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# Table of Contents:

**Foreword** Custódio Martins ................................................................. 4

**Research Articles**

1. **Jihyun Kwon** .................................................................................. 6-56
   *The Role of Proficiency in Pragmatic Transfer: A Study of Refusals by Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Korean EFL Learners*

2. **Hsin-Yi Lien** .................................................................................. 57-75
   *EFL Learners’ Vocabulary Size in Relation to Their Choices of Extensive Reading Materials*

3. **Danielle Tracey, Alexander S. Yeung, A. Katrin Arens & Christina Ng** ........ 76-95
   *Young Second Language Learners’ Competence and Affective Self-concept*

4. **Clay Williams** .............................................................................. 96-108
   *Post-Intensive Instruction Effects on L2 English Lexical Development*

5. **Yoo-Jean Lee** .............................................................................. 109-149
   *An Alternative Approach – Copying: Can it be as Effective as Summarizing to Improve EFL Learners’ Reading and Writing?*

6. **Sachiko Yasuda** ........................................................................... 150-187
   *Issues in Teaching and Learning EFL Writing in East Asian Contexts: The Case of Japan*

**Book Reviews**

*Codeswitching in University English-Medium Classes: Asian Perspectives.* .............. 188-190
Edited by Roger Barnard and James McLellan
Reviewed by **Anna Husson Isozaki**

Aisha Walker and Goodith White
Reviewed by **Darío Luis Banegas**

*Asian EFL Journal Submission Guidelines* .......................................................... 194-198
Foreword

Teaching foreign and second languages in formal contexts has seen some dramatic changes and challenges in the past decades. If in the first decades of the new era in language teaching the debate concentrated more on practical issues, theoretical and epistemological concerns have been central more recently. As Erlam (2008:253) points out: “The growth of the field has resulted in its specialisation and in its increasing alienation from the concerns of the practitioner (…)”. Research literature within SLA has echoed the risks of such divide that leaves, at times, teachers out of the discussion ground (Tavakoli and Howard, 2012). The current issue of the *Asian EFL Journal* includes a selection of research articles that bridge such gap contributing to a reflection on teaching by focusing on the learner and learner strategies in different Asian contexts such as Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The first article by Jihyun Kwon investigates pragmatic transfer of refusals of Korean EFL learners at three different proficiency levels in. Jihyun Kwon’s article is an interesting contribution to the research field on pragmatic transfer. Inquiring about the possible correlation between proficiency level and pragmatic transfer, through the analysis of several discursive situations, this study confirms the results yielded by previous studies. Results show that pragmatic transfer occurs at all levels of proficiency even if transfer of L1 discursive norms increase with proficiency level.

Based on the assumption that vocabulary size has impact on reading comprehension, as attested in the literature, Hsin-Yi Lien’s study investigates on the one hand vocabulary size of EFL learners at tertiary level in Taiwan, and on the other hand the possible correlation between vocabulary size and learners’ choice of type of extensive reading books. In terms of vocabulary size, this study shows that Taiwanese college learners, in general, perform poorly both at the 3000 and the 5000 word level, leading Hsin-Yi to question the effectiveness of English instruction in high school in Taiwan. Even if vocabulary size may be important for the learners’ choice between graded readers or authentic books, to a certain extent, results also show that those learners whose vocabulary test’s score was low tended to choose authentic materials as well. From a practical perspective, Hsin-Yi suggests that authentic books ought to be the choice in the language classroom so as to increase vocabulary size and make extensive reading enjoyable.

The third study of this issue by Tracey, Yeung, Arens and Ng addresses L2 acquisition from the perspective of the learner by discussing the importance of two components of self-concept: competence and affect and their correlation with academic achievement. With a focus on the Hong Kong primary one education context, Tracey et al. base their research on the hypothesis that the affective and components of self-competence may affect academic outcomes differently. This study shows that first graders are able to differentiate between the
competence and affective component of their self-concept. Moreover, this group of first graders show distinct self-concepts depending on the language which in turn are not related to other curriculum areas. These findings have practical implications for L2 teaching and learning, especially in what concerns early stages.

Following up on a previous study on prime susceptibility, William’s study in this issue investigates an L2 English-medium tertiary education context in Japan. Based on the assumption that both semantic and phonological knowledge is important for reading, William’s study assesses the effectiveness of English-medium contexts for L2 reading proficiency through a phonological and semantic priming paradigm. Williams tested the same learners 14 months after their having completed a foundation English course. Comparing the results obtained with those of his previous study, Williams concludes that learners show a decrease in their lexical processing abilities, even if results show a slight increase in phonological priming. These results lead Williams to propose that English-medium institutions in non-English-speaking contexts should continue to provide explicit language instruction, so as to students be able to further develop their lexical processing abilities.

Yoo-Jean Lee’s study leads us back to the Korean EFL context to explore learner writing strategies such as copying and summarizing identified as specific and common in learning contexts in Korea. Adopting a metacognitive approach to the interconnection between reading and writing, Yoo-Jean Lee sets to investigate the role of both strategies in different proficiency levels as facilitators of reading and writing skills in English. Yoo-Jean concludes that copying can be an important language learning strategy being as effective as summarizing for the development of reading and writing, and that both strategies can contribute to the development of different areas of reading and writing at higher and lower levels of proficiency.

The final research article of this issue by Sachiko addresses writing instruction in Japanese EFL contexts: both in high school and university, so as to understand possible changes in the past two decades in how writing has been taught and how students perceive writing. Results reveal that are no considerable changes in terms of writing activities in the language classroom in Japan. Moreover, results also show that writing focuses almost exclusively on grammatical accuracy rather than content. In spite of the fact that the results reveal a change in the use of writing genres, Sachiko stresses the need to reconceptualize writing instruction in the Japanese context so as students can really develop their communicative competence.

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The Role of Proficiency in Pragmatic Transfer: A Study of Refusals by Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Korean EFL Learners

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Bioprofile
Dr. Jihyun Kwon is currently a Professor and Chairperson of the Korean Language Department at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Monterey, California. Dr. Kwon’s main research interests include cross-cultural pragmatic transfer, assessment of second language pragmatics, and building awareness of pragmatics in the classroom through explicit instruction.

Abstract
The study investigated the occurrences of pragmatic transfer of Korean EFL learners at three proficiency levels in their performance of refusals. Forty native speakers of Korean, 37 native speakers of English, and 22 beginning, 43 intermediate, and 46 advanced Korean EFL learners participated in this study. The subjects completed a written discourse completion test, which elicited refusals of requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions from interlocutors of different status (i.e., higher, equal, and lower status). The data were categorized according to the refusal taxonomy and were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. The results of this study showed the effect of the native language pragmatic transfer to the target language at all three levels of proficiency, with an increase in transfer commensurate with an increase in proficiency.

Keywords: Interlanguage pragmatics, Pragmatic transfer, Speech act, Refusal, Proficiency level, Korean EFL learners
Introduction

The occurrence of pragmatic transfer in second language learners’ speech act performance has been well documented in the interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) literature. However, due to scarcity of research with explicit emphasis on factors that influence pragmatic transfer, little is known about the conditions underlying pragmatic transfer.

Studies so far suggested that pragmatic transfer may be influenced by various factors including learners’ perception of language distance between their native and target languages (e.g., S. Takahashi, 1996), learning context (e.g., T. Takahashi & Beebe, 1987), instructional effect (e.g., Kasper, 1982), second language proficiency (e.g., Olshtain & Cohen, 1989; T. Takahashi & Beebe, 1987), and length of residence in the target community (e.g., Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985).

As for the relationship between learners’ proficiency and pragmatic transfer, not only have there been few studies which explicitly investigated the relationship between learners’ proficiency and pragmatic transfer, but the findings have also been controversial. For instance, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) hypothesized that second language proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer. Their assumption was that more fluent learners have enough control over the target language to transfer native language pragmatic strategies to target language linguistic forms. Thus, they will be able to encode target language phrases that reflect native language norms of politeness or indirectness, and express native speakers’ sentiment at the pragmatic level. Lower proficiency learners, on the other hand, will be less likely to transfer native language pragmatic knowledge and have to rely on a simplification strategy since they lack competence at lower linguistic levels (e.g., phonology, syntax, and lexicon) to express complex conventions of the meanings and forms of their native language. When learners become very advanced, the occurrence of pragmatic transfer will again decrease since they will have near-native proficiency in the target language.

The results of Takahashi and Beebe’s study on refusals performed by Japanese EFL and ESL learners suggested that higher proficiency ESL learners seemed to reflect more transfer than the lower proficiency ESL learners in terms of the content and tone of refusals. The predicted proficiency effect, however, was not demonstrated among the EFL learners, possibly due to the fact that a proficiency difference between the two EFL groups was not firmly established (T. Takahashi & Beebe, 1987). Other studies (e.g., Blum-Kulka, 1982; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Olshtain & Cohen, 1989; Scarcella & Brunak, 1981; Scarcella,
1983; Trosberg, 1987) have also supported Takahashi and Beebe’s notion that learners’ limited target language knowledge prevents them from transferring native language pragmatic knowledge.

A number of other studies (e.g., Maeshiba et al., 1996; S. Takahashi, 1996; S. Takahashi & Dufon, 1989) have attempted to examine the relationship between transfer and learners’ proficiency at different levels. However, their findings did not support Takahashi and Beebe’s hypothesis in that pragmatic transfer was more prevalent among learners at lower linguistic proficiency than advanced learners.

The conflicting views concerning the influence of proficiency on pragmatic transfer warrants further investigation. Therefore, the present study conducted an explicit investigation of how pragmatic transfer interacts with one factor, learners’ proficiency, in refusals of Korean EFL learners. The specific research question of this study was the following:

Are there differences in the occurrence of pragmatic transfer existing in the frequency and the content of semantic formulas used in refusals of Korean EFL learners at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels?

It was hypothesized that the instances of pragmatic transfer would increase as the learners’ proficiency increases, supporting Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis (1987). In addition, the present study provided important methodological modifications to the previous study. With regard to proficiency levels of the subjects, this study established clear proficiency differences, using learners’ TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) scores, while Takahashi and Beebe only used learners’ lengths of stay in the target culture and their status in university (undergraduate vs. graduate) to differentiate low and high proficiency levels. More importantly, each level in the present study contained a greater number of participants than that of Takahashi and Beebe, which makes statistical tests possible and increases the generalizability of the results. Another important modification was the inclusion of three post Discourse Completion Test (DCT) questions. The purpose of these questions was to investigate the extent to which the selection of the directness level and semantic formulas in relation to the different status of interlocutors may be influenced by their native language socio-cultural norms.
Pragmatic Transfer and Proficiency

In the ILP literature, the relationship between second language learners’ proficiency and the occurrence of pragmatic transfer has always been controversial. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) argued that since more proficient learners have enough control over the target language to express sentiments of their native language at the pragmatic level, they are more likely to transfer their native language sociocultural norms than less proficient learners who are hindered from transferring complex native language pragmatics due to their limited target language knowledge. In addition, Takahashi and Beebe also hypothesized that there would be more pragmatic transfer in the EFL context than the ESL context.

Takahashi and Beebe’s claims were based on their study of refusals of Japanese learners of English at different proficiency levels. Their study involved 20 native speakers of Japanese, 20 native speakers of English, and 40 Japanese learners of English.

Within the 40 Japanese learners of English, 20 learners were studying English in Japan, thus categorized as EFL learners while 20 learners were studying English in the USA, thus categorized as ESL learners. For the 20 EFL learners, all of them were students majoring in English at a university in Japan. Ten students representing the high EFL proficiency level were studying at the graduate level whereas 10 undergraduate students represented the low EFL proficiency level. For the 20 ESL learners, all of them resided in the New York City area. The 10 students representing the low ESL proficiency level were from a private language institute. They had spent an average of 7 months in the United States and none of them had majored in English in Japan. The 10 students representing the high ESL proficiency level were graduate students with different majors. They had been in the United States for an average of 4 years.

