began to have an impact on the research of autonomy in language education in the 1960s in Europe. The purpose of this paper is to suggest avenues for contextualization of this concept in Japanese foreign language education through an overview of the theoretical background.

Keywords
reflection, autonomy

1. Introduction

EPOSTL and J-POSTL have been developed as self-assessment tools to encourage teachers or student teachers to monitor the development of their skills, knowledge and aptitudes on the trajectory of their evolution as language educators. Encouragement of reflection by utilizing such tools as diaries or worksheets as well as portfolios, although not limited to language education, is currently an integral component of teacher training worldwide. The general purpose of such practice is the training for teacher autonomy that involves ideas of professional freedom and self-directed professional development (MacGrath, 2000). In fact, in the study of autonomy, reflection is positioned as one of the key psychological elements. For example, Benson (2001: 50) argues that in the autonomous learning, learner control may be exercised at three levels as follows: learning management, learning content and cognitive process. And among them, reflection involves control over cognitive process as a key element as well as directing attention and building metacognitive knowledge (Benson, 2001:86). In terms of the relationship between reflection and autonomy, Little (1997: 94) says as follows:

> *If we make the development of autonomy a central concern of formal learning, conscious reflection will necessarily play a central role from the beginning, for the simple reason that all formal learning is the result of deliberate intention* (Little, 1997: 94).

However, in the current societal climate, the concept of reflection has not been truly integrated into Japanese educational culture. In fact, our research group[1] conducted a questionnaire with about 17,000 university students on their second foreign language learning (Spanish, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Korean) in 2012 in which the term *autonomy* was defined as composed of the following five elements: "Possession of Learning Goals", "Awareness of What I'm Learning", "Comprehension of Learning Strategies", "Self-management", and "Self-evaluation". Analysis of responses revealed that self-evaluation, which we considered most relevant to reflection, was ranked lowest (Yamguchi & Hori, 2015). The authors concluded that the influence of the Japanese educational environment is responsible for these results. Firstly, the role of rote memorization or test scores is pivotal in Japanese education, including foreign language instruction. It is entirely possible to achieve good test scores through rote learning without actually acquiring language skills (Beacco, 2015). As entrance examinations and other high-stake mechanisms unduly influence the curricular thrust of Japanese education, often such tests scores are valued more highly than what is learned or how it is learned, and therefore Japanese students have almost no opportunities to develop the habit of reflection in their learning.

The concept of reflection, still unfamiliar to most rank and file educators in Japan, dates back to the era of early modern Western philosophy, beginning with Descartes in the 17th century. The purpose of this paper is to elucidate this concept in Japanese foreign language education through an overview of its theoretical background and focusing on key junctures relevant to the application of this concept in teaching practice; namely Descartes, the empiricism of John Locke, the pragmatism of John Dewey and Donald Schön in the 20th century, and critical reflection that has been deployed by the Frankfurt School.

2. Theoretical Transition of Reflection in Philosophy

2.1 Reflection in Modern Western Philosophy: Descartes and John Locke

For the purpose of the pursuit of truth, Cartesian philosophy regards methodological

scepticism (Cartesian doubt) as a starting point, that is, regarding what is questionable, even if only slightly, as false as well mistrusting even what is received through the senses (Kumano, 2006). Senses as referred to here may be substituted with experience. However, evidence for claiming something as false must be true and also certain. What is certain is a thinker as known in the famous phrase "je pense, donc je suis (I think, therefore I am)" (Descartes). In the "Meditationes de prima philosophia" Descartes regarded "self" as "res cogitans" or "mind", that is neither captured by the senses nor reached through the reasoning but rather the intuition of the thinking entity. And object is also what is captured by the mind rather than senses, then what the mind provides is insight into what truly exists (Kumano, 2006). By logical extrapolation, Fendler (2003: 17) points out that when teachers are asked to reflect on their practice, the Cartesian assumption is that self-awareness will provide knowledge and understanding about teaching.

John Locke also considered, like Descartes, the individual as "res cogitans". However, while the Descartes found it an innate dimension, Locke emphasized in the "An Essay concerning Human Understanding" that "it is in the experience that there is a foundation of all our knowledge, and ultimately knowledge is derived from experience" (Kumano, 2006). In his meaning, first, stimulation provided by the sensory organs equips the mind with the idea of the nature of an object, which corresponds to experience. Then reflection about the idea arises, and finally, reflection itself is also captured reflectively and through this process knowledge is generated (Philosophy Guides, 2016). Denton (2011) associates this meaning with metacognition and makes it one of the characteristics of reflection.

2.2 Reflection in Pragmatism: John Dewey and Donald Schön

Dewey (1933: 118) defines his concept "reflective thought" as an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusion to which it tends…it includes a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality (Fenner, 2012). According to Fujii (2008:1), Dewey rejected Cartesian idea of the human view, that is, owner of the "reason", and also rejected Locke's empiricism, that is, passive reception of sense-datum. In addition, for Dewey, the knowledge is of value not for the correspondence to "entity" with which traditional philosophy had been concerned, but for problem-solving through clarifying the situation and devising appropriate and effective schooling ideas, which are exploited in real intellectual activities and produce a specific actual effect (Fujii, 2008: 8). Reflection, therefore, is also defined as a means to achieve this. In reviewing Dewey's philosophical position, we have to be conscious of the socio-political context of the time. 1930s witnessed

global economic depression, political extremism and resultant social issues. Dewey's educational philosophy was based on the belief that any individual has moral responsibility to contribute to the problem-solving process of social issues and the betterment of democratic society, in which education should be not only learning subjects, but also preparation for social and political participation. Benson (2001: 25) pointed out that in this respect, Dewey's view of education is a precursor of the view that informed the early Council of Europe work on autonomy in language learning.

Donald Schön, whose work is largely based on Dewey's philosophy, proposed a yet more practical model of reflection. In "The Reflective Practitioner", he criticized the technical rationality model in which experts apply uncritically the existing scientific knowledge and technology, and proposed a reflective practice model (Mishina, 2015). In this model, there are two key concepts: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The former means that individuals regularly deal with ambiguity, then, in order to transform the situation, they engage in negotiation with the constraints they face (Akita, 2000). This is a process of developing a new understanding to inform actions in the situation with which one is faced (Fenner, 2012). The latter is a process carried out after the event in which they become involved or which they encounter by accident. Through written or oral communication, the practitioners explore what happened, why they acted as they did and what they might do as a consequence of their analysis and evaluation. Through this exploration they develop questions and ideas about practice and thus build up a collection of images, ideas and actions that they can draw upon (Fenner, 2012: 34).

2.3 Critical Reflection by the Frankfurt School

Critical Reflection is based on the critical social theory developed by the Frankfurt School which adopts a critical stance to the actual situation. It means that the actual situation cannot in itself be the only reality, but must be seen as repressive and consequently, by critical attitude, liberation from the present situation becomes possible － in other words critical reflection opens up opportunities for change (Fenner, 2012: 35). Fenner (2012) refers to the following definition of reflection by Stephen Kemmis (1985) on the basis of the Frankfurt School of philosophy:

- Reflection is not a purely "internal" psychological process: it is action oriented, historically embedded.
- Reflection is not a purely individual process: like language, it is a social process.
- Reflection is shaped by ideology; in turn, it shapes ideology
- Reflection is a practice which expresses our power to reconstitute social life by the way we participate in communication, decision-making and social action.

In this way, differing from the reflection that we have seen so far, such as insight for the self or mind, as a means for immediate problem-solving or effective practice, critical reflection keeps the framework of society in mind from the beginning. Another valuable feature of critical reflection is that it produces critical ideas through dialogue and group interaction.

3. Toward Contextualization in Japanese Foreign Language Education

As mentioned at the beginning, the importance of reflection has been well recognized in Japanese education and efforts to encourage reflection have been made in pre-service education programs. However, at present, the fact remains that there are many activities based on misinterpretation or superficial understanding of the concept of reflection, and consequently, diaries, portfolios or other potentially useful instruments of reflection become reduced to reaction papers or can-do lists which carry much less educational value. Therefore, successful integration and contextualization of this complex concept are likely to require more time. As mentioned above, the concept of reflection is not an indigenous philosophical notion in Japanese society. Furthermore, even in Western contexts, where the notion of reflection evolved, there remains a degree of criticism about the practice of reflection. A major focus of the criticism is the degree to which reflective practices serve to reinforce existing beliefs rather than challenge assumptions. Some reflective practices may simply be exercise in reconfirming, justifying, or rationalizing preconceived ideas (Fendler, 2003: 16).

As well as autonomy, it is not easy to apply reflection in language education because it is a philosophical concept with a range of definitions. However, by reviewing the evolution of the theory, some of the key concepts that characterize reflection have become more crystalized, such as thorough objectification of self, metacognition, problem-solving, interface with our immediate reality, group interaction. Although some of these concepts are mutually incompatible, creating educational environments bearing these concepts in mind, beyond just simply using reflective practice as a tool, may help to develop a more meaningful paradigm in foreign language teacher education.

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【Research Note】
Insights Gained from Self-evaluation on Skills and Knowledge for Pre-service Teacher Education

Yoneda, Sakiko

Abstract

The importance of enhancing teaching and English skills in pre-service education of elementary school English teachers has been acknowledged by a number of researchers (Sakai et al., 2014; J-SHINE, 2014). The current research was conducted to identify the skills and knowledge of English and English teaching which should be prioritized in pre-service education, and evaluate the effects of teaching practicum on teaching skills and knowledge. Twelve fourth-year Japanese university students in pre-service teacher education program participated in this study. Participants took courses focusing on teaching English to Japanese children, at the end of September 2014-July 2015, when they were in their third and fourth year. In the context of their teaching practicum, they team-taught elementary school students with an American assistant language teacher (ALT) in June 2015. The participants recorded their self-reflection four times over the course of the research period. The average score of self-evaluation started from 1.0 and reached around 3.0 on the five-point Likert scale. The results suggested that the length of the classroom instruction and the length/number of university courses and the teaching practicum were insufficient to build the student teachers' confidence as foreign language educators at elementary school level. Inadequate training in lesson planning, foreign language teaching methodology, team-teaching strategies were identified as key weaknesses. Self-reflections also highlighted poor English pronunciation as a liability in the classroom. Comparison of the average scores at the end of the research period with those obtained between 2013 and 2014 (Yoneda, 2015) indicated that feelings of achievement conducting successful classes in terms of actual English communication/ teaching with American students assuming the role of ALTs, and 4 month teaching preparation with the American students for the practicum were the elements to make student-teachers confident and raise awareness of necessary communicative teaching skills and knowledge.

Key Words
Pre-Service Teacher Education, J-POSTL for Pre-service, Team-Teaching, English Language Proficiency, System of Teacher Training

1. Introduction: Research Background and Previous Research

In 2013 the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan announced the plan to introduce formal English instruction in grades five and six and Foreign Language Activities (FLA) in grades three and four of all elementary schools. In preparation for full implementation, there have been an increasing number of pilot studies (MEXT, 2015). The government proposed that the teaching be done collaboratively—with the classes team-taught jointly by a homeroom teacher and an ALT. According to the results of a study conducted with pre-service teacher candidates with English proficiency of A2 level on a CEFR scale, lack of even classroom English, mostly grammatically simple and short phrases, was a hindrance for communication with the ALT and class management (Yoneda & Shreves, 2016). The results suggested that student teachers had a very limited communicative competence in English. The causes of these problems were assumed to be the teaching curriculum and class schedules: pre-service teachers did not have enough class hours to enhance their English or there were no classes offered to gain the necessary didactic foreign language skills (Yoneda & Shreves, 2016). Besides, the four-week teaching practicum was scheduled before studying how to teach English to children. These curricular and administrative limitations underscore the need for more attention to be paid to English as a subject of instruction by the managers of teachers' programs at Japanese universities.

Hatta (2002) claims that self-reflection is effective to enhance English proficiency as well as teaching skills. The Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (Pre-service) (J-POSTL) (JACET SIG on English Language Education, 2014), which includes detailed descriptors of skills and knowledge required for English teachers, appears as a useful tool to make students in pre-service education aware of what they need as they embark on their careers, let them engage in self-reflection and eventually enhance their teaching skills in English. On the other hand, as Takagi (2015) and Kiyota (2015) point out, while self-reflection is important for student-teacher training, for students lacking practice or experience of teaching, J-POSTL may not work effectively enough for them to gain the necessary knowledge and/or skills. Ross (2006) also claims that self-evaluation has strengths as well as weaknesses and should be used judiciously. He also emphasizes the importance of teacher involvement to enhance participants' self-evaluation ability. These findings indicate that systematized education combining theory, practice, reflection, and teacher's advice should be implemented in pre-service foreign language education.

In a study on the effectiveness of teaching practicum for Japanese university student teachers, Yoneda (2015) suggests that team-teaching with American university

students was effective in making them aware of a lack of the required knowledge and skills as well as in helping student teachers become confident in the classroom by overcoming communicative and team-teaching problems. The results of this study, however, could not be generalized due to a very small sample size and a unique design. Therefore, the present study was conducted to gain more data.

2. Research Questions (RQ)

This paper posits three research questions (RQ): What specific effects does practicum at elementary school have on student teachers? (RQ1); what skills do student teachers find challenging? (RQ2); and what insights can be obtained by comparing the practicums of 2014 and 2015? (RQ3).

3. Description of the Teaching Practicum and University Courses

3.1 Objectives of the Teaching Practicum and Background Information
The objectives of this teaching practicum were to provide authentic teaching experience to student teachers and to raise their awareness of the challenges of teaching English to children. Once in service, they need to be able to communicate their intentions efficiently to ALTs during the preparation process and possess sufficient English competence to resolve any misunderstanding or contribute to class management. By making student teachers aware of the challenges they will face, the practicum served as a catalyst to motivate them in investing greater time and energy in the acquisition of the relevant skills.

The practicum was a component of a "Methods of Teaching English to Children" course offered in the fourth year. "Introduction to Teaching English to Children" was offered in the third year. These two subjects were designated as "classes related to pedagogy or contents" of teacher certification for elementary schools in Japan, and students had been encouraged to take these classes since FLA became compulsory in the new curriculum in 2011. These classes were elective though most teacher candidates took them.

At the elementary school where the practicum was held, English was a formal subject with syllabus centered on all four skills. Instructors were not homeroom teachers, but Japanese teachers of English and an ALT. These features were different from most public schools which conducted FLA, but experiencing teaching four skills was expected to be useful for the student teachers as English would become a formal subject from 2020. The textbooks used were *Magic Time 1* (Kampa & Vilina 2011), *English Time 1* (Rivers & Toyama, 2011a) and *English Time 2* (Rivers & Toyama, 2011b). The workbooks of the same series were also used in class. One level of the

textbook was expected to be finished in two years. Enhancing the four skills, this series was designed to introduce language in a context so that children could learn how to use phrases in actual situations. Each unit consisted of a conversation in a situation, vocabulary, target sentences, and phonics (only for *English Time*). The student teachers were assigned two to three sections to teach: "Word Time" (vocabulary) and "Use the Words" (vocabulary in sentences) for first and second grades; "Conversation Time" and "Word Time" for third to sixth grades, and "Phonics Time" to fifth and sixth grades.

3.2 Participants

Participants were 12 fourth-year teacher candidates at a private university in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture. They were completing two courses of subjects related to teaching English to Japanese children as homeroom teachers. Most of them had finished a four-week regular practicum, "Elementary School Teaching Practicum" in the third year. Some of them had a chance to observe or participate in English classes including FLA during their practicum. These participants observed classes taught by their seniors and American university students in 2014, so they knew what their practicum would be like. As for their English levels, all the participants were at Pre-2 Grade of EIKEN, approximately CEFR A2 (EIKEN Foundation of Japan, 2016). Two participants claimed that they liked or were interested in English, but the rest of the participants took the courses because they were strongly encouraged to do so by the University.

3.3 Team-teaching Procedure: Making Plans, Participation, Observation, and Group/Individual Reflection

Participants were divided into five groups of two or three and each group was assigned to teach one grade except for the group that taught first and second grades. Each group had two or three opportunities to teach during the practicum. In planning, the student teachers first looked at the pre-existent plans from 2014 and used it a template. After receiving the assignments, each pair/group made an initial plan, shared it with the ALT, received feedback, edited their plan and sent it back to the ALT. Most groups had these exchanges a few times until a face-to-face meeting with the ALT just before the class. All the participants who did not assume the role of the homeroom teachers either observed their peers' classes or participated in activities. After all the classes were completed, group reflections/discussions were held.

4. Outline of the Research

4.1 Method
4.1.1 Time. The participants self-assessed in October 2014, January 2015, the beginning of June 2015 (pre-practicum), and end of June 2015 (post-practicum).

4.1.2 Material. The materials were an internally generated free-standing descriptive survey and the J-POSTL (Pre-service). Out of a total of 96 descriptors, 77 were used for this research: the ones that related to the practicum as well as to background knowledge of TESOL (cf. Appendix).

4.1.3 Procedure. The J-POSTL (Pre-service) was distributed to the participants in class in October 2014. First they were given an explanation about the aims, contents, and the use of this instrument, which consisted of three parts. The participants assessed themselves using a five-point Likert scale according to the J-POSTL instructions in October immediately following their four-week practicum at public schools for the first time; second self-assessment took place following the completion of the course "Introduction to Teaching English to Children"; third and fourth self-evaluations were done before and after the next practicum, at the beginning and end of June, respectively. Participants turned in their J-POSTL materials to their course instructor at assigned periods. While participants were encouraged to discuss their teaching experiences with each other, it rarely happened during the research period.

4.2 Data Analysis

The data were coded into a five-point scale based on 1-5 range of the J-POSTL, using the following criteria: If the participants' self-assessment responses fell within the bounds of one point, the same score was kept for the assigned recording times. "0.5" was allocated to scores where the participant made an assessment straddling the boundaries between two points. For example, an entry straddling "2" and "3" was coded as "2.5". Based on these criteria, the results were calculated and analyzed. To grasp the change of self-evaluation of the participants, the average scores, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores of each category were calculated four times throughout the research period. Also, the average scores of each category before and after the practicum for 2015 were compared with those of 2014 to find which categories showed significant differences in the participants' self-evaluation. Then, the data were analyzed statistically.

5. Results

5.1 Changes of Self-evaluation over the Research Period

Table 1 shows participants' scores of self-evaluations at four points over the course of the research period: standard deviation (SD), minimum (MIN) and maximum (MAX) of each category (cf. SD of each descriptor in appendix.). The score of 1.0 for all the categories on first self-assessment indicates that the participants felt they gained no valuable skills or knowledge relevant to English teaching at elementary school at this practicum in September 2014. All the categories showed increases in self-evaluation,

and the subcategories reaching beyond 3.0 on average were "A. Curriculum", "B. Aims and Needs" (Category I), Category III Resources, and "D. Classroom Management" in (Category V). The number of participants who scored 4.0 or 5.0 was 6-10 before the practicum, but the number drastically dropped after the practicum. As for lowest scores, only Category III increased, but the rest showed no change.

Table 1. Changes of self-evaluation of categories I-V: SD, MIN, MAX (*n*=12)

Category	Oct. 2014			Jan. 2015			Jun. 2015 (Pre-Pract.)			Jun. 2015 (Post-Pract.)		
	SD	MIN	MAX	SD	MIN	MAX	SD	MIN	MAX	SD	MIN	MAX
I Context	0.70	1.0	4.0	0.88	1.0	5.0	0.95	1.0	5.0	0.98	1.0	5.0
II Methodology	0.50	1.0	3.0	0.86	1.0	4.0	0.80	1.0	4.0	0.92	1.0	4.0
III Resources	0.48	1.0	3.0	0.88	1.0	4.0	0.86	1.0	4.0	0.70	2.0	4.0
IV Lesson Planning	0.47	1.0	3.0	0.93	1.0	4.0	1.06	1.0	5.0	0.97	1.0	5.0
V Conducting a Lesson	0.53	1.0	3.0	0.88	1.0	4.5	1.07	1.0	5.0	0.90	1.0	5.0

The Friedman Test was conducted to examine the difference in the change of self-assessment throughout the research period, 2014-2015: the dependent variables were categories/descriptors of Categories I-V. The results (Table 2) revealed a significant increase of self-evaluation ($p < .001$).

