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## JALT Journal Information

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# Japan Association for Language Teaching

## A Nonprofit Organization

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education. Established in 1976, JALT serves an international membership of approximately 3,000 language teachers. There are 33 JALT chapters and one forming chapter, all in Japan, along with 23 special interest groups (SIGs) and three forming SIGs. JALT is one of the founders of PAC (Pan-Asian Consortium), which is an association of language teacher organizations in Pacific Asia. PAC holds regional conferences and exchanges information among its member organizations. JALT is the Japan affiliate of International TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and is a branch of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language).

JALT publishes *JALT Journal*, a semiannual research journal; *The Language Teacher*, a bi-monthly periodical containing articles, teaching activities, reviews, and announcements about professional concerns; and the annual *JALT International Conference Proceedings*.

The JALT International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning and Educational Materials Exposition attracts some 2,000 participants annually and offers over 600 papers, workshops, colloquia, and poster sessions. Each JALT chapter holds local meetings and JALT's SIGs provide information and newsletters on specific areas of interest. JALT also sponsors special events such as workshops and conferences on specific themes, and awards annual grants for research projects related to language teaching and learning. Membership is open to those interested in language education and includes automatic assignment to the nearest chapter or the chapter you prefer to join, copies of JALT publications, and reduced admission to JALT-sponsored events. JALT members can join as many SIGs as they wish for an annual fee of ¥1,500 per SIG. For information, contact the JALT Central Office or visit the JALT website at <[www.jalt.org](http://www.jalt.org)>.

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# In This Issue

## Articles

We are pleased to present a number of different pieces in this issue of *JALT Journal*. Our feature article is by **Takaaki Hiratsuka** and **Gary Barkhuizen**, who use a grounded theory approach to explore the effects of Exploratory Practice on teachers' perceptions, in a team-teaching context. This issue also features a Perspectives piece on MEXT's new Courses of Study. **Samantha Hawkins** examines the dictate that high school classes be conducted principally in English, and suggests an approach that is more open to the use of Japanese in class. Finally, we include a Research Forum in which **Rebecca Kato** and **Kenneth Reeder** interview study abroad participants to show how their expectations of the experience were met and how this changed their perceptions.

## Reviews

The first of our seven reviews is from **Annette Bradford**, who examines a title covering the historical development of Japan's foreign language education policies and the roles played by teachers and the private sector in that development. In the second review, **Brett Cumming** looks at the topic of writing collaboratively. **George Higginbotham** reviews Paul Nation's second edition of *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. The fourth review is by **Anna Husson Isozaki**, who covers Norton's expanded look at identity in language learning. Then, **Garold Murray** summarizes an edited collection of papers on the *self* in language learning and teaching. In the review on Spanish language acquisition, **Cecilia Silva** tackles one of the 500-plus page handbooks from Wiley Blackwell. Finally, **Shawn R. White** analyzes an overview of quality assurance in distance education and e-learning in the Asian context from a balanced systems perspective.

## From the Editor

Working on this issue, my first issue as editor, has made me even more appreciative of all the hard work Melodie Cook contributed to the journal for the past 4 years. I am sure many authors are grateful for her thoughtful and thorough editing, and I personally am indebted to her for the prompt and kind help she was always willing to give. Although I will miss the day-to-day interactions with her, I am happy that she will stay on as a consulting editor. I hope I can uphold the standard that she was able to maintain.

As ever, I would like to acknowledge Aleda Krause, whose work is invaluable in turning *JALT Journal* from files on an editor's computer to what you are holding in your hand today. Aleda's guidance on many aspects of the journal is always much appreciated, but especially now as I step out on my own.

Last, I'd like to thank the authors who chose to submit their work to *JALT Journal* and persevered through a very long editorial process. And of course, we couldn't do anything without our editorial board members and occasional readers, along with our consulting editor for statistics, Greg Scholdt. I'm very grateful for everyone's contribution to this issue.

*Anne McLellan Howard*

# Articles

## Effects of Exploratory Practice (EP) on Team Teachers' Perceptions in Japanese High Schools

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A team-teaching scheme involving local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) has been in place in Japanese high schools since 1987. Team teaching, including teachers' perspectives on their team-taught classes, has attracted research attention. However, how research in the form of Exploratory Practice (EP; Allwright & Hanks, 2009) affects team teachers' perceptions over time has not been documented. Data were collected for 4 months from team teachers in two high schools using various qualitative methods. Content analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) was employed to examine the data, and it was found that an EP experience mediated the participants' perceptions through different cognitive development processes, namely, *replacement*, *synthesis*, and *reconfirmation*. It was also revealed that the experience sometimes had only a minimal effect. The divergent effects seem to have stemmed from individual differences, pair discrepancies, contextual factors, and research conditions. The paper concludes with implications of the study.

日本では1987年以来、日本人英語教諭（JTE）と外国語指導助手（ALT）によるティームティーチングが英語授業内で実施されている。現在まで教師の意識調査を含めたティームティーチングに関する研究が盛んに行われているが、teacher research（教師主導的実践

研究)、特にExploratory Practice (探求的実践活動) (EP; Allwright & Hanks, 2009) が教師の認識にどのような影響を及ぼすかは検証されていない。本研究では2つの高等学校で働くティームティーチングペア2組から質的手法を通して4ヶ月に渡ってデータが収集された。データはその後content analysis (内容分析法; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) を用いて分析された。その結果、教師のEPに影響された認識発達の過程は大きく3つ(置換、統合、再確認)に分類されることが判明した。同時に、EPの影響は時に最小限に留まることも明らかとなった。これらの影響に関する相違は教師個人の特徴、ペアの構成、周囲の環境、そして絶えず変化する研究過程に起因することが示唆された。本論では最後に、言語教師教育における実践的な提言を行う。

In 1987, Japan began to use team teaching by local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) in English lessons through the government-sponsored Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. The number of ALTs participating in the program has grown over the years to 4,372 in 2013 (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations [CLAIR], 2013). The government aims to promote this trend further by hiring 50,000 ALTs by 2023 so that there will be at least one ALT in all elementary, junior high, and high schools throughout the country (Japan Liberal Democratic Party [LDP], 2013). Within this context, team teaching, including teachers' perspectives of their team-taught classes, has attracted research attention (e.g., Hiramatsu, 2005; Miyazato, 2009). However, the ways in which team teachers' perceptions change over time as a result of professional development opportunities has been underexplored. This paper reports on a study that investigated how a research experience in the form of collaborative Exploratory Practice (EP; Allwright & Hanks, 2009) affected teachers' perceptions in their team-teaching contexts. This study, informed by a sociocultural perspective on second-language teacher education (SLTE; Johnson, 2009) and by the related concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD; Daniels, Cole, & Wertsch, 2007; Vygotsky, 1930s/1978), involved collecting data from two pairs of team teachers in two public high schools, using multiple qualitative methods (i.e., individual interviews, pair discussions, group discussions, and EP stories). Findings indicate that as a result of the participants joining an EP project that consisted of observing their own and other teachers' classes, taking part in pair and group discussions, and writing EP stories, they experienced various cognitive development processes, namely, *replacement*, *synthesis*, and *reconfirmation*. The paper concludes with possible implications of the study.

## A Sociocultural Perspective on Second Language Teacher Education

SLTE generally deals with “research and practice relevant to the preparation and on-going professional development of teachers who teach English as a second/foreign language in diverse contexts” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 394). Because a sociocultural perspective is believed to provide a window into how different concepts and functions in human consciousness develop, it is regarded as a useful approach to understanding and supporting SLTE (Freeman, 2009; Johnson, 2009). Johnson contends that a sociocultural lens enables researchers to examine the inherent cognitive and social interconnection in teacher learning. One way to achieve this is teacher research. A sociocultural perspective, not as a methodology but as a theoretical lens, informs this study by showing the value of the ways in which teachers conceptualize their practice and learning.

Recently, a sociocultural perspective has been used to examine various areas in SLTE. Golombek (2011), for instance, traced the cognitive development trajectories of student teachers through dialogic mediation that was operationalized by digital video protocols in the United States. She provided mediational strategies that were adjusted according to the needs of the participants and, through this approach, encouraged them to reorganize, refine, and conceptualize their cognition. Poehner (2011) explored the experiences of an in-service teacher who participated in Critical Friends Groups (CFG), a means to “collaboratively examine teacher and student work” (p. 191). She found that the collaborative CFG activities made it possible for a participant teacher to objectively view an issue concerning one of her students, reconceptualise it, and consequently adjust her practice. Tasker (2011) investigated, through a professional development activity (i.e., lesson study), the extent to which engaging in a study led to conceptualization changes in EFL teachers in the Czech Republic. Lesson study is a “framework teachers use to explore a gap between where their students are now, and where they would like them to be” (p. 205). Tasker’s study lasted for 14 weeks and included three teachers. Findings showed that the lesson study had the power to change the ways the teachers conceptualized student learning. The participants in this study also collaboratively experienced inquiry-based professional development—EP—as a mediational tool in the field of SLTE.

Given that the participating teachers in this study were two pairs of team teachers, ZPD was a key concept in understanding the teachers’ learning experiences from a sociocultural perspective. Vygotsky (1930s/1978) defined the ZPD as the distance between one’s current developmental level, determined by one’s ability to independently solve problems, and one’s po-

tential developmental level, determined by one's ability to overcome problems in collaboration with more capable (or similarly capable) peers. The types, frequency, duration, and forms of interpersonal assistance involved are integral factors for individuals' development within their ZPDs. The development is likely to occur when teachers articulate, share, negotiate, and understand their practices (Freeman, 1993) as well as when they take risks, share frustrations, and show vulnerability (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). The foci throughout this study were various forms of dialogic and cooperative teacher learning that pushed the boundaries of the teachers' ZPDs.

### Teacher Research and Exploratory Practice (EP)

In this paper, the term *teacher research* is conceptualized as teacher-initiated inquiry into teaching practice in the teacher's professional context (Borg, 2013). It provides opportunities for teachers to participate in research as practitioners and researchers. An embedded notion of teacher research is that teachers can learn and develop by closely examining their own teaching and their learners' learning, collecting data, and using reflective processes (Barkhuizen, 2009; Borg, 2013). One of the most well-known types of teacher research for professional development is action research (Burns, 2012). Teachers who engage in action research aim to solve immediate problems raised in their classrooms via a spiral of actions, that is, developing a research plan, acting according to the plan, observing the effects of the action, and reflecting on outcomes for further cycles (Burns, 2005). According to Burns (2005), "related branches" of action research are action learning, practitioner research, and reflective practice. Along similar lines, and germane to this study, the notion that teachers, as well as their learners, should be the key protagonists in their own learning and research has given birth to a new type of teacher research: EP. There are significant differences between action research and EP. For instance, in the case of action research, the focus is on *problems* to improve lesson quality. In the case of EP, however, the focus is on understanding *puzzles* about teachers' and students' *quality of life*. Another difference is that although action research is cyclical and adds extra activities in the classroom for data collection, EP is a more flexible endeavour and includes various EP activities in the normal curriculum. EP is thus defined broadly as a sustainable way for teachers and learners to develop their own understandings of life in the classroom (Allwright, 2003, 2005; Allwright & Hanks, 2009).

The conceptual origin of EP came about when Allwright and Bailey (1991) called for a pressing change to practitioner research. They questioned the

scientific and statistically demanding types of teacher research popular at that time and suggested that these traditions led to classroom teachers not conducting research in their classrooms. Researchers in various contexts have since utilized EP as the theoretical framework for their investigations, and the characteristics and principles of EP have been extensively explored over the years (e.g., Allwright, 2003, 2005; Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Gieve & Miller, 2006; Yoshida et al., 2009). Allwright and Hanks (2009) formulated seven principles of EP for inclusive practitioner research:

*The “what” issues*

1. Focus on quality of life as the fundamental issue.
2. Work to understand it [quality of life], before thinking about solving problems.

*The “who” issues*

3. Involve everybody as practitioners developing their own understandings.
4. Work to bring people together in a common enterprise.
5. Work cooperatively for mutual development.

*The “how” issues*

6. Make it a continuous enterprise.
7. Minimise the burden [the extra workload to conduct EP research] by integrating the work for understanding into normal pedagogic practice. (p. 260)

These EP principles have been used by a number of practitioner–researchers to enrich their classroom practices (e.g., Gunn, 2010; Rose, 2007). The EP principles allow researchers to conduct research *with* participants, not *on* participants, thereby replacing the traditional hierarchy. This study also incorporates an EP component because it is the type of teacher research of, for, and by teachers and learners, and an attempt was made to explore the effects over time of an EP experience on language teachers’ perceptions within their particular and immediate contexts. This research was thus guided by the following question:

What effects does an Exploratory Practice experience have on teachers’ perceptions over time in team-teaching contexts?

## Method

### *The Participants*

In recruiting participants, the first author made phone calls to JTEs living in a northern prefecture in Japan whom he, as a former JTE in the prefecture, believed were interested in this sort of inquiry on the basis of their active participation in professional training sessions and their high English proficiency. To avoid possible ethical issues, he did not seek any teacher participant with whom he had taught, and he did not contact schools where he had previously worked. Two pairs of team teachers (each pair consisting of a JTE and an ALT) from two different public high schools participated in this study (see Table 1). Aitani (female JTE) and Matt (male ALT) worked at Sakura High School, and Takahashi (female JTE) and Sam (male ALT) worked at Tsubaki High School (all names of participants and places are pseudonyms). The ALTs had never previously lived in Japan or in any parts of Asia.

**Table 1. Participants in the Study**

| School                                | Sakura                               |                                  | Tsubaki                        |  |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                        | Vocational                           |                                  | Liberal Arts                   |  |
| Participant name                      | Aitani                               | Matt                             | Takahashi                      | Sam                                    |
| Type of teacher                       | JTE                                  | ALT                              | JTE                            | ALT                                    |
| Age                                   | 46                                   | 32                               | 45                             | 23                                     |
| Gender                                | Female                               | Male                             | Female                         | Male                                   |
| Nationality                           | Japan                                | Australia                        | Japan                          | USA                                    |
| Degree received                       | Master's (English language teaching) | Bachelor (Visual arts)           | Bachelor (English linguistics) | Bachelor (History; minor in Education) |
| Previous overseas experiences         | Travelled to UK                      | Travelled to NZ, Asia and Europe | Lived in USA for 6 months      | Travelled to China                     |
| Foreign language proficiency          | Advanced (English)                   | Intermediate (Japanese)          | Advanced (English)             | Beginner (Japanese)                    |
| Total years of teaching               | 25                                   | 1                                | 24                             | 1                                      |
| Number of years at the current school | 6                                    | 1                                | 5                              | 1                                      |

| School   | Sakura  |                    | Tsubaki   |                                |
|--|---|--------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Working days at the school   | Full-time                                       | Monday and Tuesday | Full-time   | Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday |
| Number of team-taught classes per week as a pair and types of subjects | 2 classes<br>English Conversation<br>English II |                    | 2 classes<br>English Expression<br>Oral Communication |                                |

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected from December 2011 to March 2012, in three phases: before the EP experience (Phase 1), during the EP experience (Phase 2), and after the EP experience (Phase 3). At the beginning of Phase 2, the participants were provided with information about EP principles and what participating in the EP project might entail (e.g., “There is no right or wrong way to do this,” “You teachers are the centre of the research journey”). During Phase 2, the teachers participated in an EP project that involved observing their own and other teachers’ classes, taking part in pair and group discussions, and writing EP stories. They repeated these sets of activities three times (i.e., Cycle 1, Cycle 2, and Cycle 3). Multiple types of data collection methods were used, as follows:

#### *Phase 1: Before the EP Experience*

- Narrative interview 1 (hereinafter referred to as NI1): Narrative interviews (see Appendix) allowed participants to take responsibility for their talk and generate detailed accounts (Chase, 2005). The participants could choose to be interviewed in either English or Japanese (all participants chose their mother tongue). The first author, who speaks Japanese as a mother tongue and has high English proficiency, interviewed the participants for about 90 minutes each in the counselling room at each school. All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder.