Data were collected using a DCT consisting of 12 written role-play situations. The results indicated that the EFL subjects displayed more instances (9 instances) of pragmatic transfer than the ESL subjects (3 instances) in terms of ordering patterns. However, within the EFL subjects the expected proficiency difference did not exist: The higher proficiency learners displayed less transfer (4 instances) than the lower proficiency group (5 instances) in terms of ordering patterns. Takahashi and Beebe in their study found the predicted proficiency effect among the Japanese ESL learners, but not among the Japanese EFL learners. Takahashi and Beebe speculated that this may be due to the fact that a proficiency difference between the lower and higher level EFL learners was not convincingly established,
while there was a distinguished proficiency difference between the lower and higher ESL learners. Merely categorizing undergraduate students as the lower proficiency group and graduate students as the higher proficiency group, without additional assessment, may not necessarily result in two distinguished levels of English proficiency.

As for the ESL subjects, the order and frequency of semantic formulas weakly confirmed their positive correlation hypothesis. In terms of the order, the higher proficiency learners showed two instances of pragmatic transfer, while the lower proficiency learners showed only one instance. In terms of the frequency, the higher proficiency learners, again, showed more evidence of pragmatic transfer. Like native speakers of Japanese, they used direct formulas less frequently than native speakers of English. Lower proficiency learners, on the other hand, used direct formulas even more frequently than native speakers of English, deviating from both native and target language norms.

However, Takahashi and Beebe argued that the content or tone of ESL learners’ refusals provided more convincing evidence for their hypothesis. For example, the higher proficiency ESL learners seemed to have a wider range of expressions than the lower proficiency learners, and have more flexibility to adjust their level of directness according to different situations than did the lower proficiency ESL learners. The lower proficiency ESL subjects, on the other hand, used direct and less formal target language expressions more frequently in their refusals (e.g., “I can’t”) because the learners were at a developmental stage where simpler and more direct expressions were being used.

In addition, the refusals of the higher proficiency ESL learners often contained a variety of intensifiers (e.g., “awfully”, “truly”, “deeply”) when talking to a higher status interlocutor, which reflected their desire to soften the directness of refusals. Thus, having various expressions available in the target language allowed the higher proficiency ESL learners to transfer the Japanese norm of avoiding direct expressions and being as polite and formal as possible, especially when talking to a higher status interlocutor.

Although this study did not clearly demonstrate the predicted proficiency effect, it was the first study to investigate the effects of different second language proficiency levels on the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in EFL vs. ESL contexts. However, although a proficiency difference between the high ESL and low ESL groups was established, there were only two levels of second language proficiency, each containing 10 learners. As the authors called for further research to test out their hypothesis, a larger number of subjects with several
proficiency levels were recommended in order to display a more clear pattern of proficiency effect on pragmatic transfer.

One of the assumptions underlying the positive correlation hypothesis is that learners’ limited target language knowledge prevents them from transferring complex native language conventions of meanings and forms to the target forms. The notion that learners’ insufficient target knowledge hinders pragmatic transfer has been supported by some studies (e.g., Blum-Kulka, 1982; Olshtain & Cohen, 1989). Blum-Kulka (1982) examined Hebrew request strategies by Canadian English-speaking learners of Hebrew using a DCT. The results provided evidence of transfer of the native language social norms to the target language in that the learners tended to choose a less direct request form than the one usually used by the native speakers of Hebrew. However, Blum-Kulka indicated that the learners did not transfer indirect request strategies from English to Hebrew as much as might have been expected because they lacked the complex target language knowledge necessary to implement indirectness. Learners’ reliance on a simplification strategy due to their lack of L2 knowledge was also indicated by Takahashi and Beebe (1987).

Olshtain and Cohen (1989) also attributed failure to transfer native language apology strategies and modifying devices to the target language by their Hebrew learners of English to lack of target language knowledge. However, since neither Blum-Kulka (1982) nor Olshtain and Cohen (1989) investigated the performance of their learners at different proficiency levels, they cannot provide conclusive evidence for the positive correlation hypothesis.

Other studies also showed that second language learners often fail to convey their intended meanings effectively through target language forms due to their limited linguistic proficiency. For example, it was reported that compared to native speakers of English, Arabic learners of English with limited proficiency tended to have less variety of the target language politeness strategies (e.g., greeting, indirectness, hedges) in their English requests (Scarcella & Brunak, 1981). Spanish learners of English also used fewer consecutive back-channel cues when they conversed in the target language than when they conversed in their native language since they may have not yet learned how to back-channel in the target language (Scarcella, 1983). Cohen and Olshtain (1981) also indicated that Hebrew learners of English were less likely to use certain semantic formulas such as offering repair and acknowledging responsibility when performing target language apologies than when performing native language apologies because the learners were not proficient enough in the target language to
produce the appropriate semantic formulas. These findings, thus, imply that even if second language learners may want to transfer their native language pragmatic knowledge, they will not be able to do so because they have limited proficiency to express their native language cultural norms through appropriate target language forms.

Others (e.g., Maeshiba et al., 1996; S. Takahashi, 1996; S. Takahashi & Dufon, 1989) have attempted to examine the relationship between transfer and learners’ proficiency at different levels and provided findings that do not seem to support Takahashi and Beebe’s hypothesis. Maeshiba et al. (1996) specifically tested Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis in a study of apology strategies used by Japanese learners of English at two proficiency levels: 30 intermediate and 30 advanced learners. The learners’ proficiency was determined by their TOEFL scores. Data were collected using a 20-item Dialog Construction Questionnaire. The main finding of this study was that the intermediate learners were more likely to transfer their native language apology strategies than the advanced learners. Maeshiba et al. reported that advanced Japanese learners of English were more like the native speakers of English in that they offered more explicit apologies, more intensifiers, and sympathy in their apologies. However, both the advanced and intermediate learners resembled the Japanese native speakers in that the two groups downplayed the offense by giving excuses or claiming ignorance. The English speakers used this strategy less than the Japanese groups. Both the advanced and intermediate learners also transferred the Japanese pattern of style shifting. Whereas the advanced and intermediate learners made their selection of apology strategies based upon the status of the person to whom they apologized, the native speakers of English employed almost the same apologetic force in both contexts. However, it was noted that although the advanced learners in this context did not upgrade apologetic force as much as the English native speakers did, they still upgraded apologetic force almost twice as much as the intermediate learners and the Japanese native speakers. According to Maeshiba et al., this reflected the advanced learners’ acquiring knowledge of appropriate target language pragmatics, and they, therefore, concluded that their study did not support Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis.

Although the study by Maeshiba et al. was one of the few studies that explicitly tested Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis, this study only focused on the frequency and type of strategies, overlooking other subtler aspects involved in apology strategies (e.g., tone and content of apologies) which may have shown evidence of pragmatic transfer. For instance, in the situation in which a cheating student had to apologize to a
professor, Maeshiba et al. indicated that both the advanced and intermediate groups transferred the Japanese preference for making excuses and claiming ignorance. However, the authors did not discuss the fact that the advanced learners gave much longer and more elaborated excuses than the intermediate learners, which closely resembled the tone of the reasons given by the native Japanese speakers in the data. This seems to support Takahashi and Beebe’s notion that advanced proficiency allows language learners to express their native language sentiment through the target form.

Methodology

Subjects

Forty native speakers of Korean (NK) aged between 21 to 24 years were recruited from a university in Seoul, Korea. Thirty-seven native speakers of English (NE) aged between 18 and 22 years old were recruited from a university in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Both language groups were university students with various majors.

Korean EFL learners (KE) were recruited from a private language institute in Seoul, Korea, which offers beginning, intermediate, and advanced courses in TOEIC. The TOEIC, developed by the Chauncey Group at the ETS (Educational Testing Service), assesses general English proficiency for the global workplace. It is one of the most commonly used English proficiency tests in Korea, and many companies in Korea require their applicants to submit TOEIC scores in the hiring process. The test consists of 200 multiple choice questions in listening comprehension and reading comprehension, and scores range from 10 to 990.

Twenty-two learners aged between 19 and 23 years old in the beginning class participated in the study (KEB), and their TOEIC scores ranged from 207-347 ($M = 282.82$, $SD = 47.99$). Forty-three learners aged between 19 and 24 years old in the intermediate class participated (KEI), and their scores ranged from 477-589 ($M = 514.43$, $SD = 30.68$). Forty-six learners aged between 19 and 24 years old in the advanced class participated (KEA), and their scores ranged from 635-778 ($M = 692.70$, $SD = 39.74$).
Material and Procedures

All of the subjects completed the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) that was used by Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, (1990) (see Appendix A). The 12 DCT situations were categorized into four stimulus types eliciting a refusal: 3 requests, 3 invitations, 3 offers, and 3 suggestions. One of each group required a refusal to a higher status person, one to a lower status person, and one to a status equal. The native Korean speaker subjects filled out the Korean version of the same DCT.

After completion of the DCT, the Korean learners of English at each proficiency level were asked to answer three questions. The questions were asked and answered in Korean. They have been translated into English for the purpose of this section.

1. “Among the 12 DCT questions that you just completed, which situation was most uncomfortable for you to answer personally, and why?”

2. “If you were to report on the situation that you have chosen for the above question in Korean, would this situation still be uncomfortable for you? If so, why?”

3. “Do you think you would respond to the same situation differently in Korean? If so, why?”

The purpose of these post DCT questions was to attempt to determine whether learners at different proficiency levels were particularly sensitive about refusing a certain status of interlocutor in their target refusal (the first question), whether they perceived the same situation to be equally face-threatening in their native language (the second question), and whether they thought that they would mitigate the situation they found to be most face-threatening the same way in both the target and native languages (the third question). If learners perceive the same situation to be most uncomfortable in both languages, it means that they are sensitive to the same contextual factor in both languages. Moreover, if their refusals to that situation do not differ in their target and native languages, it suggests that they are selecting their refusal strategies based on the same contextual factor (i.e., status of interlocutor) regardless of the language they use. In other words, this may mean that the learners were transferring the status sensitivity of their native language to the target language refusals, and mitigating their target refusals in the same way as they do in their native refusals. Therefore, the learners’ answers to these post DCT questions along with the analysis
of the frequency and content of the semantic formulas may provide insight into Korean speakers’ sensitivity to the status of their interlocutor.

Data Analysis

Semantic Formulas and Taxonomy of Refusals

The subjects’ refusals were analyzed as consisting of sequences of semantic formulas. For example, in the situation in which one’s classmate requests to borrow lecture notes, the participant may refuse by saying ‘I’m afraid I can’t. I already promised to lend them to my friend, so why don’t you ask someone else?’ This response would be coded as [negative willingness] plus [reason] plus [statement of alternative]. In coding refusals in terms of semantic formulas, the taxonomy of refusals formulated by Beebe et al. (1990) was used. There were additional semantic formulas which were identified in the present study (see Appendix B).