Table 2. Results of the statistical analysis using the Friedman Test (*n*=12)

Category		χ^2 ($df = 3$)	post hoc test ($\alpha = 0.05$)	Category		χ^2 ($df = 3$)	post hoc test ($\alpha = 0.05$)
I	A	24.6***	1<3, 1<4, 2<3	II	G	25.7***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4
	B	27.3***	1<2, 1<3, 1<4, 2<4, 3<4	III	N/A	31.3***	1<3, 1<4, 2<3, 2<4
	C	29.7***	1<2, 1<3, 1<4, 2<4, 3<4	IV	A	25.2***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4
	D	23.2***	1<2, 1<3, 1<4, 2<4		B	28.8***	1<2, 1<3, 1<4, 2<4
II	A	27.8***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4		C	26.8***	1<2, 1<3, 1<4, 2<3, 2<4
	B	20.5***	1<3, 1<4	V	A	26.2***	1<3, 1<4, 2<3, 2<4
	C	30.6***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4, 3<4		B	23.8***	1<3, 1<4
	D	32.3***	1<3, 1<4, 2<3, 2<4, 3<4		C	29.5***	1<3, 1<4, 2<3, 2<4
	E	22.4***	1<3, 1<4		D	25.8***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4
	F	26.4***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4, 3<4		E	23.2***	1<3, 1<4, 2<4

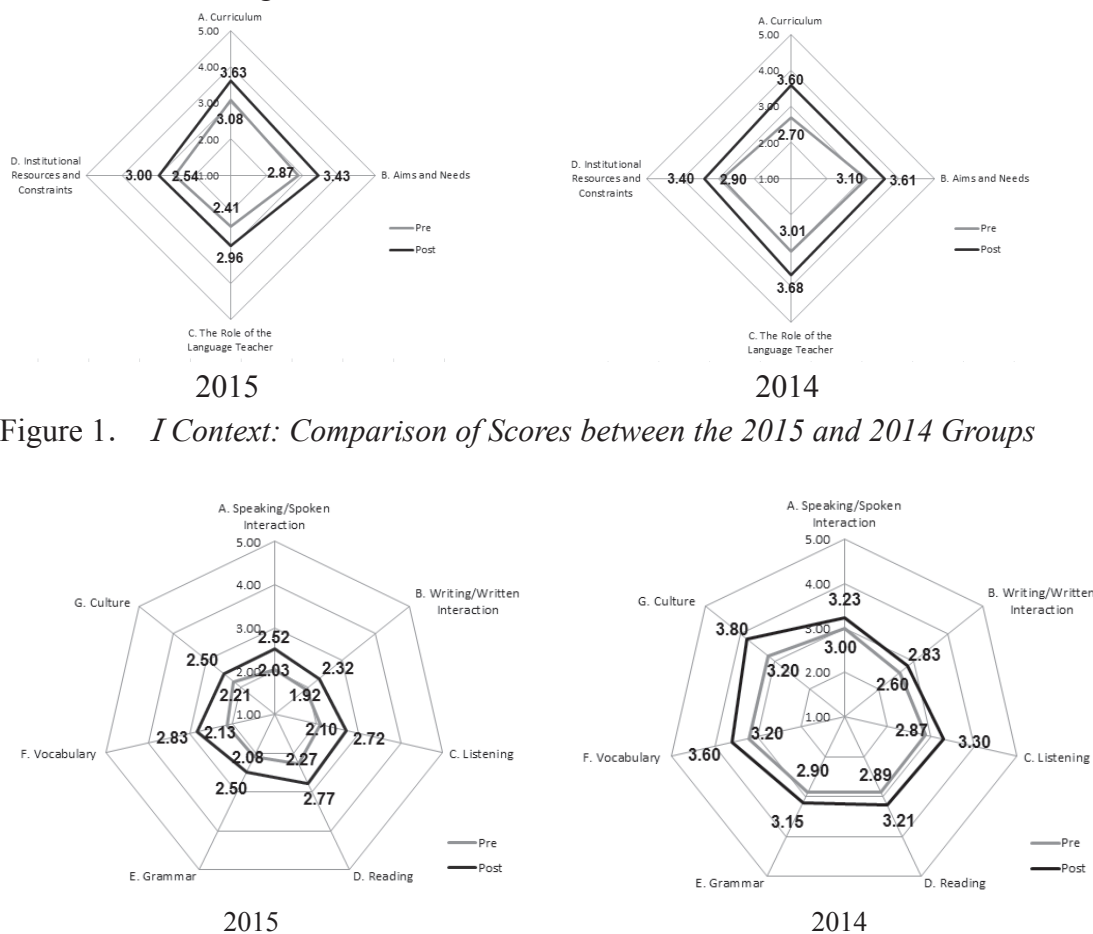Note. 1: Oct, 2014; 2: Jan, 2015; 3: June, 2015_Pre-Practicum; 4: June, 2015_Post-Practicum
*** $p < .001$

5.2 Comparison of the Self-evaluation Scores in Two Practicums

For the sake of Research Questions (RQ1-3), "what specific effects does practicum at elementary school have on student teachers?" (RQ1); "what skills do student teachers find challenging?" (RQ2); and "what insights can be obtained by comparing the

practicums of 2014 and 2015?" (RQ3), the results of students who participated in the practicum in 2014 and those in 2015 were compared in this study. Common factors between the two practicums included: the university where the students took courses and the elementary school where they team taught; the purposes and contents of the courses at both schools; and teaching contact hours at the university. Different factors were the length of preparation period and the number of rehearsals of conducting classes, i.e. students rehearsed their classes in groups/pairs to check if their plans could be carried out as the students expected, and the ALT(s)'s professional experience and knowledge of Japanese: The ALT for 2015 was an experienced teacher who had a three-year experience as a JET (CLAIR, 2014) and was also teaching at the elementary school. It was expected that the analysis of participants' self-evaluations and their comparison would offer valuable insights for the future pre-service education. The average scores of pre- and post-practicums of both years were calculated and compared (Figures 1-5). These figures show the balance of the skills and changes of self-evaluation for each category: Gray is used for pre-practicum and black is for post-practicum. All the figures showed that scores were generally higher in post-practicum in all the categories. The participants in 2015 generally scored lower than 2014 in all categories.

2015   2014

Figure 1.   *I Context: Comparison of Scores between the 2015 and 2014 Groups*

2015   2014

Figure 2. *II Methodology: Comparison of Scores between the 2015 and 2014 Groups*

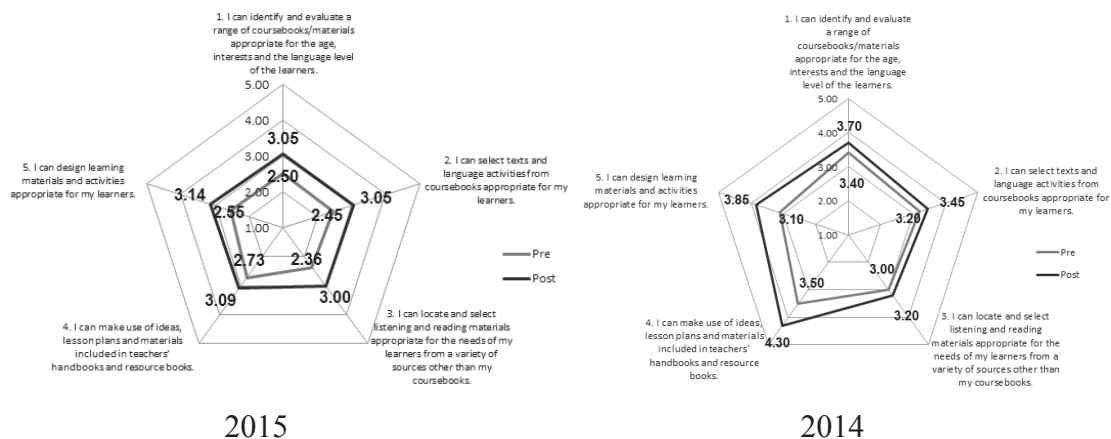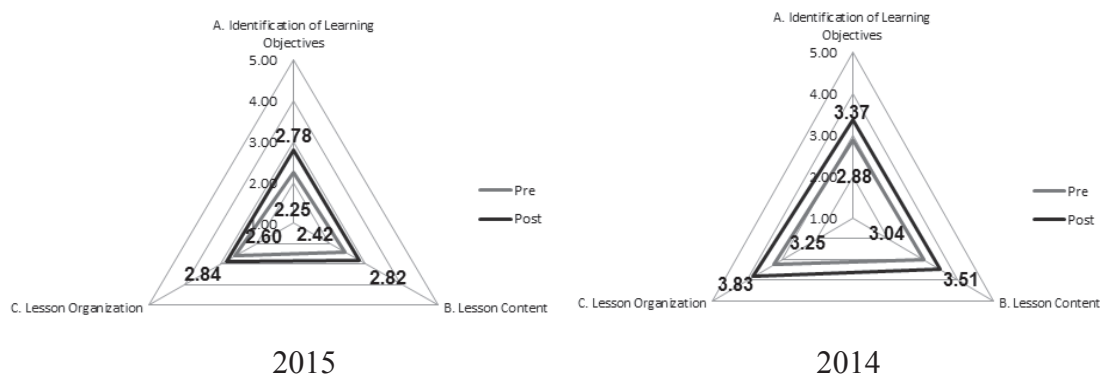Figure 3. *III Resources: Comparison of Scores between the 2015 and 2014 Groups*

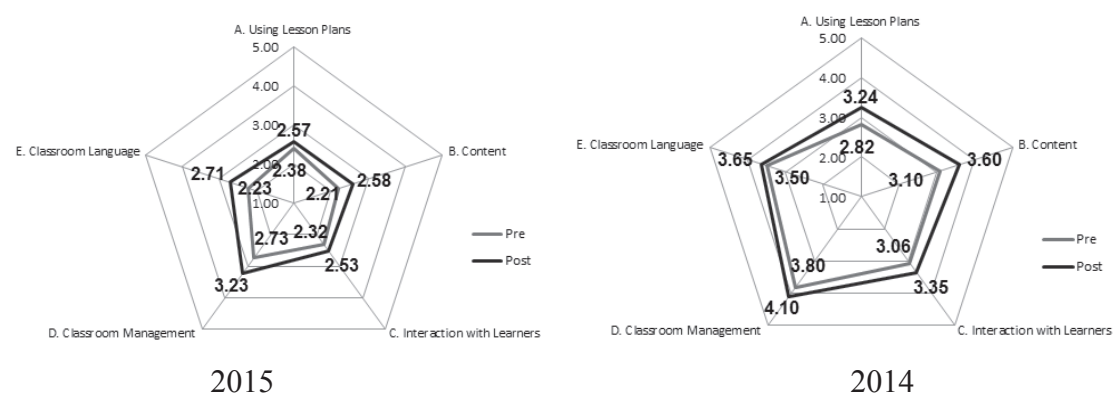Figure 4. *IV Lesson Planning: Comparison of Scores between the 2015 and 2014 Groups*

Figure 5. *V Conducting a Lesson: Comparison of Scores between the 2015 and 2014 Groups*

The Mann–Whitney U test was performed to examine the difference in the change of pre-and post-self-assessment scores for both groups, 2014 and 2015. The results were

not statistically significant (*p*s>.16), and yet the test results showed that the self-assessment scores of post-practicum were significantly higher than their pre-practicum scores.

Another Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine the difference of the self-assessment scores of both groups (Table 3). The results indicated that categories I-C (the Role of the Language Teacher), II-A (Speaking/Spoken Interaction), II-E (Grammar), II-F (Vocabulary), II-G (Culture), III (Resources), IV-B (Lesson Content), V-B (Content), V-D (Classroom Management), and V-E (Classroom Language) were statistically significant.

Table 3. Difference of overall self-assessment scores of the 2015 and 2014 groups (2015: *n*=12, 2014: *n*=10)

Category		*U*	Category		*U*	Category		*U*
I	A	52.5	II	D	32.5	IV	C	30.0
	B	58.0		E	26.0*	V	A	34.5
	C	23.0*		F	17.0**		B	20.0**
	D	52.5		G	15.5**		C	30.0
II	A	22.5*	III	N/A	21.5**		D	25.5*
	B	36.0	IV	A	37.0		E	9.0***
	C	30.0		B	28.5*			

Note. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

5.3 Survey Results

After the practicum in June 2015, a survey was conducted using an internally generated questionnaire. It used a four-point scale from "agree" to "disagree". Participants were asked to give reasons for their answers. Eleven responses were analyzed. Due to space limitations, only the most representative comments are shown below.

Table 4. Results of questionnaire on the teaching practicum (*n*=11)

	agree	somewhat agree	somewhat disagree	disagree
Q 1: Was teaching with an ALT useful for you?	7	4	0	0
Q2: Do you feel you have improved your teaching skills?	1	10	0	0
Q3: Do you think this practicum made you confident in teaching English to children?	0	6	5	0
Q4: Do you think this practicum improved your English?	0	8	3	0
Q5: Do you think this practicum will be useful when you become an elementary school teacher?	7	3	1	0

The following were the representative comments for each question (Q).

Q1: I agree because it was a new experience for me and I became aware of my strengths and weaknesses;

I somewhat agree because I learned how difficult it was to communicate with the ALT in English and I did not know how to resolve my communication problems.

Q2: I agree because I was able to teach and get feedback from teachers;

I somewhat agree because I learned that children could use classroom English much more than I had expected.

I underestimated the required skills and knowledge of English teaching at elementary school.

Q3: I somewhat agree because I was able to communicate with an ALT and saw children positively get engaged in my class, which made me confident;

I somewhat disagree because I learned how poor I was at teaching English.

Q4: I somewhat agree. While I am not sure about my English proficiency, I have developed a positive attitude toward communication;

I somewhat disagree because I don't think my English has improved, but I pay more attention to pronunciation now.

Q5: I agree because I learned a great deal like making lesson plans, creating teaching materials, having effective meetings with the ALT, and communicating with the ALT in English.

I somewhat agree. I don't know if I will be a teacher, but what I learned will be useful in case I do become one;

I somewhat disagree because I don't know what the situation of elementary school English is in my hometown, and as far as I know from experience, homeroom teachers were just observing classes conducted by English teachers.

In addition to the questions above, Question 6 "What was the most challenging aspect in this practicum?" was asked. Answers were obtained as follows: Communicating with the ALT was the most difficult (5 responses); being a model and having to pronounce or write words in front of children (3 responses). The results showed that the participants found the practicum useful and also realized how difficult it was to teach English to elementary school children.

6. Discussion

The results from the self-evaluation in October 2014 showed that participants did not feel they had knowledge and/or skills necessary for teaching English to elementary school children even after a four-week elementary school practicum. This underscores the problem of the current pre-service system in Japan: While English is now a compulsory subject for upper grades at all public elementary schools across Japan,

pre-service programs still lack sufficiently rigorous theoretical and practical requirements related to English teaching. The results show that participants felt they gradually gained some knowledge and skills as they advanced through the program, but one year with two classes was insufficient to build their confidence level.

The results of the practicum in Section 5 above suggest that the practicum was a valuable opportunity to make the participants aware of the gap between the required level and their level in terms of teaching English and English proficiency. The comparison of the scores of the 2015 group with those of the 2014 group underscores the necessity to scrutinize the reasons why scores were significantly different ($p < .05$ - $p < .001$) in the following categories: I-C (the Role of the Language Teacher), II-A (Speaking/Spoken Interaction), II-E (Grammar), II-F (Vocabulary), II-G (Culture), III (Resources), IV-B (Lesson Content), V-B (Content), V-D (Classroom Management), and V-E (Classroom Language). Two factors may be responsible: the length of preparation time and team work with American students. Participants in 2015 were able to rely on the ALT, so they did not need to work as hard. Yet, at the same time, they did not struggle enough to feel a sense of accomplishment. Categories II, IV, and V are areas to be more emphasized in pre-service education. These areas and English proficiency were the common problems seen in two consecutive years of this research.

7. Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate three research questions. The results indicated that the practicum was a valuable experience for the students in pre-service education to become aware of the necessary levels of English proficiency and teaching skills, but without sufficient preparation time, the practicum may not work efficiently. Courses related to language teaching methodology and opportunities to enhance English proficiency as well as cross-cultural communicative competence for future teachers should be urgently expanded and made an integral part of the pre-service curriculum. Instruction in pre-service programs should place emphasis on three areas: language teaching methodology, lesson planning and lesson delivery. Results also suggest that a longer and more thorough preparation period leading to a longer practicum would be warranted. Also, the curriculum should be tailored to make the students feel more confident in the classroom by creating a bridge between university courses and the skills/knowledge required in practicum. This requires more course hours beyond what the current curriculum offers. This study also helped demonstrate the usefulness of J-POSTL as a practical instrument of student self-assessment at various points of their formal training. As such, it should play a more pivotal role among resources candidate teachers can rely on for the improvement of their teaching skills.

8. Limitations

This research revealed that actual team-teaching experience with ALTs over more extensive periods made the participants more confident in all the five categories in the J-POSTL. Although the results provided teacher candidates with insights in terms of making pre-service education at university more effective, this study has several limitations which need to be addressed in future research: The sample size (number of participants) was small and all participants were from one university. External conditions such as ALTs' professional experience and knowledge of Japanese were different between the two groups. To obtain more reliable data, future research should be pursued to find how and in which category student teachers' confidence level would improve. In terms of teacher candidates' EFL proficiency, change over the course of the program could be evaluated by using standardized tests to ensure reliability.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix

Appended Table 1. Self-Assessment Descriptors and the Standard Deviations

Category	Self-Assessment Descriptors[*]	Standard Deviation			
		Oct.	Jan.	Jun.Pre	Jun.Post
I Context					
A. Curriculum	1. I can understand the requirements set in the Course of Study.	0.79	0.87	1.10	0.98
B. Aims and Needs	1. I can understand the value of learning a foreign language.	0.89	0.86	1.00	0.80
	2. I can take into account attainment of target based on the Course of Study and students' needs.	0.79	0.72	0.97	0.99
	3. I can take into account learners' motivation to learn a foreign language.	0.72	0.92	1.10	1.21
	4. I can take into account learners' intellectual interests.	0.87	0.84	0.87	1.05
	5. I can take into account learners' sense of achievement.	0.83	1.00	1.11	1.16
C. The Role of the Language Teacher	1. I can explain the value and benefits of learning a foreign language to learners and parents.	0.49	0.58	0.87	0.81
	2. I can take into account learners' knowledge of Japanese and make use of it when teaching a foreign language.	0.45	0.62	0.69	0.77
	4. I can critically assess my teaching based on learner feedback and learning outcomes and adapt it accordingly.	0.62	1.05	0.93	0.93
	5. I can accept feedback from my peers and mentors and build it into my teaching.	0.62	0.96	0.98	1.09
	6. I can observe my peers and offer them constructive feedback.	0.67	1.16	1.03	0.96
	7. I can identify specific pedagogical issues related to my learners or my teaching in the procedure of plan, act, and reflect.	0.67	0.87	0.66	0.91
	8. I can locate information related to teaching and learning.	0.67	1.04	0.99	0.99
D. Institutional Resources and Constraints	1. I can assess how to use the resources and educational equipment available in school and adapt them to my teaching as necessary.	0.67	0.94	0.98	0.81
II Methodology					
A. Speaking/ Spoken Interaction	1. I can create a supportive atmosphere and provide a specific situation for language use that invites learners to actively take part in speaking activities.	0.67	0.90	0.86	0.72
	2. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, identity, culture etc.	0.45	0.89	0.98	0.78
	3. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to help learners to develop competencies for presentation, discussion, etc.	0.39	0.84	0.70	0.88
	4. I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to use typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others.	0.39	0.86	0.81	0.86
	5. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.	0.39	0.78	0.89	1.00
	6. I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, etc.).	0.39	0.78	0.93	1.00
B. Writing/Written Interaction	6. I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling etc.).	0.49	0.86	0.92	0.87
C. Listening	1. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.	0.39	0.87	0.72	1.02
	2. I can provide a range of pre-listening activities which help learners to orientate themselves to a text.	0.65	0.84	0.70	0.94
	3. I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening.	0.67	0.99	0.70	0.68
	5. I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognize and interpret typical features of spoken language.	0.51	1.02	0.89	0.93
D. Reading	7. I can evaluate and select a variety of post-reading tasks to provide a bridge between reading and other skills.	0.49	0.79	0.93	1.16
E. Grammar	2. I can recognize that grammar affects learners' oral and written performance and help them to learn it through meaningful contexts by providing a variety of language activities.	0.39	0.66	0.62	0.87
F. Vocabulary	1. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary in context.	0.45	0.81	0.87	1.00
G. Culture	1. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which awaken learners' interest in and help them to develop their knowledge and understanding of their	0.67	1.00	0.84	0.79

	own and the target language culture.				
III Resources					
	1. I can identify and evaluate a range of course books/materials appropriate for the age, interests and the language level of the learners.	0.49	0.81	0.89	0.64
	2. I can select texts and language activities from course books appropriate for my learners.	0.49	0.79	0.79	0.64
	3. I can locate and select listening and reading materials appropriate for the needs of my learners from a variety of sources, such as literature, mass media and the Internet.	0.45	0.86	0.78	0.70
	4. I can make use of ideas, lesson plans and materials included in teachers' handbooks and resource books.	0.67	1.01	0.89	0.72
	5. I can design learning materials and activities appropriate for my learners.	0.29	0.94	0.93	0.82
IV Lesson Planning					
A. Identification of Learning Objects	3. I can set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential.	0.39	0.86	1.14	1.23
	4. I can set objectives which take into account the differing levels of ability and special educational needs of the learners.	0.49	0.83	1.12	0.96
B. Lesson Content	1. I can plan activities to ensure the interdependence of listening, reading, writing and speaking.	0.29	0.97	1.16	1.16
	2. I can plan activities to emphasize the interdependence of language and culture.	0.65	1.13	1.29	1.19
	3. I can plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication.	0.29	0.95	0.91	1.03
	4. I can accurately estimate the time needed for specific topics and activities and plan work accordingly.	0.39	0.69	0.91	0.70
	5. I can design activities to make the learners aware of and build on their existing knowledge.	0.45	0.86	0.93	0.91
	6. I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest.	0.58	0.96	0.99	0.75
	8. I can take account of learners' feedback and comments and incorporate this into future lessons.	0.39	0.74	0.86	0.77
C. Lesson Organization	1. I can select from and plan a variety of organizational formats (teacher-centered, individual, pair, group work) as appropriate.	0.62	0.95	1.02	0.85
	2. I can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction.	0.62	1.10	0.81	0.92
	3. I can plan when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage I may need in the classroom.	0.62	0.94	1.30	1.02
	4. I can plan lessons and periods of teaching with other teachers and/or assistant language teachers (team teaching, with other subject teachers, etc.).	0.62	1.04	1.19	0.94
V Conducting a Lesson					
A. Using Lesson Plans	1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.	0.58	0.87	0.90	0.99
	2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.	0.62	0.85	1.11	0.69
	3. I can time and change classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention spans.	0.62	0.85	1.12	0.66
	4. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.	0.62	0.69	1.07	0.99
	5. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.	0.62	0.86	1.12	0.81
B. Content	1. I can relate what I teach to learners' knowledge, current events in local context, and the culture of those who speak it.	0.62	0.90	0.78	0.87
C. Interaction with Learners	1. I can settle a group of learners into a room and gain their attention at the beginning of a lesson.	0.79	1.10	0.96	0.78
	2. I can be responsive and react supportively to learner initiative and interaction.	0.62	0.86	1.25	1.05
	3. I can encourage learner participation whenever possible.	0.29	0.94	0.99	0.96
D. Classroom Management	1. I can create opportunities for and manage individual, partner, group and whole class work.	0.39	0.72	1.09	0.94
	2. I can manage and use resources (flashcards, charts, pictures, audio-visual aids, etc.) effectively.	0.29	0.79	1.17	1.08
E. Classroom Language	1. I can conduct a lesson in the target language, and if necessary use Japanese effectively.	0.67	1.10	1.16	0.83
	2. I can encourage learners to use the target language in their activities.	0.67	1.23	1.34	1.07

Notes: The numbers of descriptors correspond to their numbers in the J-POSTL
(Pre-service).

【PD Activity Report】
In-service Teacher Training Using J-POSTL

Koide, Fuminori

Abstract

This is a PD activity report about on-the-job teacher training at university, which relates what I, as a Japanese teacher of English who taught at public junior high schools, learned from a year-long in-service teacher training course at Yokohama City University. The main purpose of this paper is to give an example of the effective use of J-POSTL, which shows how I used the program and how it functioned to improve my skill in organizing English lessons. I conducted demonstrative lessons at a junior high school at which I had previously worked. According to the students' feedback, the lessons were student-centered and focused on the development of the pupils' speaking skills, which indicates the lessons' goals were achieved through using J-POSTL.