#### *Phase 2: The EP Experience (Three Cycles)*

- Classroom observation: The first author observed team-taught classes at each school at the beginning of each cycle. Each class was videotaped. The main purpose of the observations with a video camera was not to

collect data for this study per se but to provide a means to facilitate the teachers' reflection on their classroom practices during their pair and group discussions that took place later.

- Pair discussion: Immediately after each classroom observation, each pair of team teachers and the first author discussed the class observed on that day. The involvement of the first author during the discussion was limited to providing direction for discussion and asking questions (see Appendix). The language used in the discussions was English because that was the only language that could be understood well by all participants. The aim of the discussions was to gain a deeper understanding of the classes by mining a small amount of data over and over from multiple perspectives rather than by viewing an entire lesson once from one perspective (Fanselow, 1992). Based on their interests, the teacher participants selected a 5-minute video clip from the observed class (recorded for 50 minutes at Sakura High School and for 45 minutes at Tsubaki High School) after watching the videotape several times. Once the clip had been selected, careful analysis of the activity that was the focus in the clip followed. In pair discussions during Cycle 1, it was necessary to determine the *theme* that was going to be explored for the remaining cycles in order to narrow the topic as well as to have a degree of consistency over time. The pair at Sakura High School (Matt and Aitani) chose "Teacher instructions for student classroom activities" as their theme. They wished to understand the ways in which they gave instructions when explaining activities. The pair at Tsubaki High School (Sam and Takahashi) selected "Teacher feedback for individual students' presentations" so that they could understand how they gave feedback in class. Each discussion continued for about 1 hour, and all discussions were recorded.
- Group discussion: A few days after the pair discussion was held at each school, all four teachers and the first author gathered and conducted a group discussion for about 90 minutes at a neutral venue (i.e., a community centre). The first author remained silent much of the time during the discussion except when he prompted and guided discussion (see Appendix). As in the pair discussions, the language used in the group discussion was English, and all discussions were recorded.
- EP story: The teachers wrote EP experience stories in English at the end of every cycle. With permission from the teachers, the stories were sent via email to all the teachers participating in the study so that there was an open process of sharing and discovery. It is important to note that

the first author was also part of this process, during which he disclosed his honest emotions and beliefs about teaching and research, a process referred to as self-disclosure (Egan, 2000). The EP story writing also became a means by which the teachers and the first author could monitor the progress and direction of the EP project.

### *Phase 3: After the EP Experience*

- Narrative interview 2 (hereinafter referred to as NI2): In an identical format to the first narrative interview, the first author interviewed the teachers for about 90 minutes each in the counselling room at each school (see Appendix). All interviews were recorded.

## **Data Analysis**

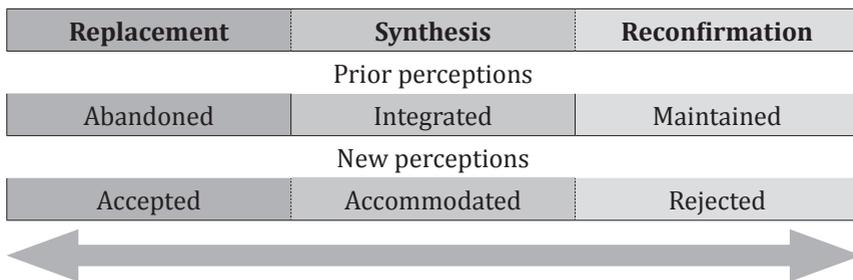
All audio data from interviews and discussions were recorded with a SANYO digital voice recorder (ICR-PS182RM). The first author carried out the transcribing and translating work at the research sites. Both authors analysed, through content analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), approximately 23 hours of detailed interviews and discussions constituting 283 pages (English only) and 129 pages (Japanese with English translation) as well as 31 pages of typed documents (i.e., EP stories). Content analysis is an inductive method that allows researchers to synthesize data, create codes and categories, and search for patterns amongst these. In this study, the method was applied *within-case* to learn as much as possible about the experiences of each of the four teachers as well as *across-case* to learn about the idiosyncrasies specific to each school (i.e., teachers at Sakura High School and teachers at Tsubaki High School). The across-case application also allowed the identification of possible divergences and convergences between the JTEs (Aitani and Takahashi) and the ALTs (Matt and Sam). These strategies enabled meaningful interpretation of the participants' particularities and commonalities at the individual, school, and JTE/ALT level.

## **Findings**

As a result of the content analysis referred to above, one recurring topic that was identified, both within case and across case, was the teachers' *changing* (i.e., developing) perceptions of individual teachers and students, teaching practices, student learning, institutional policies, and research. In other words, the EP project mediated the participants' perceptions through

different development *processes*. In discussing the significance of cognitive development processes, Vygotsky (1930s/1978) stated that “we need to concentrate not on the *product* of development but on the very *process* by which higher forms [of thinking] are established” (p. 64, emphasis in original). We determined, via further analysis, several codes connected to the teachers’ changing perceptions, such as *alternation*, *discovery*, *reinforcement*, *integration*, *maintenance*, and *confirmation*. Although researchers (e.g., Golombek, 2011; Johnson, 2009; Poehner, 2011; Tasker, 2011) use such terms as reorganization, refinement, reconceptualization, rethinking, and transformation interchangeably to describe cognitive development processes, in this study three distinct, though interrelated, terms were identified from the various codes such as those presented above and were then used to illustrate the different cognitive development processes. These are: (a) replacement, (b) synthesis, and (c) reconfirmation.

*Replacement* is the process by which the participants’ prior perceptions were abandoned and replaced with new perceptions. If the participants’ previous perceptions were integrated with new perceptions—in other words, new perceptions were accommodated into the participants’ previous perceptions—these cases were classified as *synthesis*. *Reconfirmation* means that the participants’ prior perceptions were maintained and any changes in these rejected. It is unlikely that participants will completely abandon all their previous perceptions and replace these with new perceptions, synthesize their prior perceptions and new perceptions equally, or reconfirm their initial perceptions and reject all new perceptions. The different processes, therefore, could be conceived as falling along a continuum with replacement at one end, synthesis in the middle, and reconfirmation at the other end (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Perception development processes.

We deal with these processes below and provide illustrative examples of each of them. The focus of this study was particularly on the effects of the EP intervention on the teachers' perceptions of their teaching practices. Although several of their perceptions appeared to have been affected, such as those concerning JTEs, ALTs, and student learning, it came as no surprise that the EP effects on teachers' perceptions of their own teaching were most salient in the data, given that: (a) the EP project consisted of a number of activities directly related to teaching in team-teaching contexts (e.g., viewing video clips of team-taught classes) and (b) the teachers decided to investigate certain aspects of classroom teaching as their chosen themes: how instructions were provided in class (at Sakura) and how feedback was provided in class (at Tsubaki). However, the EP project seemed to have a minimal effect on the perceptions of one teacher, Takahashi. She felt that the project did little to influence her perceptions. This matter is addressed after the discussion of the three processes.

### ***Effects of the EP as a Mediational Tool on Team Teachers' Perceptions***

#### ***Replacement***

*Replacement* is used to refer to cases in which new perceptions take the place of the participants' previous perceptions. In this category, cases that are located towards the left end of the continuum in Figure 1 are included. Because replacement means the abandoning of previous perceptions, this process could be considered to be the strongest effect of the EP project. It was found that two teachers (Matt and Aitani) most evidently experienced this process.

In his first interview, Matt, the ALT in Sakura, identified the role of ALTs as follows: "The ALT's role is to introduce native level language, to interact with students and let them experience conversing with a native speaker" (NI1). Regarding the role of JTEs, he said, "The JTE's role in the team-teaching environment is to direct in a similar way to the ALT, but really to provide the platform with Japanese translation for the native speaker to teach in an effective way" (NI1). After the EP project, however, he appeared to have radically changed his perceptions of the teaching roles of ALTs and JTEs, from being static in nature to being more fluid:

It's really come to me that for us to successfully team teach, it's all about fluidity and changing up our methods. So sometimes I'll have a more dominant role in the room, and next class, Aitani has the dominant role . . . . No matter how much you plan

a class, the occasion will arise where the need for improvisation comes about. (NI2)

Aitani, the JTE in Sakura, also indicated that she had replaced her earlier perceptions of team teaching. In the second pair discussion, she said to Matt:

Before I did the first cycle, I had an opinion about team teaching. Like if we are to do team teaching, the activity should be something special. But after the first cycle, after we talked together, I changed my mind. Like the activity itself doesn't need to be special. If we do the activity together . . . we can say that the teaching experience is effective and meaningful. (Pair discussion)

Her newly generated perception regarding team-taught classes reappeared in her final EP story:

When we first started this project, I blindly tried to make up some *special activities*. . . I had been fooled by the word *special*. And the moment I noticed it, I felt that the new possibilities of activities are widely opened before us. . . TT [Team-teaching] situation has become far more than just a useful experience. (EP story)

Aitani no longer believed that team teaching needed to be special or different from her individual teaching. As soon as she realized this, she saw team teaching to be full of possibilities. Aitani also mentioned, in her final interview, a replaced perception related to giving instructions in team-taught classes:

Before this project, when there was an ALT, I was trying very hard to explain the ALT's instructions while the ALT was providing instructions in order to help the students understand it. But after we started our team teaching in 2A, I decided to take an optimal balance when Matt was explaining . . . I now avoid the situation in which both teachers are speaking at the same time. (NI2)

Aitani consciously inspected the teaching practices of her team and began to provide support only when necessary (see Vygotsky, 1930s/1963), rather than give instructions to the students in tandem with Matt. Her perceptions

of team-teaching instructions for student activities thus made a significant turn.

### *Synthesis*

*Synthesis* is used to describe the process whereby participants' previously held perceptions of teaching were integrated with new perceptions. In this category, cases that are close to the middle point of the continuum in Figure 1 are included. Three teachers (Matt, Aitani, and Sam) showed clear evidence that they had synthesized their previous and new perceptions.

Matt synthesized his perceptions, particularly regarding the value of well-prepared questions and activity instructions. During the first group discussion he made the following comments after watching a video clip of his class:

Some of the questions were more challenging, and some groups really did need help quite a bit. . . . In one question in particular, it was my fault. It was not well designed, didn't give them enough information, and it was impossible for them to understand from the scene what it could mean. So I realized they needed some help. (Group discussion)

By looking at the students' reactions both in class and in the video clip, he realized his questions and instructions were not as well thought out as he had imagined and thus developed new approaches to preparing and executing his teaching.

Aitani provided another example of synthesizing perceptions. She previously thought that she had to use only English in class, but by the second cycle, she felt that it was not always necessary and that she could help her students by using Japanese when they were at a loss:

[I used Japanese] to remove their fears and misunderstanding. I think it's sometimes good to use Japanese to help them understand. . . . I don't think I changed my attitude completely, but I must confess that I didn't have the sense of restriction about using Japanese, as I felt last time. (Pair discussion)

Aitani did not change her attitudes enough to warrant replacement of her previous perception, as indicated by her statement: "I don't think I changed my attitude completely." However, her perception of L1 use underwent synthesis, and she reported that she felt more comfortable using Japanese in the second observed class.

Matt and Aitani also *collaboratively* synthesized their perceptions of teaching. In their final pair discussion, for example, they were asked about their concerns regarding their chosen theme of giving instructions. They externalized their current understandings about it and reconceptualised it:

Matt: The students' English ability [is my concern] . . . . I think it's not constructive to be delivering instructions using language that isn't in that band of proximity. That defeats the purpose altogether of someone being in the room to assist in their educational experience. It has to be limited to the delivery that is native and natural and challenging but is also within their reach.

Aitani: But I think your English and instructions, the level of language are totally OK with my students. Of course it's difficult for them but I think it's a bit difficult, it's a bit above their ability, so some good students would want to understand more, would like to listen to your English more. So I don't think it's totally a bad thing to use difficult, complicated expressions.

Matt: Maybe the way I should say is it's more me repeating things and speaking for too long that makes it inappropriate, probably not the actual vocab used . . . . Probably what is best to do is, as you said, speak less, demonstrate in other ways. My instinct is to speak more and try to cover my tracks with more words. (Pair discussion)

Matt and Aitani appear here to be referring to their students' ZPD ("it's not constructive to be delivering instructions using language that isn't in that band of proximity"). It is interesting, however, that while Aitani and Matt were discussing their students' English ability, they themselves were co-constructing their own ZPDs with regard to teaching practices. In particular, Aitani seemed to have acted as a supportive colleague with critical comments (Edge, 2002), who provided Matt with interpersonal assistance (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) ("I don't think it's totally a bad thing to use difficult, complicated expressions"). The exchange of ideas between the two took place based on their personal experiences and within their ZPDs, thereby perhaps enabling them to learn as teachers and develop their perceptions of teaching in a timely and effective manner (Wertsch, 2007).

Sam, the ALT in Tsubaki, explained how his perceptions, especially in terms of their chosen theme, teacher feedback, were affected by newer ideas

he acquired during the project: “We focused on feedback given in the context of them [the students] speaking . . . We have learned what kind of feedback we give and how we can give it in other ways besides grading papers” (NI2). Previously, Sam did not attend closely to what feedback entailed and considered it to be limited to grading papers outside the classroom. The EP project, however, enabled him to accommodate new perceptions of feedback, that is, as being responses to his students’ answers in class.

### *Reconfirmation*

*Reconfirmation* is used to describe cases in which participants maintained their previous perceptions as they were. If the participants’ previous perceptions were strengthened and turned into something different, this perception process was interpreted as synthesis (or replacement for extreme cases). Included in the reconfirmation category were cases located towards the right end of the continuum in Figure 1.

Sam and Takahashi provided convincing evidence that they had reconfirmed their previous perceptions. Agreeing with what the team teachers at Sakura said during the second group discussion, Sam commented that calling on one student in class while the other students are not engaged in any task is not an effective teaching technique:

I would have tried to make sure the kids will stay on task a little bit. Because when only one student is working, the longer they are without having something to do, the more they will fall out. This is the same for all kids. (Group discussion)

Sam seemed to have held the perception that one type of teaching practice (i.e., calling on students one by one) was ineffective based on his experiences (“This is the same for all kids”), and he reconfirmed this perception through discussing the idea with other project members.