Frequency of Semantic Formulas

For the purpose of reporting, all of the frequencies were converted into percentages. The analysis of the frequency of semantic formulas consisted of three parts. First, the frequency of each semantic formula used by each of the three groups in each DCT situation was compared. For each group, the total number of a given semantic formula in each situation was converted into a percentage by:

\[
\text{percentage} = \frac{\text{total number of a given semantic formula used in a given situation}}{\text{total number of subjects in each group}} \times 100
\]

When a subject used the same formula more than once in his/her response to each situation (e.g., providing an apology in the beginning and again at the end of the refusal), the formula was tallied only once. By counting the formula once for each subject, the percentage of each formula in each situation obtained actually represents the number of subjects who used the formula. This provides a more accurate pattern of how many subjects selected a
given formula in each situation and how many did not. Frequency counts of semantic formulas were considered to provide evidence of pragmatic transfer in situations in which the frequency of DCT responses containing a given formula reflects any one of the following patterns:

1. NKs > KEs > NEs
2. NKs < KEs < NEs
3. NKs $\approx$ KEs < NEs (\(\approx\) means “almost equal to”)
4. NKs $\approx$ KEs > NEs
5. NKs and KEs use a formula that NEs do not.
6. NKs and KEs do not use a formula that NEs do.

The second part of the analysis investigated the frequency shift of semantic formulas used by each group according to the status of the interlocutors. The frequency shift of a given semantic formula refers to the range of the proportion of subjects in each group that used the formula to interlocutors of different status. The frequency shift of semantic formulas used by NKs and NEs to interlocutors of different status in each of the four stimuli eliciting a refusal was compared. In this study, two criteria were established in order to determine whether the difference in NKs’ and NEs’ frequency shift provided conditions for pragmatic transfer. Firstly, only those semantic formulas that were used to refuse all three types of status by both NKs and NEs were considered in the analysis of the frequency shift. Secondly, a condition for pragmatic transfer was considered present if the difference in the range of the proportion of NKs that used a given semantic formula was 20 percentage points or greater than the difference in the range of the proportion of NEs that used the same formula, or vice versa.

The last part of the analysis of the frequency of semantic formulas examined total frequency counts of each semantic formula used by each group in 12 situations. For each group, the total number of uses of each semantic formula in the entire 12 situations was converted into a percentage as follows:

\[
\frac{\text{total number of uses of a given semantic formula in the 12 situations}}{\text{total number of uses of all semantic formulas in the 12 situations}} \times 100
\]
By counting the total number of times each semantic formula was used in any place within the subject’s refusal, the percentage represents how often a particular semantic formula was used in relation to the total number of semantic formulas used in 12 situations. Chi-square was used to test for any significant differences among the three groups in total frequency counts of each semantic formula. The alpha level was set at .05 or less.

**Content of Semantic Formulas**

In addition to the frequency of the semantic formulas, any difference in the tone and the content in which the same semantic formula was expressed was investigated. For instance, “I’m busy” and “I have three final exams tomorrow” are both categorized as reasons. However, the two differ in terms of specificity and persuasiveness. The degree of directness was also determined by examining the difference among the three groups in their choice of direct formulas. For example, “I can’t” (i.e., negative willingness) and “It won’t be possible” (i.e., passive negative willingness) are both categorized as direct formulas. Nevertheless, the former is more direct than the latter, thus showing the refusal intention more transparently. For each situation, an example of refusals from the NK, NE, KEB, KEI, and KEA data is provided. For NKs’ refusals, Korean is rendered in the Korean Ministry of Education romanization system. For the KE group, spelling mistakes are corrected, while grammatical mistakes are preserved.

**Results**

**Frequency of Semantic Formulas**

Refusals by NKs, NEs, KEBs, KEIs, and KEAs were examined in terms of the frequency of semantic formulas used in refusing requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions from a higher, an equal and a lower status person. Evidence of pragmatic transfer was identified in the frequency of semantic formulas used by KEs across the three proficiency levels. The analysis of the frequency of semantic formulas also confirmed the hypothesis in that instances of pragmatic transfer increased as the learners’ proficiency increased, supporting Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis. Across 12 situations, there were 6 instances of pragmatic transfer for KEBs, 8 for KEIs and 18 for KEAs (see Table 1).
Table 1

*Total Frequency Count of Semantic Formulas Used by Each Group in 12 Situations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic Formulas</th>
<th>Percentage of Semantic formula</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NK</td>
<td>KEB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Formulas</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Conditions for Past of Future Acceptance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promise of Future Acceptance</strong></td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement of Alternative</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement of Principle</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement of Philosophy</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt Trip</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criticism</strong></td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Request for Empathy by Holding the Request</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Defense</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let Interlocutor Off the Hook</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unspecific Reply</strong></td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedging</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joke</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Switch</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18
KEAs showed the greatest degree of pragmatic transfer compared to learners at other levels in terms of the total uses of direct formulas, adjuncts (i.e., gratitude, statement of positive feeling, pause fillers), avoidance formulas (i.e., hedging, postponement), statement of alternative, statement of philosophy, statement of solidarity, statement of acknowledgement, initial agreement, seeking approval after refusing, asking a question, and request for empathy by holding the request.
Cross-cultural differences between NEs and NKs were found in the total frequency of direct formulas used by each language group, providing a possibility for pragmatic transfer. When compared to the total frequency of direct formulas used by NEs in the 12 situations, NKs (12%) used direct formulas significantly less frequently than did NEs (18%) ($\chi^2 = 21.13$, df = 1, p < .05).

Following the native norm, KEBs (14%) ($\chi^2 = 8.42$, df = 1, p < .05), KEIs (14%) ($\chi^2 = 4.14$, df = 1, p < .05) and KEAs (12%) ($\chi^2 = 16.88$, df = 1, p < .05) also used direct formulas less frequently than did NEs. However, upon closer examination, KEBs and KEIs used direct formulas only slightly more frequently than did NKs, while KEAs used them as frequently as did NKs, showing a greater degree of pragmatic transfer.

In terms of adjuncts, NKs (2%) expressed gratitude less frequently than did NEs (9%) ($\chi^2 = 13.33$, df = 1, p < .05). Therefore, it was predicted that KEs would also express gratitude much less frequently in the target language refusals, following the native usage of gratitude. This was confirmed, as KEBs (6%) ($\chi^2 = 4.96$, df = 1, p < .05), KEIs (6%) ($\chi^2 = 6.13$, df = 1, p < .05) and KEAs (6%) ($\chi^2 = 7.66$, df = 1, p < .05) used gratitude less frequently than did NEs. However, KEBs ($\chi^2 = 14.74$, df = 1, p < .05), KEIs ($\chi^2 = 22.62$, df = 1, p < .05) and KEAs ($\chi^2 = 25.15$, df = 1, p < .05) used gratitude more frequently than did NKs. Thus, KEs fell between NKs and NEs in terms of the frequency of gratitude.

In terms of the frequency of statement of positive feeling (e.g., “I’d like to…”), NEs (4%) stated positive feelings more frequently than did NKs (2%) ($\chi^2 = 7.23$, df = 1, p < .05). Therefore, it was predicted that KEs would also use this formula less frequently than did NEs, following the native language norm. On the contrary, KEBs and KEIs (4% for both) stated positive feelings much more frequently than did NKs, and as frequently as did NEs. Moreover, KEAs (6%) ($\chi^2 = 4.61$, df = 1, p < .05) used this formula with significantly higher frequency than did NEs.

NKs and NEs also differed in terms of their use of pause fillers, another type of adjunct to signal hesitation. In total, NKs (8%) used pause fillers significantly more frequently than did NEs (3%) ($\chi^2 = 30.64$, df = 1, p < .05). Among KEs, only KEAs paused (5%) ($\chi^2 = 13.47$, df = 1, p < .05) more frequently than did NEs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. KEBs and KEIs (3% for both) used pause fillers only as frequently as did NEs. However, although KEAs used pause fillers more frequently than did NEs, and were considered to
show evidence of pragmatic transfer, they still used them less frequently than did NKs ($\chi^2 = 11.57$, df = 1, $p < .05$), falling between NKs and NEs in terms of the frequency.

In using avoidance formulas, NKs hedged (6%) ($\chi^2 = 21.75$, df = 1, $p < .05$) and postponed (7%) ($\chi^2 = 34.37$, df = 1, $p < .05$) more frequently than did NEs (2%, 2%, respectively). KEBs used hedging and postponement less frequently than did either NKs or NEs, while KEIs used these two avoidance formulas as frequently as did NEs. Only KEAs hedged (4%) ($\chi^2 = 7.62$, df = 1, $p < .05$) and postponed (4%) ($\chi^2 = 9.59$, df = 1, $p < .05$) more frequently than did NEs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. However, as was the case in the total uses of pause fillers, KEAs still hedged ($\chi^2 = 6.14$, df = 1, $p < .05$) and postponed ($\chi^2 = 14.16$, df = 1, $p < .05$) less frequently than did NKs.

Generally, NKs stated alternatives more frequently (8%) ($\chi^2 = 15.03$, df = 1, $p < .05$) than did NEs (4%). Again, only KEAs (6%) ($\chi^2 = 7.13$, df = 1, $p < .05$) stated alternatives more frequently than did NEs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. KEBs (1%) and KEIs (2%) used this formula not only less frequently than NKs, but also less frequently than did NEs ($\chi^2 = 8.66$, df = 1, $p < .05$ for KEBs; $\chi^2 = 9.91$, df = 1, $p < .05$ for KEIs), deviating from both target and native language norms.

Moreover, NKs used formulas that were either rarely or never used by NEs. For example, in refusing a higher status person’s invitation, NKs often used the address form Hwejangnim “Mr. President of Company” to replace the second person pronoun ‘you’ while NEs rarely used the address form. In spite of low frequency of occurrences, NKs also used formulas such as statement of philosophy, statement of solidarity, request for empathy by holding the request, statement of acknowledgement, initial agreement, and seeking approval after refusing, and asking a question, while these were almost non-existent in the NE data. Although these formulas were present in KE data, only KEAs seemed to employ these formulas as frequently as NKs, showing a greater degree of pragmatic transfer.

In addition to cross-cultural differences in frequency patterns, NKs tended to display sensitivity to a higher status person in their refusals, while NEs did not seem to be sensitive to a certain status type. Evidence of NKs’ status sensitivity was found in their noticeable frequency shift in mitigating formulas when refusing a higher status person. Based on the two criteria established in this study (see Data Analysis), a total of 5 cases in which NKs and NEs differed in terms of the frequency shift of a given semantic formula were identified. In
all of these cases, NKs displayed a noticeable shift in the frequency of certain semantic formulas used between a higher status person on the one hand and an equal or lower status person on the other. NEs, however, did not seem to be particularly sensitive to a certain status, and did not seem to show a dramatic shift in the frequency of semantic formulas used across the different status types. The KE group, besides transferring the frequency of semantic formulas, seemed to transfer Korean speakers’ general sensitivity to a higher status person, and showed a similar pattern of frequency shift to NKs. Figures 1-5 compare the frequency shift of NKs, NEs, and the KE group across the three status types, illustrating the occurrence of pragmatic transfer.

Frequency Shift in Refusals of Requests

In refusing requests, cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were found in their use of direct formulas and apology across the different status types. A condition for pragmatic transfer was considered present in the frequency shift of direct formulas and apology since only these two formulas met the criteria established to determine cross-cultural variation between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift of a given semantic formula.