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Keywords

J-POSTL, in-service teacher training, lesson improvement

1. Introduction

In 2014, Yokohama City Board of Education launched a new in-service teacher training program in English to improve educators' skills in teaching English. Accordingly, two junior high school English teachers, including me, were sent to Yokohama City University for a year (April 2014 to March 2015). The program consisted of attending lectures, taking tests on English ability (such as IELTS, International English Language Testing System, and TOEIC, Test of English for International Communication), providing micro-teaching to the students at the university, and overseas training. This report mainly covers three areas: reflective activities using J-POSTL (JACET, 2014), demonstrative lessons conducted by me, and reflections on these lessons.

2. Reflective Activities Using J-POSTL

2.1 The Introduction of J-POSTL into the Program
Weekly reflective discussions with a mentor and colleague were set up over the entire year of the training program. Mr. Kato, associate professor at Yokohama City University, introduced J-POSTL to the program in order to deepen reflective discussions. Three of us—Mr. Kato, a colleague who was also a junior high school

teacher of English sent to Yokohama City University, and I —began using J-POSTL in the weekly reflections.

As the colleague and I had no prior knowledge of J-POSTL, we attended a lecture by Mr. Hisatake Jimbo and Mr. Ken Hisamura, which took place at Waseda University on April 19th 2014. We learned about the philosophy of J-POSTL, an outline of the scheme, and how to use it.

2.2 The Use of the Section "Personal Statement"

J-POSTL mainly consists of three sections: Personal Statement, Self-assessment, and Dossier. The colleague and I referred to the Personal Statement section at the beginning of the reflective activities. This section requires the users to reflect on their methods of teaching English, their experiences as a learner of English, and their qualities and abilities. We wrote down thoughts and realizations through the reflection process. Although we were in-service English teachers, we also remembered our school days and answered the questions for pre-service English teachers, such as "Experiences of being taught," "Expectations of the teacher education course," and "Expectations and anxieties before student-teacher training." We remembered what we had learned and thought. For example, "Experiences of being taught" requires the user to state the positive and negative points of teaching methods or lessons they had experienced. My record stated: "When I was a junior high school student, I had a chance to ask some questions to an ALT and he understood my questions. That made me happy".

My colleague and I talked about what we had written in the first discussion. We chiefly discussed a section that mentioned the qualities and abilities required by in-service English teachers. There were ten items in the table; three were already listed, and users were asked to add seven more ideas of their own. From our collective thoughts, we identified four notions we had in common, as follows:

(1) Understanding students' actual conditions
(2) Organizing appropriate language activities
(3) Being a lifelong learner of English
(4) Being able to make students feel that "studying English is interesting"
The other ideas were as follows:
(5) Setting the goals of the units
(6) Reflecting on my own lessons from the perspective of the students
(7) Being a model for learners/students
(8) Being able to create a good atmosphere and encouraging all students to speak up without hesitation

(9) Cooperating with ALTs
(10) Giving well-organized and smooth lessons with clear direction

5, 6, and 7 were my ideas, while 8, 9, and 10 were my colleague's. These items were not listed by priority, but I happened to first write down point 1, followed by 5 and then 2. At the time, I was interested in how to plan English lessons, which is why I listed these items first, as they relate to lesson planning.

I got the opportunity to learn what my colleague thought about English teachers' qualities and abilities through sharing what we wrote down on J-POSTL. This process gave us both a fresh perspective. In addition, we discussed to what extent we could understand students' actual conditions. We also thought about whether "actual conditions" might refer to the overall atmosphere of the class, or the individual abilities of each student; such reflections added depth to the discussion.

If we consider the efficient use of J-POSTL in schools, discussions of this nature can offer good opportunities for teachers at every stage of development, such as novices and practitioners, to reflect on the lessons they teach. Novice or student teachers can learn how, or from what perspective, their guidance teachers reflect on and analyze their classes and students.

2.3 Use of Self-assessment
As preparation for our reflective discussions, my colleague and I conducted a self-assessment by referring to associated descriptors. After the first discussion, the three of us – including Mr. Kato – began to work on each self-assessment descriptor from J-POSTL. In each session, my colleague and I mentioned low-marked self-assessment descriptors and those we could not understand; Mr. Kato then gave us some comments and advice. For instance, I found it difficult to reflect concretely on certain self-assessment descriptors regarding culture, such as "I can evaluate and select a variety of texts, source materials and activities which make learners aware of similarities and differences in sociocultural 'norms of behavior,'" "I can evaluate and select a variety of texts, source materials and activities which help learners to reflect on the concept of 'otherness' and understand different value systems," and "I can evaluate and select texts, source materials and activities to make the learners aware of stereotyped views and challenge these." Mr. Kato explained the terms 'norms of behavior' and 'otherness' and suggested that J-POSTL was originally based on EPOSTL, which entails some difficulties in adapting it to a Japanese context. However, the important thing is to find a way to adjust it to the Japanese style. I did not arrive at any definitive conclusions regarding what kinds of materials and activities we should choose and how to arrange the lesson plans. As I gained an awareness of what I did not understand through the reflective activities, I was able to grasp how EPOSTL

could be adapted to the Japanese style.

I checked 180 self-assessment descriptors that were reflected upon, as well as the scales I used to mark my own assessment. There seemed to be a tendency to underestimate what I do not usually focus on and to put slightly more emphasis on what I mainly teach in my daily classes. For the descriptor: "I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities," I marked between 3 and 4 on the scale on June 12th 2014. This was because I had planned small talk and pair or group conversation for my daily lessons. However, he marked between 2 and 3 on the scale for the descriptor: "I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation." The reflection, using J-POSTL, revealed that I had not planned sufficient activities to help the students use stress, rhythm, and intonation, since I lacked confidence in these areas.

We retained these reflections for a year; in total, there were 20 reflective discussions.

2.4 Measurement of the English Skills as Materials for Reflection

My micro-teaching in English and speaking tests were recorded at the outset of the training at Yokohama City University. In addition, in order to measure my four English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, I twice took IELTS (the International English Language Testing System), once in the middle and once at the end of the training. This was aimed at measuring the efficacy of this whole-year training program. I could determine which skills I should improve on, which encouraged me to take other tests. In fact, I also sat TOEIC, the Test of English for International Communication. In this, the band scores of listening and writing were lower than those for other skills in my first IELTS. In my second IELTS, the listening score rose slightly, while writing remained on the same level as on the first occasion. The TOEIC also revealed that I need to improve my listening skills. The scores and dates of the tests were recorded in the Dossier stage.

"The fundamentals and practice of English education in the new era, for professional development as English teachers" states that the relations between English skills, which can be measured by tests, and competence as a teacher, are as follows:

> *'English skills which can be measured by certificate examinations' and 'knowledge and culture for teaching English' are not directly related to the actual lessons. However, to improve these two qualities and abilities helps teachers develop their 'qualities and abilities which are required in the actual teaching' and it might be shown as remarkable progress on the behavior in their lessons.* (JACET, 2012: 62)

Our activities in Yokohama City University focused on these two abilities; the role of J-POSTL was to put them together and help us to transparently understand what to improve. As I mentioned, it was my listening and writing skills that I needed to develop, as I gleaned from taking IETLS. In addition, my self-assessment showed that I underestimated the self-assessment descriptors to do with listening. Most pertinently, the two items: "I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognize and interpret typical features of spoken language" and "I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with typical aspects of spoken language (background noise, redundancy) etc." were placed lower than other aspects of listening. The notion that I tended to avoid activities that called for the skills I lacked confidence in had unconsciously affected my self-assessment. Retention of the J-POSTL record allowed me to somehow visibly reflect on what I used to feel.

3. Demonstrative Lesson

3.1 Content of the Lesson and Teaching Plan

I had an opportunity to be evaluated by the students who had previously taken my English lessons, in order to make use of the experience in the actual lessons in Yokohama City University. The demonstrative lesson took place in March 2015 at the junior high school where I used to work.

The visitors to the lesson were as follows: teachers at the school, teachers from other schools in Yokohama, teachers from Yokohama City University, and teachers' consultants from the Yokohama Board of Education. Eight voluntary students attended the discussion following the lesson; they remarked on their impressions of the event and answered questions in the group debates.

The aim of the on-the-job teacher training at Yokohama City University is to improve teachers' communicative competence in English and to develop educators who can contribute to the realization of practical English education in a global society. The point is whether the instructor uses proper English that can be understood by the students and encourages them to use English as much as possible. Accordingly, the language of instruction was English, and I planned the lesson to focus on student-centered language activities. The session was designed for the second grade students, most of whom I had taught during the previous year. It had been a year since I had seen them. The intention was to prompt the students to talk off-the-cuff in English about the interesting things that had happened since they became second graders. The teaching plan was as follows (the name of the school is omitted):

Teaching Plan

1 Date　Wednesday, March 18, 2015　　5th Period (13:10-14:00)

2 Class 2-1　　38 students (21 boys and 17 girls)

3 Name of the School　　A Junior High School

4 Instructor's Perspective on the Class/the Students

The instructor taught English to most of the students during the previous year. They are second grade students now (Grade 8). Although the instructor knows them, he has not met them since last April. He conducted a demonstration lesson last February that focused on improving students' language activities in order to enhance their productive competence. Students tried their hand at keeping journals, participating in group discussions, and reciting individual speeches. The teacher is curious about how they have grown and what they have been doing during the current school year. This lesson will be strictly a one-off. As stated, he has not seen the students for a year, so he is unaware of their current stage of development. The idea is to assess this during the course of the lesson.

5 Instructor's Perspective on Teaching

It is the duty of the teacher to deliver a lesson which prompts the students to speak in English. Having had the opportunity to study both at Yokohama City University and in Canada, he is keen on exchanging experiences and, as a consequence, promoting the use of practical English.

6 Special Unit: An Exciting English Lesson. Your old teacher is back!　－What have you been doing?－

　（JHS [12]　Let's talk about an everyday occurrence or thing that you have experienced!

　(Course of study, Yokohama City Version, teaching materials, pp. 122-123）

7 Aims of This Unit

・To develop a pro-active attitude toward building good relationships between pupils and to strengthen mutual understanding by means of exchanging memories or stories of personal growth with each other.

・To enable students to understand the teacher's speech, which is spoken in basic English, when listening to him.

・To encourage students to communicate what they have experienced to their teacher and friends, using words and phrases they have learned.

・To build pupils' confidence in improvising methods of communicating what they want to say, such as the use of gestures or a partner's help, when they do not know the proper expressions.

・To allow students to develop an interest in Yokohama's sister city, Vancouver, in order to identify differences or commonalities between the cities and to deepen their understanding of the different cultures.

8 Evaluation Criteria of the Unit

A	B	C	D
Interest, willingness, and a positive attitude towards communicating in English	Ability to express themselves in English	Ability to understand English	Knowledge and understanding of the language and culture
①Students attempt to actively talk about themselves using proper expressions or gestures that are suitable for the occasion. ②Students actively enjoy discussion and are not afraid to make mistakes.	③Students can communicate what they have experienced to their teacher and friends using words and phrases they have learned.	④Students can understand the teacher's speech, which is spoken in basic English, when listening to him.	⑤Students develop an interest in their hometown's sister city Vancouver, and can identify differences or commonalities between Yokohama and Vancouver and deepen their understanding of the different cultures.

9 Allotment (one period)

	○Aim・Language activities	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation method
1st Period	○ To develop a pro-active attitude toward building positive relationships among the pupils and to deepen mutual understanding by means of swapping memories or stories of personal growth with each other. ・Listening to the teacher's speech, answering questions, asking questions ・Group discussion topic: My best memories of this school year ・Group leader's speech	A①② B③ C④ D⑤	Observation

10 Language Elements

（Time expressions） during the holidays (spring, summer, winter vacation), last weekend

（Past tense） went to, played, enjoyed, bought, saw, visited 〜.

（Adjectives that refer to feelings or impressions） exciting, boring, tiring

11 Language Use Situation and Function

<Language use situation>

Situations where students make speeches in the classroom.
・Learning and activities at school
<Language function>
・Presenting　・Asking questions

12 About This Period
（1）Aims of this period: the same as the aims of the unit
（2）Evaluation criteria of this period: the same as the evaluation criteria of the unit
（3）Didactic competence aimed for by the instructor in today's lesson:
　　Self-assessment descriptors from J-POSTL (A can-do list for teachers)
・I can create a cooperative atmosphere and set up a specific language-use situation in order to let the learners participate in the speaking activities positively.
・I can set up an activity to develop students' communicative competence, such as speaking accurately to the listeners about their thoughts and feelings or their culture.
・I can set up an activity that helps students improve their skills in presentation and debate.
・I can set up an activity that helps learners communicate with others interactively, using linking words or nodding effectively.
・I can choose various authentic materials, which may be printed or visual aids, in order to encourage students to join in the speaking activities.
・Concerning the achievement gap, I can set up a speaking activity in which learners can positively engage.
・I can help pupils to use strategies that are required during oral communication, such as confirming what has been said by asking the speaker to repeat it, paraphrasing, or simplifying expressions.
・I can set up an activity that promotes learners' interest in their own culture and others through learning English.

（4）Teaching procedure

Procedure (Time)	Main activities		Instructions and assistance	Evaluation
	Students	Language activities		
Introduc-tion （１５）	Greeting	Students say "Hello" to the teacher and answer some everyday questions, such as "How are you?"	Teacher creates a positive atmosphere to encourage students to speak English.	C④ D⑤
	Teacher's presenta-tion	Students listen to the teacher talking about his experiences in Canada or YCU. They try to understand what he talked about,	Teacher uses new words or phrases to let students get used to them. Teacher helps students understand and checks	

		answer his questions, and ask some of their own.	whether each student is trying to actively listen to his or her peers. Teacher tries to engage students in having an interest in their own culture and others through English learning. Teacher encourages students to communicate with others interactively, using linking words or nodding effectively.	A②
Develop-ment（３０）	Group discussion	Students talk about their memories or plans for growth during this school year in groups of three or four. Students collaborate with each other to summarize their stories, so that leaders can make speeches about their groups.	Teacher creates a cooperative atmosphere and sets up a specific language-use situation in order to allow the learners to participate in the speaking activities positively. Teacher encourages pupils to communicate with others interactively, using linking words or nodding effectively. Teacher helps students use strategies which are needed during oral communication, such as confirming what has been said by asking the speaker to repeat, paraphrasing, or simplifying expressions.	A①② B③

	Student leaders' presentations	Each group leader makes a speech about their team members' memories and personal growth. Students answer questions from the teacher.	Teacher praises the students who attempt to make a report. Teacher encourages students to communicate with others interactively, using linking words or nodding effectively.	
Conclusion （5）	Reflection	Students make some comments about the lesson on self-reflection sheets.	Teacher distributes self-reflection sheets to the students. Teacher provides feedback or support as needed.	
	Closing	Students say goodbye to teacher.	Teacher says goodbye to everyone.	

3.2 Introduction of Self-assessment Descriptors into the Teaching Plan

Self-assessment descriptors were introduced into the teaching plan (refer to teaching plan 12, About this period: (3) and (4) Teaching Procedure, Instructions, and Assistance). The lesson focused on the students' speaking activities; accordingly, self-assessment descriptors about such activities were taken from J-POSTL. There were two aims: first, to inform the visitors of J-POSTL and to reflect on the lesson from a common viewpoint through the self-assessment descriptors during the discussion, as this demonstrative lesson was open to the teachers of Yokohama; second, to remind me of how to help or encourage the students to use English, by including supportive points based on self-assessment descriptors in the teaching plan.

Let us reflect on these two aims. First, most of the visitors did not know about J-POSTL at that time, as it had only been about a year since its publication. Their first introduction to it was in the discussion. I asked some of the visitors about the inclusion of self-assessment descriptors in the teaching plan. Here are some of the comments they gave: "To narrow down the items might make the teaching plan clearer and the discussion might be deepened because teachers could also narrow down the subjects to discuss;" "Visitors might focus on the instructor as the instructor's didactic competence was written down in the teaching plan." As the comments imply, students should focus on the lesson, which in turn should be aimed at assessing whether it is student-centered or not. Teachers may be able to reflect without including self-assessment descriptors in their teaching plans as J-POSTL becomes more popular. This demonstrative lesson could constitute a first step toward the widespread application of J-POSTL.

Next, let us move on to the second aim. While I was making the plan, I was thinking about the self-assessment descriptors; I could also have done so while discussing with my colleague what activities would be needed for the students. One of the speaking aims of this lesson was "Students can communicate what they have experienced to their teacher and friends using words and phrases they have learned." What should the instructor do to enable pupils to achieve this goal? The descriptors from J-POSTL provided useful information for resolving this question. J-POSTL is a reflection tool, but it can also assist us to make teaching plans.

4. Reflection on the Lesson

Let us expand on how I came up with the ideas for the lesson and how the students felt about it, with reference to J-POSTL.

Descriptor: "I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities."

According to the book *The Fundamentals and Practice of English Education in the New Era for Professional Development as English Teachers*, the above descriptor is explained as follows:

> *When teachers introduce speaking activities into their lessons, they are required to encourage students to develop their positive attitude towards communicating in English.*
> *Moreover, students need to become friendly with one another through pair work or group work designed by teachers in order to take part in speaking activities independently and actively by themselves. To make it work better, teachers need to consider how to organize pairs or how many people are needed for each activity, etc.* (JACET, 2012: 108)

In the lesson, the groups were divided simply by seat order. Each group consisted of three or four students. I gave the students directions to introduce themselves in each group, as a warm-up activity at the beginning of the lesson. The first speaker introduced only two things: his or her own name and favorite thing. The second speaker had to introduce the first speaker using phrases such as "This is …. He or she likes ….," before talking about himself or herself. The third speaker introduced both the first and second speakers. I reassured them that they did not have to memorize the former speakers' information and that they should help each other. I also encouraged students to ask their group members to repeat their favorite things. Although these

directions were given in English, most students could understand them because I provided examples. When observing their activities, it appeared that students did not feel anxious over the task and continued to talk and help one another. The following are some comments from the students' reflection papers:

"We helped each other and could talk about the words we did not know." "I could tell a lot of things to my friends." "I could clearly express what I thought." "The instructor's lesson today was done without using Japanese, but it was easy to understand and also easy to speak. It was fun." "It might be the first time for me to understand what people spoke in English. It was a very good thing to help each other. I think talking in groups is one of the ways to improve our English skills and we can learn a lot of things from our friends."

Descriptor: "I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to identify and use typical features of spoken language (informal language, fillers, etc.)."
Descriptor: "I can help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks, etc.) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification, etc.) when engaging in spoken interaction."

> *It is important for you to know you can somehow keep on communicating with somebody using gestures if you would like to communicate something to someone but you do not know how to express it. Teachers need to make students somehow manage to keep conversation or dialogue and try not to finish conversation with only stereotyped responses or just one-question-and-one-answer exchanges.* (JACET, 2012: 107)

I intentionally used fillers and nods as an example for students using them. He also gave an example of how to explain what they did not know, as follows: "If you do not know the word 'apple', you can say 'red', 'sweet', and 'fruit', showing the round shape with your hands." One of the goals of the lesson was for students to find alternative methods of communication, such as using gestures or a partner's help, when they did not know the correct expressions. Here is another example: a student wanted to express the phrase "the place she went to was 'crowded', " but she did not know the word 'crowded.' Her friend, who was in the same group, suggested 'many people' instead.

Here are some more comments from the students' reflection papers: "I was so nervous that I could not understand what the teacher was talking about in English. However, gestures and visual aids helped me somehow understand the content even though I did not understand English." "I could somehow understand what the teacher was talking

about even though I did not understand some words and details because he used gestures. It was very easy to understand and fun." "I could ask some questions to my friends and listened to them while nodding. I am not good at English but I enjoyed the lesson." "I learned how to think and express what I want to say."

These comments demonstrate that the lesson, as based on the self-assessment descriptors, was useful from the students' point of view.

At the end of the lesson, students reflected on their activities and wrote down their thoughts on the reflection papers (see Appendix).

The three items of the papers were added up. The same lessons were conducted in eight classes (38 students per class). The result of the totaling was as follows.

1 I could understand the content when I listened to the teacher speaking English.
Average: 69%   Could understand more than 80%: 50%   Less than 50%: 14%

2 I could communicate what I have experienced to the teacher and my friends using words and phrases I had previously learned.
Average: 72%   Could communicate more than 80%: 50%   Less than 50%: 15%

3 I could somehow find a way to communicate what I wanted to say, such as the use of gestures or a partner's help, when I did not know the proper expressions.
Average: 71%   Could find techniques more than 80% of the time: 46%   Less than 50%: 14%

According to the result, most students understood the lesson as delivered in English. Although there is only a slight gap between them, the figures for item 2 are higher than those of item 3 (72%, 50%, and 15%, and 71%, 46%, and 14%, respectively). It is obvious that the teachers in the school have taught their students effectively. However, if a lesson had been planned that was only designed to promote speaking activities marginally, this might have affected the result.

Now I will introduce some comments that were written in the 'free statement' section of the reflection papers: "I got a chance to speak English, which I had rarely spoken and then I realized what skills I lack to speak English. I want to study English harder." "I could clearly express my ideas when my friends asked me about my feelings. It was fun because the teacher asked a lot to us." "This lesson reminds me of My Diary, which we used to do in the previous year but I found myself speaking English better than before. It made me happy." "I could understand my friends better through the

communicative activities." "I really liked the lesson which focused on communication with friends." "I could not understand some difficult words which the teacher used in his speech. I thought the teacher should explain the meaning of the words or ask us the meaning in Japanese." "The teacher should speak Japanese more because the lesson could be boring." "Your English is good but you need to learn more."

From these comments, this lesson can be regarded as a student-centered and all-in-English lesson.

However, 15% of students answered 'less than 50%' to all three items, and the last three comments that mentioned "use of Japanese" and "teacher's English skills" highlight that there are still some hurdles to overcome in order to continue teaching English in English. J-POSTL must be used as a tool for ongoing reflective discussions in order to mitigate these problems.

5. Conclusion

This report reveals how I, who was sent to Yokohama City University to improve my English skills, didactic competence, and practice of teaching English in English, have developed my lessons through reflective discussions that used J-POSTL alongside a mentor and a colleague.