Takahashi, the JTE at Tsubaki, also reconfirmed the perceived advantages of her team-teaching style and determined to keep doing what she had been doing for her students:

Before I started this project, I didn’t think so much about team teaching. My interest was focusing on . . . conducting English classes in English! . . . So this project didn’t affect my own teaching style so much, but it kind of reinforced my belief. I was like, “OK. I will keep doing like this!” (Group discussion)

The EP project was not so influential in changing Takahashi's perceptions, but it led her to reconfirm for herself the benefits of her current teaching practice. Noticeable here, besides her perception reconfirmation, is that the immediate interest of Takahashi at the time of the project concerned teaching English in English, which was a policy to be instituted by the government in April 2013. The disconnection between Takahashi's immediate interest (i.e., teaching English in English) and the project's overall focus (i.e., team teaching) no doubt influenced the degree and type of EP effect on her perceptions.

### *Minimal Effect*

The final category is *minimal effect*. One participant, Takahashi, stated repeatedly that the EP experience did not affect her perceptions. She shared her opinion quite categorically in her final interview:

I haven't changed anything through this project . . . I changed my teaching motto about 10 years ago. And I have continued to create language classes where students and I can learn and communicate together since then . . . Especially my teaching goals and the roles of teachers, I didn't change them . . . I want them [ALTs] to be in the classroom as a communicator . . . So the ideal English classes I imagine remain the same. That doesn't need to change, and it was not changed. (NI2)

Takahashi also said that her perceptions of teacher feedback were not affected: "I cannot think of anything I have learned about feedback from this project" (NI2). Her comments suggest that the effects of EP on teachers' perceptions depend at least on (a) teachers' previous perceptions and experiences, (b) the degree and duration of teachers' previous perceptions, and (c) teachers' interests and the focus of the research. These factors have also been discussed in relation to teacher research and teacher cognition (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2009; Borg, 2006, 2013; Freeman, 2002).

However, her teaching partner, Sam, had different ideas about Takahashi's EP experience. During his final interview he expressed his beliefs about what effects the EP experience might have had on Takahashi's perceptions of teaching practices:

I don't know if she has learned anything, but maybe more reinforced the idea of our roles and that our roles are working and that we are to some extent achieving our goals. . . I get the

feeling . . . she has learned that what we are doing is what we want and where we should be at. (NI2)

In line with Sam's comments, there were in fact instances where Takahashi seemed to have reconfirmed her previous perceptions (see *Reconfirmation* section above). A benefit of this is that reconfirming previous perceptions, being cognizant of current teaching practices, and talking about them can affect teachers' perceptions as well as lead to their professional development as teachers (Freeman, 1993; Golombek, 2011; Johnson, 2009; Vygotsky, 1930s/1963). Therefore, the EP project most likely mediated Takahashi's perceptions, however small she might have reported the effects to have been.

## Discussion

As the identified categories (i.e., replacement, synthesis, reconfirmation, and minimal effect) suggest, an important finding in this study is that the EP project as a mediational tool influenced the perceptions of each participant in various ways. There is, however, a pattern to the way the processes differed. In particular, the JTE at Sakura, Aitani, replaced and synthesized her perceptions but did not reconfirm her previous perceptions and was therefore the most influenced by the EP project, whereas the JTE at Tsubaki, Takahashi, confirmed her previous perceptions several times and did not show much evidence of replacing or synthesizing her perceptions. She was therefore the least affected participant.

In relation to these findings, one issue to consider is the extent to which the teachers, as professionals, might have felt compelled to give a positive presentation of self in public in order to reduce the risk of losing face. For instance, Takahashi, and to some extent Sam, might have reconfirmed their previous perceptions more than they replaced or synthesized them. Sam, for example, stated: "What we are doing is what we want and where we should be at" (NI2). This possibly inhibited meaningful self-examination during the EP project (see Golombek, 2011). In contrast, Aitani, and to some degree Matt, replaced and synthesized their previous perceptions and openly shared their uncertainty, vulnerability, and frustration (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). For instance, in Group discussion Matt said: "In one question in particular, it was my fault. It was not well designed." This might suggest that they had built up appropriate collegial bonds with other project members and felt safe participating in the project. Trusting others and feeling secure is believed to be a prerequisite for professional growth and a key to conducting successful collaborative teacher research (Poehner, 2011; Tasker, 2011).

Another issue, related to the above, concerns the experience the participants had as pairs. Sam made a comparison between his pair at Tsubaki and the pair at Sakura: "We didn't really seriously change very much with our class in the process of this. And I know the other group did" (NI2). Both Sam and Takahashi at Tsubaki reconfirmed previous perceptions of their teaching more readily than Matt and Aitani at Sakura, and Sam and Takahashi neither replaced nor synthesized their perceptions as much as Matt and Aitani did. The data in general, together with Sam's comments, suggest that although the effects of the EP project on the participants' perceptions vary from one individual to another, individual teachers' EP experiences might have been affected by their teaching (research) partner at the same school. This is hardly surprising, given that each pair had taught in the same school for some time in addition to the period of the EP project and shared the experience of the same EP project activities as a pair (e.g., pair discussions). Nevertheless, it is still interesting to note that each teacher had come to hold shared interests, goals, and styles with their teaching partner, which affected their own and their partner's ZPDs during the EP project. This seemed to have led to the participants experiencing similar outcomes to those of their partner, but different from those of the other pair.

The divergent effects of the EP project on the participants' perceptions were likely to have stemmed from (a) individual characteristics, such as the participant's prior perceptions and experiences; (b) pair discrepancies, such as their experiences as a pair; (c) contextual factors, such as school research culture; and (d) research-related matters, such as focus of the research, timing of data collection, and project members. As a result of these disparities, as well as other unidentified elements, the effects on the individual participants' perceptions of EP were multifarious. Future studies on teacher research, perhaps those using EP, that take into account these individual, collaborative, contextual, and research-related factors may shed further light on these issues within the field of teacher research and SLTE.

## **Conclusion**

We have shown in this paper that the EP project, which included multiple activities such as class observations and various kinds of discussion, mediated the participants' perceptions of team-teaching practices in different ways. The effects of EP on the participants' perceptions were categorized into three cognitive processes: (a) replacement, (b) synthesis, and (c) reconfirmation. Replacement most evidently occurred in two participants:

Matt and Aitani. Replacement had the largest impact of the three processes identified. Synthesis seemed to be experienced by three of the participants: Matt, Aitani, and Sam. Reconfirmation was observed in Sam and Takahashi. In the case of Takahashi, she felt that the EP project had no effect on her perceptions. However, it appears she at least reconfirmed her perceptions as a result of participating in the project.

Japan has long relied on, and will continue to depend on, team teaching by JTEs and ALTs hired through the JET program for EFL teaching and internationalization. Despite this, the perceptions of stakeholders in the actual team-taught classes have not yet been scrutinized sufficiently nor have the stakeholders or researchers moved beyond the prevailing rhetoric and come up with practical ways in which to improve team-teaching practices (Hiratsuka, 2013). Based on this study, it seems advisable that team teachers embark upon teacher research (such as EP) as part of their regular teaching practice, in addition to, or perhaps even in place of, the current professional development opportunities, which normally come in the form of 1-day or 2-day workshops, often including a lecture by a third party, typically a university professor. Through an EP project, team teachers can engage in issues interesting to them and relevant to their working contexts over a full term or school year. The three cognitive development processes discussed in this paper could perhaps provide a useful framework to guide such research. That is, teachers could use the processes to reflect on and make sense of their research outcomes or the processes could be used to focus discussions with collaborating partners. Locally situated professional development opportunities, like the EP in this study, should, ideally, be funded and made available so that, in the future, teacher and student learning will be enriched in team-taught classes.

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## Appendix

### ***Rubrics for Interviews and Discussions***

#### *Phase 1: Narrative interview 1 (All teachers individually)*

“I would like you to tell me any stories regarding team teaching. I might ask you questions for further discussion later. You might think I have answers to some questions I ask, but I would like to know *your* answers. So please answer my questions freely.”

#### *Phase 2: Pair discussion (Each pair of team teachers and the first author)*

- Choose a 5-minute video clip from the video-taped class.
- Describe, analyse, and interpret the chosen clip while stopping and replaying it.
- Take the time to discuss your *theme*.
- Answer the following questions:
- In what way do you want to change your teaching for the following classes?
- How will you attempt to achieve that?

#### *Phase 2: Group discussion (All teachers and the first author)*

- Watch the two chosen 5-minute video clips and consider the description, analysis, and interpretation from each pair.
- Describe your experience of the cycle.
- Please share and discuss the *themes*.
- What would you like to achieve in the next cycle?

#### *Phase 3: Narrative interview 2 (All teachers individually)*

“I would like you to tell me any stories regarding team teaching based on your EP experience.”



# Perspectives

## **Guilt, Missed Opportunities, and False Role Models: A Look at Perceptions and Use of the First Language in English Teaching in Japan**

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At the start of the 2013 academic year, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) implemented the guideline set forth in their latest Courses of Study, dictating that English classes "should be conducted principally in English in high school" (MEXT, 2009, p. 8). The new Courses of Study, although not imposing a strict target-language-only rule, are still reflective of the past dogma that takes what Macaro (2001) calls a maximal position wherein the L1 is a necessary evil rather than a pedagogical resource. Teachers and institutions espousing such a view undermine language learning progress by engendering undue guilt for responsive and responsible teaching decisions, inhibiting creative pedagogy, and discouraging teachers from acting as positive and realistic bi/multilingual role models.

日本の文部科学省は、現行版学習要領に記載された「高等学校の英語教育授業を原則として英語で教えること」(文部科学省, 2009, p. 8)という方針を2013学年度に施行した。対象言語のみの使用を徹底するという厳格な規則にはなっていないものの、新学習要領は、Macaro (2001) が maximal position と呼ぶ「母語 (L1) の使用は教育上の必要悪である」とする考えを反映している。このような見解を広める教師及び教育機関は、柔軟かつ責任ある教育的決断に対して過剰な罪悪感を生み、独創的な教授法を抑制し、教師が積極的に現実的に対応できるバイリンガル・多言語が使いこなせる模範者として活躍することを阻害し、それによって外国語教育の進歩を妨害する。

At the start of the 2013 academic year, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) implemented the guideline set forth in their latest Courses of Study that English classes "should be conducted principally in English in high school" (MEXT, 2009, p. 8). This is part of an ongoing endeavor by the Japanese government, still reeling from low rankings in English compared to its neighbors, to improve the English capabilities of its citizens (McMillan & Rivers, 2011). This push to use more English in the classroom is seen as a necessary step in the process of shifting away from the grammar-translation and lecture-style methods of the past towards more communicative approaches, in accordance with goals in the 2003 Action Plan to Cultivate "Japanese with English Abilities" (MEXT, 2011). The new Courses of Study, although not completely banning L1 use, are still reflective of the dogma that takes what Macaro (2001) calls a maximal position wherein the L1 is a necessary evil rather than a pedagogical resource. In this paper, I will attempt to show that teachers and institutions espousing such a view undermine language learning progress by engendering undue guilt for responsive and responsible teaching, inhibiting creative pedagogy, and discouraging teachers from acting as realistic bi/multilingual role models.

### Changing Perspectives of the L1's Value in Teaching

Perceptions of the L1's role in second language teaching, broadly referring to anything from translated class materials to code-switching (alternating between two or more languages) by teachers or students, have changed quite dramatically throughout history. Whereas within the traditional grammar-translation method the L1 was the principal means through which language was taught, proponents of the direct method, emerging around the turn of the 18th century, sought to imitate the L1 acquisition process by total immersion in the target language (Cook, 2001; Ferguson, 2009). Assumptions concerning L1 use inherent within the direct method posit that languages are separate systems within the mind and thus best learned in exclusivity or near exclusivity, relying on inductive learning and negotiation of meaning (Cook, 2002a; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2008). Taking this stance, the L1 becomes the enemy of language learning—an interference, a contaminant, a dangerous temptation (Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Weschler, 1997). Strong and weak versions of this *monolingual principle*, being "taken for granted as the foundation of language teaching" (Cook, 2001, p. 404), influenced subsequent language teaching approaches like the audiolingual method and task-based learning (see also Butzkamm, 2003; Littlewood &

Yu, 2011). The acceptance of these premises' validity as a "standard feature" (Ferguson, 2009, p. 235) or "sacrosanct principle" (Kramersch, 2012, p. 109) of the widely popular communicative language approach has decisively reshaped the global educational landscape. Though denigration and avoidance of the L1 in language learning classrooms endures in current mainstream attitudes (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Littlewood & Yu, 2011), the 1990s saw a marked re-evaluation of the monolingual principle from sociocultural, cognitive, and humanistic perspectives (Antòn & DiCamilla 1999; Tian & Macaro, 2012). Research since has yielded further interest in, and empirical evidence for, not only the value of the L1 on a pedagogical level (Ferguson, 2009; McMillan & Turnbull, 2009), but also the vital role of the L1 on the journey towards a bilingual identity (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2013; Kramersch, 2012; McMillan & Rivers, 2011).

Not sharing a history of colonization, Japan has not followed the "monolingual bias" trajectory (Kachru, 1994, p. 798) that has been seen in countries where enforcement of a target-language exclusivity rule could amount to imperialistic oppression (Auerbach, 1993; Littlewood & Yu, 2011). On the contrary, the L1-heavy grammar-translation method, for various reasons, is still very much alive and kicking and constitutes a substantial portion of private and public English instruction in Japan (McMillan & Rivers, 2011; MEXT, 2011). Nevertheless, Japan has not escaped the influence of the direct method via the prevalent communicative approach (Carson & Kashihara, 2012; Kanno, 2007). Universities and private teaching institutions capitalize on the lure of *English only* in promotional tactics (Ford, 2009; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Nao, 2011) and MEXT's latest and controversial Courses of Study show that ideals of immersion or target language maximization still hold sway in the educational sphere.

### **Unjustified Guilt**

After examining teachers' or institutions' views on L1 classroom use, Macaro (2001) outlined three possible viewpoints: the virtual position (the L1 has no value and can and should be totally excluded), the maximal position (the L1 has no value but imperfect learning conditions necessitate its occasional use), and the optimal position (the L1 has pedagogical value that should be explored). Teachers subscribing to the maximal position often experience guilt or shame for "lapses" into the L1 (Butzkamm, 2003; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Especially in Japan, where students have little opportunity to practice English outside the classroom, many regard any use of the L1 as irresponsibly taking away from precious L2 input time (Kim &

Elder, 2005; Stephens, 2006). Furthermore, there is still the sense that code-switching demonstrates inadequate language skills or determination on the part of teachers or students (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Hosoda, 2000). As a result, teachers more often hear L1 use discussed in terms of avoidance or minimization (Cook, 2001; Ford, 2009). Like so many educators worldwide, a lot of Japanese teachers have been left juggling discordant demands without much guidance (Critchley, 2003; Turnbull & Dailey-O’Cain, 2009).