NKs used direct formulas much less frequently to a higher status person than to an equal status person and a lower status person, while NEs used them with similar frequency across the three status types. NKs’ use of direct formulas when refusing a higher status person decreased by 25% over an equal status person, and 30% over a lower status person. For NEs, the direct formulas used when refusing a higher status person decreased by only 3% over an equal status person, and 6% over a lower status person. Transferring NKs’ sensitivity to a higher status person, the KE group used direct formulas noticeably less frequently to a higher status person than to other status types (see Figure 1). Specifically, KEBs’ use of direct formulas when refusing a higher status person decreased by 5% over an equal status person, and 23% over a lower status person. KEIs’ use of direct formula in refusing a higher status person decreased by 25% over an equal status person, and 31% over a lower status person. KEAs’ use of direct formula in refusing a higher status person also decreased by 37% over an equal status person, and 39% over a lower status person.
Cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were also found in their use of apology in requests. Both NKs and NEs apologized more frequently to a higher and an equal status person than to a lower status person. However, the range of difference in the frequency of apology used between a higher and a lower status person was much greater for NKs than NEs, which is evidence of NKs’ sensitivity to a higher status person. NKs’ use of apology when refusing a higher status person increased by 7% over an equal status person, and 40% over a lower status person. On the other hand, NEs apologized with the same frequency to a higher and an equal status person, while their apology to a lower status person decreased by only 8%. Following NKs’ frequency shifting pattern of apology, the KE group also showed more noticeable frequency shift, especially, between a higher and a lower status person than NEs (see Figure 2).
KEBs’ use of apology when refusing a higher status person increased by 9% over an equal status person, and 50% over a lower status person. KEIs’ use of apology in refusing a higher status person increased by 7% over an equal status person, and 18% over a lower status person. KEAs’ use of apology in refusing a higher status person also increased by 2% over an equal status person, and 33% over a lower status person. In terms of the frequency shift in refusals of requests, there were 2 instances of pragmatic transfer for KEBs, 2 for KEIs and 2 for KEAs.

**Frequency Shift in Refusals of Invitations**

In refusing invitations, cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were found in their use of apology and postponement. A condition for pragmatic transfer was considered present in the frequency shift of apology and postponement since only these two formulas met the criteria established to determine cross-cultural variation between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift of a given semantic formula.

NKs apologized most frequently to a higher status person, while least frequently to a lower status person. Similarly, NEs also apologized more frequently to a higher and an equal status person than to a lower status person. However, the range of difference in the frequency of apology used between a
higher and a lower status person was much greater for NKs than NEs, showing evidence of NKs’ sensitivity to a higher status person. NKs’ use of apology when refusing a higher status person increased by 17% over an equal status person, and 37% over a lower status person. However, NEs’ use of apology to a higher and an equal status person increased by only 8% over a lower status person. Among the KE group, only KEAs transferred NKs’ frequency shifting pattern between a higher and a lower status person (see Figure 3). KEAs’ use of apology to a higher status person increased by 5% over an equal status person, and 22% over a lower status person.

Cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were also found in their use of postponement in invitations. Both NKs and NEs gave postponement more frequently to a higher status person than to an equal and a lower status person. However, the two language groups differed in that NKs noticeably shifted frequency of postponement between a higher and lower status person, while NEs did not vary it between the two status types. NKs’ use of postponement to a higher status person increased by 15% over an equal status person, and 23% over a lower status person. NEs’ use of postponement to a higher status person increased only 2% over both an equal and lower status person. Among the KE group, only KEAs followed the frequency shift pattern displayed by NKs (see Figure 4).
KEAs’ use of postponement to a higher status person increased by 11% over an equal status person, and 13% over a lower status person. In terms of the frequency shift in refusals of invitations, there were 2 instances of pragmatic transfer for KEAs.

![FIGURE 4]

Frequency Shift of Postponement When Refusing Invitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To a Higher Status Person</th>
<th>To an Equal Status Person</th>
<th>To a Lower Status Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NK</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEA</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEI</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Shift in Refusals of Offers

In refusing offers, cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were only found in their use of pause fillers. A condition for pragmatic transfer was considered present in the frequency shift of pause fillers since only this formula met the criteria established to determine cross-cultural variation between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift of a given semantic formula.

NKs provided pause fillers most frequently to a higher status person and least frequently to a lower status person, while NEs did not vary it across the three status types. NKs’ use of pause fillers increased when refusing a higher status person by 20% over an equal status person, and 32% over a lower status person. Transferring NKs’ sensitivity to a higher status person, the KE group provided pause fillers much more frequently to a higher status person.
than other status types (see Figure 5). Specifically, KEBs provided pause fillers only to a higher status person. For KEIs, their use of pause fillers to a higher status person increased by 14% over an equal status person, and 12% over a lower status person. KEAs’ use of pause fillers to a higher status person increased by 20% over an equal status person, and 13% over a lower status person. In terms of the frequency shift in refusals of offers, there was 1 instance of pragmatic transfer for KEB, 1 for KEIs and 1 for KEAs.

FIGURE 5
Frequency Shift of Pause Fillers When Refusing Offers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To a Higher Status Person</th>
<th>To an Equal Status Person</th>
<th>To a Lower Status Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEA</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEI</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEB</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Shift in Refusals of Suggestions

In refusing suggestions, cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in the frequency shift were not found. Although 4 categories of semantic formulas (i.e., direct formulas, reasons, statement of alternative, gratitude) used by NKs and NEs satisfied the first criterion established to determine cross-cultural variation between the two language groups in the frequency shift of a given semantic formula, none of these formulas met the second criterion. These 4 categories of semantic formulas met the first criterion in that they were used toward all three status types by both native speakers of Korean and English. However,
these formulas did not meet the second criterion in that the difference in the range of the proportion of NKs that used a given semantic formula was less than 20 percentage points than the difference in the range of the proportion of NEs that used the same formula, or vice versa. Therefore, the necessary condition for pragmatic transfer in the frequency shift was considered absent in suggestions.

In sum, when the total number of semantic formulas used in requests, invitations, suggestions and offers was counted, NKs used statement of positive feeling (5%) ($\chi^2 = 15.47$, df = 2, p < .05), apologies (13%) ($\chi^2 = 31.20$, df = 2, p < .05) and elaboration on the reasons (5%) ($\chi^2 = 30.45$, df = 2, p < .05) more frequently to a higher status person than to an equal (1%, 9%, 3%, respectively) or a lower status person (1%, 3%, 2%, respectively). NEs, however, did not vary the frequency of these formulas according to the status type. KEs not only transferred frequency patterns of their native language refusals to their target refusals, but also this status sensitivity. Among KEs, KEAs were said to transfer the NKs’ sensitivity to a higher status person to the greatest degree in that they also stated positive feelings (9%) ($\chi^2 = 11.06$, df = 2, p < .05), apologized (14%) ($\chi^2 = 10.12$, df = 2, p < .05), and elaborated their reasons (8%) ($\chi^2 = 22.77$, df = 2, p < .05) more frequently to a higher status person than to an equal (6%, 10%, 3%, respectively) or a lower status person (4%, 8%, 2%, respectively). KEBs and KEIs also gave these formulas slightly more frequently to a higher status than an equal or a lower status person. However, both KEBs and KEIs were said to transfer to a lesser degree than KEAs since the differences in the frequency of these formulas given to a higher status person were not statistically significant.

Another evidence of transferring status sensitivity was found in KEs’ responses to the questions administered after the DCT. In answering the first post DCT question, “Among the 12 DCT questions which you just completed, which situation was most uncomfortable for you to answer personally, and why?” most of the subjects, regardless of the level of proficiency, indicated that they had the most difficult time dealing with situations involving refusals to a boss. Specifically, 33% and 42% of KEBs chose situations 11 (refusing a higher status person’s offer) and 12 (refusing a higher person’s request), respectively, to be most uncomfortable to answer. For KEIs, 20% and 47% chose situations 11 and 12, respectively. For KEAs, 27%, 31%, and 20% selected situations 6 (refusing a higher person’s suggestion), 11 and 12, respectively. Therefore, more than half of the subjects in each proficiency level (75% of KEBs, 67% of KEIs, 78% of KEAs) chose one of the situations involving refusal to a higher status person to be the most uncomfortable to deal with. One subject wrote, “I don’t
think I will refuse my boss’ requests just because of my personal matter.” Another wrote, “Even though I don’t like my boss’ suggestion, I would still follow it just to save his face. It is not easy to say ‘no’ to someone who is higher than you, especially, that person is your boss from work.” Thus, in order to mitigate their uncomfortable feelings in refusing a higher status person, KEs may have taken a more sensitive approach by stating positive feelings, apologizing and elaborating their reasons more frequently.

In answering the second post DCT question, “If you were to respond to the situation which you have chosen for the above question in Korean, would this situation still be uncomfortable for you to answer? If so, why?”, 78% of KEBs who chose situation 11 or 12, 82% of KEIs who chose situation 11 or 12, and 88% of KEAs who chose situation 6, 11 or 12 said that they would also find the same situation (e.g., refusals to a higher status person) uncomfortable to answer in Korean. One subject wrote, “Despite westernization, Korean society is still very conservative and traditional, and you don’t have a freedom of refusing invitations or favors asked by your boss.” Another wrote, “It would be incredibly difficult to refuse my boss if he wants me to work overtime. If I refuse, I may be disliked by the boss and be eventually ostracized from my co-workers since they wouldn’t want to associate with someone who is not favored by their boss.” This implies that KEs perceived refusals to a higher status person to be face threatening in both the target and native languages, probably due to the transfer of native language-influenced status sensitivity to their target language refusals.

In answering the third post DCT question, “Do you think you would respond to the same situation differently in Korean? If so, why?”, 40% of KEBs, 83% of KEIs, and 72% of KEAs said that they would find the same situation (i.e., refusals to a higher status person) to be also uncomfortable to answer in their native language and that their answers would not be different. This implies that the majority of KEs selected refusal strategies used in the target language situations based on the same contextual parameter (i.e., status of interlocutor) as they would in the native language situations.

For those who reported that their answers would be different in Korean (60% of KEBs, 17% of KEIs and 28% of KEAs), they usually said that in English they were not able to express intended politeness due to their lack of proficiency while in their native language, Korean, they would be able to use appropriate expressions to make sure not to offend their boss. One subject wrote, “If I ever have to refuse my boss, I will be really tactful about it and
come up with a really convincing reason. I can do that much better in Korean. In English, I don’t think I sound natural.”

In addition, 60% of KEBs, the highest percentage among KEs, indicated that their answers in Korean would be different from those in English, and reported that their responses to a higher status person would be much more appropriate and polite if they refuse in their native language. Thus, even though KEBs wanted to be polite and mitigate their target refusals to a higher status person, they may have not been able to do so as much as they desired to because of their lack of target language proficiency.

The fact that NKs provided a significantly higher frequency of mitigating formulas to a boss suggests that refusing a higher status person may be a particularly sensitive speech act for Korean speakers to perform. Due to the status sensitivity in their native culture, KEs perceived refusals to a boss to be most uncomfortable even in their target language and thus took a more mitigating approach to a higher status person than other status types in their target refusal.

Although evidence has been presented that both NKs and KEs may be particularly more sensitive to a higher status person, the evidence must be considered preliminary since the DCT used in the present study included only one character for a higher status person (i.e., boss) and one type of speech act (i.e., refusal). More data should be collected using a variety of characters representing a higher status person and of speech acts to confirm Korean speakers’ sensitivity to status of interlocutors in general.

Content of Semantic Formula
Refusing a Higher Status Person’s Request (Situation 12)

In refusing a boss’ request to stay longer at work, NEs and NKs gave different reasons for their refusals. NEs typically referred to a previous engagement or dinner with a spouse or friends as reasons for their refusals. NKs, however, usually referred to their poor health or a family member’s sickness, while this type of reason was rarely used by NEs. NKs also frequently paused, and used various intensifiers (e.g., really, very, so) to emphasize their poor physical condition or to upgrade apologetic force. The KE group also gave reasons with content similar to that of NKs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. However, only KEIs and KEAs used intensifiers like NKs.
NKs and NEs also differed in terms of the degree of directness expressed in their refusals. NKs rarely refused directly, whereas the NEs usually used negative willingness (e.g., ‘I can’t’) with the occasional use of ‘no’. In general, NKs sounded much more indirect than did NEs since they provided formulas such as hedging, postponement, pause fillers, and alternatives more frequently than did NEs to soften their refusals.