I could reflect on the lessons I had conducted as a result of using J-POSTL for a year. I had also experienced not only the sharing of mutual thoughts, but the formation of new ideas through the above mentioned discussions. In addition, I realized that continuous reflective activities led to the development of teaching skills. The teaching of English, using the target language exclusively, is based on a whole-year program of taking part in English classes as a learner in the university.

J-POSTL was a useful tool for thinking about how we might apply what we learned in the university to junior high school level classes. The first self-assessment descriptor is "I can understand the requirement set in the Course of Study" (J-POSTL). As for grammar, the descriptor is "I can introduce a grammatical item and help learners to practice it through meaningful context and appropriate texts." (J-POSTL), while the Course of Study imparts that "language activities should be conducted in such a way that grammar is effectively utilized for communication, based on the idea that grammar underpins communication."

I referred to both the Course of Study and J-POSTL when constructing the lesson plan. It is stated that J-POSTL is an effective tool for improving teaching skills in a

long-term teacher training program in the university. The issue is how to utilize J-POSTL effectively in schools, where teachers are faced with a great deal of work aside from their daily lessons.

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Appendix

Reflection Sheet

I would like to know "what you could do" in the lesson. Reflect on today's lesson and what you could do. Make a circle between 0 and 100. If you can answer the additional question, write down your comments.

① I could understand the content when I listened to the teacher speaking English.

0 ％   5 0 ％   1 0 0 ％

・ If you could not understand parts, what do you think was the cause?

② I could communicate what I have experienced to the teacher and my friends using words and phrases I had previously learned.

0 ％   5 0 ％   1 0 0 ％

・ If you could not communicate, what couldn't you communicate?

③ I could somehow find a way to communicate what I wanted to say, such as the use of gestures or a partner's help, when I did not know the proper expressions.

0 ％   5 0 ％   1 0 0 ％

・ When you could communicate, what were the most effective ways?

・ If you could not, what do you think was the cause?

Other comments

【Case-study Report】
Using Portfolios to Develop Autonomous Learners

Saito, Riichiro

Abstract

This is a practical report on a high school "Communication English I" course using portfolios with the textbook. The issues for the students in the school are weakness in English learning, limited learning experience, and low motivation toward learning. Through usage of a portfolio, this practice aimed to motivate the students and develop them to be autonomous learners. As an interaction tool between the students and the teacher, portfolios can help support advancement of learner autonomy and improve a teacher's class management. In this report, several activities in the class will be demonstrated and the changes in learning attitude among the students will be discussed. In the latter part, some proposals and potential for usage of portfolios will be suggested with the aim of developing learner autonomy.

Keywords

1. Usage of Portfolio

This is a case-study report on high school classes on usage of portfolio "*My Learning Mate Ver. 2 (MLM)* (Kiyota, 2015)" based on a course textbook for "Communication English I", *All Aboard! Communication English I* (Kiyota, et. al, 2013). The aim of the use of the portfolio is to create autonomous learners.

According to *Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (J-POSTL)－A reflection tool for professional development－* (JACET SIG on English Language Education, 2014), it is required that language teachers help learners become autonomous. Language teachers should indicate to learners the goal and aims of studying, learning plans, practical lessons, and evaluation. Usage of portfolios encourages learners to reflect and evaluate their attitude toward learning, and provides teachers with feedback on their daily lessons as well (Nishioka, Ishii, Tanaka, 2015).

This activity was carried out with senior high school students, who have less confidence in studying English, less daily practice of study, and uncertain goals of study. Kiyota (2013) reported that, in order to become autonomous learners, students should study for themselves, set their own goals of study and keep on learning toward the goals.

Portfolios are useful in this regard. In the portfolio, *MLM,* learners have several activities to reflect on their own attitudes towards studies, such as their individual English learning career, their motivation toward English learning, and the relation between their English learning and what they want to be/do in the future. In the process of these activities, learners describe what they can do initially, what they become capable of, and what they are wishing to still achieve. Furthermore, through usage of portfolios, teachers have opportunities to get feedback on the depth of learners' understanding of daily lessons. This feedback can lead to teachers' reflective practice and improvement of classroom instructions as well.

We can name the portfolio "a compass for English learning." This paper reports on the 6-month activity of the course, and indicates potentials for portfolio learning.

2. Textbook and Portfolio

2.1 The Content of the Textbook, *All Aboard! Communication English I*

This section describes the content of the textbook used in this practice. The textbook, *All Aboard! Communication English I* is published for the high school course of study "Communication English I." The textbook is aimed at beginners and the content begins with a review of junior high school English, including "to get familiar with English sounds" and "alphabet."

Each lesson consists of 2 pages (14-20 sentences, 90-200 words). The topic of each lesson is familiar and interesting to senior high school students.

2.2 The Content of the Portfolio, *My Learning Mate (MLM)*

This section describes the component of the portfolio, *MLM*. *MLM* is a 42-page booklet based on *All aboard! Communication English I*. Several activities are included in this portfolio.

(1) "My English Learning Career": Learners check their own English learning career. First, Learners evaluate how much they like several ways of learning English: "Translating English into Japanese", "Doing a drill in English grammar", "E-learning with a computer", "Studying English through movies or music", "Listening", "Doing pair or group work", "Making a speech or presentation", "Writing", "Reading easy English books" and "Checking words in a dictionary." Learners can reflect on which types of English learning they prefer. At the end, learners describe their attitudes toward English learning.

(2) "Purposes of English Learning and Self Evaluation": This part shows what and how

learners are going to learn in English lessons in high school. Learners themselves evaluate their abilities in four English skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and evaluate "interaction", "intercultural understanding" as well. Learners will evaluate themselves four times a year (at the beginning of the school year, before the summer holidays, before the winter holidays, and at the end of the school year).

(3) "English Learning and Future Career": This section relates English learning to the future careers of learners. First, learners provide their individual information: their character, strong points and interests. Next, learners describe what they want to be/do in the future. Lastly, learners connect what they are doing in English lessons to their own future dreams and consider what they have to do with English in order to realize their dreams. These activities aim to keep on motivating learners towards lifelong English learning.

(4) "Creating 'My Tree'": Through the activities in the former part, learners make clear what exactly they are, what they want to be/do in the future, and how they relate English learning to their future career. This section is for learners to visualize these activities. On the page of *MLM*, a big "Tree" is drawn. It has three large trunks, which stand for "about jobs", "about personal identity", and "about English learning." Learners will draw branches from each trunk for "specific goals" and draw roots from each trunk for "specific actions." Learners may have several concerns about their goals and actions. Then they draw their concerns in the "stones" around the roots. Each time learners see the "Tree" they have drawn, they have a chance to consider what they are learning English for.

(5) "Learning Record": Each lesson has its own goals of study for grammar, content, and communication activities. Before learners go into a new lesson, they check what they will learn in that lesson. After the lesson, learners evaluate their own depth of learning and the activities. Learners have space for commenting on what they learn, find, and notice.

2.3 How to Relate Usage of *MLM* to the Textbook

This section refers to the combination of the portfolio, *MLM*, and a textbook in the course of "Communication English I."

At the beginning of the school year, learners reflect on their own English learning career with "My English Learning Career" section. Through this activity, teachers can discover the learners' attitudes towards English learning. Next, the teacher tells them the goals and aims of the English course with "Purposes of English Learning and Self Evaluation", so that the learners and the teacher have a common understanding of the course.

The learners and the teacher share what they will learn in each lesson with "Learning

Record." After the lesson, the learners evaluate themselves and describe what they have learned. This self-evaluation by the learners enables the teacher to reflect on his/her teaching, which can lead to the improvement of teaching.

In order to develop learners' autonomy, activities in "English Learning and Future Career" and "To Create 'My Tree'" are useful. Through the activities in these sections, the learners can get a concrete image of their English learning.

By using *MLM*, the learners can reflect on their own learning history. Also, the teacher can grasp the learners' depth of understanding. The interaction between the learners and the teacher via MLM activates and improves the class lessons.

3. Case-study Report

3.1 Outline of the Classes
This portfolio learning was carried out in a part-time (teijisei) high school. The school has a diversity of students: almost half of the students were truant in their junior high school days, 20% of the students are non-Japanese, 10% dropped out of high school. Generally speaking, the students in this school feel themselves to be weak at studying, and have less experience of and motivation for studying. This situation is a serious issue in this school. The teachers have been trying various methods for motivating and activating the students. Using *MLM* is one of those treatments carried out by the teachers of English. In this report, activities during a half school year in 2015 are demonstrated and discussed. Table 1. shows the lesson plans of Communication English I course for a half school year in 2015.

Table 1. Plans for Usage of *All Aboard!* & *MLM*

Month	*All Aboard!*	Content	*MLM*
April	Warm-Up 1 Warm-Up 2	English Sounds Alphabet Letters	"My English Learning Career"
May	Pre-Lesson 1 Pre-Lesson 2 Lesson 1	Be/General Verbs Self-Introdction Past Tense	"Purposes of English Learning and Self Evaluation" (1st)
June	Mid-Term Exam Lesson 2	 Progressive Form	"English Learning and Future Career"
July	Lesson 2 Lesson 3	Writing Letters in English Auxiliary Verbs	"Creating 'My Tree'"
September	Lesson 3 Final-Term Exam	Oral Communiaction	"Purposes of English Learning and Self Evaluation" (2nd)

In this report, several activities during a half school year will be demonstrated: "My English Learning Career" at the start of the course, introduction of English letters and sounds as a review of English learning in junior high school, an activity of self-introduction in English, an activity of writing letters in English, an activity of "Creating 'My Tree'" in *MLM*, and a check sheet on the final term exam for developing learner autonomy.

As mentioned above, the purpose of using *MLM* is to motivate students toward English learning and the final goal is to develop autonomous learners. Changes of learning attitudes among the students as a result of using *MLM* will be discussed in the latter sections.

3.2 "My English Learning Career"

At the start of the course, the course guidance took place with *MLM*. First, the students reflected on their English learning career. Their favorite learning style of English tended to be "Studying English through movies or music" and "Checking words in a dictionary." On the other hand, "Doing pair or group work", "Making a speech or presentation", and "Writing" were not favored. This indicated that the students were likely to study passively or individually. Some students wrote that they couldn't join the class and a teacher gave them tasks that they could do by themselves, such as checking words in the dictionary, watching DVDs, and writing sentences repetitively. Some students had thought that this is English learning.

In the free description on their English learning career, more clear and concrete attitude tendencies could be found. The number that follows in brackets refers to certain students.

"I couldn't catch up with the class after the summer holidays." (S1)
"I was lost in the lesson when I was in the second grade." (S2)

These kinds of comments about when the student fell behind in their lessons can be good clues and encourage the teacher to redo high school lessons.

"I lost confidence in pair or group work. I became less motivated." (S3)
"I couldn't speak English, so I didn't like English." (S4)
"English was getting more and more difficult." (S5)
"I didn't like speaking and listening." (S6)

The teacher can find what kinds of activities the students were not good at.

"I couldn't memorize spelling, and I couldn't read the alphabet well." (S7)
"I couldn't read or write English words." (S8)
"I couldn't understand English sound." (S9)
"I could only read and write easy, simple English words." (S10)
"I couldn't make English sentences." (S11)

Many students wrote that they couldn't read or write English words. Some of them couldn't distinguish alphabet letters or English phonemes. Special education may be needed.

"I couldn't find any need to study English." (S12)
"I don't like English. I have no interest. I don't understand English." (S13)
"I don't like the teacher. Studying is boring." (S14)
"I didn't attend the class." (S15)

Some students didn't like school, teachers and studying itself. The important issue in remedial education is how to get them motivated towards studying (Kiyota, 2013).

Based on these comments from the students, the teacher modified the plan of the course. The aim is to support their learning in the high school classroom, and to motivate them for lifelong English learning.

3.3 Alphabet, English Sound, Spelling

At the start of the course, some students wrote that they couldn't write alphabet letters nor read English words. If the class had started in the way they experienced in junior high school (such as with tracing or penmanship), the student might have felt English learning is boring. The teacher changed the focus to get the students to pay attention to the shape of letters. What was done was "to categorize alphabet letters by their similarities and differences." First, the teacher demonstrated the categorization by "letters with lines", "letters with round shapes", and "letters with lines and round shapes." This instruction was useful and interesting for the students, and they began to categorize alphabet letters by their own original category. For example, "tall letters/short letters/letters with 'underground'", "letters which change/don't change their shape when capital or small", "similar shaped letters such as b, d, p, q/uniquely shaped letters like x, y, z", and so on. Each student made a presentation on their original category, and they got interested in alphabet letters. Several students said, "I have more interest in the alphabet!"

Next, the teacher tried to show the relationship of English letters and sounds. Using "magic-e", some pairs of words (e.g. hat-hate, pet-Pete, win-wine, hop-hope, tub-tube)

were introduced to the students. The students tried to find a rule for letters and sounds. One student said, "Vowel sound changes with/without 'e'!" Then, many other students understood the rule. They began to read English words.

The third step was to memorize spellings. Ten words from the textbook were introduced. After practicing them in several ways, the teacher gave the students a task to learn the spellings of the words within ten minutes. The students started discussing how they would learn the spellings. Ideas proposed by the students were "to write repetitively", "to write the letters while reading them", "to memorize letter by letter", "to remember the spellings by watching", and so on. The students tried their own memorizing methods. Ten minutes later, a spelling quiz was done. Some student passed the quiz (7/10 correct spellings), and the others didn't. Those who passed the quiz explained how they learned the spellings. This advice was useful for other students, and after several trials, almost all the students passed the quiz.

3.4 Self-Introduction in English

After a review of English learning in junior high school, the students went into an activity in the textbook. One task in the Pre-Lessons in the textbook was self-introduction. *MLM* showed the aims of this part: (1) self-introduction using be-verb, (2) self-introduction using general verbs, (3) understanding the order of an English sentence. The class checked these aims in *MLM*.

The students used a template (see appendix 1). First, they filled the blanks in Japanese sentences. Then they changed the word order to English. Lastly, they made a speech in front of the class. After the activity, the student left their comment on *MLM*.

> "I can't find the rule. Difficult." (S14)
> "I think English is difficult." (S4)
> "I haven't understood the change of be-verb. I want to know." (S1)
> "Making sentences is difficult, but reading is fun." (S11)

Through the activity, the students got to know what they could do or couldn't do. But their problems turned from a vague to a more concrete understanding.

> "I couldn't make my speech well enough." (S3)
> "I felt nervous in front of other student." (S9)
> "English expressions were difficult for me, but I did my best." (S8)

The students expressed and evaluated their own feelings in the activity.

"I got to understand the different word order in Japanese and English." (S10)
"The word order is different between Japanese and English. Surprising!" (S13)

Some students showed what they discovered through the lesson. It meant that they got new knowledge.

"It was fun for me to listen to speeches by other students." (S6)
"I couldn't talk well. Next time, I want to make a better speech." (S7)
"I want to let others know more about me." (S12)
"I thought English is useful and fun." (S2)
"I found my problems. To talk slower and louder. To make eye contact." (S5)

Through the experience of making a speech, some students realized their own problems with English learning. Some students wrote "I want to ….", which shows an improvement of their motivation towards English learning.

3.5 Writing Letters in English
A task of Lesson 2 in the textbook is writing letters in English. *MLM* showed the aims of this section: (1) to understand the expressions of English letters and to apply them, (2) to understand the content of English letters, (3) to express what you are doing by using the progressive form, (4) to write English letters about your school life. The class checked these aims in *MLM*.

The students used a template (see appendix 2). First, they filled the blanks in English sentences. Some students found they should use adjectives. They asked other students or searched for the word in a dictionary. Finally, the students handwrote English letters. After the activity, the students left their comments on *MLM*.

"Writing English letters is difficult. I want to keep on trying." (S4)
"I think writing is easier than making a speech." (S9)

Among various kinds of communication skills in English, the students began to consider which they preferred.

"I found some vocabulary is difficult. The past tense is difficult." (S10)
"I want to understand the past tense." (S7)
"I want to know more about the progressive form." (S2)
"Lessons seem to be more difficult. I could understand the progressive form." (S1)
"I can use the progressive form in writing my English letter." (S8)

The lessons become more and more difficult, so it becomes tough for the students to follow the content. However, many students left comments like "I want to …." Compared with their comments at the start of the course, definite changes in their learning attitude can be found.

The letters written by the students were sent to Mr. Kiyota, who is the main writer of the textbook, *All Aboard! I*. Later, it was very pleasant that Mr. Kiyota wrote letters back to each student. The students felt glad and tried to find what was written by asking each other or searching for words in the dictionary. The students found that another person understood what they expressed in English: they had an experience of communicating in English.

3.6 "Creating 'My Tree'"
After three months of lessons, the class worked on the sections, "English Learning and Future Career" and "Creating 'My Tree'", which are the main sections in *MLM*. The procedure is seen in appendix 3.

First, the students left more than one comment on their personality, strong points and interests. Some of the students couldn't get their image of themselves, and asked other students about it. The teacher advised that positive words were preferred because they would be helpful in later activities.

Next, the students thought about their future jobs. As almost all the students were in the first grade, they couldn't get a concrete image of their future job. The teacher advised, "If you can't imagine what job you want to get in the future, you can leave a comment on what you want to do as an adult." Some students responded, "I want to make others happy", "I want to be reliable", "I want to be kind to others", "I want to feel empathy with others", and so on.

Lastly, the students related what they had been learning in the English course to what they would be/do in the future. The comments the students wrote showed that their motivation toward English learning had been improving compared with their comments at the start of the course.

The section, "Creating 'My Tree'" is an activity to visualize the descriptions in "English Learning and Future Career." The tree stands for growing up from three points of view: a future job, personal identity, and English learning. The students drew several branches from three large trunks ("about job", "about personal identity", and "about English learning"). Each branch stands for "a specific goal" of each view. The teacher advised, "In order to grow branches, we need nutrition." Then the students drew roots from each

trunk, and wrote "specific actions to achieve the goal" on each root. The teacher continued, "There might be some obstructions or fears about the actions and goal, so please write your concerns around the roots." Then the students drew "stones" and wrote their concerns in them.

Some students drew big, clear "Trees", but others could not (see appendix 5-8). The teacher concluded with, "We haven't finished this activity. We will do this several times this year. Your vision for the future may change, then your goal and actions may change, too. When you find something new about yourself, please write it over the earlier information. That's what it means to create your own 'Tree'."

3.7 "Check Sheet on Final Term Exam"

The main purpose of using the portfolio, *MLM,* is to develop autonomous learners. In order to affirm how much the students could "study by themselves", the "Check Sheet on Final Term Exam" was introduced (see appendix 4). This check sheet showed the students what would be set in the exam in advance. By taking a look at the sheet, the students could study for the exam by themselves. Moreover, the students checked by themselves "what they can/can't do now." This activity aimed to develop learner autonomy.

Before the exam, the students evaluated "how much they can do" for each question in the "Pre. Part." After the exam, the student looked back again "how much they have done" for each question in the "Post. Part." The students with good scores reflected that they could get what they had prepared for. On the other hand, the students with lower scores reflected that they should have preparation to get good scores. The responses of both the students with good scores and those with lower scores indicated that they had understood what and how they should learn.

4. Conclusion on the Practice

This was a 6-month long practical report on usage of portfolios with a textbook for the course. At the beginning of the school year, the students' attitudes toward English learning were unenthusiastic, hostile, and they lacked motivation. Through the activity on the course, their attitudes have become better, more positive, and they are motivated. Through the support of portfolios, the students found the goal of their learning: what was planned for them to do. Besides, the students could evaluate for themselves what they can/can't do through their learning. The description or comments by the students have changed from "I can't …" to "I can …." or "I want to …." These changes indicate that the motivation of the students toward English learning has been improving. This feedback from the students also enabled the teacher to find what the students can/can't

do. This interaction can be the basis of improvement in future teaching.

Since the portfolio can be employed as a heuristic tool, it should not be used only as an archive of test scores and evaluation by the teacher. The students can use portfolios for their evaluation and feedback themselves. This type of application leads to meta-cognition of learning by the students (Nishioka, Ishii and Tanaka, 2015). Using portfolios with the textbook in a course can support learner autonomy and lifelong English learning.

Acknowledgement

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Appendices

Appendix 1

All Aboard! I　Pre-Lesson 1　動詞を使い分けて、「自己紹介」
NAME:＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

☆　日本文を参考にして、自己紹介の英文を作ろう。
こんにちは。
1. 私の名前は ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ です。
2. 私は 高校生 です。
3. 私は （場所）＿＿＿＿＿ に 住んでいます。
4. 私は ＿＿＿＿ を します。 ※スポーツとか楽器とか
5. 私は ＿＿＿＿ が 好きです。
ありがとう。

☆☆　下線と四角を参考にして、英語の語順にして書いてみよう。
Hello.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Thank you.

☆☆☆　みんなの前で、英語で「自己紹介」をしよう。
　　　（下の自己チェックを参考に、読む練習もしておこう）

☆☆☆　「自己紹介」が終わったら・・・自己チェック(5段階で○)
・大きく、はっきりと話せた　　　　　　5　4　3　2　1
・ゆっくり、早口にならずに話せた　　　5　4　3　2　1
・アイコンタクトが取れた　　　　　　　5　4　3　2　1
・(聞き手として)発表者をリスペクトできた　5　4　3　2　1

Comment by Teacher:

Appendix 2

All Aboard! I　Lesson 2　英語で手紙を書こう
NAME:＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

先日、授業を見に来てくれたオジサンは、実は、みなさんが使っている教科書を書いた方です！　みんなが英語の勉強をがんばっている姿を見て、とても喜んでいましたよ。
さて、Lesson 2は、"A Letter to Australia"ということで、英語での手紙の書き方について学びました。　レッスンの最後に、教科書の作者に、英語で手紙を書いてみましょう。　きっと、驚いたり喜んだりしてくれると思います。

下書きは、こんな感じ・・・
Dear Yoichi,
　　How are you?　I am ＿＿＿＿＿.　Now, I am writing this letter in the class.
We started studying English in April in this school.　For me,
English lessons are ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿.　←英語の授業は、どうですか？
Our English teacher is ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿.　←英語の先生は、どうですか？
The textbook is ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿.　←英語の教科書は、どうですか？
Thank you for visiting us.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Come again,
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(自分の名前)

それでは、清田先生に、英語で手紙を書いてみましょう。みんなの手紙をまとめて、郵送します。　返事が来るかな？うん、きっと来るよ!!

A Letter to Yoichi from student of Ota Flex High School

To Yoichi: We are looking forward to your reply!