Although the maximal approach appears benign (what teacher wouldn’t want to provide extensive L2 input?), it places quantity of L2 unjustifiably high on the hierarchy of teachers’ responsibilities towards students. This priority status of maximum L2 use risks alienating frustrated, uninterested, or otherwise struggling students and falling short of set course content objectives. Teachers who take multiple important considerations into account when making the decision to use the L1 will still feel as if they have failed in relation to their target-language exclusivity aspirations. In personal experience working in the Japanese high school system, I have witnessed firsthand the furtive glances around to see who could be listening and the embarrassed, apologetic faces from Japanese English teachers (JTEs) and assistant English teachers (AETs) alike when speaking of their use of the students’ L1 in class, followed up by a common expression typifying the grudging sentiments of the maximal position: “*Shouganai*,” meaning “It can’t be helped.”

Yet, this automatic guilt and perception of inadequacy proves unjustified as there is little empirical backing for the maximal position and a compellingly wide breadth of studies supporting less extreme positions (Auerbach, 1993; Critchley, 2003; Macaro, 2009). As Kim and Elder (2005) stressed, “The proportion of the TL used in classroom interactions should not be the sole basis for judging the linguistic quality of the classroom environment, where various contextual factors come into play” (p. 357). Many have investigated the frequency and purposes of L1 use in the classroom and have identified multiple legitimate and beneficial functions for the L1 and for code-switching in particular (Atkinson, 1987; Butzkamm, 1998; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). Ferguson (2009) divided these common uses of the L1 into three broad categories: for constructing and transmitting knowledge, for classroom management, and for interpersonal relations. Enumerating the various situations where L1 would outperform the L2 is beyond the scope of this paper; however, some particularly salient reasons within Japanese classrooms would be (a) reducing anxiety (Carson & Kashihara, 2012), (b) providing an equal playing field for less advanced students in a system that commonly eschews ability grouping (Sugie, 1995), and (c) advancing

content coverage conducive to entrance examination preparation (Yamamoto-Wilson, 1997). In a study done specifically in Japan on teacher code-switching, Hosoda (2000) revealed that it had a positive effect by fortifying or restoring “the flow of interaction” (p. 89) in classes with low proficiency or unmotivated students, or both—an all too common situation in Japanese high schools or universities.

The benefits of code-switching by students is also strongly supported by sociocultural and cognitive theories. In brief, if we understand language as the primary semiotic tool that mediates thought, we must accept that students’ L1 will be the medium through which they process and internalize new information. Far from being an interference, their L1 scaffolds their progress, building new information on old (DiCamilla & Antón, 2012; McMillan & Turnbull, 2009). Regardless of the classroom or institutional policy, the L1, especially for beginners and intermediate students, will be the vehicle by which they focus attention, organize thoughts, and internalize meaning (Swain & Lapkin, 2013). Rather than entertaining the improbable notion of students “reconceptualiz[ing] the world” (Butzkamm, 2003, p. 31) through such finite L2 exposure, teachers should be encouraged to make use of the scaffolding and higher order cognitive shortcuts older learners possess (see also Cook, 2001; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003).

A deeper look at teachers’ decisions to use or allow the L1 paints a far different picture than that implied by the maximal position—that is, lazy teachers or students compensating for inadequate linguistic abilities. We see teachers using all their and their students’ linguistic knowledge to “facilitate a pupil’s access to curricular knowledge in a classroom environment that feels comfortable, familiar and safe” (Ferguson, 2009, p. 232). Undeniably, not all choices to use the L1 will be in the students’ best interests. To illustrate, De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) found that rationales for use differed between novice and experienced educators, suggesting L1-use optimization is a skill to be developed over time. Cook (2001) advocated that teachers be encouraged to weigh the merits (efficiency, learning, naturalness, and external relevance) against “the potential loss of L2 experience” (p. 413), a far cry from uncritical adherence to an arbitrary target-language-only rule. The maximal position apparent in the latest Courses of Study has the effect of focusing teachers’ attention towards which language to use rather than how to make the most of either. In lieu of an untenable edict of L1 avoidance, support and guidance on pedagogically justified uses of L1 within realistically imagined classroom contexts could be provided (Ferguson, 2009; McMillan & Rivers, 2011). From simple things such as telling a joke in the L1 to lighten

the mood to in-depth cross-linguistic analysis, there are times when the L1 not only has a role, but is a superior means to achieve the desired end.

### **Missed Opportunities**

Support for principled and judicious use of the L1 as responsive and effective teaching for which educators need not feel ashamed is extensive and comprehensive (Butzkamm, 2003; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). In contrast, the maximal position does far more harm than just imposing a sense of guilt on teachers compelled to use the L1 when necessary. It stifles the creative pedagogy vital to assisting students on the arduous journey towards bilingualism. Under the maximal position, teachers resort to code-switching with hesitation and fear of possible recrimination. This reluctance leaves a powerful tool on the shelf to collect dust. Especially for advanced learners who will need far less scaffolding from the L1, the maximal position may lead teachers to abandon code-switching the very moment students can function adequately without it. Yet, far more intriguing than code-switching, an economic and efficient classroom strategy, as a means to an end is code-switching as an end in itself. This idea makes a profound departure from conceptions of parallel or isolated monolingualisms (Cook, 2001; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2008) to view learners as “aspiring bilinguals” developing their full linguistic repertoires to create their own voice and identity (McMillan & Rivers, 2011, p. 251). This view also recognizes code-switching not as a deficient interlanguage, but as sophisticated and complex discourse strategies constructed by “savvy navigator[s] of communicative obstacles” (Kramsch, 2012, p 108; see also Ogane, 1997).

This exciting potential for code-switching in the classroom is easiest to appreciate when looking at advanced writing students who, in the face of new audiences and unfamiliar linguistic self-presentation strategies, “are observed to experience struggles in their representation of discursal selves” (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2013, p. 7). Even in circumstances where the final product must be entirely within the target language, highly advanced students can utilize their L1 writing skills to enhance their writing content, make appropriate word choice, and come to various stylistic and rhetorical decisions (Friedlander, 1990; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2013; Lally, 2000; Woodall, 2002). In Nichols and Colon’s (2000) longitudinal case study, a bilingual student in the U.S. reported that when encouraged to make use of either Spanish or English when freewriting and outlining drafts, “she was able to tap the full range of her linguistic ability for class assignments” (p. 504).

Likewise, in their study of 64 writing students from a multilingual perspective, Kobayashi and Rinnert (2012) found that L1 and L2 knowledge evolved and merged, allowing multicompetent writers “to exert more control over the text they [were] constructing by choosing the most appropriate features from their repertoire of writing knowledge” (p. 101). Teachers unencumbered with arbitrary L1 avoidance can see the students’ first language as the powerful resource that it is and thereby are in a better position to facilitate and enhance learning.

Although it has been noted that code-switching is a natural process and therefore does not require explicit modeling from teachers (Dailey-O’Cain & Liebscher, 2009), Canagarajah (2011) argued that students could greatly benefit from further guidance into the exploration of discourse and rhetorical strategies in what he called codemeshing. His study was on the progress of a Saudi Arabian student who, within an environment that provided modeling and encouragement for codemeshing, developed her deeply rhetorically powerful recontextualization, voice, interactional, and textualization strategies. Perhaps that level of mastery and refinement is beyond the reach of the majority of Japanese high school students, but having that possibility promoted—unthinkable from a maximal position—opens the door to more level-appropriate but equally fulfilling classroom activities.

### **Teachers as Bilingual Role Models**

The pressure towards monolingual classes neither reflects the current English-as-a-lingua-franca reality nor provides positive bilingual role models from either Japanese English teachers or teachers from abroad. The current era of globalization has brought a proliferation of questions about the primacy of the native speaker, the appropriacy of exonormative versus endonormative grammar, and the goals of language learning itself (Alptekin, 2002; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Kramsch, 2012). As with any high-stakes, complicated issue, answers to those questions can be exceedingly emotive and controversial. Nevertheless, there seems to be a turn in the discourse away from the undisputed monolingual native-speaker ideal to greater interest in bi/multilingualism (Kramsch, 2012; Levine, 2012). This shift has roots not only in philosophical theories, but also in pragmatic assessments of the global landscape where the monolingual native speaker of English is now the minority (Cook, 2002a). “Globalization is reshuffling the cards,” so to speak (Kramsch, 2012, p. 115). As it is MEXT’s (2011) stated goal to develop students’ skills and sensibilities in preparation for the international stage, it would follow that they should deeply examine how to recreate a

“multilingual social space” reflective of the wider international community in which they wish to be players (Levine, 2012, p. 3). In such a multilingual social space, languages can no longer be thought of as simple on/off binary phenomena in which only one predetermined set of grammar, lexis, and pragmatics can be used at a time. Instead, the flexible, dynamic possibilities within linguistic diversity are acknowledged.

Although a significant part of the societal and governmental efforts to promote the learning of English is in aid of producing Japanese citizens capable of communicating in English-only situations, that particular goal is truly only relevant to an elite minority of the population (Seargeant, 2011). What should not be forgotten is that Japanese citizens, as their country grows evermore linguistically diverse (Kanno, 2007), will be encountering more and more bi/multilingual situations in which the language of interaction must be negotiated by all parties. This can require a tremendous amount of skill, as the speaker must take into account the possible linguistic abilities and preferences of all participants and the social or discursal significance of a language choice (Auer, 2010; Blom & Gumperz, 1972). Depending on the participants and situation, a decision to conduct a conversation solely in one language may be perceived as impolite, alienating, or even offensive (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). Conversely, skillful use of code-switching can help speakers carry out an array of interpersonal and discursal aims. The classroom can be a place where students are shown and can learn when it is best to use English or Japanese and when and how to mix them. Cook (2002b) urged that teachers “develop the systematic use of the L1 in the classroom alongside the L2 as a reflection of the realities of the classroom situation, as an aid to learning and as a model for the world outside” (p. 332).

The monolingual-oriented status quo raises serious questions of inequality and practicality (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011; Rivers, 2010). In the current climate of a widespread maximal position, the new Courses of Study, although they do not advocate a strict English-only policy, may lead many to erroneous conclusions about what are effective teaching methods or even what the goals of teaching should be. That is, should teachers focus on preparing students for an imagined monolingual community or on facilitating a broader multicompetence? The current dictates, rather mildly worded as they are, are still directing attention towards the quantity of L2 spoken in class rather than the purposes or benefits of either L1 or L2 use. The focus towards maximizing L2 usage rather than encouraging discussion and creativity on how best and when to use either language reinforces the false monolingual native speaker paradigm that is inconsistent with the glo-

balized reality (Alptekin, 2002; Nao, 2011). In this paradigm, the authority and legitimacy of the nonnative speaker are diminished (Cook, 2002a) and the native speaker can be forced to occupy a reductive stereotype (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011; Mahoney, 2004; Nao, 2011). In this system, the JTE can never be a true authority; JTEs are held up against the native speaker compared to whom they will always be “deficient” even within their own classrooms (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011). Likewise, at the expense of valuable pedagogical and interpersonal tactics, the native speaker teachers may feel pressured to hide their knowledge of Japanese (Barker, 2003; Breckenridge & Erling, 2011) to maintain “facsimiles of a monolingual L2 environment” of dubious value (Levine, 2012, p. 3). This not only creates “an unequal linguistic divide” between native speaker teachers and JTEs (Rivers, 2010, p. 105), but furthermore robs students of the chance to experience the classroom as a space for developing code-switching norms and strategies more in line with their future communication needs and through which they can “see themselves, in real-world ways, as nascent bilinguals and legitimate peripheral participants” (Levine, 2012, p. 8). After all, if we take bilingualism instead of parallel monolingualisms as our objective, students “need to be presented with proper role models of L2 users to emulate” (Cook, 2002b, p. 336). For MEXT to accomplish their objectives to foster a “global perspective” and provide “opportunities to see how people actually use English” (MEXT, 2011, p. 6), a monolingual native speaker paradigm is hardly a step in that direction.

## **Conclusion**

From interference, danger, and obstacle to ally, asset, and resource, the rhetoric surrounding the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom has undergone a remarkable reversal. Whether one focuses on the possibilities of L1 use through perspectives of cognitive acquisition, pedagogical efficiency, or larger personal or political functions, it is undeniable that the use of the students’ first language demands deeper inquiry and consideration. Thus far, it appears Japan’s educational institutions remain constrained by an unfounded devaluation of the mother tongue. To move away from unwarranted guilt and false prescribed roles impeding creative teaching, it is imperative to critically address the monolingual bias and “integrate into our pedagogy the reality of L1 use and orientation toward bilingual development” (Levine, 2012, p. 4).

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# Research Forum

## **“I Didn’t Know Who Is Canadian”: The Shift in Student Expectations During the Initial Stages of a Study Abroad Program**

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An interview-based case study was used to identify the shift in expectations for 5 Japanese undergraduate students studying abroad at a Canadian university. Using a modified expectancy violation framework, this study examined the initial stage of an 8-month study abroad program, using semi-structured interviews supported by observational data gained in classroom observation. An inductive, qualitative analysis of the interviews revealed that expectation of interaction was the most commonly violated expectation for the participants. Most participants struggled with assuming the identity of a less competent language user but nonetheless sought out opportunities to become competent in their study abroad context, in some cases creating and shaping their own contexts for language use and growth. Further, participants faced the challenge of addressing the native speaker/nonnative speaker dichotomy in a multicultural study abroad environment, particularly outside the classroom. The paper concludes with curricular, policy, and research implications.

本研究は、カナダの大学に留学中の日本人学生5人を対象に、留学先の学校や現地の人々、自身への期待の変化をケース・スタディの手法を用いて調べたものである。8か月間の留学期間の初期段階に授業観察及び半構造的面接を行い、データを修正版期待違反理論の枠組みで分析した。質的帰納的な分析の結果、現地人との交流に対する期待が最も満たされなかったことが判明した。本研究が対象とした留学生は、英語力が劣る話者というアイデンティティーの葛藤を抱えながらも、英語上達の機会を積極的に見出し、英語を使う機会も創出した。さらに、現地の多民族社会の中で、特に教室外で英語のネイティブ・非ネイティブという従来の二項対立の意味を再検討するという課題に直面した。本稿はカリキュラム、政策、本研究の意義についても言及する。

**I**t is widely believed that the best route to proficiency in a second language is study abroad (SA). Miller and Ginsberg (1995) claimed, “the only way that students ever acquire functional language ability, at least at advanced levels, is during study abroad” (p. 393). Although students may enter into the SA experience believing this, they often find their experiences in SA fail to meet those expectations. Studies on the relationship between expectations and overseas adaptation have suggested that the fulfillment or violation of these expectations have a strong influence on students’ ability to acculturate into the host environment (Furnham, 1993). Therefore, it is important for designers of SA programs for Japanese students to understand student expectations in relation to processes of adaptation in order to help students benefit from their SA experience (Bacon, 2008).