The KE group was more direct than the NKs, while the learners at each level showed a different degree of pragmatic transfer in terms of the mitigating formulas used in their refusals. KEAs transferred the mitigating tone of NKs in the greatest degree, followed by KEIs and KEBs. KEBs were direct and to the point, almost always using ‘no’. Although KEBs sometimes added apologies for mitigation, they still sounded abrupt due to lack of other mitigating formulas. KEIs and KEAs also refused much more frequently with negative willingness than did NKs, but they used mitigating formulas which were often used by NKs to soften the refusal effect. KEAs in particular used mitigating formulas such as apologies, statement of positive feeling, address form, and elaboration on their reasons even more frequently than did NKs. Also, only KEAs, like NKs, asked a question as in “Can I go home?” or “Is it urgent?”.

**Refusing an Equal Status Person’s Request (Situation 2)**

In refusing a classmate’s request to lend notes, NEs and NKs gave both similar and different reasons. NEs almost always said that they need the notes to study, and some NKs gave the same reason for their refusal. However, only NKs and the KE group mentioned unavailability of their notes as in “I already lend them to someone else”. NKs, KEIs and KEAs also referred to the messiness of the notes due to their bad handwriting for their reasons to refuse.

In terms of the degree of directness, NKs sounded less direct in their refusal tone than did NEs, due to their frequent use of passive negative willingness (e.g., *Him dūl kōt katūn tae*yo “It will be difficult”) instead of refusing directly with “no”. NEs, on the other hand, refused with either ‘no’ or negative willingness. NKs also mitigated their refusals using hedging, pause fillers and reasons more frequently than did NEs, which softened the overall tone of their refusals. In addition, NKs and NEs used criticism in their refusals to the classmate, while the content of criticism was different for each language group. NEs usually criticized the person for not attending class, as in “Where were you in lecture last week?” or “I am
always in class and you choose to miss them.” NKs’ criticism, however, sounded harsher than that of NEs since they bluntly criticized the classmate for being lazy and selfish.

Evidence of pragmatic transfer was present among the KE group, while KEIs and KEAs showed a greater degree of pragmatic transfer than did KEBs. KEIs and KEAs refused directly with negative willingness more frequently than did NKs or NEs, deviating from both the native and target language norm of directness. Nevertheless, KEIs and KEAs used other mitigating formulas that were used frequently by NKs, such as elaboration on their reasons, apologies and pause fillers, and thus sounded as mitigating as did NKs. Even though KEBs used negative willingness the least frequently, they still sounded the most direct since they usually abruptly stated reasons without other mitigating formulas. In terms of use of criticism, the KE group transferred the NKs’ harsher tone, as in “Why do you want to get whatever without effort” for KEB, “You think only of yourself, your convenience” for KEI and “I’ve taken much effort to take good notes. But, you’ve just snoozed and chatted. You must pay for your laziness” for KEA.

Refusing a Lower Person’s Request (Situation 1)

In refusing an employee’s request for a pay raise, NKs and NEs had both similar and different reasons for their refusals. Both NKs and NEs typically referred to some financial difficulty of the store, but only NKs cited fairness as grounds for the refusal (e.g., 

Tangshinman ilbangchōguro pongūbul olinūn kōn dalūn chigwŏndūlege pulgongpyŏng han kŏt kakkunyo “I don’t think it’s fair to your co-workers if I only raise your salary”). The KE group also referred to the financial difficulty as their reason, while only KEAs, like NKs, mentioned fairness in their refusals, as in “John would feel unfair if I increase your pay only”.

In terms of the degree of directness, NKs sounded much more indirect than did NEs since they predominantly used passive negative willingness rather than ‘no’ or negative willingness. NKs also mitigated their refusals by providing various other formulas which were not used by NEs, including postponement, statement of alternative, request for empathy by holding the request (e.g., Kŏngkiga choa jiltte kkaji kidaryŏ chul su ikkenna? “Can you wait until economy improves?”), statement of solidarity (e.g., Chane uri sajung nugu bodado chal alji? “You know our situation more than any one”), and saying that they had already considered giving a pay raise. In addition, NKs often used a statement of solidarity to elicit their feeling of solidarity as a member of a given group (e.g., Kage sajŏngi chŏmchŏm nappajinŭngun chanedo nawa kach’i il haemyŏnsŏ pwa oji ananŭnga “As you and I have
worked and witnessed together how the situation of our store is getting worse”). NEs, on the other hand, simply apologized and stated their reason to the employee. Further, although both NKs and NEs used positive comment to the employees in their refusals, its content differed for each language group. NEs usually stated positive feelings about raising the employee’s salary (e.g., “I’d love to give you a raise) or expressed gratitude (e.g., “I appreciate the work you’ve done for us”). NKs, however, typically gave acknowledgement of the employee’s hard work in the store, often followed by pause fillers or initial agreement (e.g., Kūrae, chanega sugo hanŭngun múlon naega nugu boda chal alji “That is so, I know, of course, more than anyone, you work hard”).

The KE group did not transfer the type of direct formulas used by NKs, while KEIs and KEAs transferred the NKs’ mitigating tone to a greater degree than did KEBs. KEBs’ refusals seemed more direct and abrupt than those of NKs and NEs because they typically refused by saying a direct ‘no’ without mitigating their refusals. In contrast, despite frequent use of negative willingness, the overall tone of refusals by KEIs and KEAs resembled the mitigating tone of NKs since they used formulas which were typically used by NKs (e.g., initial agreement, statement of alternative, request for empathy by holding the request, statement of acknowledgment, statement of solidarity, and pause fillers). KEIs and KEAs also transferred NKs’ acknowledging tone to their target language refusals. For instance, KEIs said, “Yes, I know what you mean” or “I recognize your capability”, while KEAs said “Okay, I know well about your hard working” or “Well, that’s right, I know you are a real hard worker.” Only one KEB said “I know” in an attempt to transfer the native tone of acknowledgement.

In addition to transferring the NKs’ mitigating tone, KEIs and KEAs also used negative willingness and statement of positive feeling, both of which were typically used by NEs, almost as frequently as did NEs. Therefore, refusals by KEIs and KEAs tended to show typical characteristics of both native and target language refusals. Examples of refusals used by each group in situation 1 are as follows:

**Refusing a Higher Person’s Invitation (Situation 4)**

In refusing a boss’ invitation to a party, half of the NKs’ and NEs’ reasons tended to be vague, referring to a previous engagement or a busy schedule. When NEs gave more specific reasons, they usually mentioned plans with their spouse or family. NKs usually cited plans with parents or parents-in-law. NKs also cited their mother’s or father’s 60th birthday, which
is considered to be the most celebratory birthday in one’s life in Korea, as grounds for their refusals. NEs never used parents’ birthdays as a reason. Like NKs, the KE group also often mentioned their parents’ birthday or dinner with their parents or parents-in-law for reasons (e.g., “Sunday is my mother’s birthday” for KEBs, “But the day is mother’s birthday” for KEIs and “I have to go to my wife’s parents’ house for dinner. It’s their 40th anniversary”).

Overall, NKs’ refusals in general sounded more tentative and regretful than those of NEs. NEs typically stated positive feelings about the invitation and expressed gratitude more frequently than did NKs. NKs, however, provided a wider range of mitigating formulas such as apologies with intensifiers, hedging (e.g., Ŭttŏkhajo? “How can it be done?”), suggesting alternatives, and elaboration on their reasons more frequently than did NEs. NKs also used address form (e.g., Hwejangnim “Mr. President of Company”) to refer to the boss in order to avoid using the second person ‘you’ to be polite.

Among the KE group, KEIs and KEAs transferred the NKs’ mitigating tone of refusals to a greater degree than did KEBs. KEBs did not use mitigating formulas typically used by NKs (e.g., apologies, postponement, pause fillers, suggesting alternatives, address forms) sufficiently enough to transfer NKs’ hesitant and regretful tone to the target refusals. The overall tone of refusals by KEIs and KEAs resembled those of NKs, frequently employing formulas which were typical of NKs’ refusals. For example, KEIs and KEAs often intensified their apologies with ‘really’ or ‘very’, and used the address form ‘sir’ or ‘boss’ in their attempt to transfer the native language address form Hwejangnim.

However, in addition to using the formulas expressing the NKs’ tone, KEAs used formulas such as statement of positive feeling, and gratitude which were frequently used by NEs, but not by NKs. Thus, KEAs’ refusals often tended to seem more polite than refusals of either NKs or NEs, as they relied on both target and native language mitigating patterns.

**Refusing an Equal Status Person’s Invitation (Situation 10)**

In refusing a friend’s invitation to dinner, NEs and NEs gave both similar and different reasons. Both language groups referred to a plan with their spouse or children or they simply said that they had other plans on that day. However, NKs, unlike NEs, cited their parents’ birthday or sickness as a reason. NKs also referred to work related matters such as an appointment with a boss or a client, a staff meeting or a seminar as a reason for their refusals. The content of the KE group’s reasons were like that of NKs’ reasons, showing evidence of
pragmatic transfer. However, in spite of the similarity in the content of reasons, KEAs generally provided much longer, and more elaborated reasons than did NKs.

NKs and NEs had a different choice of direct formulas and mitigating formulas, which in turn resulted in a different tone of refusals. With the frequent use of negative willingness, NEs expressed their unwillingness and inability to accept the friend’s invitation more transparently than did NKs. Then, they cushioned their directness with formulas such as statement of positive feeling, gratitude or statement of alternative. NKs, on the other hand, tended to avoid refusing directly, as shown in their infrequent use of either negative or passive negative willingness. Instead, by hedging (e.g., Ṭottekhaji “How can it be done”), postponing, or apologizing, NKs expressed their hesitant and regretful feelings to hint their unwillingness to accept the invitation.

Among the KE group, KEBs’ and KEIs’ refusals deviated from those of both NKs and NEs, while KEAs’ refusals resembled those of both NKs and NEs. KEBs and KEIs tended to sound more abrupt than did either NEs or NKs because they used fewer types and lower frequency of mitigating formulas than did NEs or NKs. KEAs’ tone resembled that of NKs as well as that of NEs since they used both target and native language preferred formulas at the same time. For example, KEAs showed evidence of transferring hesitant tone of NKs refusals by using hedging (e.g., “I am afraid”) and postponement (e.g., “I will have dinner with you later”) more frequently than did NEs. However, like NEs, KEAs also used statement of positive feeling and gratitude much more frequently than did NKs. Therefore, their refusal tone was often more verbose, often involving a wider range of mitigating formulas than that of NEs or NKs.

Refusing a Lower Status Person’s Invitation (Situation 3)

In refusing a sales person’s invitation to a fancy restaurant to sign a contract, NKs and NEs gave both similar and different reasons. Both groups cited a previous plan or lack of interest in buying a new machine as grounds for their refusals. However, only NKs referred to bribery or objective decision-making in their reasons (e.g., Ibǒn shikssaga kige kongkúp kyŏchŏnge yŏnghyangŭl michi’ikkabayo “Having dinner with you might affect the decision involved in buying your company’s machine” or Kige kongkúpgwa kwalyŏn twen nwemurŭn sayanghagessūnimida, “I’ll decline any bribery in relation to buying the machine”). Like NKs and NEs, the KE group used generally vague reasons such as a busy schedule or a previous engagement. However, like NKs and unlike NEs, KEIs and KEAs also mentioned that
accepting dinner would affect a fair contract, or that it is against the company’s regulation to have dinner with a contractor.