Appendix 3

All Aboard! I　My Learning Mate　「自分の木」を描こう！

☆　MLM 6ページ「未来の自分と英語学習について考えよう」
1st Step: 自分の適性を考えよう
・自分の性格について：なるべく プラスのことばで
　　　　　　　　　　　短いことばでいいから、たくさん書く
　　　　　　　　　　　友だちに聞いた「ほめことば」でもよい
・自分の得意なこと：最低１つ以上
・自分の好きなこと：最低１つ以上
2nd Step: 自分の将来を考えよう
・将来なりたいもの
　－進路(職業)として：「未定」ではなく、思いつくものをいくつでも
　　　　　　　　　　　（「こういうことをしたい」という内容でもよい）
　－人間として：「こんな大人になりたい」を書く
※具体的に目標となる人を連想すると、考えやすい
3rd Step: 自分の適性と将来を、英語学習と結びつけよう
・将来なりたいもの(職業・大人)→「英語学習」と結びつける
　＝どんなふうに英語と関わったら、「なりたい自分」に近づけるか考える

☆　MLM 8ページ「自分の木を成長させよう！」
・大きな枝＝３つの要素(仕事・人間・英語学習)
・小さな枝＝それぞれについての「具体的な目標」
・地に張る根＝枝を成長させるための「具体的な行動」
・地中の石ころ＝でもある「不安」

☆　「自分の木」は、今回で完成形にはならないと思う。
　　今日の日付を記入して、これからも「木」を成長させていこう。

Appendix 4

コミュニケーション英語Ⅰ基礎　前期期末テスト対策(?!)プリント
ID No.＿＿＿　NAME:＿＿＿＿＿　(ゼミ担任：＿＿＿先生)

Pre. 次の項目について「自分がどのくらいできるか」自己チェックしてみよう。
★☆☆・・・何を尋ねられるかは、分かった
★★☆・・・まぁ、答えられるくらいの準備はする
★★★・・・バッチリ、答えられる。自信あり　　＜☆を塗りつぶそう★＞

Ⅰ　授業の最初のあいさつに答えられる　　　　★★★
Ⅱ　授業に持ってくるものを英語で答えられる　★★★
Ⅲ　月の「和名」と「英語名」、何月かをつなげられる　★★★
Ⅳ　be 動詞(is / are / was / were)を使い分けられる　★★★
Ⅴ　英語での手紙を読んで、内容を理解できる　★★★
　　進行形の英文を書ける　　　　　　　　　　★★★
　　動詞の過去形が書ける　　　　　　　　　　★★★
Ⅵ　Japanese *kawaii* culture の内容を理解できる　★★★
　　助動詞を使っている英文が見つけられる　　★★★
Ⅶ　助動詞を使って英文を書ける　　　　　　　★★★

Post. 次の項目について「自分がどのくらいできたか」自己チェックしてみよう。
★☆☆・・・ちゃんと準備しておけば良かったと、後悔している
★★☆・・・何を尋ねられているのかは、分かって答えられた
★★★・・・だいたい答えられた。テスト返却が楽しみだ

Ⅰ　授業の最初のあいさつに答えられた　　　　★★★
Ⅱ　授業に持ってくるものを英語で答えられた　★★★
Ⅲ　月の「和名」と「英語名」、何月かをつなげられた　★★★
Ⅳ　be 動詞(is / are / was / were)を使い分けられた　★★★
Ⅴ　英語での手紙を読んで、内容を理解できた　★★★
　　進行形の英文が書けた　　　　　　　　　　★★★
　　動詞の過去形が書けた　　　　　　　　　　★★★
Ⅵ　Japanese *kawaii* culture の内容を理解できた　★★★
　　助動詞を使っている英文が見つけられた　　★★★
Ⅶ　助動詞を使って英文が書けた　　　　　　　★★★

Appendix 5-8
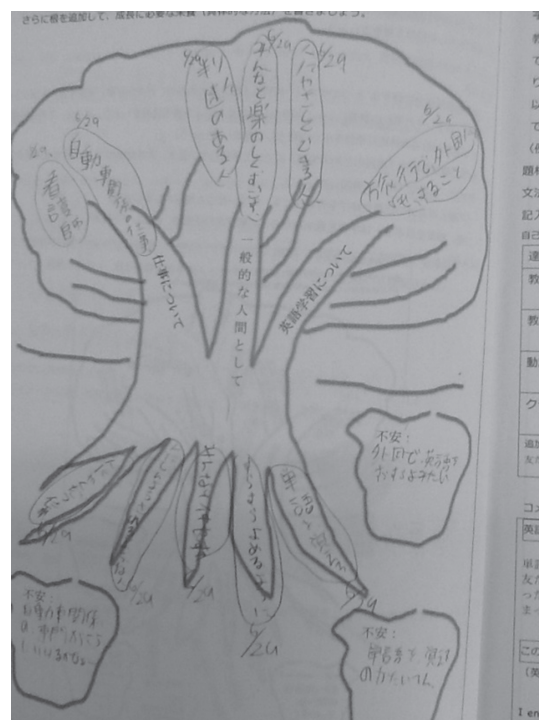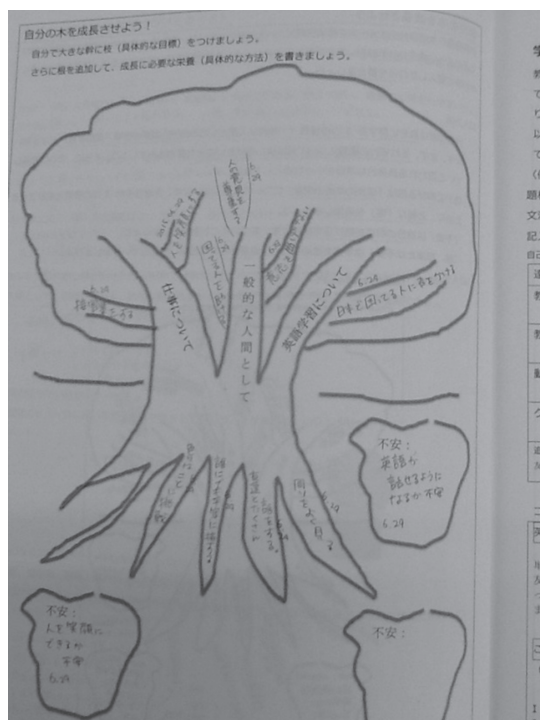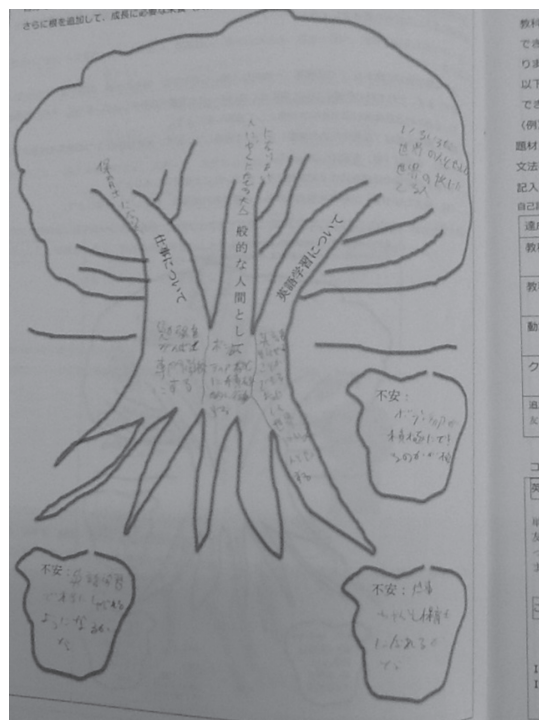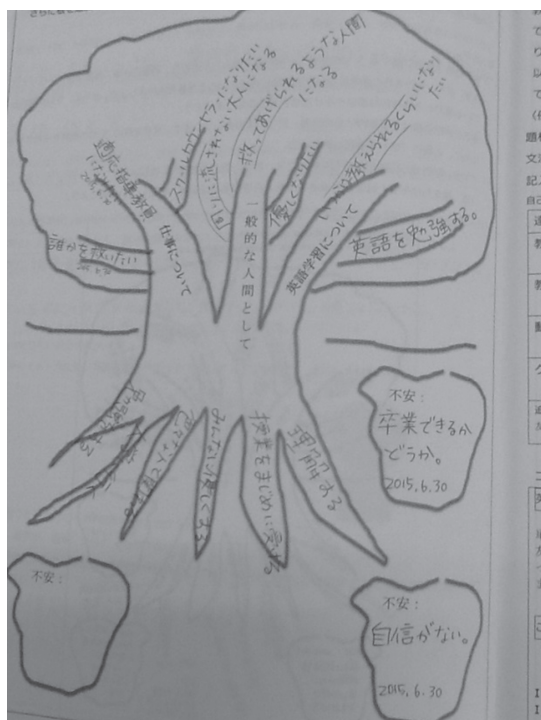
【Research Note】
A Study on Globalized Human Resources Based on the Necessity of Small and Medium-sized Manufacturing Companies

Adachi, Rie and Sakai, Shien

Abstract

The Japanese government is currently working on some new English education policies such as introducing English education in the elementary school system, and they urge Japanese people to adapt to a globalized environment. Behind this background, the number of foreign visitors is expected to increase as the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games approach. Therefore, the number of companies that have expanded their market abroad has increased, and they have requested the government to nurture work-ready recruits in the globalized world. These companies are increasing business start-ups in Asian countries. This study investigated small and medium-sized local manufacturing companies using questionnaire to identify the trend related to globalized human resources among them. The results are the following. Firstly, most partners of these companies are located in Asian countries. Secondly, they do not require entry-level applicants to have higher English proficiency. Thirdly, they expect the new recruits to have some nonverbal communicative competence and cooperative attitudes with others. As a result, they seem to expect the applicants to have general intercultural communicative competence rather than just English language skills. As most of this study's participants are limited to small and medium-sized local manufacturing companies, we need further investigation. However, a similar tendency was found in other studies, and this study offers a suggestion to Japanese educational policy makers about how to nurture globally competent human resources.

Keywords
globalization, global market, small and medium-sized companies, intercultural communicative competence

1. Introduction

1.1 Globalized Policy
The Japanese government is currently introducing new educational policies in order to help Japanese people adapt to a globalized environment. For example, they initiated the "Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development"[1] in 2012 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), 2012). The aim of the

project was to "to foster human resources who can <u>positively meet the challenges and succeed in the global field,</u> as the basis for <u>improving Japan's global competitiveness."</u> As it says, this program's main purpose focuses on supporting the selected universities to nurture human resources that can play an important role in a globalized world on behalf of companies. In fact, the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) revealed the result of the selection shows that most of the selected universities on both Type A (University-wide) and Type B (Faculty/school specific) were national universities or large private universities (JSPS, 2012).

Moreover, a subsequent project, "The Top Global University Project," also started in 2014 (JSPS, 2014a). As the aim of the project is described as "to enhance the international compatibility and competitiveness of higher education in Japan," it focuses more on "competition." In this project, a Type A university is expected to be ranked in the world's top 100 while a Type B university must lead the internationalization of Japanese society (JSPS, 2014b). In fact, the institutions in the selection are dominated by national or public universities or large universities again. The selection criteria of the target plan are based on diversity, which includes the increasing ratio of foreign faculty members and foreign students, the flexibility of students who have experienced study abroad, and the level of foreign language proficiency for students to reach: All of these appear to be severe requirements (JSPS, 2014c, MEXT, 2014a).

MEXT (2013) also announced an "English education reform plan corresponding to globalization" in order to reform English education policies throughout each stage from elementary school to high school. The plan aims for the improvement of students' English ability (to pass Grade 2 on the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) test equivalent to the B1 level of CEFR or above at upper secondary schools) by introducing some new policies, such as implementing English language activities in third and fourth grade, starting English language education in fifth and sixth grades in elementary schools[2], conducting lessons in English in principle at lower secondary schools, and so on. However, the aim would be difficult to reach if it was just set without any support. In addition to the plan, MEXT started The *Tobitate*! (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad Initiative (MEXT, 2014b) in order to overcome the Japanese younger generation's "inward tendency" and nurture a challenging attitude toward studying abroad. It is compulsory for the applicant to pass a screening of application documents and an interview in order to qualify for a scholarship. Therefore, students that have enrolled at a university with various support systems for them with good writing and presentation skills tend to have an advantageous position. As a result, the educational policies toward globalization by MEXT seem to have some problems with their aim, orientation, and support system, which will be discussed in the next section.

1.2 The Problems of the Educational Policies toward Globalization

The first problem of the current educational policies is that the government focuses on only nurturing elite students in national, public, or large private universities. As the selection universities enroll students that have passed their stringent entrance examinations, and they tend to possess high English proficiency, the educational investment by the government would end up being directed to the privileged group. In addition, the number of the selection universities is about 40. As the total number of the two projects accounts for less than 10% of all universities, the number of the universities which have not gotten any financial support overwhelmingly surpasses it. Most of the universities that have not been adopted for these projects are small and medium universities, and they have poor policies for internationalization and scarce financial resources. Therefore, the gap between the selection universities and these small universities will increase. The second problem is that the aim of these policies emphasizes only English ability. Though the "Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development" has a plan to develop the internationalization of all universities through this project, most of the adopted universities focus on enhancing students' English proficiency (Kobayashi, 2013). If they focus on only English, what are the possibilities that students would have no interest in other languages or other cultures? The third problem is that we lose a viewpoint toward internationalized human resources within Japan.

In a globalized society, we need to cooperate together with people from different countries other than English native countries; furthermore, the requirement to work along with these workers has been increasing every year (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2015) with the number of foreign visitors expected to reach 20 million, which is 1.5 times that of last year (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2015). Hence, it is necessary for us to nurture not only workers that can work in large companies overseas, but also workers that can work with foreign colleagues in various workplaces in Japan. Therefore, this study attempts to identify what kind of applicant would be desirable for small- medium sized companies.

1.3 Literature about Nurturing Globalized Human Resources

Some studies have investigated what kind of human resources would be desirable in businesses for Japanese companies. The Business Policy Forum Japan described past studies on workers with past or current foreign experience and some examples of Japanese companies which have expanded their business abroad. From these findings, future implications were identified (Business Policy Forum Japan, 2013). Nagai (2012) reviewed various kinds of studies on the nurturing environment for global human resources and from these studies he proposed solutions and policies to some prevalent problems. However, these studies and related literature showed that most of the

participants were large companies belonging to the *Keidanren* (Japan Business Federation). The studies focused on the essential abilities required by workers or management personnel in overseas operations.

There are studies that have focused on small and medium-sized companies, such as by Japan Finance Corporation (JFC, 2013). Their study noted that most topics of the previous studies dealt with cultivating human resources in large companies in a globalized world; however, they have not investigated how to nurture them at small and medium-sized companies. Their study focused on the globalization of human resources, the roles which will be necessary for small and medium-sized companies in the global market, and how to nurture and keep better human resources. They interviewed 10 small and medium-sized companies. According to the result, not only large companies but also small and medium-sized companies need to undertake overseas expansion strategies in their business as they are influenced by various factors and their business partners are dominated by Southeast Asian countries and China in their markets or production sections. Their problems in overseas expansion were about financial resources and human development including foreign employees (JFC, pp.4-9). In order to compensate human resources, the number of those employing foreign graduates is increasing especially in small companies (JFC, 2013, pp.11-12). Based on their study, the following requirements will be necessary as standards of hiring Japanese employees for overseas business network: "Management ability rather than communication ability when launching an office," "Selecting employees with a challenging spirit and self-assured attitude," "The workers who can learn from failure and try again" (JFC, 2013, pp.75-76). The workers are expected to have leadership, assertiveness, adaptation ability, and resilience. Nagai (2012, p.21) also highlighted that at present, companies are required to have various strategies for obtaining competent human resources and preparing a system to cultivate not only Japanese employees who have basic international literacy in business such as foreign language skills but also globally competent human resources regardless of nationality. He claimed that cultivating human resources is performed through their experience, reflection on their own attitude, and their metacognition (Nagai, 2012, pp.25-26). Furthermore, Fujio (2015), who aimed to clarify English proficiency in business, suggested that the important English characteristics required in the internationalized world were the content of talking, the effectiveness of sharing information, and mutual understanding of the communication style and culture of foreign partners.

Several common tendencies of these studies can be established. Firstly, cultivating globally competent human resources will be necessary. Secondly, more workers who have various abilities and can manage an intercultural situation appropriately will be required. Thirdly, as human resources need vary according to the nature of the

companies' businesses, it is difficult to find suitable personnel. Fourthly, as a result, many companies began recruiting not only Japanese workers but also foreign students or local employees in the overseas markets.

1.4 A Preliminary Study

Semi-structured interviews were conducted by the first author of this paper for small and medium-sized companies to investigate their views about overseas business and their future attitude toward hiring globally competent human resources. She prepared 24 questions based on reference to some literature as mentioned above. They were "Overseas Business Transactions" and "Future International Business Expansion" (with the US, Southeast Asian countries, China, and Middle Eastern countries), "Requirements for International Human Resources" (recruitment of foreign students, their impressions, future plans, overseas dispatch), "Hiring Globally Competent Human Resources" (English proficiency, future English policy, intercultural competence), and "Intercultural Receptive Attitudes" (attitude toward foreign visitors, attitude toward different opinions, and attitude toward local employees overseas).

Among the companies that had participated in a job fair held by the career center of a university located in a manufacturing zone in the spring 2014, 12 companies that had agreed to her interview request responded to the questions, talking about some of their business. The result of the interviews (Adachi & Sakai, 2014) showed that higher average values were seen in the following items: "Foreign employees were excellent," "Increasing the number of foreign residents is desirable," "Non-verbal intercultural adaptive ability will be necessary," "The possibility of using English on business will be higher"). Lower average values were seen in the following items: "We will expand business with Middle-Eastern countries," "We will expand business with African countries," "We have a lot of business with American companies." The results had a similar tendency to the results of previous literature.

However, the results from the 12 companies was not enough to reach some conclusions, and a further study was considered necessary in order to obtain a holistic picture of these companies' visions regarding globalization. Therefore, this study was planned based on the results of the interview. Since there were not enough respondents who answered the item "Foreign employees were excellent," and the value of the item "We have a lot of business with Middle-Eastern companies" was low, the two questions were excluded. On the other hand, the question about "Non-verbal intercultural adaptive ability" was divided into two questions to make the intent of the question more concrete. One was a communication style using gestures and another was a cooperative attitude with different people. The question of English proficiency was also divided into two questions for newcomers and for sub-leaders.

2. The Purpose of the Study

The study was conducted on small and medium-sized manufacturing companies to investigate their policies about globally competent human resources. This study aimed to plan how to cultivate college students who would apply to these companies and educate them to develop their English proficiency. The research questions of this study are the following:

1. Which country is their current best partner to do business with, and which country will be in the future?
2. How much do these companies expect their employees to have English and non-verbal communication abilities?
3. What kind of personnel is considered as desirable for these companies?

3. The Study

3.1 Participants and Method
The career center of a university located in an area of high density with manufacturing companies collaborated in this study. The questionnaire was sent to 628 companies, and most of them were small and medium-sized manufacturing companies registered in the center. They were asked in the questionnaire to answer the mark sheet and free description and return their responses in the enclosed envelope.

3.2 Questionnaire
The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions structured and adjusted based on the results of the preliminary study with a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 6. Three items required basic company information, such as capital fund, the number of employees, and the business type. Eight items were about their current business relationships in the world and future business expansion. The remaining 14 items were business attitudes and their policy toward globalization, which included "Requirements for International Human Resources" (hiring foreign students, their impressions, future plans, overseas dispatch), "Hiring Globally Competent Human Resources" (English proficiency, future English policy, intercultural competence), and "Intercultural Receptive Attitudes" (attitude toward foreign visitors, attitude toward different opinions, and attitude toward local employees overseas).

3.3 Procedure
The collected questionnaires were processed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version18, and the marks were changed into data. The free description was also input into a computer. Though the total number of respondents was 237 companies, and the collection rate was 37.7%, five data were excluded because of

insufficient marks. As a result, the total number analyzed was 232 data. The items about basic company information and business relationships in the world, which became nominal scales, were represented in graphs and tables. The remaining 14 items about globalization were converted into descriptive statistics values to confirm the data distribution, and these items were analyzed in detail further.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics Values

Table 1 shows the capital fund, and Table 2 shows the number of employees. These tables indicate that the mode value of the capital fund ranged from 20 to 50 million yen while the mode value in the number of employees ranged from 100 to 300. As the companies whose capital fund surpassed 300 million yen were only 13.8%, it can be said that most of the respondents were small and medium-sized companies. The university was located in an area with many manufacturing companies, and it had only science courses. Concerning their business type, 164 companies were in manufacturing, 23 companies were in information technology, and 42 companies were in other industries. Three respondents did not mark their responses. Therefore, more than 70% of all companies were in the manufacturing industry.