## Literature Review

According to Dufon and Churchill (2006), research on the topic of SA has followed similar trends to those in applied linguistics and second language acquisition research, where the research has expanded to include studies of learning processes and individual differences (Churchill, 2009; Habu, 2000; Talburt & Stewart, 1999), dimensions of communicative and academic competence (Bacon, 2008; Marriot, 2000), and the role of the host context in positively and negatively shaping opportunities for interaction and learning (Churchill, 2009; Iino, 2006; Polyani, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998). Studies of Japanese SA participant expectations have argued that program variables may affect opportunities for interaction (Churchill, 2009), especially for programs that group learners in ways that may restrict their interaction outside the classroom (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003).

In terms of theoretical approach, previous research on expectations has applied the expectancy violation model (Feather, 1967) to analyze participant expectations. In his expectancy violation framework, Burgoon (1992) postulated that students enter the SA experience with predeparture expect-

tations influenced by gender, prior experiences, and location of sojourn. This framework was applied to large scale quantitative research with American SA students by Martin, Bradford, and Rohrlach (1995), who called into question the idea that the more similar the host and native culture, the less acculturation difficulty experienced by SA students. Although this framework has been previously applied to large-scale quantitative research, the general model could also inform a small exploratory study. We therefore situated the present small-scale study within the context of Japanese students' shifting expectations. Our broad aim is that this exploratory study will contribute to the growing SA literature on student expectations by addressing the following linked questions:

Did the expectations of Japanese SA students in a two-semester program change from the pre-exchange phase to the initial stages of their SA experience, and if so, in what specific ways?

## Method

Our data were generated from a project orientation, an individual semi-structured interview with each participant (see Appendix A), and contextual field notes from three observations in the participants' classrooms. In order to address some known disadvantages of retrospective event interviews, participants were given time to reflect on the interview questions prior to the interview. Data were collected by the first author, who was a volunteer tutor in the Japan-Canada Exchange Program (JCEP)<sup>1</sup> during her time in Canada as a visiting student from her graduate program in Japan. Because case studies of SA can "present questions for further research in the area of language and cultural acquisition" (Bacon, 2008, p. 640), we characterize this study as *exploratory*; however, findings can be transferred not only to the cohort but also to SA programs in a variety of contexts.

## The Study Abroad Program

The host university is located in a large Canadian city in which English is used in fewer than half of its households. At the time of the study, 14% percent of the students at the university were international, and of these, 50% were from Asian countries. The JCEP, established 21 years prior to the current study, links a mid-size teaching-focused Japanese university and a large Canadian research-intensive university where English is the medium of instruction. The goals of the JCEP are to promote intercultural and academic engagement for students. JCEP students are exempted from

the host university's language proficiency requirements and follow a mainly sheltered curriculum in the sense that the majority of their courses are not credit-bearing at the Canadian host university, and hence are attended nearly entirely by visiting students enrolled in the JCEP, with a handful of exchange students from other countries. JCEP students go to Canada in September, halfway through their 2nd year of study at home in Japan, to pursue two semesters of custom-designed courses in liberal studies taught by EFL instructors familiar with content-based language teaching for JCEP students. Courses consist of a sheltered Canadian Studies course and two unsheltered liberal arts courses paired with noncredit adjunct English language support. In their second semester, the top third of the cohort (screened by incoming academic standing and current English proficiency scores) may replace sheltered courses with one or two freely chosen unsheltered elective courses. Students are placed individually in residence apartments with non-Japanese students. It should be noted that program details are normally covered in a predeparture orientation series that includes several sessions with leaders of the Canadian program and also a description of the host university's student body. Because of an organizational transition for this cohort, the Japanese university shortened its preorientation program and omitted all sessions by the Canadian team.

### ***Participants***

The sample was generated using convenience sampling based on availability and accessibility of the participants; however, as Dörnyei and Csizér (2012) argued, this method is also partially purposeful as students also had to possess characteristics that were related to the purpose of the investigation. The pool of 44 JCEP students was canvassed for participation, and five volunteered to participate in the project. All of them appeared to meet the criteria for the study and were enrolled in the study. The criteria for inclusion were willingness to volunteer (no payment was involved), written consent to participate, and representativeness of the larger student pool enrolled that year in the JCEP. Participants were considered representative of the larger JCEP population based on gender, academic major, incoming GPA, and incoming English language proficiency. The home faculties (i.e., academic majors) of the five participants in the study (three from the most widely represented faculty, International Relations, and one each from Economics and Letters) were reasonably representative of home faculties of the cohort of 44 students in the JCEP that year.

Ayumi,<sup>2</sup> an international relations major, had a TOEFL (PBT) score of 513 but seemed able to articulate her ideas well. She had previously studied abroad for a month in the United States and aimed to improve her English for work in Japan and meet new friends. She also wanted to improve her TOEFL score to participate in an unsheltered elective course. Ayumi lived with four international students—three Asians and one European—along with one Canadian. She joined two campus clubs.

Kana studied economics. Her TOEFL PBT was 527. Kana had previously studied in Canada briefly during high school. During her SA experience, she lived with a Canadian and an American international student, as well as a nonnative English-speaking international student. Kana also volunteered, preparing food at a homeless shelter.

Ryo was studying English literature in the Faculty of Letters, after having worked for 2 years. His TOEFL score was unreported. This was his first time outside Japan. He was the only nonnative English speaker among his roommates: four Canadians and one Australian. Ryo joined campus clubs and volunteered in an undergraduate Japanese class.

Yasutaka was studying international relations. Like Ryo, he had no prior SA experience. Despite his score of 530 on the TOEFL PBT, his speaking proficiency seemed weakest of the five participants. Yasutaka's roommates were Canadians and international nonnative English-speaking students.

Yui, also studying international relations, had spent a high school year in New Zealand. Yui's English proficiency was the highest of our participants (TOEFL PBT 570, meeting the threshold for the university's international student admissions). Yui resided with two international students and a Canadian and aimed to take unsheltered elective classes in the second semester.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

Participants received copies of the interview schedule at the orientation session and prior to being interviewed were given the interview questions in English in order to offset any potential difficulty for students working in their L2. Participants were asked to reflect for several days on the questions and to write down their answers before the interview. Semi-structured individual interviews in English lasted up to an hour and were recorded digitally and transcribed in full. Students were also asked to elaborate on or clarify their spoken responses as well as their previously written responses as an informal way of member-checking at the data collection level (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). At the conclusion of the interviews, participants' previously written responses were collected.

A comparison of topics mentioned in participants' spoken and previously written responses showed full consistency between spoken and written topics for each of the five participants. Transcribed interviews were then analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Two key themes were identified along with nine subthemes (see Appendix B) and refined by the method of constant comparison. These themes were (a) present feelings and ideas about life in Canada and (b) pre-SA expectations.

A subset of the interview transcripts (about half of one interview selected at random, representing approximately 10% of the full data set) was also coded by the second author. The two coders attained 85% coding agreement on the subset. This inter-rater agreement procedure, together with the attention to clarifications during interviews as well as our content check (or "data triangulation") of spoken with written responses' content gave the researchers reasonable confidence in the trustworthiness of the interview data despite the fact that respondents were not working in their native language.

## Findings

We found that during the initial stages of their SA experience, the participants' expectations in terms of setting (university) were mostly fulfilled or exceeded, yielding positive evaluations of this aspect of their experience. However, when examining the subtheme of present interaction and expectations of interaction, we found that participants' reported experiences frequently fell short of preprogram expectations. Therefore, we focus our presentation of findings in this report upon the more problematic subtheme of *opportunities for interaction and expectations of opportunities for interaction* and examine how the participants' expectations of interaction shifted during the initial stages of SA.

### ***Expectations and Opportunities for Interaction: In the Classroom***

Four participants indicated that they had expected to be studying in an environment with non-Japanese students, interacting with students from other countries as well as a variety of Canadian undergraduate students. They anticipated English-only classroom interaction with students, which for a great deal of student interaction was not the norm at the host university because of the sheltered program as well as the university's cosmopoli-

tan, predominantly multilingual student makeup. Ayumi was disappointed about being in a classroom with other Japanese speakers:

I don't like the class environment, because we should talk in English, but we talk each other in Japanese, so I don't like it. (Ayumi)

Although everyone agreed that an English-only classroom would be beneficial, Yasutaka commented that using Japanese allowed them to code-switch to discuss ideas or terms that were unknown in English, although he also commented that this impeded his opportunity to try to negotiate meanings in English. Yasutaka's and Ayumi's comments regarding language use in the classroom were corroborated by observations of classrooms in which students code-switched between Japanese and English, often using Japanese to discuss difficult concepts as well as to check meaning for instructions and presentations.

Although pre-SA expectations regarding interaction with classmates fell short, participants' expectations regarding their instructors in Canada were largely exceeded. Although students had expected that they would have difficulty interacting with instructors, all commented that their instructors provided an unexpected source of interaction. Ryo especially felt that the teacher-student relationship in Canada was closer and more casual than those relationships they had experienced in Japan:

I can talk with my teacher easily, so if I have a question, I can ask my teacher, but before I came to Vancouver, I have never asked my question to a teacher. (Ryo)

Although students could easily communicate with their instructors, it was not always possible with others outside the classroom.

### ***Expectations and Opportunities for Interaction: Outside the Classroom***

Participants initially expected that in a country where English is one of two official languages, there would be many chances to communicate with native speakers (NSs) of English. Students had to face the reality that they had arrived with 44 other Japanese students. As Ryo commented, his expectations regarding an English-only environment outside the classroom had shifted:

I expected that there are lots of opportunity to speak English, but as I said, we can use only Japanese in here, we can live with Japanese here so we have to, we have to be aggressive to speak English or make friends. (Ryo)

Pellegrino (1998) also found that, during SA, learners often interacted with NSs less frequently than planned.

### ***(Present) Interaction with Roommates***

One of the largest expectations our participants held for interaction was with roommates, as all participants resided on campus with other international and Canadian students. However, students soon realized that interaction with roommates was not guaranteed. Ryo was able to articulate the difference between his expectation of interaction with his roommates and the reality:

Everyone is kind for me, but they have their community or their group, so we don't have enough time to speak English or talk conversation, so, yeah, because also students here has a lot of assignment, a lot of paper, they are always busy. (Ryo)

Some participants realized that the academic English studied prearrival was not the register for informal interactions and they lacked the listening and speaking fluency to communicate information. Kana noted the discrepancy between her listening and speaking fluency in her L1 and L2:

They are not Japanese people. They, like, when I, when we just talk and they, like, I want to say something like happy or fun happened in Japanese. I can say like that, but in English I cannot say and also I can't listen to what my friends say. (Kana)

Yasutaka also commented that he lacked the skills to begin and maintain conversations in informal communication with roommates, developing an identity as a less competent member of his household, making participation additionally difficult. However, he soon began weekly tutoring sessions to help him build conversational skills to become an active contributor to interactions.

### ***Shaping Opportunities for (Present) Interaction***

From the beginning of their SA experience, students looked for opportunities for interaction on campus beyond their dormitories in university clubs, events, and as volunteers. When reflecting on expectations, students explained that they believed they would be more successful in making friends during the initial stages of their SA. Ryo began to realize that he would have to shape his own opportunities for interaction:

I'm facing this problem that there are few opportunity to speak native people English, but it's my problem, cause if I don't start to something, it's something never happen. I have to be more progressive. (Ryo)

All participants discussed their membership in clubs and noted that some members of these associations were students who had joined in order to practice Japanese. When asked if they used Japanese to interact with these students, participants indicated that they resisted in order to practice speaking English. That is, they resisted using their multilingual competence in situations where it could have been a tool to build relationships with other students through language exchange.

Ryo realized that Japanese could be a means to exercise what Kramsch and Whiteside (2011) termed *symbolic competence*, creating and shaping the contexts in which language is used and learned. He decided to volunteer as a teaching assistant for a Japanese class, repositioning himself into the teacher role, in which he was required to code-switch between Japanese and English in order to present Japanese culture and attractions.

### ***Ethnicity, Culture, and Expectations of Interaction***

Despite students knowing about the multilingual and multicultural make-up of the host university and its city, they nonetheless commented that the demographics of the university and the city were much more diverse than expected. Yui reflected on the difference between her expectations and her experience of this diversity:

At first I thought [host city], the whole Canada was Canadian people—I imagined there is white people but my expectation was not correct actually—there is a lot of Asians, a lot of Canadians. Well, Canadian includes everything, but there's a lot of others including Japanese and I'm really shocked, but things

turned to be okay, because then I can meet a lot of people I wouldn't meet in Japan. (Yui)

Although Yui's expectation in this regard was violated, she saw this as positive, increasing her opportunities to interact in English with a wider variety of people than she had expected. However, others' expectations of interaction were violated negatively, as some had pictured Canadians as Caucasian, native English speakers. This topic is usually addressed in the preprogram orientation course in Japan which, as previously mentioned, was seriously truncated for this cohort. When asked about interaction with "Canadian people," Ayumi answered:

I don't know who is Canadian and who is not . . . even she or he is the face is like Asian, but the person is Canadian.

Early in their SA experience, participants began to question classifications of ethnicity and culture in relation to their expectation of NS interaction. When asked about ethnicity and culture in relation to new friendships, Ayumi felt social groups on campus tended to be defined by culture and ethnicity:

I feel like there is a tendency that Asian people and European or American or Canadian people are a little separated . . . at some events and always when I'm walking in the street, I saw Asian and Asian or Canadian and Canadian like that, so I feel like it. (Ayumi)

Participants struggled with difficulties of ethnic and cultural classification in a multiethnic, multicultural community. Several mentioned that it was easier to make friends with other Asian international students from Korea or China because they shared knowledge or interests in topics such as Asian pop culture. Participants' initial expectations of interaction with only NSs in Canada had expanded to embrace interaction with other nonnative speakers (NNSs) in situations where English was used as a lingua franca. In these situations, English became a shared resource to create the opportunity for interaction beyond what the students had expected predeparture. Ayumi was able to use English as a lingua franca with NNS friends:

I can talk to Korean . . . more easily and many students say I became a friend, but she or he is Korean, so many students have Korean friends or Chinese. (Ayumi)

## Discussion

Similarly to the research of Martin, Bradford, and Rohrlich (1995), this study found that unmet expectations of SA are not always evaluated negatively. When expectations are either fulfilled or violated positively, participants will also have a positive evaluation about that aspect of their SA experience. This was seen in the positive violation of Yui's expectation of Canadian ethnicity as she realized the definition of a Canadian was much more diverse than she had expected, leading to opportunities for interaction that she had not experienced in Japan. The results also coincide with Martin et al.'s findings that when predeparture expectations are violated negatively, students will form a negative evaluation of that aspect of their experience, as was seen in the violation of students' expectations regarding interaction and language use within the classroom. Through the lens of this theoretical framework, we propose several implications of these exploratory findings.