In terms of the degree of directness, NKs’ tone often sounded much more formal and polite due to their use of performatives (e.g., Chŏngchung hage sayanghagessūmnida “I’ll refuse politely”) or passive negative willingness (e.g., Pudamsūpssūmnida “It is a burden” or Chega kal koshi aningūt kassūmnida “It won’t be a place for me to be”). To mitigate their refusals, NKs typically expressed their hesitant feelings with formulas such as pause fillers, hedging, postponement and statement of alternative more frequently than did NEs, while NEs simply stated positive feelings or used reasons.

The KE group did not show evidence of transferring the formal tone found in the direct formulas used by NKs, however KEIs and KEAs overall showed a greater degree of pragmatic transfer than did KEBs. While KEBs rarely used direct formulas, they sounded abrupt and insincere since their refusals usually consisted of vague reasons and apologies without providing any other mitigating formulas. While KEIs and KEAs used direct formulas less frequently than did NKs, they sounded more straightforward in their refusal tones than did NKs due to their greater use of negative willingness, rather than performative or passive negative willingness. KEIs and KEAs, however, showed evidence of transferring the hesitant tone of NKs’ refusals by using statement of alternative, hedging, and postponement more frequently than did NEs. Nevertheless, both KEIs and KEAs used these formulas less frequently than did NKs.

Refusing a Higher Status Person’s Offer (Situation 11)

In refusing a boss’ offer of a promotion and raise involving a move to a small town, both NKs and NEs usually said that they like the city where they live and want to be with their family as a reason for their refusals. However, unlike NEs, NKs also often referred to a responsibility for the care of old parents and disapproval from a spouse as a reason not to accept an offer. While KEBs did not transfer this content of the NKs’ reasons, and only said that they like the city, KEIs and KEAs often used old parents or a disapproving wife as a reason.

In terms of the degree of directness, NEs tended to be more direct about their unwillingness to take the boss’ offer than did NKs due to their frequent use of negative willingness. NKs’ refusals were often more formal and indirect in tone than those of NEs due to their use of performatives or passive negative willingness. NEs and NKs also differed in
their choice of mitigating formulas. NEs mitigated by expressing appreciation about the offer using statement of positive feeling or gratitude. NKs, on the other hand, mainly mitigated by expressing their regret and hesitation for refusing the boss’ offer by using pause fillers, postponement (e.g., “Sanggakhaebogessümnimida ‘I’ll think about it’) and apologies. Unlike NEs, NKs also acknowledged that they know that the new position is a great opportunity to further their career.

The KE group’s refusals were more direct than those of NKs, however KEIs and KEAs conveyed the NKs’ mitigating tone to a greater degree than did KEBs. KEBs’ refusals were short and abrupt, deviating from both NKs and NEs. They refused directly with either “no” or negative willingness, and sometimes mitigated their refusals with a single formula, either gratitude or apology. KEIs and KEAs sounded more transparent about their refusals than did NKs because they typically used negative willingness rather than performative or passive negative willingness, which were preferred by NKs. However, in terms of mitigating their refusals, KEIs and KEAs were much more like NKs than like NEs. Both KEIs and KEAs used all the formulas which were typically used by NKs to convey hesitant and regretful tone, including postponement, pause fillers, and apologies. Like NKs, some KEAs also stated acknowledgement as in “I know this position is very important for my future.” In addition, although KEIs and KEAs did not express gratitude as frequently as did NEs, both of them used this formula much more frequently than did NKs, suggesting a convergence toward the target norm.

Refusing an Equal Person’s Offer (Situation 9)

In refusing a friend’s offer to have a piece of cake, although both NKs and NEs said that they were already full, only NKs elaborated their reasons, as in Nŏmu massissŏsŏ shiwil sae āpssi mŏgŏttŏni paega nŏmu pulŏ “I am too full. I ate non-stop since your food was so delicious.” The KE group gave reasons with content similar to that of NKs and NEs, but they did not elaborate their reasons.

In the first refusal, even though both NKs and NEs refused with direct formulas, NKs’ tone was much more mitigating than that of NEs due to NKs’ frequent use of mitigating formulas. NEs almost always refused with the formulaic expression ‘No, thanks’ and then gave reasons for refusals. NEs did not use any other mitigating formulas. NKs usually refused directly with either aniya “no” or negative willingness (e.g., Anmŏgŭllae “I won’t eat”). NKs typically gave reasons or used the formula of letting the interlocutors off the hook (e.g.,
Kwaench’ana “It’s okay”) to mitigate. In order to further soften the refusal effect, NKs provided additional mitigating formulas such as postponement and statement of alternative. Pause fillers were also frequently used before giving negative willingness to convey their hesitation about the refusals. NKs apologized for refusing the offer, but they never expressed gratitude.

In this situation, the KE group were more like NEs than like NKs in that they typically refused with the formulaic expression “No, thanks”, and then gave reasons. In addition, unlike NKs, the KE group rarely provided other mitigating formulas.

In the second refusal, NKs were more indirect than their first refusals, while NEs were more direct than their first refusals. NKs used aniya “no” much less frequently, and tried to hint at their refusals by repeating their reasons, postponing or stating alternatives (e.g., Nŏna tŏ mŏkjii kūröni? “Why don’t you eat some more?”). As was the case in the first refusal, NKs again apologized for their refusals. Some NKs, however, criticized the friend as in Na sal tchige harōgo kūrönnūn kōgūna “You are trying to make me fat”, while NEs never did. On the contrary, NEs showed their refusal intention more clearly in the second refusal by refusing directly with “no” followed by intensifiers such as “really” and “truly” to emphasize their sincerity about not wanting another piece of cake. Like NKs, NEs also repeated their reasons.

In the second refusals, the KE group was more like NKs than like NEs. Like NKs, they apologized for refusing the offer, and at times criticized the friend (e.g., “I don’ want to be fat like you” for KEB, “You hope that I become a pig” for KEI, and “Don’t tempt me” for KEA) for insisting to eat.

Refusing a Lower Status Person’s Offer (Situation 7)

In refusing a cleaning lady’s offer to pay for a broken vase, the content of reasons given by NKs and NEs was similar. Both groups typically said that the vase was not expensive or that they could get another one. The KE group also used reasons with content similar to that of NKs and NEs.

Overall, NKs’ refusals were lengthier than those of NEs because NKs used more of a variety of mitigating formulas than did NEs. Both NEs and NKs usually let the cleaning lady off the hook, as in “Don’t worry about it” or by adding “no” in front of the formula as in “No, don’t worry about it.” However, unlike NEs, many NKs also used pause fillers instead of a direct “no” before letting the interlocutor off the hook as in Ahyu (pasue filler), kwaench’anayo “Well, it’s OK.” NEs and NKs also differed in that NKs stated alternatives to
the cleaning lady (e.g., Taũmenũn chebal choshimhaseyo “Next time, please be careful”) much more frequently than did NEs. Also, NKs often gave a statement of philosophy (e.g., Nuguna shilssunũn hage maryõnigo, ajummado yewenũn anigitchiyo “Anyone can make a mistake, and you are not the exception”) and statement of relinquishment (e.g., Hal su innayo “There is nothing we can do”) to console the cleaning lady. However, NEs mitigated without philosophizing as in “It’s really not a big deal” or “I understand it was an accident.”

Among the KE group, KEAs showed the greatest degree of pragmatic transfer in their use of mitigating formulas, followed by KEIs and KEBs. The KE group usually refused the offer by letting the cleaning lady off the hook (e.g., “It’s okay) or adding “no”. KEIs and KEAs, like NKs, also used pause fillers, and stated alternatives (e.g., “Just be extra careful next time”). However, only KEAs transferred the philosophical tone used by NKs by using statement of philosophy (e.g., “Person is more valuable than an object”) and statement of relinquishment (e.g., “It is already broken and gone. That’s in the past”) as frequently as did NKs. Further, one KEA even cited a Korean proverb about making a mistake (e.g., “Even a skillful monkey can fall from a tree once in a while”) to sympathize with the cleaning lady.

Refusing a Higher Status Person’s Suggestion (Situation 6)

In refusing a boss’ suggestion to write little notes, NKs and NEs gave both similar and different reasons. Both NKs and NEs often said that they don’t like writing things down, and that they might lose the notes as their reasons. They also defended themselves, as in “It may look messy, but I know where everything is”, and as in Onũrũn nõmu pappatsõyõ. Pyõngsoenũn irõkke ōjirupji aũnssũnnida “It was such a busy day. It isn’t usually this messy.” However, only NKs cited their personality as grounds for their refusals, as in Wõnak sõngõgi kũphaesõ inji̇ ch’abunhage chõngnihal yöyuga ōpdõraguyo “Since I am hot-tempered, I am not patient enough to write things down”, or Kûrõk’ kkalakkũmhan pyõni anilasõyõ “I am not that meticulous.” The KE group usually gave reasons with content similar to that of NEs and NKs. Only KEAs, however, referred to their personality as a reason for the refusal.

Overall, NKs were more verbose in their mitigation than were NEs. Both NKs and NEs seldom used direct formulas to the boss, but NKs’ refusals were much more tentative and mitigating. NEs usually expressed gratitude for the suggestion and then gave reasons to hint at their unwillingness to follow the boss’ suggestion. They also joked (e.g., “It’s okay, that’s what my Dick Tracy radio watch is for”) to soften the refusal effect. NKs, on the other hand,
attempted to express their respect for and validation of the boss’ suggestion by giving formulas such as initial agreement (e.g., Ne, matchiyo “Yes, it is right.”), statement of acknowledgment (e.g., Dŏ choun bangpupiranŭn gon chal algo issūmnida “I know very well that it’s a better method”), statement of alternative and postponement. NKs also paused before their reasons to convey the tentative tone.

Among the KE group, KEAs resembled the NKs’ tentative tone to the greatest degree. The KE group, like NKs and NEs, rarely used direct formulas to the boss. KEBs and KEIs used neither the formulas typically used by NKs (e.g., statement of positive feeling, postponement, initial agreement) nor those by NEs (e.g., gratitude) sufficiently enough to mitigate their refusals appropriately. Thus, despite lack of direct formulas, their overall tone was more blunt than either that of NKs or NEs. The tone of KEAs’ refusals resembled that of NKs’ refusals in that they frequently acknowledged the boss’ suggestion or stated alternatives to mitigate their refusals. KEAs, like NKs, also used initial agreement (e.g., “Yes, but”, “Of course, but”) and pause fillers to soften their refusals.

**Refusing an Equal Status Person’s Suggestion (Situation 5)**

In refusing a friend’s suggestion to try a new diet, NKs and NEs gave both similar and different reasons. Both NKs and NEs usually said that they don’t like diets or they don’t think diets work for them. However, only NEs stated their principle on diets, as in “Fad diets never work in the long run”, or “I don’t believe in diets.” NKs cited their laziness or lack of will power as grounds for the refusals, while NEs never did. The KE group also expressed their negative feelings about diets as their reason as in “I don’t like diets” for KEB, “I think it’s not working” for KEI and “I tried almost every kind of new diet programs, but nothing worked” for KEA. KEIs and KEAs, like NKs, blamed themselves for not being able to do diets as in “I am very lazy” for KEI, and “When I see food, I can’t control” for KEA. KEBs also expressed their lack of will power as in “I like eating too much” or “I am always hungry.”

Both NKs and NEs used direct formulas, however, the overall tone of NKs’ refusals was more mitigating and tentative because of NKs’ frequent use of different types of mitigating formulas. NEs usually used either “no” or “no, thanks” to show their unwillingness to accept the refusals, and generally did not mitigate their refusals. NKs, like NEs, also refused with either “no” or negative willingness, but NKs stated alternatives much more frequently than did NEs, and used other mitigating formulas which were not used by NEs such as pause.
fillers, repetition (e.g., Daiŏtů? “Diet?”) or asking a question (Chungmal hyogwa ittæ? “Does it really work?”) to convey their hesitation to accept the suggestion.