Table 1. Company Fund(yen)

	N	%
Less than 20 million	39	16.8
20 - 50 million	78	33.6
50 -100 million	57	24.6
100 - 300 million	26	11.2
300 million -1billion	14	6.0
More than 1 billion	18	7.8
Total	232	100.0

Table 2. Number of employees

	N	%
Blank	1	0.4
Less than 50	30	12.9
50～100	35	15.1
100～300	106	45.7
300～1000	42	18.1
1000～10000	15	6.5
More than 10000	3	1.3
Total	232	100.0

The companies were also asked about current business relationships with the US, European countries, Southeast Asian countries, African nations, and China, and then about their future business expansion (Figure 1, 2). The results showed that about half of the companies have not had any business relationships with other countries, and the partner companies for most of them which have had or which will have business relationships, were Southeast Asian countries and China. This result was similar to the result of Japan Finance Corporation (2013), which studied small and medium-sized companies and confirmed that these small and medium-sized companies continue to deepen their partnerships with Asian countries.
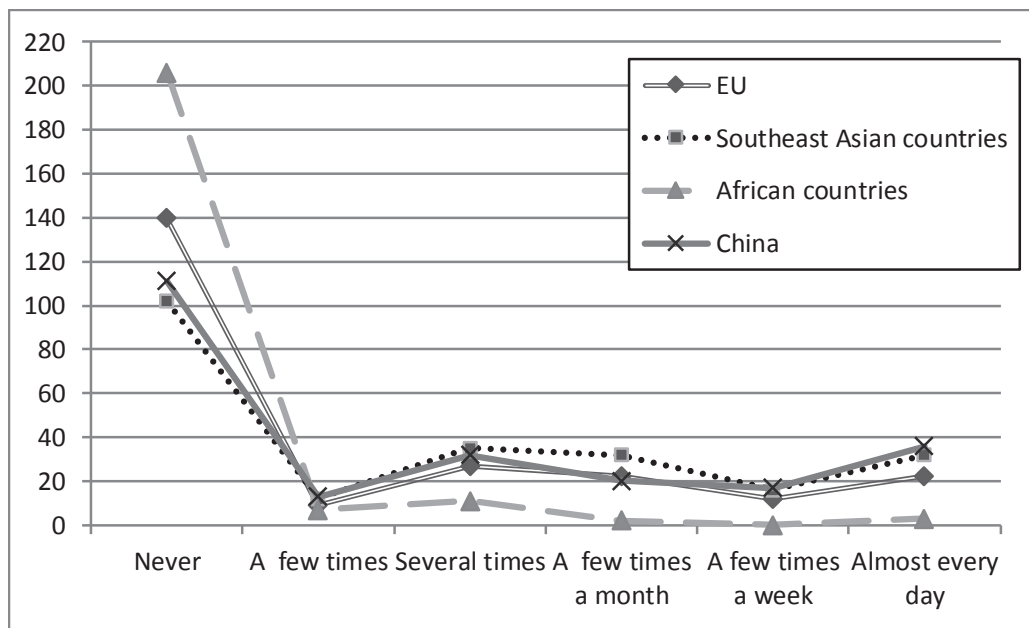
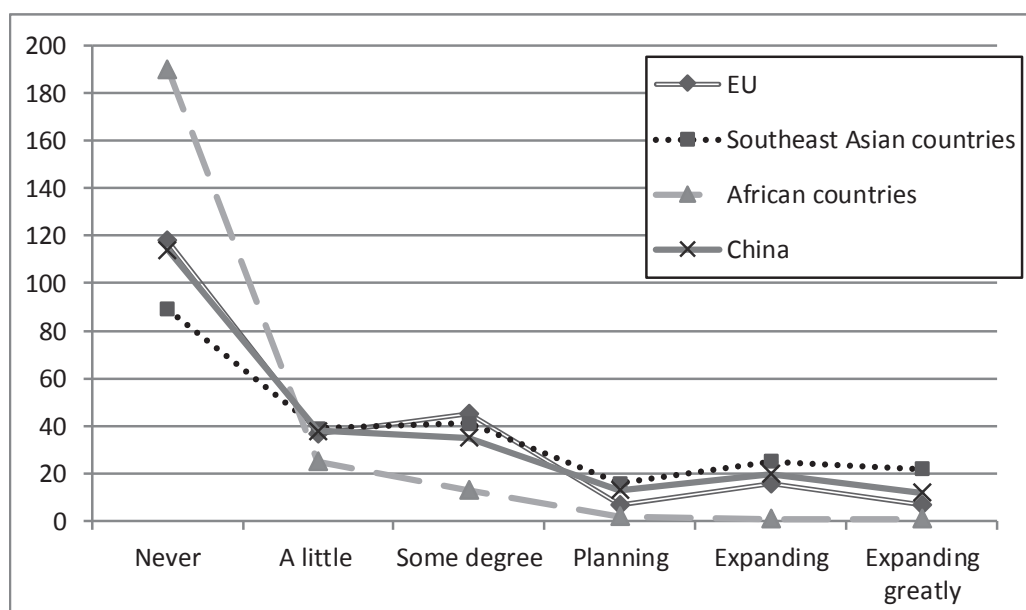Figure 1. Business transaction amount depending on area

Figure 2. Expected future business depending on area

Next, the items from 9 to 22 regarding their business attitudes and policies toward globalization were ordered in average values (Table 3). As these items were asked using a 6–point Likert scale (most of the options were (1) Very low, (2) Low, (3) somewhat low, (4) Somewhat high, (5) High, and (6) Very high), the median was 3.5, and four out of 14 items were over 3.5. Therefore, it can be said that most of the participating companies have not established a global business in the field of "International Human Resources" and "Hiring Globally Competent Human Resources" yet.

Table 3. Business attitudes and policy toward globalization

Items	Average
No.15 Increasing the number of foreigners visiting Japan is desirable for future business	4.14
No.17 Increasing the number of overseas partners is desirable	4.09
No. 9 Possibilities of going abroad	3.75
No.14 Possibilities of fostering cooperative attitudes with people with different values	3.75
No.10 Possibilities of using English abroad	3.42
No.13 Possibilities of attempting communication using gestures	3.38
No.16 Increasing the number of foreign employees is desirable for future business	3.37
No.19 The Japanese communication style with foreign workers is desirable in meetings	3.34
No.11 Possibilities of using English for domestic business	3.19
No.20 Interpersonal relations in the Japanese style are desirable even after work	3.18
No.22 English proficiency for sub-leaders	2.99
No.12 Possibilities of using various languages other than English	2.88
No.21 English proficiency for entry-level	2.68
No.18 Employing foreign applicants with high Japanese proficiency rather than Japanese applicants	2.50

The English proficiency of newcomers and sub-leaders (items No. 22 and 23) was also asked according to six levels using TOEIC by each level of 150 scores. They were as follows: (1) Very low English level: less than 250,　(2) Low English level: 250-400, (3) Average English level: 400-550,　(4) Good English level: 550-700,　(5) Very good English level: 700-850,　and (6) Excellent (native-like) English level: more than 850. As a result, the average value of newcomers was 2.7, while the average of sub-leaders was 3.0. The two items of using English abroad and at home were asked according to six levels again respectively. The results showed that average values were 3.4 and 3.2 respectively. The average values of the two items about a communication style using gestures and a cooperative attitude with different people were 3.4 and 3.7 respectively. According to The Institute for International Business Communication (2013), the average expected TOEIC score for employees with global competency was 600 in listed companies. However, this study showed that the expected TOEIC scores for entry-level applicants in small and medium-sized companies was not so high, from 250-550. In addition, using English in business is not so frequent in small and medium-sized companies. On the other hand, it was found that the intercultural communicative competence was also being gradually required in these companies.

4.2 Factor Analysis and Internal Consistency Reliability
A factor analysis with Promax rotation was conducted on the 14 items about globally competent human resources to investigate the companies' business attitudes and their

policies. No items indicated both the floor effect and the ceiling effect among items from No.9 to No.22. As a result, three factors were yielded. However, as item No.18 did not show any contribution ratio to any factors (0.350>), it was excluded, and a second factor analysis was performed. Three factors were yielded again (Table 4).

Table 4. Factor analysis of companies' preferred traits and other items with Promax rotation: Pattern matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor3		Sub-factor 1, 2
13.Using gestures	**.919**	-.167	.038		
14.Cooperative attitude	**.864**	-.089	-.036		
10.English use abroad	**.815**	.160	-.155		Intercultural communicative skills
9. Possibilities to go abroad	**.811**	.076	-.119	Intercultural communicative competence	
12.Use of various languages	**.759**	.063	-.001		
11.Domestic use of English	**.677**	.091	-.081		
17.Increasing overseas partners	**.676**	.052	.150		
16.Increasing foreign employees	**.454**	.002	.394		Intercultural receptive attitude
15.Increasing foreigners visiting Japan	**.385**	-.141	.300		
22.English proficiency (sub leader)	.066	**.862**	.011	Scores by test	
21.English proficiency (entry-level)	-.027	**.847**	.060		
20.Relations in Japanese style	-.106	.170	**.624**	Japanese mind	
19.Japanese style in meetings	-.063	-.030	**.566**		

Factor 1 included nine items, and the items with high factor loading were No.13: "Try to communicate using gestures," No.14: "Try to have a cooperative attitude with people with different values," and No.10: "Possibilities of using English abroad." Factor 2 comprised two items, which were No.21: "English proficiency for newcomers," and No.22: "English proficiency for sub-leaders." In addition, Factor 3 was also comprised of two items, which were No.19: "Taking the Japanese communication style is desirable" and No.20: "Having interpersonal relations in the Japanese style is desirable." Since only Factor 1 contained more than 3 items, a factor analysis with Promax rotation was performed on the nine items again, which yielded a further two factors. Sub-factor 1 included 8 items except No.15 and No.16, and Sub-factor 2 contained two items. Next, the Cronbach alpha index of internal consistency was calculated for each factor. The Cronbach alpha index for Factor 1 was 0.912, Sub-factor 1 was 0.922, and Factor 2 and Factor 3 were 0.870 and 0.594 respectively. Though the internal consistency reliability of Factor 1 and 2 was fully acceptable, the internal consistency reliability of Factor 3

was not high enough.

As Factor 1 included items from No.9 to No.17, which had some relationship with positive attitudes toward communication with various foreigners rather than toward learning English, it was labelled "Intercultural communicative competence." Among the items, No.15 and No.16 were different from the others since it was presumed that the two items were about foreigner acceptance in Japan while the others were about positive and cooperative attitudes with people with different business backgrounds. Therefore, Sub-factor 1 was labelled "Intercultural communicative skills," and Sub-factor 2 was labelled "Intercultural receptive attitude." As item No.15 had the highest average value, accepting foreign people in Japan would be considered important common sense for Japanese companies in order to operate globally.   Under Sub-factor 1, there were five items with a higher contribution rate (>0.750). On the whole, it is important to communicate with various people and exchange ideas actively on business, and using English is one of the important elements of business. Factor 2 was comprised of item No.21 and 22, and their contribution rates to Factor 1 were low. Therefore, Factor 2 represented "English proficiency evaluated by test," rather than a communicative attitude, hence its name. In addition, Factor 3 is labelled as the "Japanese mind." However, as the average values of the two items subsumed to Factor 3 were under the median (3.5), they were not strong elements, and it showed that Japanese workers tend to think Japanese communication style is considered important after work.

5. Discussion

5.1 Results of the Study
The results of this study are summarized as follows:
1. The small and medium-sized companies did not show high awareness on how to develop globally competent human resources.
2. As the companies in this study had their business partners in Southeast Asian countries and China, and they planned to expand the business relationships with these countries, it is expected that Japanese companies would have a stronger relationship with Asian countries.
3. The companies expected their new employees to have intercultural communicative competence such as a communicative attitude using gestures and a cooperative attitude with different people, rather than a high English proficiency.
4. The companies have expanded their business in Asian countries and considered non-verbal communication important, and Factor 1 included the most items. Therefore, it can be said that the required abilities were not only English but also intercultural communication competency with which the new employees will play an active role.

5. The "Japanese mind" of Factor 2 seemed to show that they expect foreign employees to adopt and accept the Japanese style. Therefore, these companies have not been able to raise awareness about multicultural coexistence yet. Henceforth, they will also be required to have attitudes that are more cooperative in order to overcome the differences with employees from other countries.

5.2 How to Cope with the Globalized Society

In a globalized world, people, goods, and information go back and forth over borders, and not only people who go abroad but also people who remain within a country are required to have abilities to adjust themselves to correspond to the global era. Since intercultural contacts will increase both inside and outside Japan, the intellectual elite will not be enough to supply the shortfall in human resources. Therefore, in educational institutes, teachers need to prepare all the students to manage different intercultural situations appropriately. In addition, teachers should help students foster some interest in foreign languages even though the students do not have high English proficiency. Furthermore, it will be necessary to cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence in order to lead them toward appropriate communication and working on various tasks together with people from different cultures or foreign employees. In order to conduct such education, teachers need not only to provide some knowledge to students but also introduce some action-based various learning methods such as overseas internship, Project Based Learning (PBL), and cross-cultural understanding workshops to develop students' intercultural communication competency.

As Japanese companies expand into Asian countries, it is expected that the number of local foreign employees and the number of foreign workers in Japan will increase as Nagai (2012) and NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) (2015) have indicated. Subsequently, we need to consider how we should treat them and improve their working conditions as if they were working under the same employment conditions with Japanese workers. As Factor 3 was labelled as "Japanese mind," we need to foster an awareness of international co-living with others among Japanese people. To date, Japanese companies have tended to expect foreign employees to assimilate into the Japanese culture similar to the proverb, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Even in a study about intercultural contacts, the host society itself has not been focused on. However, both the host society and sojourners have influenced their mutual relationship to some degrees (Adachi, 2008). In order to avoid business frictions and conflicts between various cultures, both sides should respect each other. To addition, we need to prevent minority people from being excluded from society and forming a radical group; therefore, the host country should be free from the merging attitude of forcing them into assimilation, but rather, nurturing a co-living attitude of respecting others (Adachi, 2010). In addition, while foreign students come from Asian countries, if Japanese

students do not have much interest in Asian languages, they may have a narrow mind toward the world. Moreover, if they immerse themselves in the English native speakers' world, they may be confronted with communication problems in various Asian countries (Phan 2013, p.171). It is important to think about our future education through not only focusing on English skills but also nurturing the global competency required in different situations.

5.3 The Limitations of This Study

As this study focused on only small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in a local area, it does not uncover the globally competent human resources which small and medium-sized companies require. Further studies which especially focus on other industries will be necessary. However, as some similar results were found in some literature in section 1.3, it can be said that this study demonstrated the current business situation in the manufacturing industry to some degree.

6. Further Studies and Implications

This study was conducted by focusing on small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in a local area to investigate what kinds of human resources these companies require and how teachers should educate the students. As a result, it was found that small and medium-sized companies seek the cultivation of employees' multiple communicative skills[3] in an intercultural context rather than high English ability. This suggest that the government policy in which English proficiency is the primary aim should be reconsidered. This study is different from other studies because it revealed the companies' attitudes toward foreign workers. The companies in the study and in other similar studies considered neighboring Asian countries as their future business market. In addition, most of the increasing foreign workers and foreign visitors come from these Asian countries (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2015). From this time forth, we have to address problems of serious labor shortage in some industries such as care services, agriculture, and construction, and interact with people from different cultures in local governments and local tourism businesses. Therefore, we need to confront issues on how to cope with these domestic globalized working situations, exit from an assimilative way of thinking, which was shown in the "Japanese mind," respond without prejudice, and not "Japanize" the foreign workers. It will be required for each company to increase their efforts to create a better working environment where workers can collaborate and cooperate with each other. Furthermore, if we hope to develop human resources that can survive in the globalized world both inside and outside of Japan, the government should support more universities in developing their global education. In a further globalized society, all students will need to have some ability to adjust themselves to the situation. If not, our society will prominently lack globally

competent human resources. Therefore, we ask for a better education to promote globally competent human resources that possess a global mindset with which every student can build a good relationship with different people in order not to compete but to cooperate.

Notes

(1) It is said that this plan was originally based on a group called "Global Human Resources" (2012), under the Prime Minister. (http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/global/)
(2) Now, it is planned to have one class and several module-type classes (total one hour) because of the limited number of classes a week.
(3) Since "Intercultural communicative competence" in this study is limited to companies, it may not correspond to a broader meaning of "Intercultural communicative competence."

Acknowledgements

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【Research Note】
Self-regulated English Writing of Japanese High School Students Focusing on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies

Matsuoka, Mayuko

Abstract

This paper reports the effects and limitations of an EFL writing program fostering high school students' use of metacognitive strategies in EFL writing. It is based on the process of self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning refers to proactive processes that learners use to acquire academic skills, such as setting goals, selecting strategies, and self-monitoring their effectiveness. Subjects were 78 senior high school students, and the program was conducted over a three-month period. The students self-reflected on their own writing process using feedback from their teachers or other peers, set the goals for their next writing activities, and planned what metacognitive strategies they needed to use. The results of the survey showed that the frequencies of the use of metacognitive strategies in forethought and self-reflection phases were significantly higher after the completion of the program. The results of open-ended questionnaires as a post survey revealed that the students tend to have positive feelings towards their own English language learning, which lead to their self-efficacy. Furthermore, they recognized the difficulties of setting goals, planning, and controlling their affective motivation.

Keywords
self-regulated learning, metacognitive strategies, essay writing

1. Introduction

In 1996, the report by the Central Education Council of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of, Japan, stressed the importance of acquiring "a zest for living (*Ikiru-chikara* in Japanese)" for students. This statement refers to the ability to identify the necessary tasks, learn, think, judge, and solve problems spontaneously and effectively by oneself, regardless of the prevailing societal conventions. The same principle is included in the current course of study for elementary, junior high, and senior high schools highlighting the centrality of such ability for survival in a drastically changing society. In 2013, "the thinking skill (*Shiko-ryoku* in Japanese)" was designated as a core 21st century skill, which includes problem-solving or metacognitive skills. To foster such skills and abilities, self-regulated learning (SRL) must play a significant role. SRL is a learning style that

requires learners to monitor their own learning process spontaneously, particularly focusing on metacognition, motivation, and behavior (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). In European countries and the United States, academic research focusing on and learning programs based on the theory of SRL have been produced and implemented, respectively (Schmitz & Wiese, 2006). One example is Responsive Open Learning Environments (ROLE), which is a corroborative project of six research groups in EU countries and China (Mikroyannidis, 2011). It offers a web-based software for university students, using ICT technology (see http://www.role-project.eu for details). Other countries, such as Finland and Hong Kong, have set the goal of developing SRL ability as well as foreign language skills (Yamamoto et al., 2013). Therefore, the current focus on SRL theory within the EFL context is largely recognized as warranted by policy makers and language practitioners.

In an effort to explore further the potential role of SRL in Japanese foreign language education, the present study was conducted to foster the use of high school students' metacognitive strategies in an English writing class. Students reflected on their own writing process with teachers' guidance or peer feedback, set goals for the subsequent writing activities, and chose strategies they planned to use on the basis of their self-reflection. In this paper, the effects and limitations that were revealed in the questionnaires are reported and discussed.

2. Current State of EFL Writing of Japanese Senior High School Students

This section aims to examine the writing learning contexts of senior high school students in Japan, from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. According to a survey done by Benesse Corporation (2014), junior and senior high school students tend to spend little time on English writing. More than 85% of students in senior high schools thought "translating Japanese into English" was the main activity in their English writing class. On the other hand, only 36.3% of second-grade senior high school students said that they "express their own feelings and ideas in English" as the main activity in a writing class. The percentage of first- and second-grade students who experienced difficulty in writing an English sentence was quite high at 76.

In their qualitative analysis, Mizumoto et al. (2014) reported that students tend to use only words or phrases they feel are easy to use, without paying sufficient attention to grammaticality of their writing productions. They argued that the cause of unsuccessful self-regulated writers is a communicative approach that merely encourages students to use simple expressions – without paying attention to accuracy, resulting in students' lack of self-monitoring in their essays (Mizumoto, et al., 2014). It is thus possible that teachers have not focused sufficiently on students' process of checking and revising

their writing.

These two findings suggest that it is worthwhile to reconsider teaching and learning methods or processes in English writing from an SRL perspective. Now EFL teachers are responsible for building students' confidence in their writing skills which includes self-revision in the writing process. Furthermore, they need to effectively lead students to reflect upon their own learning (writing) process with the circulative process of SRL for the next writing activity.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1 SRL
This learning program is based on the model of SRL with a social cognitive perspective (Zimmerman, 2000). Figure 1 shows a cyclic phase model of SRL that consists of three phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection.
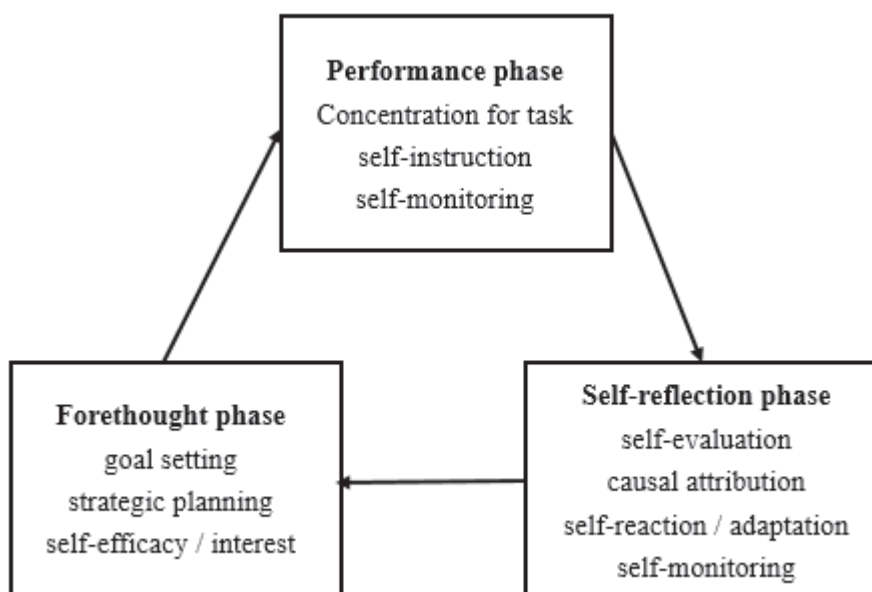
Figure 1. Three phases of SRL *(Translated from source: Ito 2009).*

3.2 SRL and Metacognition
Metacognition plays a crucial role in the SRL process. Metacognition refers to the regulation of behavior with one's subjective observation for intellectual activities beyond one's cognition (Uesaka, 2010). Metacognition consists of both metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies. Metacognitive activities are based on metacognitive knowledge (Sannnomiya, 2008), and monitoring and controlling can function cyclically.

Metacognitive strategies are regarded as components of SRL strategies, which learners use in an SRL process. Metacognitive strategies, such as monitoring and planning, enable learners to recognize their comprehension, changes of intelligence status, and/or aspects of the learning process.

In Japan, there is some research related to metacognitive strategies. For example, Tani (2010) focused on the relationships between learners' use of metacognitive strategies and motivation from the perspective of autonomous learning. Nito (2007) examined the effects of feedback on fostering learners' metacognition.

3.3 SRL Process in Writing

Writing is a task that gives writers a larger cognitive load than almost any other human cognitive activity. The process of producing essays, for example, is so complex that it takes many years for individuals to become well-skilled writers.

Researchers have had various approaches to analyzing writing processes since the first practical study was conducted in North America in the 1970s (Harris, Santangelo, and Graham, 2010). Particularly, after the Cambridge Cognitive Revolution, innate processes have been highlighted (Nystrand, 2006). As Chomsky claimed "to study language is to investigate the structure of the mind, and linguistics is a branch of cognitive psychology" (Nystrand, 2006, p. 13), the current research focus tends to be put on learners' self-regulated process (Harris, et al., 2011). To more precisely describe this tendency, researchers focus on the varieties of SRL strategies that writers use (examples of these strategies are shown in the next section.). In a writing process based on the SRL theory, writers produce essays using self-regulation, and plan for the next writing task by reviewing their writing process or its evaluation. Considering that writing is an activity that only involves writing, it can be clearly understood that metacognition plays a major role in this process.