First, in terms of student preparation for SA, to ensure that the legitimate expectations of students are met as far as possible, the design of the program could have been more effectively explained to the participants using the Japanese university's standard predeparture orientation course that, for organizational reasons, was not fully implemented for our participants' cohort. Similar to the findings of Churchill's (2009) study, predeparture coordination between the host and home universities was of utmost important to participants' successful involvement in the SA program. However, an SA program itself cannot be solely responsible for positive or negative evaluations, because students' agency and capacity for self-regulation also influence engagement in SA (Allen, 2010). The findings of this study imply that pre-SA orientations may need to include a discussion of ethnicity, language, and culture to prepare students for SA in multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual host communities.

Second, in regard to research implications, the NS-NNS dichotomy needs to be studied in relation to SA in multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual host communities. Ayumi's observation, that she didn't know who was Canadian and who was not, supports Isabelli-Garcia's (2006) argument that SA research on interaction and L2 acquisition needs to take account of social and demographic challenges to the ways in which NSs are classified and conceptualized (see Talburt & Stewart, 1999.)

Third, from a policy and practice perspective, these findings suggest that preparation for SA should address skills that students will require not only inside but also outside the classroom. That may mean explicit teaching of communicative skills that better equip students for "extracurricular" inter-

actions during the initial stage of their SA experience. As also found by Miller and Ginsberg (1995), many participants found teacher talk comprehensible but were unable to comprehend communication outside their classrooms.

One limitation of scale in this study is that it was only able to address expectations of SA during the first 3 months of the sojourn. This allowed for only one interview with participants. Having a single interview with students is likely to have influenced their perspectives on their pre-SA expectations. Participants' perspectives may have shifted during the 8-month SA experience, as seen in other SA literature (Bacon, 2008) and would need to be re-evaluated upon program completion to create a full-scale comparison. Nonetheless, studies on expectations during short-term SA (Pitts, 2009) have found that even during a limited time period, individuals were able to compare expectation gaps and overlaps and normalize their experience in the process of refining expectations.

When examining implications for further research, it is evident that there is a continued need for research that addresses student expectations of the SA experience. It is the authors' hope that this exploratory study will inform a future longitudinal investigation that will allow for a more comprehensive analysis of this issue.

## Notes

1. The program's title is a pseudonym, to protect the identities of participants.
2. Pseudonyms are used for participants.

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## Appendix A

### *Interview Protocol*

1. How do you feel about your life in Canada?
2. What do you think about your classes at the host university? (class environment, class topics, assignments, difficulty).
3. What do you think about your teachers and the staff members at the host university?
4. What do you think about the school campus and about the host city?
5. Before you came to the host city, what did you think your life here would be like?

6. Before you came to the host city, what did you think your classes at the host university would be like? (classroom environment, course topics, types of assignments, difficulty)
7. Before you came to the host city, what did you think your teachers and staff at the host university would be like?
8. Before you came to the host city, what did you think the school campus and the host city would be like?
9. What kind of preparation did you receive before you came to Canada (academic, linguistic, cultural)? Do you think this preparation was enough? If not, how could the preparation be improved for future students?
10. How have your expectations of this program changed after 2 months in the host city?

## Appendix B

### *Coding Themes/Subthemes for Analysis*

1. Present feelings and ideas about life in Canada
  - a. (Pres-Set) Setting (host city)

Yeah of course the people in Canada is also kind like shoppers shop staff. (Kana)

- b. (Pres-School) Host university
      - i. Campus
      - ii. Class environment
      - iii. Curriculum
      - iv. Teachers and staff

I chose Family Studies because I was interested in that but yeah I like learning new things and I like learning so I'm learning sociolinguistics and reading behind the image and like that. (Yui)

- c. (Pres-Int) Interactions/opportunities for interaction
        - i. People students are interacting with
        - ii, Opportunities for interaction
        - iii. Communicative competence

I think I quite go outside and participate a lot of parties because I belong the Asia Club and Japan Association Club so I make a lot of friends there. (Yui)

d. (E-C) Ethnicity and culture

So I feel that there is a tendency that Asian people and European or American or Canadian people are a little separated. (Ayumi)

e. (Trans) Transformation of self/learning

Uh little by little I uh speak English and then make friends so yeah so I enjoy the my life in Canada. (Yasutaka)

2. Pre-study abroad expectations

a. (Ex-Set) Expectations of setting (host city)

I expect that there are more entertainment place like to like amusement park or but not so much in here but it's good I don't need like that place. (Ayumi)

b. (Ex-School) Expectations of host university

- i. Campus
- ii. Class environment
- iii. Curriculum
- iv. Teachers and staff

I expect the campus is larger than my university. (Yasutaka)

c. (Ex-Int) Expectations of interactions/opportunities for interaction

- i. Expectations of who they would interact with
- ii. Expectations of opportunities for interaction
- iii. Expectations of communicative competence

It's difficult to make friends than I expected. (Kana)

d. (Ex-Self) Expectations of self

I expected I will be lazy for housework but now it's not so. (Ayumi)

# Reviews

***International Education Policy in Japan in an Age of Globalisation and Risk.* Robert W. Aspinall. Leiden, The Netherlands: Global Oriental, 2013. xiv + 207 pp.**

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*International Education Policy in Japan in an Age of Globalisation and Risk* explores a question that surely resonates with many *JALT Journal* readers: Why, despite much policy attention and many educational reforms, does English language teaching in Japan fail to equip students with the skills to interact successfully with people from other nations? This thought-provoking study focuses on foreign language education and study abroad programmes and the research is complemented by many examples from the author's decades of experience in Japan. It will be of interest to anyone who has ever wondered about the level of foreign language ability among the Japanese, and many of Robert Aspinall's arguments will ring true to those who teach English in Japan.

In this informative volume, Aspinall analyses the learning of English as a foreign language through the lens of globalisation and Beck's (1992) sociological paradigm of *risk society* to make sense of the decisions made by institutions and individuals that influence the outcomes of government policy. Following the Introduction, which defines international education policy in Japan and describes the limitations of conducting research on Japanese politics and society, Chapter 1 sets out the theoretical framework of the book. Then, six chapters cover the historical development of Japan's foreign language education policies, the roles of teachers and learners in the implementation of English language education policy, the role of the private sector in language teaching, and policy and practice in study abroad.

Aspinall's picture of the English language education system in Japan is not optimistic. He describes obstacles that hinder the successful implementa-

tion of government policies that are aimed at improving language abilities and increasing student exchange and concludes that the current system “spreads misery and failure equally throughout the land” (p. 187). These obstacles comprise an overemphasis on translation in foreign language learning, the persistence of the belief that Japan is a homogenous society and the insider vs. outsider dichotomy that this belief promotes, and the disconnect between national policy and classroom practice.

In Chapter 2, Aspinall traces Japan’s emphasis on the grammar-translation method of foreign language instruction back to patterns of behaviour institutionalised soon after Japan’s opening to the outside world in the 1850s; in Chapter 3 he explains how inertia in the national policymaking system, along with a fear of disrupting the system, has enabled this method to endure. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the obstacles within Japanese schools and universities that inhibit the adoption of communicative styles of teaching and learning, including the many nonteaching duties of teachers, the intense pressure to teach to and study for high school and university entrance exams, and the compulsory, egalitarian nature of many English classes. In Chapter 6, Aspinall investigates the considerable role that the private sector has in Japan’s English language teaching industry. He explains that private and international schools, the *eikaiwa* industry, and English language testing companies have not bridged the gaps in communicative English fluency left by the public sector in a way that a globalisation economist might expect. Instead, many actors in this sector have complex goals, which may not actually include helping their customers attain fluency in English. In Chapter 7, Aspinall employs the risk society paradigm to highlight both the risks and opportunities involved in engaging with study abroad. Drawing upon his own analysis and previous studies, he argues that inadequate English language education and institutional loyalty and conservatism within universities and companies, along with the stress of dealing with foreign countries and people, create an incentive deficit that discourages both the outbound and inbound movement of Japanese and foreign students.

Given the Japanese government’s current push towards increasing the international competitiveness of its students and its focus on creating world-class universities, a book on international education policy in Japan is both timely and welcome. A thorough evaluation of Japan’s international education policy would complement earlier works such as Willis and Rappleye’s (2011) edited volume *Reimagining Japanese Education* and articles and book chapters by authors such as Akira Arimoto (2010) and Akiyoshi Yonezawa (2011). *International Education Policy in Japan* contains a great deal

of useful information pertaining to the many issues surrounding English education in Japan and it piques the interest of researchers who may want to delve deeper by reading the research studies that Aspinall cites.

However, the book fails to live up to the promise of its title. Despite its overall merit, the volume seems to struggle with identity. In contrast to its title, most of the book firmly focuses on English language education policy. At the beginning of the book, Aspinall states that one of his purposes is to “analyse the reasons why Japan’s international education policy at all levels has failed to equip all but a few Japanese people with the skills necessary to interact with the outside world” (p. 5), something he addresses through his focus on English language education policy rather than via an examination of the larger international education policy effort. Later, the subject of the book is presented as an examination of a “mismatch between the stages of development of the Japanese state apparatus and the population it tries to govern” as it relates to international education (p. 24), a topic much broader than the one actually addressed by this volume. Chapter 7 begins to look into the larger picture of international education, but muddles internationalisation policy and study abroad, both important topics that would benefit from in-depth treatment in separate chapters.

Another point of frustration concerns the many typographical and grammatical errors found throughout the book. Generally, these are merely distractions, but at times they cause confusion. For example, the typographical error in the subtitle “Changes in Education Policy Since 1993 in Japan” on p. 29 is distracting, and the use of *duel* instead of *dual* along with the qualifier *main* in the sentence that begins “Their main duel role . . .” on p. 152 requires the reader to take a second look.

Even with these limitations, this book is an enjoyable read, provides a valuable foundation for those seeking to understand more about English language education policy in Japan, and is a useful addition to the growing literature focusing on Japan’s attempts to promote the international outlook of its education system.

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***Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms*. Neomy Storch. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2013. ix + 202 pp.**

Reviewed by  
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This new publication will be undoubtedly welcomed by practitioners as an authoritative book in the field of L2 writing, especially for those interested in practical methods of incorporating collaborative writing in class. Researchers too may benefit from the identification of questions for further exploration in an area that is still, by and large, underexplored and in which, according to the author, only a small number of published studies have appeared to date.

Considered a pioneer in this field, Storch is indeed well qualified in the area of collaborative writing, which she defined as “the joint production of a text by two or more writers” (Storch, 2011, p. 275). She has published widely on issues in L2 writing, specifically peer interaction, feedback, and ESL pedagogy in general, as well as the development and the use of L1 in L2 learning. Her experience in second language learning is firsthand, having been born in Poland and subsequently raised in Israel, later graduating from Monash University in economics and sociology.

*Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms* includes rationale that is theoretical, pedagogical, and empirical in nature, in addition to practical activities and methodological guidance. Storch covers theories of language acquisition and learning and also suggests tasks and addresses the practicalities of appropriate composition and sizes of groups, learners’ perspectives such as beliefs and attitudes, and computer-mediated collaborative writing. Moreover, existing literature in the field of L2 writing is critically evaluated, as are factors such as task type, L2 proficiency, and the relationships that influence

language learning. With an easily reviewable author and subject index, this comprehensive publication provides a thorough overview of precisely what collaborative writing is.

The eight chapters are easily navigated, moving from the aforementioned rationales and theories of language acquisition and learning in Chapter 2 to a discussion of providing feedback and scaffolding in Chapter 3—a concern for many teachers of writing courses or writing techniques. Chapter 4 introduces the concept of *linguaging*, which, according to Swain (2006), is a “means to mediate cognition” (p. 96) and “a process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language” (p. 98). A comparison between individual and collaborative texts is provided in Chapter 5, learners’ perspectives are addressed in Chapter 6, and computer-mediated collaborative writing is covered in Chapter 7, where Storch introduces opportunities for teachers and students to utilise the Internet and ubiquitous web applications such as email, chat rooms, and discussion boards.

Storch skilfully summarizes the crux of collaborative writing, in which the underlying premise is that collaborative writing, when effectively used in class, results in social interaction facilitating crucial dialogue between writers. This concept has been described by social interaction theorist Vygotsky (1934/1986) as internalisation required to assist the learner in moving from complex to conceptual thinking. The author explains in a straightforward manner that in collaborative writing, learners *language* about language, meaning that they “deliberate about how to best express their intended meaning” (Storch, 2011, p. 276), in contrast to writing individually. Ultimately, writing collaboratively brings about the added benefit of vocalising thoughts into what the author terms *artefacts*, as well as other advantages, such as greater grammatical accuracy and increased motivation (Storch, 2005). In advocating strongly for collaborative writing, Storch highlights the increased opportunities for “authentic communication among learners, encouraging learners to deliberate about language while engaged in meaningful text production” (Storch, 2005, p. 171). Such a claim is supported through theoretical and pedagogical rationale as well as empirical evidence with the hope that her suggestions will prompt more teachers “to make informed decisions about how best to implement such activities in their teaching context” (Storch, 2005, p. 172).

The genesis for Storch’s book was her initial collection of data for her PhD dissertation, where learning was observed in students’ interactions in pair work on a short composition task. These beginnings have culminated in this illuminative and succinct work that sheds light not only on whether col-

laborative writing provides learners with an awareness of the composition of L2 texts, but also on whether it provides students with “opportunities to learn and consolidate knowledge about L2 grammatical structures and vocabulary” (p. vii).

Although not new as a research area, in that collaborative writing has been incorporated in U.S. educational institutes in pedagogy and compositional research for some decades now, readers will surely welcome the many guidelines provided. This resource will also provide reassurance to readers with reservations or concerns with respect to the linguistic skills students need to write collaboratively. It also covers how best to implement collaborative writing activities not only in a face-to-face context but also online.

This book will be a welcome addition not only for those with an interest in L2 writing generally, but also for practitioners who may be looking for alternative ways of promoting effective learning. Encouraging here are the findings that when collaborative writing is conducted with guidance, students are the benefactors of a heightened awareness of better writing protocols that are not always obvious to them when writing is undertaken solitarily.

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***Learning Vocabulary in Another Language (2nd edition)*. Paul Nation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. xiv + 624 pp.**

*Reviewed by*

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Nation's first edition of *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* (2001) has been the standard reference in the field of vocabulary acquisition for over a decade. With an unrivalled 3,745 Google Scholar citations (as of October 2014), it could even be claimed to be the most influential EFL reference book in current circulation. Such is its recognition within linguistic circles that without reading beyond the contents page one might confidently recommend any updated edition to a language teacher or vocabulary researcher who has not yet read it. For many of us, though, the question is not whether this is a useful book, but whether there is anything new that would persuade us to update our dog-eared first editions. The author himself anticipates this question in the opening section and—unsurprisingly, but convincingly—supports the second edition. Citing the huge amount of research conducted during the intervening decade, he calculates, “at least one-fifth is new material” (p. 5). However, simply agreeing with the author, even one who has made remarkable contributions to the field for over 30 years, does not seem a satisfactory way to choose a book. I will therefore look at the similarities and differences between the two editions and also comment on areas that I feel were neglected.