KEAs resembled the NKs’ mitigating tone to the greatest degree, while the KE group used direct formulas much less frequently than did NKs or NEs. Despite lack of direct formulas, KEBs’ refusals still sounded to the point and at times abrupt since they typically refused by giving reasons without providing other mitigating formulas. KEIs were more mitigating than were KEBs, giving alternatives and pause fillers slightly more frequently. KEAs, however, were most like NKs in that they transferred the hesitant tone of NKs by using the native language preferred formulas such as asking a question, statement of alternative, and pause fillers to mitigate their refusals. In addition, KEAs often stated positive feelings about the friend’s suggestion, while neither NEs nor NKs used this formula. Therefore, KEAs’ refusals were sometimes longer and more mitigating than either NKs’ or NEs’.

**Refusing a Lower Status Person’s Suggestion (Situation 8)**

In refusing a student’s suggestion to include more conversation in class, although both NKs and NEs frequently referred to the importance of grammar as reasons for their refusals, NKs’ reasons were much more elaborated than those of NEs. Moreover, only NKs used figurative language in order to emphasize the importance of grammar in studying language as in, Munppŏbe patangi upnūn hwehanūn haebvŏne moraesŏngkwa kattayo “Studying conversation without firm grammar is the same as building a sand castle on the beach.” Some NKs also explicitly emphasized their position as a teacher (e.g., Mwŏga chungyo hanjinūn karuch’inūn sarami chunghanŏngŏya. Sŏnsengŭn naya. Nanūn munppŏbi tŏ chungyo hadago sangakke “The person who teaches decides what is the most important thing. I am the teacher, and I think grammar is more important”). NEs never cited their status as a teacher, but rather cited the curriculum of the school as grounds for the refusals (“We are following a very strict curriculum”). The KE group typically referred to the importance of grammar as their reason. Among the KE group, only KEAs explicitly referred to their position as a teacher (e.g., “I’m the teacher if you want to teach, why don’t you take my job?”), and delivered the figurative tone observed in the NKs’ reasons (e.g., “If you don’t know your grammar, it’s like a castle in the air”). In terms of the length of the reason, most KEAs were as verbose as NKs in convincing the student of the importance of grammar.
Both NKs and NEs usually refused the student’s suggestion by stating the reason, however their choice of mitigating formulas differed. NEs either expressed gratitude for the suggestion or stated positive feelings at the beginning of their refusals. Some NEs also postponed (e.g., “I will take that into consideration”) and set conditions for future acceptance (e.g., “If there is time, we will practice conversation”) to mitigate their refusals. NKs, unlike NEs, began their refusals with pause fillers or statements of acknowledgement (e.g., Taehwado mulon chungyohaji “Conversation is of course important”) to admit the validity of the student’s suggestion. Moreover, only NKs tried to establish solidarity by seeking the student’s approval after refusing as in Chanedo kū chôme taehaesŏnūn tongkamhagetchi? “You, too, agree with me on that [the importance of grammar], don’t you?”.

Among the KE group, KEIs and KEAs showed a greater degree of pragmatic transfer in their use of mitigating formulas than did KEBs. KEBs generally gave a reason to emphasize the importance of grammar, rarely giving other mitigating formulas. In contrast, KEIs and KEAs, like NKs, frequently mitigated by acknowledging the validity of the student’s suggestion and by seeking approval after refusing (e.g., “Can you understand me?” for KEI, and “Don’t you think so?” for KEA), showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. However, KEIs refused with “no” and negative willingness more frequently than did NEs or NKs, deviating from both the native and target language group. KEAs, on the other hand, used statement of positive feeling and expressed gratitude, two formulas which were preferred by NEs, even more frequently than did NEs, suggesting overgeneralization of the usage of these formulas.

**Discussion**

**Frequency of Semantic Formulas**

Pragmatic transfer occurred among the learners at all three levels in the frequency of semantic formulas, however, the amount of pragmatic transfer increased with proficiency. With their sufficient linguistic proficiency, KEAs seemed to be able to express native norms when they wanted with the wide range of semantic formulas they possess. On the other hand, for KEBs and KEIs, even though they wanted to, their lack of linguistic competence prevented them from transferring their native pragmatic knowledge, as noted by Takahashi and Beebe (1987). For example, only KEAs transferred semantic formulas typically used by NKs, but not by NEs such as pause fillers, hedging, postponement, statement of solidarity,
statement of acknowledgement, initial agreement and seeking approval after refusals. Statement of alternative, another formula which was more frequently used by NKs than NEs, was only used by KEAs with similar frequency to NKs. However, KEBs and KEIs used the formula not only less frequently than did NKs, but also used it much less frequently than NEs, deviating from both target and native language patterns. Moreover, KEAs used the address form which was only used by NKs to a higher status person with a frequency similar to NKs.

In terms of the frequency of direct formulas, the amount of pragmatic transfer was also different with proficiency. Although the learners at the three levels used direct formulas less frequently than did NEs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer, only KEAs used direct formulas with a similar frequency to NKs, showing the greatest degree of pragmatic transfer. KEBs and KEIs, on the other hand, used direct formulas slightly more frequently than did NKs, falling between NKs and NEs. Thus, while they were not as direct as NEs, they tended to seem more direct than did KEAs or NKs. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) also reported the higher frequency of direct formula usage among lower proficiency Japanese ESL learners in their target refusals. According to Takahashi and Beebe, preference of direct formulas among lower proficiency learners may be a characteristic of the developmental stage where simpler and more direct forms are used.

In addition to showing evidence of pragmatic transfer, KEs displayed an interlanguage pattern that seemed to indicate their possible departure from NKs’ refusal style. For example, gratitude was used much more frequently by NEs than NKs in the present study, establishing the condition for pragmatic transfer to occur. As predicted, KEs expressed gratitude much less frequently than did NEs, following the NKs’ norm. However, unexpectedly, the learners at all three levels used this formula much more than did NKs, falling between NEs and NKs in terms of the frequency.

KEs displayed another evidence of their possible departure from NKs’ refusal style in the use of statement of positive feeling (e.g., I’d love to...). This formula was used by NEs much more frequently than by NKs, providing the condition for pragmatic transfer. It was initially predicted that KEs would state positive feeling much less frequently than NEs, conforming with the NKs’ pattern. However, the results indicated that KEBs and KEIs not only used this formula much more frequently than did NKs, but also used it as frequently as did NEs. More interestingly, KEAs actually used this formula significantly more frequently than did NEs.
KEs’ resemblance toward the NEs’ usage of gratitude as well as overuse of statement of positive feeling may be attributed to an instructional effect. Expressions such as “Thank you, but…”, “No, thank you”, “I’d love to, but…” and “That sounds great/good” are often practiced as formulaic utterances in the language classroom in Korea as the most appropriate way to begin refusals in English.

KEs’ infrequent use of avoidance formulas which were typically used by NKs was another case of their possible departure from the NKs’ refusal norm. Avoidance formulas such as pausing, hedging, and postponing were frequently used by NKs to hint at their refusals. NEs, on the other hand, expressed their refusal intention explicitly by using more direct refusal formulas. This difference in use of avoidance formulas between NEs and NKs was expected to be another source of pragmatic transfer. Contrary to this expectation, KEBs used avoidance formulas less frequently than did either of NKs or NEs, while KEIs used these only as frequently as NEs. Only KEAs used hedging, postponement and pause fillers more frequently than NEs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. However, upon closely examining KEAs data, it was found that although KEAs used avoidance formulas more frequently than NEs, they still used these formulas much less frequently than NKs, placing themselves between NKs and NEs in terms of frequency.

A possible explanation for infrequent use of avoidance formulas by KEBs and KEIs may be their lack of linguistic means to transfer the native language-preferred strategies to the target language. However, this may be not be a plausible cause for KEAs’ underuse of this formula since they seemed to be proficient enough to transfer other formulas typically used by NKs (i.e., statement of solidarity, statement of acknowledgement, initial agreement and seeking approval after refusals) to the target language forms.

Another explanation may be that KEAs might have considered pause fillers, hedging and postponing which are used to convey the avoiding and hesitant tone to be inappropriate in the target language situation or ‘unlike Americans’. Koreans tend to perceive Westerners or Americans to be more straightforward and assertive in expressing their feelings (see Scollon & Scollon, 1991 for a discussion on stereotypes held by East Asians and Americans toward each other). Based on this notion, KEAs may have decided to use the avoidance formulas less frequently in the target language refusals in their attempt to sound more direct and thus more ‘like Americans’.
Further, KEAs’ refusals at times sounded like a merger of NKs’ and NEs’ refusals, containing both target and native language preferred semantic formulas. The dual resemblance of both native and target language was also reported by Takahashi and Beebe (1987) with respect to the ordering pattern of refusals by Japanese learners of English. Takahashi and Beebe called this interlanguage pattern ‘composite’ which is a merger of native and target language variants. For example, in refusing invitations from a higher and an equal status person, KEAs not only hedged, stated alternative and expressed empathy but also stated positive feeling and expressed gratitude for additional mitigation.

**Content of Semantic Formulas**

The analysis of the content of semantic formulas also confirmed the hypothesis in that instances of pragmatic transfer increased as the learners’ proficiency increased, supporting Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis.

While both NKs and NEs offered reasons in their refusals, the content of reasons given by each group differed, setting the condition for pragmatic transfer. In fact, the learners at the three levels tended to give a similar content of reasons to those also used by NKs, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. For instance, in refusing requests and invitations from a higher status person, NEs usually referred to plans with their spouses or their children, while NKs typically mentioned dinner with parents or sickness of parents. In refusing a higher status person’s invitation in particular, NKs often cited their mother’s or father’s birthday as grounds for their refusals, while NEs never used parents’ birthdays as an excuse. KEs also frequently mentioned plans with parents or sickness of parents in their refusals, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer.

The frequent use of parents as their reasons for refusing a boss may be explained by NKs’ and KEs’ sensitivity to a higher status person. Since refusing a boss tends to be a highly face-threatening act, they had to come up with reasons which involved matters that were unquestionably more eminent than a request or an invitation from the boss. For Korean people, mentioning their duty and piety for their parents might be one of those. The emphasis on filial piety stems from the philosophy of Confucius that has traditionally provided moral guidance for Koreans. Filial piety is based on the notion that children owe an unpayable debt to their parents who gave them life, nurtured them as infants, and took care of them in childhood (Clark, 2000). Throughout their lives, adult children in Korea assume the responsibility of supporting and caring for their parents to whom they are eternally indebted.
and grateful. The notion of loving and respecting their parents, thus, holds a major place in Korean moral values (ibid). Therefore, NKs may have decided that mentioning matters related to their duty and obligation for their parents such as parents’ sickness or birthday would be the most appropriate and face-saving reasons when refusing a higher status person like a boss (Kwon, 2004).

Consequently, KEs attempted to transfer this native cultural value to the target language refusals. However, cross-cultural differences between NKs and NEs in their tone of a given formula did not necessarily result in pragmatic transfer. For example, in terms of the degree of directness, the condition for pragmatic transfer was considered present since NKs’ use of passive negative willingness (e.g., Pudamsırŏpssŭmnida “It is a burden”) and performative (e.g., Chŏng chung hagae sayang ha gesseŭmnida “I’ll refuse politely”) made them seem more formal and indirect than NEs who almost always used negative willingness. KEs did not transfer the formal tone of NKs which was expressed by performative or passive negative willingness to their target language refusals. Instead, most of the learners chose to use negative willingness including “I don’t think I can” or simply “I can’t”, which was also commonly used by NEs. Thus, KEs in general seemed much more straightforward about their refusal intention than did NKs.