3.4 SRL Strategies in Writing

The aim of this section is to explain learning strategies that are used in a self-regulated writing process, with emphasis on those which are the target strategies in this study. Table 1 shows strategies writers use from the beginning to ending phases. The strategies are classified according to the taxonomy proposed by Harris, Santangelo, and Graham (2010) and those related to metacognitive processes described by Chamot et al. (1999). The author of this paper put each strategy into "one phase" for convenience of classification; however, in a real writing activity, two or more strategies may be effectively used, depending on the situation a writer faces. The underlined strategies in the table are metacognitive ones.

4. The Role and Impact of SRL in an EFL Writing Context

This section looks at the two reasons for focusing on an SRL approach within an EFL context. The first point is the government guidelines requiring teachers to foster autonomous learning in their students (MWXT, 2014). Autonomous learners control their own learning process at three points: learning management, cognitive process, and learning content (Benson, 2001).

Table 1. *Writing Strategies in an SRL Process*

Stage		Strategies
SRL	Metacognition	
Forethought	Planning	Goal setting; Strategic planning; Organizational planning; Time planning; Self-reinforcement factors setting; Elaboration of prior knowledge; Creating the essay structure; Seeking information; Concentration on a task*; Environmental structuring *
Performance	Monitoring	Record keeping; Organizing; Transforming; Reviewing notes; Imitating skillful learners; Selective attention; Self-monitoring (comprehension, method, time); Checking the essay content; Reflecting on prior experiences; The substitution of known expressions; Resourcing; Self-control; Seeking social assistance
Self-reflection	Evaluation	Self-evaluating for the essay; (Problem finding and improvement）; Self-evaluating for goal achievement/planning/strategies; Revising essays or plans; Planning to overcome problems or weaknesses

Note. The strategies that have an asterisk mark in the table are used in the performance phase.

In other words, autonomous learners are learners who manage their own learning, have metacognitive knowledge, and decide the learning content. Learning management is related to a metacognitive strategy (Oxford, 1990). Learners first start to use strategies related to learning management and master them. Then, as a result, they can have metacognitive knowledge, which influences learners' cognitive processes. This supports the possible objective of this program to foster learners' metacognitive strategies through the SRL process.

The second point is related to learners' individual differences, such as their proficiency. Previous studies have mainly examined the learning styles and processes of successful

learners of English, and teachers tend to teach "slow learners" based on findings and implications of such studies (Takeuchi, 2012).   The phase "slow learners" refers to learners who pursue their learning in their own way or at their own pace, spending much more time to master something than other learners (Nakazawa, 2014).   However, there are various learning processes and weaknesses of learners.   It should be necessary for learners themselves to recognize the self-regulatory features of their learning styles and review the learning processes.   Therefore, an SRL perspective enables learners to improve their skills and knowledge in line with their proficiency levels (Schunk, 1984).

In a writing learning context, previous studies identified that self-regulation plays a crucial role in learners' writing processes.   In theoretical and empirical studies, researchers have been focusing on metacognition as a key element in writing, and the differences between skillful writers and poor ones have come into clear view (Harris, Santangelo, & Graham, 2010).

In the light of previous findings, it is reasonable to assume that, this SRL-focused program may impact EFL students with various proficiency levels.

5. Methodology

5.1 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to examine the effects and limitations of a SRL-based program in EFL writing.   Focusing on metacognitive strategies, the author aims to reveal whether some changes in students' use of strategies occur.   In addition, students' responses to the open-ended questionnaire are analyzed to determine the program's effects and whether there are any problems that need to be addressed.

5.2 Subjects
Subjects were 78 second-graders in a senior high school in Japan who belong to the same academic course.   According to the questionnaire on task values in English learning, which was conducted before this program (all tie items were derived from Ida, 2004, with some revisions for English learning, not general learning), they tended to have a strong desire to enter a specific university, and studied English not as a communication tool but to achieve their goal (to enter the targeted university).   In their English writing classes, students are taught to clearly describe the reasons for their statements and add specific examples as supporting evidence.   They take a Global Test of English Communication (GTEC) for students (Advanced type), produced by Benesse Corporation every year.   This GTEC test is the most commonly used English assessment test for junior and senior high school students in Japan (Benesse, 2014).

The proficiency levels of examinees are assessed as a grade on a scale from 1 to 7 (7 being the highest, examined on the basis of the sum of all scores in reading, listening, and writing: 810 is a full score). Examinees who reach grade three, for example, are regarded as beginners, grade four as intermediate, and grade five as advanced learners (recommended grade by examinees' graduation from senior high schools) by Benesse Corporation. The average writing grade is four (scores of 100–129 out of 170), and about 15% students are in grade three (under 80). The evaluation criteria for writing are: (a) whether a writer clearly states his/her idea; (b) whether he/she adds the reasons for it; (c) vocabulary; (d) grammar; (e) essay organization (Benesse, 2014). According to the webpage of Benesse Corporation, its can-do statements of GTEC for STUDENTS show grade 3 examinees as being able to "describe their ideas, thoughts, or events with five or six English sentences" and "write an English letter or e-mail using a dictionary," while the grade 4 examinees "can write an English essay focusing on its organization" and "can write an English letter or e-mail without the use of a dictionary." It can be said that the differences between these two grades are related to the frequency of dictionary use and the coherence of the text organization.

5.3 Period of Study

The study was conducted from September to November of 2014, in writing classes that were held three times per week. Within 45 minutes of each lesson, students spent 25 minutes on the SRL activity in September, and 10 to 15 minutes in October and November. The hours that students spent on this program was one third of the total hours for their English classes. A pre survey was given to the students at the beginning of September and a post-survey at the end of November.

5.4 Method

5.4.1. Questionnaire. The author administered a 30-item questionnaire (based on a five-point scale ranging from 1(never) to 5 (always), and separately gave another questionnaire that consisted of open-ended questions. All questions were written in Japanese, students' mother tongue. The former was to determine the frequency of students' use of metacognitive strategies that are underlined in Table 1. The wording of each item was revised appropriately. The latter was conducted in the final class in November, asking about what points the students felt were effective or difficult. The students could report two positive points (that they felt effective) and two negative points (that they felt difficult). This questionnaire was submitted as a report for the second term. The students were required to write a sentence in Japanese that expressed simply the content of each point (like a title) and described precisely what they felt was effective/difficult with some specific reasons. Furthermore, they wrote about what and how they were going to improve their English writing skills (what kind of strategies in this program they felt important to foster their English writing skills).

5.4.2 Worksheets. Students used three types of worksheets in this program. The first sheet (Worksheet 1) was used for their self-reflection of strategy use and self-evaluation of it, based on a cyclic SRL process. This was distributed twice in three months, at the beginning and end of the program. The second one (Worksheet 2) was used for planning. It asked students to outline what strategies they were going to use and how they were going to use them, so that they could freely check their planning. The worksheet served as a learning guide or reminder for the students. The third one (Worksheet 3) was used for self-recording. Teachers and classmates gave their feedback to each student based on this worksheet, and the student solved the problems or difficulties that s/he had identified. The second and third sheets were distributed when the teacher gave a new task to the students.

5.4.3 Procedures. In the forethought phase, the teacher administered the questionnaire on students' use of metacognitive strategies (see the Appendix). Then, she explained the context of this writing class and divided students into groups of four or five. In each group, students shared the strategies that they tended to use in English writing and any difficulties or problems that they typically faced. Then, they wrote the strategies in Worksheet 1, divided them into appropriate and inappropriate strategies for themselves and underlined the strategies that they felt were effective. In Worksheet 2, the students wrote about the goals they set for their English writing, the process for completing a given task, and the strategies that they planned to use in a task. On the first day, the teacher did not provide students with any feedback; she only tried to elicit students' ideas. In the second lesson, she offered guidance on effective metacognitive strategies for writing.

In the performance phase, students completed a writing task (essay) at home following the SRL process (shown in Figure 1). As they had to do the task independently, students wrote down the questions or problems that they wanted to ask their teacher or classmates or solve in Worksheet 3 after the process of self-monitoring (Charles, 1990, cited in Hiromori, 2004). This worksheet was helpful for both teachers' guidance and students' cooperative learning.

In the self-reflection phase, students checked their essays independently in accordance with the check items printed on the GTEC for Students STEP UP Notebook (hereafter referred to as the STEP UP Notebook, given to all examinees by Benesse after the test). These items enable students to check whether they are expressing their ideas on a given topic coherently and with adequate support, using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and whether the essay is well organized. After their self-check, students reported on their writing process, the strategies that they had used, focusing on points that they felt worked well, and points that they thought should be clarified in their group. They

shared the above points using Worksheets 2 and 3.   All discussions were recorded by IC recorders.   The data was used for the teacher's evaluation and feedback on each student's activity.   After the students submitted their essays for correction and feedback, they reflected upon why they had received a particular evaluation for their essays, tried to determine what needed to be improved, and planned for the next writing activity.   The teacher supported her students' self-reflection with relevant comments related to areas requiring improvement.

This study was characterized by a cooperative learning style, rather than the teacher-dominant one to provide a more natural learning environment to students. This style tends to stimulate learners' self-reflection and internalize or deepen the knowledge, and as a result, it increases their motivation (Ueno, 2005).

The teacher introduced frequently used and effective strategies in each phase of the SRL process, checking the students' Worksheets 1 and 2.   She provided clear in-depth explanations of the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies and the contexts in which learners use them.   Furthermore, she wrote supportive comments on students' worksheets, in an effort to raise and sustain their motivation.   These teaching/learning procedures continued regularly for approximately two and a half months.

6. Results

6.1 Questionnaire on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies

A dependent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the means of students' data in the pre-survey (September) and the post-survey (November).   Data from 74 students (excluding missed answers) collected from the questionnaires were statistically analyzed with SPSS 18.0 and the effect size calculation sheet (Mizumoto, 2009 for details).   Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, t-values, and effect sizes of the items where a significant difference was found (#1, 2, and 3 in the forethought phase, #9 in performance, and #12, 13, 14, and 15 in self-reflection).

There were significant effects for eight metacognitive strategies in three phases, as shown in Table 2, with the post-survey showing higher means than the pre-survey, except for   item #9 in the performance phase (Concentration on a task / Environmental structuring), and item #2 in the forethought phase (Time planning).   Large effect sizes for this analysis were found for goal setting, strategic planning, self-reflection and self-evaluation.

6.2 Questionnaire on the Benefits and Drawbacks of This Program

Data from 74 students collected from the questionnaire were descriptive, including the

students' reactions to the program.　Three English teachers including the author analyzed the data using　Group KJ method (Nakanishi, 2011; explained as a narrow definition of a KJ method by Kawakita, 1996), first identifying the titles that represented the contents of their statements and keywords.　This method consists of four analytical stages: labeling, grouping, graphic explanation, and predication.　In particular, the analysts spent a considerable amount of time clarifying the meaning of each labeling and sharing areas of disagreements or identified problems among the teachers.

Table 2. *Means, SDs, t-values, and Effect sizes (r) of Students' Use of Metacognitive Strategies (N=74)*

	September		November		*t*-value	*r*
Forethought phase	M	SD	M	SD		
1) I always try to plan what skills I want to master and achieve the goal of mastering them.	3.27	1.15	4.23	0.77	8.5***	0.7
2) I always try to think how much time I will spend and how much effort I will put in before starting to learn something.	3.12	1.35	3.41	1.07	2.46*	0.27
3) I always try to think what strategies I will use and how I will use them during learning.	2.31	1.1	3.35	1.17	8.1***	0.68
Performance phase						
9) I always try to do a task in a quiet place or somewhere I can concentrate on it.	4.12	0.97	3.78	0.85	2.49*	0.27
Self-reflection phase						
12) After a task, I always try to reflect on how I learned something.	1.29	0.76	2.94	1.3	11.51***	0.8
13) After a task, I always try to think whether my learning process was appropriate for me.	1.24	0.54	3.22	1.1	15.62***	0.87
14) After I received a result (evaluation), I always try to think about the reasons for it.	4.13	0.9	4.46	0.62	4.12***	0.43
15) After I received a result (evaluation), I always try to think whether my learning process was appropriate for me.	2.46	1.1	3.65	0.8	9.73***	0.74

N=74,　*** *p*<.001, **p*<.05

The analysis demonstrates, that the students considered this program useful: they gained awareness of an effective way of learning, developed a positive attitude towards EFL writing which in turn enabled them to have confidence in their writing skills (similar to self-efficacy), and cultivate good relationships with other classmates.　Many respondents mentioned that it was enjoyable to consider deeply what an effective learning style was for themselves, recognize the development of their writing skills, and what is more, "self-regulate" their writing process.　For students who had lower English writing proficiency (as well as English language ability in general), a cooperative learning style enabled them to gain a new perspective that they could not have had in self-study.

On the other hand, they experienced difficulty in the following three areas.   The first was to determine an effective learning style that was individually suitable.   This is related to the limited time for this program of only two and a half months.   The second was to self-regulate their whole learning processes, particularly in goal setting and adjusting the planning they set.   The third was to control their feelings (particularly negative), which was reported especially as difficult by poor English learners. They felt that cooperative learning was effective; however, it gave such students the opportunity to compare themselves to other skillful learners in terms of English proficiency and a self-regulatory process, and to more deeply recognize their weaknesses. In addition, they pointed out that they needed to have more intervention or support from their teacher.

7. Discussion

This section offers a discussion of the results from an educational perspective.   The findings from the questionnaires on the use of metacognitive strategies indicate that this program was effective, to some extent, in improving students' use of metacognitive strategies in the forethought and self-reflection phases.   In particular, it could effectively foster students' use of these strategies in the self-reflection phase.   At the same time, the results revealed that, there were only a few strategies which were statistically significant and an effect size was too small.   Students' concentration on a task and environmental structuring in the post-survey were lower than in the pre-survey. One possible reason is that the teacher could not directly observe her students' online use of strategies and writing processes because of the task being performed outside the classroom and was only able to provide detailed advice on the students' worksheets. Therefore, the worksheets did not necessarily reflect students' real learning processes.

The findings from the open-ended questionnaire indicate that the students in this study could develop a positive attitude that allowed them to pursue appropriate individual learning processes.   In addition, their positive attitude could stimulate their self-efficacy for English writing.   As shown in the report by Zimmerman and Bandura (1994), such positive emotions could motivate students to continuously engage in SRL processes.   Furthermore, through a cooperative learning process, they could self-regulate their own learning by metacognitive monitoring and controlling, while sharing their self-regulatory process with other students. It is implied that cooperative learning can foster learners' self-regulation.

As mentioned earlier, the difficulties that the students experienced were to internalize an effective and suitable learning style, adjust their goals and plans, and appropriately control their emotions.   They became cognizant of the fact that making SRL an integral

mechanism of their learning routine is a time-consuming process.   This realization may make students more confident and positive in undertaking writing activities in the future, as well as more aware of the continuous SRL processes as they recognize the feasibility of their set goals.

One possible reason for students' difficulty in adjusting their goals and plans is their misattribution of the outcome (evaluation for an English essay).   They might perceive some external circumstances beyond their control (such as bad luck) as the real causes of the failure to achieve desired outcomes.   They tended to be unfamiliar with the mechanics of setting self-reinforcing factors or using a "self-talk" strategy as a way to control their emotions.   Self-reinforcing factors include learners' innate contentment, verbal reactions, and rewards such as pocket money are self-reinforcing factors (Muto et al., 1990).   In other words, such factors help learners gauge their self-evaluation and use self-reinforcing strategies.   We can see this represented in the following self-talk: "If I achieve my learning goal, I will do what I would want (such as going to a museum exhibit)."   It is important for learners to plan in advance what they are going to do after their goals are accomplished.   Finally, these findings imply that the students needed to have their teacher's concrete guidance or support in dealing with such challenges.

8. Prospects for Future Research

In a future study, recorded data (students' discussion; about 115 minutes per student on average) should be analyzed to gain some new perspectives on the instruction of the self-regulatory writing process.

The pedagogical implications of this study point to the need to clarify the teacher's role in such program, accentuate teacher's explicit guidance related to students' use of learning strategies, and decreasing the students' cognitive load.   To solve these problems, Kimura et al. (2005) argued that explicit guidance on the basis of the model of metacognition should be used.   "To give different check lists (self-reflection sheets) to students according to their proficiency" (Yoshida, 2012, p. 198) is one possible method for teachers.   Teachers need to raise students' awareness of specific effective strategies and guide them gradually to the stage of autonomous self-reflection.   The author feels that it is effective for teachers to deal with strategies such as goal setting and strategic planning in the initial phase of their instruction.   Teachers design learning contexts that their students can use as a targeted strategy in class, observe their learning process directly, and are then able to identify important challenges that may be unreported by students.   For lower-level students (students whose writing grades were three (or lower) on the GTEC test), teachers need to help them self-regulate, especially in their motivation and emotions.   It is imperative for learners to focus on strategies to

raise and sustain their level of motivation, and control their emotions (Ito et al., 2007). Activities in which students can become aware of their own feelings and emotions might be effective, such as a think-aloud protocol method.   In addition, appropriate scaffolding is required to lessen learners' cognitive load according to the level of learners' writing proficiency, as English learning in and of itself is represents a significant a cognitive load for EFL learners.

Based on the preliminary findings presented in this study, a teaching program based on an SRL model may be effective in the EFL writing environment.   The positive effect can be maximized if teachers pay special attention to students' cognitive load and motivation, in an attempt to overcome some of the problems described above.

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Appendix

Questionnaire on the use of metacognitive strategies

[Forethought phase]

1) I always try to plan what skills I want to master and achieve the goal of mastering them.

2) I always try to think about how much time I will spend and how much effort I will put in before starting to learn something.

3) I always try to think about what strategies I will use and how I will use them during learning.

4) I always try to make a learning plan on the basis of the results of my previous learnings.

5) I always try to make a plan analyzing what kind of task I was given before starting to learn something.

[Performance phase]

6) During a task, I always try to determine what I can understand and what I cannot understand.

7) During a task, I always try to check whether my learning process is appropriate for me.

8) During a task, I always try to check whether I can spend enough time on learning.

9) I always try to complete a task in a quiet place or somewhere I can concentrate on it.

10) I always try to complete a task no matter how difficult it is for me.

[Self-reflection phase]

11) After a task, I always determine whether the goal I set has been accomplished.

12) After a task, I always try to reflect on how I learned something.

13) After a task, I always try to determine whether my learning process was appropriate for me.

14) After I receive a result (evaluation), I always try to think about the reasons for it.

15) After I receive a result (evaluation) back, I always try to consider whether my learning process was appropriate for me.

【**School-visit Report**】
A Report on Visiting Lágymányosi Bárdos Lajos
Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola

Sakai, Shien

Introduction

I was presented with a wonderful opportunity to visit Lágymányosi Bárdo Lajos Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola, or Lágymányosi Bárdos Lajos Bilingual Primary School, in Budapest, Hungary and to observe some lessons conducted there from 9–11 November 2015. The school kindly showed their lessons to me. I observed ten lessons during my three-day visit and all the classes were splendid. The aim of this report is to introduce their high level of English education to practitioners and researchers in Japan. I write what I witnessed in the classes so that the readers will understand this school's educational system. As presented in the following sections, some reports about a lesson are long, and others are brief. This does not mean that a long report indicates a better lesson than a short one. The difference depends on my intention to make good use of the lessons conducted there as a model to develop English education in elementary schools in Japan.

Keywords
CLIL, elementary school, Budapest, English

1. Day One: 9th of November, 2015

1.1 Introduction of the School
At 8 o'clock, I arrived at Lágymányosi Bárdos Lajos Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola. I had a meeting with Ms Angéla Trescsik, an English teacher, Ms Petra Makai, an English teacher, and Mr János Kerekes, the school director. They gave me general information about the educational system of Hungary.

In Hungary, an elementary school consists of lower elementary classes for first to fourth graders and higher elementary classes for fifth to eighth graders. Students from the ninth to the twelfth grades attend a secondary school.

Learning of one foreign language is mandatory in the fourth grade of the elementary school. At the secondary level, based on plurilingualism, studying two foreign languages is required. The popular foreign languages in the secondary schools are Spanish, French, German, and Italian. Russian is regaining its status as one of the preferred foreign languages. Chinese is also gathering strength. Additionally, there are

schools where students can learn Latin or Japanese. A daughter of a staff member in this school attends a secondary school where she is learning English and Japanese. Six Japanese classes per week are held in her school.

In this school, the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) programme is considered part of bilingual education. This idea is noted among schools that intend to increase their teaching hours of English lessons by teaching other subjects in English.

This school has three classes in each grade. One of them is a class under the CLIL programme, which is very popular among the parents. Approximately 30 schools in Hungary offer the CLIL programme. The CLIL programme of this school started five years ago, sponsored by the government. In the lower elementary grades, students attend five regular English classes and three CLIL classes (art, technology and music) each week. This means that a student is taught eight lessons a week in English. The reason for the school decision to use CLIL in the three subjects is based on the number of teaching staff members who can teach these subjects. Teachers who teach CLIL classes have teaching certificates in English and in the respective subjects they teach. Each school can decide on the three subjects to be taught in its CLIL classes. At the higher elementary level of this school, world history, science, and culture and civilisation are taught for two hours each week. Additionally, this school offers German classes three times a week.

The maximum number of students in each class is 32. However, a CLIL class is split in half, with 16 students or fewer per class. Generally, Hungarian elementary schools without a CLIL programme offer English classes twice a week, starting from the first graders or from the second graders. They do not divide each class into two.

1.2 Second Period (8:55–9:40): World History Taught by Gabriella Nagy to Fifth Graders under the CLIL Programme
There were 12 students, who were taught entirely in English.
Topic: From apes to humans, conducted mainly in pair and group works

1.2.1 Procedure
(1) Two groups, with six students per group, were formed by drawing lots.
(2) Each pair was assigned to think about the question "What advantage do humans have if they have tools?" and to present their opinions.
(3) Each group was assigned to write five true or false questions about the differences between apes without tools and humans with tools. Then each group addressed its questions to the opponent group.
(4) In the "Do you remember?" game, the two teams competed against each other. First,

three students from one team went out of the classroom. One student from the rest of this team received a sheet of paper that had nine sentences about the features of *Pithecanthropus erectus* and read them to the remaining two members. Then two of the students staying out of the classroom were called back inside to receive the information from the other two who had heard it before without seeing any materials. Next, the remaining member outside the classroom was called back, to whom the two who had been outside conveyed the information. Finally, the last one, the remaining member, tried to recall what he or she heard. Next, the opposite team did the same drill with a different topic. The winner was the team that remembered more information than the opponent team.