A major point of similarity between the two editions is that the broad thrust of Nation's arguments remains unchanged. The central idea is that a language course ought to have four strands running throughout. These strands comprise learning from comprehensible meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, a focus on form, and fluency development. In the second edition, Nation also reiterates three main themes. The first is that word learning can be most effective if viewed from a cost–benefit perspective. This means that for many learners, studying the highest frequency words will bring the best return on effort. The second theme is that word learning is a cumulative process. The 18 aspects of word knowledge that Nation specifies (p. 49) require that words must be repeatedly reviewed in a variety of ways for learners to achieve full understanding. The third theme

is that teachers ought to consider the psychological conditions conducive to word learning when designing activities.

Although the broader arguments are familiar, there have been numerous revisions, most of which are supported by research that has emerged over the last decade. To be precise, there are 132 pages of new material, with three additional chapters. Some areas have been given notable attention; one of these is the Academic Word List (AWL; Coxhead, 2000). Although mentioned in the first edition, it now deserves greater discussion, having become the standard list for students aiming to enter English-speaking universities. Another area is the distinction made between low-, mid-, and high-frequency vocabulary and specialized terms. Previously, the discussion did not include mid-frequency vocabulary. These words, ranked between 2,001 and 10,000 in frequency of occurrence, represent an important band for learners and provide an additional 9% on top of the 90% coverage provided by the top 2,000 high frequency words (p. 23). The final area of note is the rewritten chapter on collocations (Chapter 12). With around 50 different terms in circulation (Nation prefers *multiword unit*), this can be a confusing area. Nation carefully explains the distinctions between these terms and guides the reader through a number of recent studies that clarify our understanding of multiword units and how L2 students and teachers ought to approach them. Besides these new and rewritten sections, a different tone can also be discerned. In the first edition, for example, Nation felt the need to vigorously defend graded readers: "Some writers and teachers are uncomfortable with simplification, largely because they feel that the authenticity of the text is lost. This is a mistaken view" (Nation, 2001, p. 173). Having long since won this battle, in the second edition Nation instead devotes more pages to examining how best to use graded readers.

The broad scope of the book—how vocabulary is best acquired by L2 learners and the research that supports this—means that not all of the subfields within vocabulary acquisition can be fully explored. Many readers may therefore feel that their own area of interest has received insufficient attention. I, for example, was disappointed with the section on word associations as an aspect of word knowledge (Chapter 2). Although the new edition contains a better explanation of the Word Associates Test (Chapter 13), the earlier section on associative knowledge was not updated. Consequently, the explanation of how the mental lexicon is structured, from an associative point of view, relies on work published before 1991. This is unfortunate, as the large body of research compiled since then (especially in South Wales) is unrecognised. Given that Nation's new edition is likely to be as influential

as its predecessor for quite some time, work within this subfield may not now receive the attention it deserves. One finding, for example, that Nation does not discuss is that the associative structure of the lexicon is not (as is often assumed) homogeneous (Fitzpatrick, 2007). This variability between individuals has also become an issue in more recent L1 and L2 word association studies. This is not the only omission. In redressing a perceived injustice to the AWL in the first edition—while maintaining loyalty to the General Service List (GSL; West, 1953), Nation also fails to mention other useful word lists. Browne (2013) and colleagues, for example, created new versions of the GSL and AWL from a two-billion-word corpus that they claim give higher coverage than the former lists. As an advisor on both Coxhead's and Browne's word list projects, I feel that Nation missed a unique opportunity to compare their utility as learner resources.

Vocabulary acquisition is too large for one book to comprehensively cover to a depth that will satisfy every reader. Nevertheless, the lack-of-depth criticism only detracts slightly from the huge achievement that the author has made in covering such a large field, providing a readable and well thought-through analysis of the approaches that researchers and teachers ought to take. Furthermore, when the discussion does run thin, Nation points the interested reader to books and articles that explore each subfield further. The short bibliography at the end of each chapter, as opposed to the 30-page reference list in the original, makes the task of follow-up reading significantly easier.

In answer to the initial question: Yes, the updated edition is to be recommended. Second language teachers, course designers, and textbook writers would be hard pressed to find better advice on how to deal with vocabulary. Nation's *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* is therefore set to remain the authoritative text in vocabulary acquisition for the foreseeable future.

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***Identity and Language Learning: Extending the Conversation (2nd edition)*. Bonny Norton. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2013. x + 216 pp.**

*Reviewed by*

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Bonny Norton's *Identity and Language Learning: Extending the Conversation* is a republication of *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*, which chronicles five new immigrants to Canada who, after completing an ESL course, volunteered to meet with Norton as part of a diary study. Norton wrote, "I sought to investigate the relationship of learners to the larger social world, without resorting to oversimplification . . . questions of gender, race, class and ethnicity were central to the analysis" (p. 60). The five (pseudonymous) participants kept journals of their English language-using adventures and misadventures, taking the position of ethnographers in recording their interactions with target-language (English) users and sharing the diary contents on paper and in discussions with Norton and the other members. The events related by Eva from Poland, Mai from Vietnam, Katarina from Poland, Martina from (then) Czechoslovakia, and Felicia from Peru make compelling reading for anyone interested in crossing cultures and adapting, as well as for those interested in language learning.

This second edition (made partly to offer an e-book option) retains the core chapters of the 2000 edition without alterations but adds a comprehensive update in the Introduction, summarizing movements in the field of identity and language learning from 2000 to the present. At nearly 40 pages, the Introduction's overview of new developments in the field, including its set of references, is likely to be essential to anyone currently involved in research on identity, learner motivation and investment, and language learning. The subsequent core chapters of the original edition are then followed

by a substantial new Afterword as well, written by Claire Kramersch, plenary speaker at JALT2014.

In the first chapter, “Fact and Fiction in Language Learning,” Norton argues that the focus in SLA theory is often on the student to the exclusion of the environment, and classrooms are devalued in contrast to idealized notions of outside-the-classroom practice. Norton notes that depending on gender, race, class, and other variables, bias encountered in the environment profoundly affects the chance to practice language, the quality of these interactions, and the consequent feelings about the target language and, furthermore, about themselves experienced by learners. Norton introduces her concept of *investment* to discuss learners’ sometimes shifting determinations to learn a language, their hopes of some positive “return” in their lives (pp. 50-51), and the crucial need for learners to feel a connection between classroom work and their imagined future identities and communities (p. 9).

In the second chapter, Norton discusses the diverse influences on her qualitative research methods, her intention “to develop both an ethical and empowering relationship with my participants” (p. 62), and how she developed her project to fit with this conviction. Chapter 3 is a survey of international research regarding adult immigrants, documenting difficulties and fundamental ironies facing these language learners, particularly discrimination in their new countries limiting the communication opportunities they could potentially use to improve their L2 skills. Norton focuses on immigrant women in particular and why they are held back from acquiring full fluency and literacy in English—often, the prioritizing of family needs and well-being, little sense of leeway for lesser priorities (themselves), and also cultural, economic, and psychological barriers (pp. 79-85). Concluding that only by hearing participants’ own voices can we properly explore connections between learner identities, investments, and their language learning, Norton then profiles each of the five participants in her study: their living situations, work, and feelings about English and living in Canada (pp. 85-96).

The fourth chapter follows the two younger participants, Eva and Mai, in their struggles and successes at the locations of their primary challenges: Eva’s at work and Mai’s both at home, which was tense and linguistically fragmented, and at work. Chapter 5 focuses on Katarina, Martina, and Felicia, the three mothers in the group, all with professional backgrounds, who are working to regain security and belonging for themselves and their families.

In Chapter 6, “Second Language Acquisition Theory Revisited,” Norton revisits the central irony facing adult language learners: “Immigrant language learners are generally more invested in relationships with target language speakers than the reverse situation” (p. 155). Based on the data culled from the diary study, she addresses what she sees as overly simplistic mainstream SLA theories. Referring to the assumption that when living in a country where the target language is dominant, plentiful opportunities will exist to practice with target language speakers, Norton writes from the members’ experiences, “on the bus, in stores or in shopping malls” when a participant “tried to engage anglophones in social conversation in these public places, they would ‘run away’” (p. 148).

Norton’s final chapter, “Claiming the Right to Speak in Classrooms and Communities,” considers potential change and empowerment for language learners. Rather than abandoning traditional classwork, Norton suggests incorporating more cultural awareness tasks (pp. 173-174) and creating “social research” projects to help learners empower themselves and “critically engage” with cultural differences (pp. 188-189). Collaborative projects such as journal keeping and sharing of excerpts supply opportunities for learners to “give voice to the complexity of their experience” (p. 185) and after all, as Norton says of her study, “each woman was an expert on her own life” (p. 184). By listening as learners share, teachers can also learn about students’ investments, concerns, and hopes, and can shape classwork to better address learners’ needs. Norton suggests addressing the gaps that learners feel in output-type skills practice to strengthen their positions outside the classroom (pp. 172-174), and notes that journal keeping and sharing provide practice “speaking up” in writing, and potentially verbally as well (p. 185). Norton mentions parallels to consciousness raising groups in the 1970s (p. 183), and her examples from the five women’s experiences of taking more assertive stances toward issues in their lives are intriguing and ultimately hopeful.

In the Afterword, Claire Kramsch examines the philosophical influences on Norton’s work and the context of the book in its first edition and the present edition: globalization, IT improvements stimulating communications across borders, English as a lingua franca movements, and new awareness of the importance of social relations in language learning (pp. 192-194).

A small but persistent drawback to the volume is an absence of appendices which might have usefully included some of the surveys, letters, and charts Norton describes handing out during her project, such as an adapted Likert scale questionnaire she developed (Chapter 2). The Index, also, is rather inadequate, lacking terms used in the chapters that readers might

wish to find again (*consciousness raising* is missing, as is *collaboration*, and *educational research* is listed as only from pages 58-60.) Another possible drawback for some readers is that the content is not focused specifically on EFL. That said, with global migration, travel, and social media, our learners are hardly immune to issues of power and access, and they do and will have encounters in which more is involved, and at stake, than merely words. The deeper reflection and consideration of issues affecting learners that Norton encourages is likely to be of genuine value for all teachers.

Norton writes, "The goal for future research on identity and language learning is to contribute to efforts to promote language learning and teaching in ways that can enhance human agency in more equitable worlds" (p. 22). Strengthened by the thorough updates in the new Introduction and the context provided by Kramersch in the Afterword, the book makes a persuasive case for language teachers to regard our learners and their investments in a more holistic light. It may also shed some illumination on our experiences as L2 learners ourselves.

***Multiple Perspectives on the Self in SLA.* Sarah Mercer and Marion Williams (Eds.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2014. xi + 188 pp.**

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Interest in the topic of identity, which has characterized work in the field of language education since the turn of the century, has recently focused on the self. References to the self in the literature on SLA in general, and second and foreign language learning in particular, are now commonplace. Less common are clear and cogent explanations of what writers actually mean when they refer to the self. Discussing the difficulties involved in defining the self, the renowned American cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner once reportedly quipped that the best most of us can do when asked to describe a self is point a finger at our chest. Given this state of affairs, Sarah Mercer and Marion Williams's edited volume, which aims to elucidate and enhance current understandings of the self, is not only timely but also makes an invaluable contribution to the field of language learning and teaching.

To accomplish their aim, the editors bring together diverse perspectives on the self in the hope that readers will be able to see how these positions might complement each other and, subsequently, make connections that will ultimately lead to the emergence of a more comprehensive view of the self. The organization of the book reflects this strategy. Early chapters that treat aspects of the self such as self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-esteem are followed by chapters that have a wider scope, exploring broader constructs like identity and motivation. The final chapters offer perspectives that show promise as a means of moving to a more holistic view of the self. Each chapter provides a reader-friendly overview of the theoretical constructs under consideration, a review of salient research, and in most cases, a reflection on the implications for pedagogical practice, making the book a “must read” for teachers, researchers, and graduate students.

Following an introduction, which serves as a reader’s guide to the book, the beginning chapters examine several closely related constructs. In the first of these, Nicole Mills (Chapter 2) brings a social cognitive perspective to bear on the topic. She discusses the importance of learners’ self-efficacy beliefs and suggests steps teachers might take to support their development. Next, Sinthujaa Sampasivam and Richard Clément (Chapter 3) address L2 confidence. Of particular interest to educators working in foreign language contexts like Japan is the authors’ argument that opportunities for L2 interactions—contact with the target language and culture—are essential if students are to develop L2 confidence and ultimately a desired L2 self. In Chapter 4, Fernando Rubio takes up self-concept and self-esteem. After clarifying conceptual aspects of these constructs, he outlines how teachers can foster learners’ self-esteem by creating a safe learning environment in which learners’ identities are honoured and support is given to their sense of belonging, purpose, and competence. Although these chapters provide insights into perceived aspects of the self, they leave the impression that the self is a somewhat fragmented “family of phenomena” (Sampasivam & Clément, Chapter 3, p. 36).

Subsequent chapters take a broader view of the self. For example, Bonny Norton (Chapter 5) discusses insights poststructuralist theory has brought to understandings of the role of identity in language learning. She urges teachers to recognize learners’ multiple identities and employ pedagogical practices that encourage them to engage or invest in language activities. Informed by postmodern, sociocultural, and poststructuralist perspectives, Chantal Hemmi (Chapter 6) reports on case studies of bilingual Japanese women that suggest they experience a different sense of self depending on

which language they use. Continuing to explore the theme of the contingent and shifting self, Florentina Taylor (Chapter 7) introduces the notion of *public selves* versus the *private self*. In the ensuing discussion, Taylor cautions teachers that what learners think about themselves as language learners may not be reflected in their behaviour in the classroom due to such factors as peer pressure. This is followed by Stephen Ryan and Kay Irie's (Chapter 8) exploration of the role of imagination and narrative in the formulation and ongoing evolution of the self as well as the L2 self. Drawing primarily on the L2 motivational self-system and self-determination theory, Ema Ushioda (Chapter 9) focuses on how language-learning motivation becomes a part of the self and the role the social context plays in these processes. Overall, these chapters suggest that teachers can support learners' developmental processes by establishing safe learning environments that honour learners' identities and promote mutual engagement, self-regulation, and learner autonomy.

The final chapters come closer to tackling the crucial, but daunting, question: What is the self? Georg Northoff (Chapter 10) addresses this question by demonstrating how combining phenomenological theory with advances in neuroscience can enhance our understanding of the self. This is followed by Mercer's examination in Chapter 11 of the self as a complex, dynamic system that encompasses the various self-constructs, identities, and beliefs. A strength of Mercer's perspective is that it provides researchers and theorists with the means to explore aspects of the self while not losing sight of the whole. To conclude the book, Mercer and Williams (Chapter 12) consider the contributions the various chapters make to theory, pedagogical practice, and research. They also identify challenges that lie ahead in the ongoing quest to understand the self.