(5) The teacher summarised the lesson: the relation between physical features and how to use tools, as well as human evolution – from apes, anthropoids with tools, *Pithecanthropus erectus*, Neanderthals, to humans.

1.2.2 Four Cs
Content: from apes to humans
Cognitive aspects: memorisation, comparison, analysis, judgement
Culture: developing the students' cooperative attitude
Communication: pair and group

1.3 Fourth Period (10:50–11:35): Design Taught by Angéla Trescsik to Fourth Graders under the CLIL Programme
There were 14 students, who were taught entirely in English.

1.3.1 Topic: How to recycle paper, conducted mainly in pair and group works.
Recyclable or non recyclable: The following sentence and four options were written on the blackboard:

I can (can't) recycle things made of |paper | (students answer "can" or "can't").
                                      |glass |
                                      |metal |
                                      |plastic |

1.3.2 T/F Quiz.
1.3.2 T/F Quiz. The teacher gave the students four true or false statements about things that can or can't be recycled, using the sentence and the options written on the blackboard. Example: I can recycle things made of paper.

1.3.3 How to Make Recycled Paper.
1.3.3 How to Make Recycled Paper. The teacher read the steps about how to make recycled paper and asked the students to repeat what she said, while demonstrating the process.

(1) Tear the paper into small pieces.

(2) Pour water into the blender.

(3) Put the small pieces of paper into the blender.

(4) Turn on the blender to break up the paper into pulp.

(5) Pour the pulp into the bowl and mix it.

(6) Place the window screen into the bowl.

(7) Slowly lift up the screen from the bowl.

(8) Put the screen inside the newspaper to dry.

(9) Flip the newspaper over.

(10) Put the board onto the newspaper and press it.

(11) Remove the window screen from the paper.

(12) Put the newspaper on the tray.

(At this point, the teacher showed the wet recycled paper and the dried one that had been processed before.)

(13) When the paper is dry, carefully peel it away from the newspaper.

(The teacher peeled it off.)

Then she wrote on the blackboard:

To make recycled paper, what do you need?

Tool   Material

The students got cards, each with the name of a thing that was used to make recycled paper. They had to judge whether it was a tool or a material, and they put the card under the correct column on the blackboard.

1.3.4 Sorting. A pair of students got an envelope containing 11 strips of paper on which the steps in the process of making recycled paper were written (steps 9 and 13 were missing). The strips had no numbers and were in random order in the envelope. The students were instructed to sort out the steps into the right order. When they finished, they got a sheet of paper with the right order of the process, which they checked against their work.

1.3.5 Making My Own Recycled Paper. A group of four students made their own recycled paper. One was the maker, another read the process, and the others were helpers. When one finished making the paper, the others took their turns. The rest were asked to draw a picture showing each step of the process.

1.3.6 Four Cs

Content: Making recycled paper

Cognitive aspects: Evaluation, analysis, judgement

Culture: Developing students' attitude towards cooperation
Communication: Pair and group work

2. Day Two: 10th of November 2015

2.1 First Period (8:00-8:45): Science Taught by Anikó Ujhelly to Fourth Graders under the CLIL Programme

There were 14 students, who were taught almost entirely in English. Hungarian was used to name some difficult science terms.

2.1.1 Procedure

(1) Hung-man: PIGS MIGHT FLY.

(2) The teacher asked the students to talk about pigs.

(3) She instructed each student group to write the names of some animals.

(4) She showed a picture of a boar on the screen and called on a student to describe it. Then she showed a picture of a pig on the screen and asked another student to describe it.

(5) Next, she showed a skeleton of a pig on the screen and explained it.

(6) Then she showed a picture of a pig family, in which the mother was giving milk to her piglets. Using the pictures, the teacher encouraged the students to speak a lot. Before the slide show, she gave the students some cards, each with a keyword. When the teacher mentioned a keyword, the student who had the card with the word raised his or her hand and gave the card to the teacher. Then she put the card on its proper place on the blackboard.

(7) The teacher narrowed the classification from vertebrates and mammals to animals with even-numbered hoofs so that the students could understand the species to which the pigs belonged. She also taught the vocabulary referring to jaws and jaw bones.

(8) Next, she asked the students to name some foods made of pork, as well as the countries and/or areas where people did not eat pork and their reasons for avoiding it.

(9) As a consolidation of the class, two students were called on in turn to go to the blackboard, which displayed many cards with their respective keywords. When the teacher gave the definition of a keyword, the students competed to point to the right card.

2.2 Second Period (8:50–9:45): English Taught by Petra Makai to Eighth Graders

Before I visited the school, I had been asked to make a presentation about Japan. Therefore, the first ten minutes of the class session were used for my show. Afterwards, some students asked me about the slides and Japan.

Next, two students gave a slide show about Japan, which they had researched well. Lastly, the teacher made her presentation about Hungary, which included an impressive section on shadow dancing.

2.3 Third Period (9:50–10:35): Civilisation Taught by Gabriella Nagy to 12 Fifth Graders under the CLIL Programme
The topic was Australia. The class was divided into two groups of six students each.

2.3.1 The two groups competed in a guessing game at the same time. One of the group members sat with his or her back to the blackboard and was supposed to give the answers. The other members were able to see the blackboard, on which the teacher wrote one word at a time. The other members gave the student who would answer some hints, without saying the word. The winner was the group whose member gave the correct answers earlier than his or her counterpart in the other group. The words that the teacher wrote on the board were Tasmania, national symbol, emu, dunny, Aussie and Aborigine.

2.3.2 The next game was from the "Australian States and Territories Word Scramble" game (www.ActivityVillage.co.uk-Keeping Kids Busy).
Australia is made up of six states and two territories. Can you unscramble the letters below to find the names of the states and territories?
  i.   nqsnaeuedl   _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  ii.   aaisanmt   _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  iii.   weh hutso ewlas   _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _
  iv.   iocavtir   _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  v.   nrnoreth yrrrteit   _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  vi. ustho srtaliaua   _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  vii. raualisntan cialatp irrytote   _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  viii. rneeswt altariasu   _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

2.3.3 The students worked cooperatively with their group.
(1) For the next assignment, each group wrote questions, using keywords given by the teacher. Group A was given these words: name of the country, population, big cities, capital city and the flag. Group B was given these words: national colour, Commonwealth Star, national flower, coat of arms and Australian dollars.
(2) The teacher showed the emblem of Australia and asked the students to describe it.
(3) She gave the students true or false questions about the Great Barrier Reef and asked them to guess the answers.
(4) She showed a video about Uluru and asked the students some facts about it.

2.4 Fourth Period (10:50–11:35): English Taught by Petra Makai to Sixth Graders Participating in the Music Programme

The teacher made good use of the of the students. Two girls wore Hungarian ethnic costumes. They danced gracefully and in rhythm to the music. A boy played the flute well. Another boy showed his good skill in using a whip. All the girls sang a song beautifully. There was a harmony of English and music in the lesson.

2.5 Fifth Period (11:45–12:30): English Taught by Judit Vári for 12 Second Graders under the CLIL Programme

Today's lesson outline was written on the board. However, some letters were missing, so the students had to guess these letters to fill in the blanks. This was a good idea. The students understood the main agenda of the lesson, but with the blanks in the agenda, they would think about what activities the teacher would give them.

2.5.1 Agenda

Colour song

What is your favourite colour?

Find out who I am

Work Book 15

The "Who is this?" game

Troll Tales

Listen and read

Out in groups

For the class

Three-chair game

Bye-bye song

2.5.2 Procedure

(1) As the agenda stated, the lesson started with the colour song. Everybody sang it, swaying and making hand gestures merrily.

(2) The teacher told the students to do the exercise in the course book. The picture in the book showed four people on the top row. Their belongings were on the bottom row. There was a maze in the middle. The students should connect the four people to their belongings by drawing a line through the maze from the start to the end. Next, the students should write sentences about three people and their belongings, following this example: This is Lee's pencil case. Its colour is blue. Blue is his favourite colour. "Lee's = his" and "Mona's = her" were written on the board. When the first three students finished writing, the teacher started the game "Simon says …" so that the class would not be bored. Others joined "Simon says …" when they finished. Finally, everybody joined.

(3) Find out who I am. A student was requested to stand in front with his or her back to the class. The teacher put on the student's back a card with the name of one of the characters described in the course book. The student turned again to face his or her classmates, who started giving him or her hints by using their hands and saying, "This is your …" "Your favourite colour is …" With these hints, the student answered correctly.

(4) The following is an excerpt from a dialogue in "Troll Tales", one of the stories in the course book.

Trog: This is a great book.
(Posie tickled Pag's head with a feather. He did not see Posie.)
Pag: Stop it, Trog.
Trog: What? Pag!
Pag: Stop that. Stop that.
Trog: Hmm. What is it?
Posie: Hi, I'm Posie. Bye.
（Posie left quickly.）

Listen and read: The teacher read aloud the dialogue; the students listened and read after her.

Out in groups: The students formed groups to perform a role-play of the conversation in the book.

For the class: A selected group performed the role-play in front of the class.

Three-chair game: The three chairs meant that three groups competed in the game. One student sat on a chair with his or her back to the board. The other members stood around him or her. The teacher wrote a word or a phrase that was used in the conversation. Then the standing members gave the sitting student hints without using the word or the phrase. The group with the student who answered first was the winner.

(5) Bye-bye song. At the end of the class session, everyone sang the song, swaying and gesturing merrily. Some girls hugged the teacher before leaving the classroom.

2.5.3 Impression. With their playful nature, when the second graders moved, they always skipped and hopped. For this reason, they sang and danced merrily. For beginning learners of English in the lower grades, dancing and singing are very effective. Thus, many teachers in Japan use singing and dancing in elementary schools. However, when singing and dancing are used as introductory learning aids in classes for higher grades, some reserved students feel reluctant to join such activities. If the fifth grade is the beginning year of learning English, Japanese practitioners and researchers should devise methods that are suitable for fifth graders in Japan.

3. Day Three: 11th of November 2015

3.1 Third Period (9:50–10:35): Music Taught by Erika Lakatos-Koncz to Third Graders Attending the Music Programme
The lesson was for choir practice of Hungarian folk songs (national anthem). Since music is an international language, the lesson was enjoyable.

3.2 Fourth Period (10:50–11:35): English Taught by Maria Bredican to 15 First Graders under the CLIL Programme
(1) Counting: As there were 15 students, the teacher counted up to 15 and asked the students to repeat the numbers after her.
(2) Greeting. Teacher: "How are you"? Students: "Fine, thank you".
(3) Roll call: The teacher called each student's name, and the student answered, "Here".
(4) The teacher threw a ball of yarn to one student at a time and asked him or her a question, which was answered. The questions were as follows: What colour is your school bag/pencil case? (This was an exercise in answering with colours: pink, blue, white, black, purple, green, yellow, brown, etc.)
(5) TPR (Total Physical Response): The teacher said, "Stand up. Stretch". She continued, "I want you to jump three times / hop five times / stamp / clap / touch your toes / turn around / tiptoe / walk / hop hop / jump jump / now we sit / clap / now sleep / wake up". During the performance, if the teacher said, "Stop", everybody had to freeze. If someone moved even a little, he or she had to go back to his or her seat.
(6) A Big Fat Hen: Everybody got together in front of the blackboard and sang this song with gestures: One, two, buckle my shoe; three, four, knock on the door; five, six, pick up sticks; seven, eight, lay them straight; nine, ten, a big, fat hen.
(7) The teacher wrote the numbers 1 to 15 on the board. All the students gathered in front of the board. Two students were selected to touch the same number as quickly as he or she could when the teacher uttered the number. For example, if the teacher said, "eight", the student who first touched "8" on the board won. When a student lost, he or she returned to where the other classmates stayed. Everybody wanted to be selected. The teacher told them to say, "Can I go next?"
(8) London Bridge: The teacher said to the students, "In a circle" and started to sing the song. Everybody started running within the circle and singing. The teacher raised both her hands and caught the child in front of her when the song finished. The child had to get out of the circle. The remaining children resumed singing London Bridge. Each time, another student had to leave the circle. The remaining students did not want to be removed, so they went wild but enjoyed the game.
(9) The class ended with the students singing the goodbye song.

3.2.1 Impression. I understood that first graders couldn't stay still. For this reason,

singing, dancing and playing games were very suitable ways of learning for them. I realized the importance of having the beginners' response to English lessons accompanied by physical gestures.

3.3 Fifth Period (11:45–12:30): English Taught by Imola Márkus to 15 Fourth Graders under the CLIL Programme
3.3.1 Procedure

(1) Review about Liverpool: The teacher called on a student to give answers regarding some facts about Liverpool (population, location and so on).

(2) Study about Budapest: The teacher and the students cooperated to put some landmarks on a white map of Budapest. When they put a forest symbol on the map, the teacher asked the students to name some animals that lived there.

(3) Budapest, old and new: The teacher showed two pictures each of three places in Budapest, depicting the past and the present. The teacher explained the differences between the old and the new pictures.

(4) My favourite place in Budapest: The teacher asked the students individually about their favourite and least preferred places in Budapest.

(5) What is my favourite place in the world?: The teacher asked each student in which city he or she would like to live and the reason for his or her choice.

(6) The future plan for our city: The students were divided into three groups of five. The teacher directed each group to vote a member as the "mayor" of their city and to discuss their future plan for the city. Each mayor then made a presentation of the group's future plan.

3.4 Sixth Period (12:50–13:35): Art Taught by Eszter Viola to 15 Fourth Graders under the CLIL Programme
3.4.1 Topic: Making Their Own Name Cards
3.4.2 Procedure

(1) The teacher talked about initials.

(2) She explained about the necessary materials for the activity.

(3) She discussed the steps of this session.

(4) Making the nameplate: Each student received an A4-sized white paper. Each of them started writing his or her own name on the paper, using coloured pencils.

(5) Evaluation: At the end of the class, the teacher collected the works of the students who had almost finished the task, and she commented on each work.

3.4.3 This lesson can be introduced to the classes in elementary schools in Japan.

I hope this report will contribute to the reform of English education in Japan.

【Chronicle】

April 2015 ― March 2016

Presentations by the SIG members:

Date	Title and Presenter(s) Venue	Event
May 23	Lectures: "*J-POSTL*: A Springboard for the Reformation of English Education " Ken Hisamura. "Using *J-POSTL* for English Methodology Class" Akiko Takagi. "Using *J-POSTL* for In-service Teachers" Yoichi Kiyota. Yokohama City University, Kanagawa Japan.	Seminar for In-service High School Teachers in Yokohama City. Practical English Center Yokohama City University.
June 28	"Reflection by Student Teachers Using J-POSTL" Akiko Takagi. Wakayama University, Wakayama Japan	CATE Conference
July 12	Plenary: "English Education in the Globalized World – Significance and Challenges of Developing Intercultural Competences" Natsue Nakayama & Fumiko Kurihara. Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo Japan.	JACET-Kanto Conference
August 4	Lecture: "Viewpoints and Devices of Classroom Instructions for Senior High School Students to Use English" Kaori Yoshizumi. ELEC, Tokyo Japan.	ELEC Summer Seminar
August 22-23	**August 22**: "The Use of *J-POSTL* for Enhancing Teacher Autonomy" Yoichi Kiyota. "In-service Teacher Training Using *J-POSTL*" Ken Hisamura & Fuminori Koide. **August 23**: "Using Language Learning Portfolio to Encourage Autonomous Learning" Miho Kiuchi & Yoichi Kiyota. "Exploring a Framework of Didactic Competences to Teach English in English – Focusing on the Descriptors in J-POSTL" Takane Yamaguchi & Michiaki Azami. Kumamoto Gakuen University, Kumamoto Japan.	JASELE Conference
August 30-31	**August 30**: "Key Concepts for Intercultural Development and Their Treatment in Junior High School Textbooks in Japan" Natsue Nakayama & Fumiko Kurihara. JACET SIG Poster (Presenter: Hiromi Imamura). **August 31**: "Exploring Influences of Self-efficacy in English Learning upon Autonomous Learning Skills of and Basic Psychological Needs for the Second Foreign Language" Takane Yamaguchi & Shinya Hori. Kagoshima University, Kagoshima Japan.	JACET International Conference
September 3	Poster : "Which will be more necessary for Japanese university students, English proficiency or intercultural communicative competence? From a case study at a Japanese technological university" Rie Adachi. "A Study on Enhancing Students' Autonomy in Asian EFL Areas." Shien Sakai. Aston University, Birmingham, UK	BAAL 2015 Conference
September 13	Lecture & Symposium: "Nurturing English Learners' Autonomy – From a Viewpoint of the Cooperation between High Schools and Universities" Kaori Yoshizui. Kanda University of Foreign Languages, Chiba Japan.	Open Symposium for English Language Education under the Auspices of Kanda University of Foreign Languages Supported by Chiba Prefectural Board of ducation

September 14-17	**September 16**: "J-POSTL: A Reflection Tool for EFL Teacher Education in Japan" Hisatake Jimbo, Ken Hisamura, & Hiromi Imamura. "A Study on Enhancing Students' Autonomy in Asian EFL Areas" Shien Sakai. SpringHill Suites Pensacola Beach, Florida USA	27th Annual JUSTEC Conference Co-sponsored by The University of West Florida
October 29	Key-note Speech : "Teaching English in the Globalized world: Enhancing Students' Intercultural Competence in the Japanese Educational Context" Natsue Nakayama. The Gunma Prefectural Education Center, Gunma Japan.	ALT and JTE Skill Development Conference Co-sponsored by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) & Gunma Prefectural Board of Education
October 29-30	"Encouraging Pre-service Teachers to use the Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Language (*J-POSTL*) for Reflection" Akiko Takagi. Pullman Bangkok King Power, Bangkok Thailand	CULI International Conference 2015
November 30	Lecture: "Teaching English in the Globalized World: Issues Related to Enhancing Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence in Japan" Natsue Nakayama. The Gunma Prefectural Education Center, Gunma Japan.	Special Lecture for Middle Leaders of English Teachers at Senior High Schools 2015 Gunma Prefectural Board of Education
February 25	"Practical ways to enhance intercultural learning: lessons from New Zealand classrooms and the role of task-based teaching" Jonathan Newton (Victoria University of Wellington). "How "culture" and "intercultural learning" are treated in English textbooks in Japan" Fumiko Kurihara. "How to plan an IC lesson by making use of the J-POSTL descriptors" Natsue Nakayama & Yoichi Kiyota Waseda University, Tokyo Japan	A Roundtable on Teaching Intercultural Competence in Practice Co-sponsored by Nakayama *Kaken* & JACET SIG on English Language Education
March 6	Language Education EXPO 2016 was held at Waseda University under the auspices of the JACET SIG on English Language Education supported by six academic societies and twelve research project teams. Seiji Fukazawa (Hiroshima University) made a key-note speech, followed by three symposia, nine workshops, and 31 presentations. The event was attended by approximately 300 participants.	

Abbreviations

BAAL: British Association for Applied Linguistics

CATE: Chubu Association of Teachers of English

CULI: Chulalongkorn University Language Institute

ELEC: The English Language Education Council, Inc.

JASELE: The Japan Society of English Language Education

JUSTEC: Japan-U.S. Teacher Education Consortium

Publications:
August 5, 2015. *Language Teacher Education Vol.2 No.2*
March 6, 2016. *Language Teacher Education Vol.3 No.1*

Language Teacher Education
Submission Guidelines

1.　Requirements

　Contributors and co-authors should be SIG or JACET members. However, contributions from the users of J-POSTL or researchers/practitioners of language teacher education as well as foreign language education are welcome.

2.　Editorial Policy

Language Teacher Education, a refereed journal, encourages submission of the following:

Genre	Contents	Number of words
Research Paper	Full-length academic articles on the transportability or the use of *J-POSTL* or on language teacher education and related fields.	Within 8,000
Research Note	Discussion notes on *J-POSTL* or on language teacher education and related fields.	Within 6,000
Practical Report	Reports on classroom application of J-POSTL or on language teacher education and related fields.	Within 6,000
Other	Reports of conferences, activities, materials, research programs, etc. related to *J-POSTL* or language teacher education and related fields.	Within 4,000
Book Review	Book reviews on language education	Within 2,000

3.　Submission Procedure

・*Language Teacher Education* invites submissions for both Japanese and English editions.

・Data Entry: The data with the name(s), affiliation(s), e-mail address(es), and abstract should be sent to the e-mail address below no later than November 31 for Japanese edition and April 30 for English edition.

・The complete manuscript for publication in March issue (Japanese edition) should be sent to the email address below no later than January 10, and that for publication in July issue (English edition) no later than June 15.

　　　　　Email to: YAMAGUCHI Takane　takane@aoni.waseda.jp

4.　Formatting guidelines for submissions in English

　Full-length manuscripts in MS W, conforming to APA 6 edition style, should not exceed 8,000 words on A4 paper (Leave margins of 30mm on all sides of every page / Use 12-point Times New Roman, 80 letters×40 lines), including title (14-point Times New Roman), headings (12-point Times New Roman in bold type), abstract (200-300 words), key words (no more than 5 words), references, figures, tables , and appendix. (See, template on the SIG website)

成長のための省察ツール
言語教師のポートフォリオ

JACET教育問題研究会　　<http://www.waseda.jp/assoc-jacetenedu/>
監修：神保尚武／編集：久村　研，酒井志延、髙木亜希子、清田洋一

- ■　「言語教師のポートフォリオ」には，【英語教師教育全編】【英語教職課程編】【現職英語教師編】の３編があります。それぞれの用途によって使い分けることができます。本ポートフォリオの主な特徴は次の通りです。
  - ・英語教師に求められる授業力を明示する。
  - ・授業力とそれを支える基礎知識・技術の振り返りを促す。
  - ・同僚や指導者との話し合いと協働を促進する。
  - ・自らの授業の自己評価力を高める。
  - ・成長を記録する手段を提供する。

- ■　本ポートフォリオの中核には，Can-Do形式の180の自己評価記述文があります。これらの記述文は，授業力に関する系統的な考え方を提供しており，単なるチェック・リストではありません。教職課程の履修生，現職教師，実習や教員研修の指導者・メンターなどが利用したり，お互いに意見を交換したりする際に，省察を深めるツールとして機能すること，教職の専門意識を高める役割を果たすことが期待されます。