According to Mercer and Williams, the next challenge facing scholars is to determine how current theoretical perspectives and constructs might fit together to form a holistic conceptualization of the self. By bringing together different perspectives, which makes it possible to note points of convergence, this book represents an important step in this direction. Another key challenge identified by Mercer and Williams is the need to investigate the relationship between the self and language pedagogy. A theme running throughout the book is that, for language pedagogy to be effective, learners have to be able to relate the learning to their sense of self. In Mercer's words, "As teachers, our challenge is to ensure that learners can connect their language learning experiences in class with their underlying, continually emergent core sense of self in a positive way" (p. 174). Given the centrality

of the self to language learning and teaching, anyone and everyone involved in language education should read this book—at least twice.

***The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition.***  
**Kimberly L. Geeslin (Ed.). Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons,**  
**2014. v + 553 pp.**

*Reviewed by*  
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Kimberly L. Geeslin has collected an outstanding set of papers that address the following issues of Spanish language acquisition: theoretical and methodological approaches; phonology, grammar, individual and social factors; and language acquisition in the classroom. The book comprises an introduction and five parts, with a total of 30 chapters that show the recent ubiquity of high quality research conducted on Spanish second language acquisition. *The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition* is an excellent compilation of scholarly papers focused on research. This focus notwithstanding, teachers of Spanish as a second language will also find the studies and their applications to be quite stimulating. For example, research on the acquisition of commonly mistaken features such as the prepositions *por/para* (p. 33), the verbs *ser/estar* (p. 456), and the order of adjectives (p. 288) can furnish educators with hints for teaching. It is worth mentioning the chapter “Teaching Pronunciation in Second Language Spanish” by Gillian Lord and Maria Fionda, who consider an important issue from the perspective of the classroom: What is known so far about teaching pronunciation and what should be explored from now on? Furthermore, research on the language instructor, in “Instructor Characteristics and Classroom-Based SLA of Spanish” by Laura Gurzynski-Weiss, is meant to provide insight into the context of learning an L2 and is relevant to the theory and practice of language acquisition.

The first part, “Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to the Study of Second Language Spanish,” contains six chapters. In the first, Amaya Mendikoetxea reports on the use of corpora-based SLA research related to the acquisition of specific aspects of Spanish grammar such as the copula verbs *ser* and *estar*, word order, or the null/overt realization of pronominals.

The other five papers report on the application of several approaches to research on Spanish language acquisition. For example, there are functional studies focusing on prepositions *por* and *para*, generative approaches used to explain differences in L1 and L2 acquisition in adulthood, psycholinguistic approaches to understanding brain mechanisms involved in language processing, observations from the perspective of variationism accounting for the complex nuances of interlanguage and the developmental process of language acquisition, and cognitive linguistic approaches that show the connection between language and human cognition in areas like figure/ground segregation, metaphors, and metonymy.

The second part, "Phonology in Second Language Spanish," contains four chapters, beginning with Mary Zampini's "Voice Onset Time (VOT) in Second Language Spanish," which offers a complete overview of VOT research on the production of Spanish stop consonants and perceptions by nonnative speakers of Spanish. Then, in "Speech Perception in Second Language Spanish," Polina Vasiliev and Paola Escudero shed light on difficulties that adult learners from different L1 backgrounds have with the perception of segments (vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental features (stress and intonation). These authors raise two important issues: Spanish intonation is particularly challenging due to the great deal of dialectal variation and the perception of L2 Spanish segments has been less researched than their production. Subsequently, Manuel Díaz-Campos outlines the phonetic inventories of Spanish and English, offers a description of shared elements, and also refers to the factors considered to account for L2 phonological attainment, such as maturation, perception, motivation, and identity. This part concludes with Nicholas Henriksen's chapter "Suprasegmental Phenomena in Second Language Spanish," which focuses on suprasegmental structures in Spanish including prosody, stress, intonation, rhythm, and speech rate.

The nine chapters in the third part, "Developing Grammars in Second Language Spanish," provide insightful contributions to several areas of Spanish grammar. The chapter about direct and indirect object pronouns (clitics) reviews the research carried out in two categories: studies on L2 production and studies on grammatical processing according to specific approaches such as cognitive-functionalism, linguistic theory, the interface hypothesis, and the model of input processing. Chapter 15 highlights the L2 acquisition of subject pronouns from the perspectives of generative approaches, processing theory, discourse pragmatics, and a sociolinguistics-variationist model. There are four chapters regarding verbs in this part of the *Handbook*. In addition to outlining the results of off-line and online studies on L2 ac-

quisition, in Chapter 12 on grammatical gender, Irma Alarcón analyzes thoroughly the functions of copula verbs *ser* and *estar* (both equivalent to the English verb *to be*). Chapter 14 provides an overview of the acquisition of L2 Spanish tense and aspects from the perspective of several approaches, focusing on the contrast between perfective and imperfective past morphology, and offers a brief explanation of the application of research for teaching the preterite–imperfect contrast. Llorenç Comajoan Colomé cites the example mentioned by Pérez Saldanya (2004) and Lunn (1985) to clearly distinguish between the preterite, perfective aspect (*bailé*: I danced, when the situation is viewed as a whole) and imperfect, imperfective aspect (*bailaba*: I danced/was dancing, which points to one phase of the situation). Chapter 16 covers an analysis of linguistic and developmental factors that influence the acquisition of the subjunctive by English speakers. Chapter 17, about word order, offers a wide range of research methods and a general overview of Spanish interlanguage on this topic. In the chapter about meaning, Roumyana Slabakova examines how learners come to understand and convey meaning, and presents several theoretical approaches. The last chapter of the third part, “Language in Context,” refers to pragmatics and describes interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks used to focus on language users and the contexts in which they interact.

The five chapters of the fourth part, “Individual and Social Factors in Second Language Spanish,” describe the current positions and thoughts related to personal and social aspects that may influence language acquisition in general and Spanish language acquisition in particular. In this part, there are at least two highlights. One of them is the definition provided by Silvina Montrul of “ultimate attainment” as “the final state and stable grammar of people who have completed the language acquisition process” (p. 353). This author discusses the possibilities of acquiring a native-level potential in Spanish, focuses on age effects, and points to the notion that, according to research, learners who begin acquiring an L2 after puberty are unlikely to reach a native speaker level of proficiency. The other point, developed by Barbara Lafford and Izabela Uscinski (p. 386), is that research has found that study abroad does not meet all expectations in terms of delivering high levels of linguistic and cultural competence, thus the need for expanded research using more socially based frameworks centering on interaction.

The fifth part, “Acquisition in the Second Language Spanish Classroom,” refers to input and output of the skills and other components of an L2: grammar, reading, writing, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The author of the last chapter, Gurzynski-Weiss (p. 530), suggests that in many cases the instruc-

tor is the only link between the learners and the L2; thus, she advocates research on the instructor's characteristics, in particular his or her training and background.

*The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition* offers a comprehensive and critical overview of research on phonology, grammar, and methodology. However, a criticism would be that culture-related issues such as intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence are just briefly mentioned in Chapter 22, which focuses on the benefits and the effect of contextual, individual, and social factors related to immersion via study abroad on Spanish acquisition. It should be mentioned that each chapter contains a thorough analysis of the topic, a suggestion of areas that deserve further investigation, and a list of extensive references. In addition, the most effective aspects of the book are the choice of very specific features in Spanish acquisition and the depth of the research. Compared to other quite extensive investigations—for example, Macaro (2003), whose research on writing covers a good number of aspects of language acquisition—Chapter 27 “Acquisition of Writing in Second Language Spanish” by Marly Nas and Kess van Esch develops three specific issues: writing process, writing product, and the role of feedback. Unlike the 11 papers gathered by Salaberry and Lafford (2007), which focus on how practice and teaching are enhanced by research, *The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition* is centered on a critical review and assessment of research into acquisition of Spanish, identifies areas that are in need of further study, and provides readers with theoretical data as a basis for teaching. Thus, this title from the Wiley series of handbooks constitutes an indispensable and highly recommended resource for researchers conducting investigations and also for educators in practice.

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***Quality Assurance in Distance Education and E-learning: Challenges and Solutions From Asia.*** Insung Jung, Tat Meng Wong, and Tian Belawati (Eds.). New Delhi, India: Sage, 2013. xxiv + 307 pp.

*Reviewed by*  
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*Quality Assurance in Distance Education and E-learning: Challenges and Solutions From Asia* serves as a good overview on the state of content development and provides information on regulation and oversight in quality assurance (QA) in higher education around Asia. Although this is a book focused on distance education (DE), the information applies to all higher education institutions because the regulation of DE falls under the same oversight as brick and mortar schools. Additionally, with the growing use of technology in the face-to-face classroom, differences between DE and traditional learning are beginning to blur with integration seeming inevitable. Because the book provides persuasive examples of effective organizing principles applied and evaluated in a number of Asian countries, it is a valuable read for anyone interested in e-learning.

The book is divided into five parts that cover systems theory, management, pedagogy, learner support, and measuring outcomes. Individual chapters address the theme of each part within the context of a particular institution or educational provider. The organization is easy to follow and allows for a broad overview of a variety of issues faced in different cultural environments. The sum of the papers presents strong evidence for a *balanced systems approach*, drawing from hard and soft systems theory to address “the need for both types of approach, and for greater awareness of their respective qualities” (Naughton, 1984/2012). Such a balanced approach also includes all levels of staff in the development of not only DE but of curriculum in any higher education program. Whether it is worth wading through the many detailed descriptions of government oversight programs (which could have been summarized or simply referenced) will depend on the goals of the reader and his or her familiarity with the context. Nevertheless, there are definitely some gems to be found.

In Part 1, “A Systems or Balanced Approach to Quality Assurance,” the four chapters are based on contexts in Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, and

South Korea. The authors provide a good feel for how each country has set up their DE program and what kinds of systems are in place to insure continued QA. However, because there is no introduction or discussion at the end of this section (or any of the five parts), a reader must infer why the papers are considered examples of a balanced approach. From my perspective, as a user of open source online Learning Management Systems (LMS), the paper by Cheong Hee Kiat on the Singapore Institute of Management left me wondering about the evaluation criteria for the university's proprietary LMS when compared with the open source LMSs of the five universities it claims to be benchmarking against. In Chapter 3 on Hong Kong's Open University, Robert Butcher presents an excellent study of involving adjunct teaching staff in course development, something I have long advocated. In addition to providing a reference in support of collaborative course development, the author offers a clear rationale for where DE online content is most effective compared to face-to-face courses.

Part 2, "Ensuring the Quality of Management Processes," provides an overview of the regulatory environments in Indonesia, China, Mongolia, and South Korea. Details are provided on various government regulatory systems, implementation, auditing, stakeholders, oversight, and review. This content applies not only to DE, because the oversight regulatory systems discussed are relevant to all higher education, including language learning programs. From each of the four chapters in this part, one can get the feel for the culture of both the institution and the country. This could provide valuable information to anyone wanting to work in that country, for example, how top-down bureaucratic a nation is, and the status of associate and tenured professors. Again, because there are no discussions or synthesis of the chapters in Part 2, it is left up to the reader to read between the lines, count how many agencies and procedures are in place, and imagine what it would be like to work, develop content, or publish in these nations.

Part 3 is titled "Focusing on Instructional Design and Pedagogy." In Chapter 9, by Katsuaki Suzuki, it was refreshing to read a report that is honest about the condition of QA in Japanese universities being "piecemeal, generally consisting of occasional seminars . . . [and] student evaluation of completed courses, which may not lead to substantial improvement in the quality of teaching and learning" (p. 146). It was more encouraging however to read how Kumamoto University has addressed this issue by institutionalizing a Course Team approach to "check course quality while the materials are under development" (Kitamura et al., 2007, as cited by Suzuki, p. 146). The chapter outlines how this fresh approach avoids creating a course designed

by a single sage, working instead to collaborate to successfully meet new national standards set by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Suzuki presents further informative detail on how this small university is successfully developing this approach in Japan. It is interesting to note that the scope of the program is strictly limited by the government to a very small number of degree students, “15 per year for a master’s program and three per year for a doctorate program” (p. 142). Those with background knowledge of the context and awareness of how very strict Japanese universities are on attendance can understand that a DE program with no classroom attendance required could be viewed skeptically and therefore a large program might not be easily approved. However, I was unable to draw as much from the other papers of Part 3 in the same manner. Because most readers are similarly not likely to be aware of the breadth of contexts covered, which include China, India, and the Philippines, some discussion specific to each part of the book would have been a useful addition. Even a section of questions to be considered would have served to unify and clarify the intent of the book editors in their selection of these papers.

In the two chapters in Part 4, “Assuring Quality of Learning Support and Assessment,” evidence from Malaysia and Pakistan does indicate clearly that quality in the areas of learning support and assessment is dependent on the involvement of all staff at all levels. This also supports the concluding remarks in the book by Jung that a balanced approach that includes the flexibility to adapt and change to meet new goals as they arise is critical to a successful program. This is reflected in particular in the case of Pakistan (Chapter 14), where Naveed Malik states that there is an “absence of established standards” and that the collaborative approach was helping to “formulate and establish these standards” (p. 224).

Part 5, “Outcomes and Performance Measurement,” comprises two chapters. In Chapter 15, Uma Coomaraswamy from Sri Lanka mentions extensive reviews by committees internal and external, but details on the *how* to attain quality were unclear. There is mention of the use of the Course Team concept, in-house training, and home-grown bottom-up ownership, but little detail is included on who made up a team and how this was executed. Performance Indicators (PI) are said to have been developed and reviewed by an international team but again, more detail on the development process of the PIs would provide useful information for readers looking to replicate their approach and emulate their success. Furthermore, much of the QA seems to depend on external review from conventional universities, which

draws attention to the notion of expertise available in the scope of DE and e-learning as mentioned in the book title. Chapter 16, set at the Open University Malaysia, was thorough in listing the outcomes achieved and gave much more detail as to what the QA measures were and examples of the implementation. This bolsters the statements made in the concluding remarks that close out this part, stating that to be an effective flexible education provider means developing a quality culture and innovative environment.

Did I find information on the things I was looking for? Briefly, yes. First, did I find information about what regulatory and oversight systems are in place to support development? Yes, clearly. Although some institutions have been more forthcoming than others, there is enough provided here to make a very strong argument in support of greater collaboration and an involvement of all levels within institutions facing modern educational challenges. Second, were there details on how content and systems were set up to provide a quality experience for the learner? In a larger sense, yes, many of the authors provided insight into how to get people involved from the start. Although not all of the authors addressed this fully, it was quite quickly apparent when an author was not volunteering such detail, and I could jump ahead. I can firmly recommend this book for anyone looking for insight into breaking the mold of industrial educational practices to establish enduring QA innovation. I can also recommend this book for anyone looking to find information on the political and cultural environments in various Asian nations that may influence decisions or the uptake of the educational innovations available through blended learning, flipping the classroom, or content delivered through new technology such as m-learning.

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