KEs’ use of negative willingness may be related to an instructional effect from the classroom teaching in Korea which usually stresses the use of “I don’t think I can” or “I can’t” as the encoder of unwillingness or inability to comply with a proposed action (e.g., invitation, requests) in English. Another explanation for KE’s use of negative willingness may lie in Koreans’ commonly held perception of Westerners or Americans as much more assertive and direct in expressing their feelings than Korean people. Therefore, by using negative willingness in their target language refusals, KEs might have attempted to mimic the direct tone of Americans, which they believe to be the appropriate target language norm.

The proficiency effect was also observed in the learners’ use of statement of acknowledgement. In refusing an employee’s request for a pay raise, while both NKs and NEs provided positive comments to the employee in their refusals, the content differed for each language group. NEs usually stated positive feelings about raising the employee’s salary (e.g., “I’d love to give you a raise) or expressed gratitude (e.g., “I appreciate the work you’ve done for us”). NKs, however, typically gave acknowledgement of the employee’s hard work in the store, often followed by pause fillers or initial agreement (e.g., Kūrae, chanege sugo hanŭngun mŏlon naega nugu boda chal ajji “Surely, I, of course, recognize that, more than
anyone, you work hard”). The initial acknowledgement was also used by KEIs as in “I know well about your hard working” and KEAs as in “I recognize your capability”, but not by KEBs. However, two KEB subjects used a simplified form of this formula as in “I know” in their effort to express an acknowledgment. This seemed to support the idea that linguistically more advanced KEIs and KEAs were able to encode the nuance of the formula preferred by NKs in the target language form to a greater degree than KEBs. Therefore, as Takahashi and Beebe (1987) noted, fluency in the target language gave more advanced learners “rope to hang themselves with” (p. 153), while beginning learners, despite their desire to transfer, did not express the native sentiment as much as they wanted to due to limited proficiency. Further, a certain tone involved in NKs’ refusals was transferred only by KEAs, who had the sufficient linguistic tools to do so. Specifically, the criticizing and philosophical tone, as well as the use of figurative language, all of which were typically found in the NKs’ refusals, were transferred only by KEAs.

In refusing a student’s suggestion, NKs, unlike NEs, were firm about establishing their authority as a teacher, and criticized the student who they perceived to be challenging their territory. For example, NKs explicitly emphasized their position as a teacher as in “the person who teaches decides what is the most important thing. I am the teacher, and I think grammar is the most important thing”, and gave a lengthy reason explaining the importance of grammar. NKs also used figurative language in order to emphasize the importance of grammar in studying language as in, Munppŏbe patangi upnŭn hwehanŭn haebvŏne moraesŏngkwa kattayo “Studying conversation without knowing grammar is the same as building a sand castle on the beach.” NEs, on the other hand, usually cited the curriculum of the school as grounds for their refusal. Only KEAs criticized the student by explicitly referring to their position as a teacher (e.g., “I’m the teacher if you want to teach, why don’t you take my job?), and delivered the figurative tone observed in the NKs’ reasons (e.g., “If you don’t know your grammar, it’s like a castle in the air”).

Another aspect of NKs’ refusals which was transferred only by KEAs was the philosophical tone. In refusing a cleaning lady’s offer to pay for a broken vase, NKs often philosophized their reasons (e.g., Nuguna shilssunŭn hage maryŏnigo, ajummado yewenŭn anigitchiyo “Everyone makes a mistake, and you are not the exception”). However, NEs mitigated without philosophizing as in “It’s really not a big deal” or “I understand it was an accident.”
Among KEs, only KEAs transferred the philosophical tone used by NKs by using statement of philosophy (e.g., “Person is more valuable than an object”) as frequently as did NKs. Further, KEAs often cited a Korean proverb about (e.g., “Even a skillful monkey can fall from a tree once in a while”) to sympathize with the cleaning lady.

Conclusion

The findings of this study support Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis, which states that pragmatic transfer increases with proficiency in EFL situations. By establishing clearly distinguished proficiency levels, this study showed how learners at different language proficiency stages increasingly utilized their native language pragmatic knowledge to carry out the second language refusals. Also, with the inclusion of the three post DCT questions, this study provided a better understanding of the ways in which learners relied on their native language contextual factor (i.e., the status of their interlocutor) for their choice of refusal strategies in their target language. The present study revealed that linguistic proficiency seemed to facilitate pragmatic transfer in an EFL context where learners have a limited exposure to the target language norm. With sufficient linguistic knowledge, advanced learners have the means to transfer their native language preferred semantic formulas and tone of the refusals to the target language situations.

In addition to providing strong evidence for Takahashi and Beebe’s positive correlation hypothesis, the present study found that the differences in the use of refusal strategies between the native and target languages did not always result in pragmatic transfer for the learners. For example, despite the differences in the tone of direct formulas used by NKs and NEs, the learners in this study, including the advanced learners who had sufficient linguistic knowledge, did not use the formal tone of direct formulas, which was typical of the native speakers of Korean. It was speculated that the avoidance of formal tone might have been due to an instructional effect or their desire to follow the English norm.

The advanced learners also combined both their native and target language preferred strategies to perform target refusals. As a result, their refusals appeared more verbose and elaborated than those of native speakers of Korean and English. These aspects of advanced learners’ refusals require further investigation as these may be a distinct stage in the continuum of interlanguage pragmatic development.
The present study contains a number of limitations that should be noted before generalizing its findings. First, data were artificially elicited by a written DCT which may have yielded different results from naturally occurring data. Also the presence of rejoinders in the DCT may have influenced the subjects’ choice of semantic formulas (see Johnston, Kasper & Ross, 1998 for a discussion on the effect of rejoinders in the DCT). Second, the subjects representing native, learner and target language groups largely consisted of 18 to 24 year-old college students, thus decreasing the generalizability of the findings to other age groups or occupations of Korean and English speakers (e.g., middle-aged business people). Moreover, with regards to providing cross-cultural baseline data, native speakers of different regional varieties of American English and Korean may have different preferences in the speech act behavior of English and Korean. It should be noted that the particular English variety (i.e., American English used in the Boston area) and Korean variety (i.e., Korean used in the Seoul area) provides only one of the various models that exist in the speech act behavior of English and Korean. Finally, although this study intended to examine the occurrences of pragmatic transfer by learners at different developmental stages of second language learning, the design of the study was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal. Data from longitudinal studies may provide a more dynamic holistic picture of the ways in which proficiency and pragmatic transfer interact over time.

As the findings of this study indicate, pragmatic transfer increasingly occurs although learners gain a greater control over target language grammatical knowledge. To enhance our understanding of pragmatic transfer and pragmatic development, future studies should focus on identifying other factors (e.g., learning context, length of time in the target community, transferability) that may influence the occurrences of pragmatic transfer among learners at various developmental stages.
References


APPENDIX A

Discourse Completion Test

1. You are the owner of a bookstore. One of your best workers asks to speak to you in private.

Worker: As you know, I've been here just a little over a year now, and I know you've been pleased with my work. I really enjoy working here, but to be quite honest I really need an increase in pay.

You: ____________________________________________________________________________

Worker: Well… then I guess I’ll have to look for another job.

2. You are a junior in college. You attend classes regularly and take good notes. Your classmate often misses class and asks you for the lecture notes.

Classmate: Oh God! We have an exam tomorrow but I don’t have notes from last week. I am sorry to ask you this, but could you please lend me your notes once again?

You: ____________________________________________________________________________

Classmate: Well… then I guess I’ll have to ask someone else.

3. You are the president of a big printing company. A salesman from a printing machine company invites you to one of the most expensive restaurants, Lutece, in New York.

Salesman: We have met several times now, and I’m hoping you will buy my company’s printing machine. Would you like to have dinner with me at Lutece to sign the contract?

You: ____________________________________________________________________________

Salesman: Well…maybe we can meet another time.

4. You are an executive at a very large software company. One day the boss calls you into his office.

Boss: Next Sunday my wife and I are having a little party at my house. I know it’s sudden…but I’m hoping all my executives will be there with their wives/husbands. Will you come to the party?

You: ____________________________________________________________________________

Boss: Well, that’s too bad… I was hoping everyone would be there.

5. You are at a friend’s house watching TV. Your friend offers you a snack.
You: Thanks, but no thanks. I’ve been eating like a pig and I feel just terrible. My clothes don’t even fit me.

Friend: Hey, why don’t you try this new diet I’ve been telling you about?

You: ________________________________

Friend: Well… you should try it anyway.

6. Your boss just asked you to bring a report to him.

You can’t find the report on your desk because your desk is very disorganized. Your boss walks over.

Boss: You know, maybe you should try to organize yourself better. I always write things down on a piece of paper so I don’t forget them. Why don’t you try it?

You: (However, you don’t like the boss’ suggestion.)

_______________________________

Boss: Well… it was only an idea anyway.

7. You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to you.

Cleaning lady: Oh God, I’m so sorry! I had a terrible accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel very bad about it. I’ll pay for it.

You: (Knowing that the cleaning lady is supporting three children.)

_______________________________

Cleaning lady: No, I’d feel better if I paid for it.

8. You teach English at a university. It is just about the middle of the semester now. One of your students asks to speak to you.

Student: Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class yesterday. We kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar.

You: ________________________________
Student: Well… it was only a suggestion.

9. You are at a friend’s house for lunch.

Friend: How about another piece of cake?
You: ___________________________
Friend: Come on, just a little piece?
You: ___________________________

10. A friend invites you to dinner, but you really don’t like this friend’s husband/wife.

Friend: How about coming to my house Sunday night?
   We’re having a small dinner party.
You: ___________________________
Friend: Well… maybe next time.

11. You’ve been working in an advertising company now for some time.
The boss offers you an increase in salary and a better position, but you have to
move to another town. You don’t want to go.
   Today, the boss calls you into his office.

   Boss: I’d like to offer you an executive position in our new office in Hicktown.
   It’s a great town - only 3 hours from here by airplane!
   And, your salary will increase with the new position.
You: ___________________________

   Boss: Well… maybe you should think about it some more before declining.

12. You are at the office in a meeting with your boss.

   It is getting close to the end of the day and you want to leave the office.

   Boss: If it’s okay with you, I’d like you to spend an extra hour or two tonight so that
we can finish up with this work. Can you stay a little longer at the office?
You: ___________________________

   Boss: Well, that’s too bad… I was hoping you could stay.
Appendix B

Refusal Taxonomy

Direct

Performative

Nonperformative statement

1. ‘No’
2. Negative willingness/ability

Indirect

Statement of regret

Wish

Excuse, reason, explanation

Statement of alternative

1. I can do X instead of Y
2. Why don’t you do X instead of Y

Set conditions for future or past acceptance

Promise of future acceptance

Statement of principle

Statement of philosophy

Attempt to dissuade interlocutor

1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester
2. Guilt trip
3. Criticize the request/requester; insult
4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
5. Let interlocutor off the hook
6. Self-defense

Acceptance that functions as a refusal

1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
2. Lack of enthusiasm
Avoidance

1. Nonverbal
   a. Silence
   b. Hesitation
   c. Do nothing
   d. Physical departure

2. Verbal
   a. Topic switch
   b. Joke
   c. Repetition of part of request
   d. Postponement
   e. Hedging

Adjuncts to refusals

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement
2. Statement of empathy
3. Pause fillers
4. Gratitude/appreciation

Additional strategies found in the present study:

Saying I tried/considered
Statement of solidarity
Statement of relinquishment
Expression of surprise
Statement of acknowledgement
Asking a question
Seeking approval after refusing
Initial Agreement
EFL Learners’ Vocabulary Size in Relation to Their Choices of Extensive Reading Materials

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Abstract

Non-native speakers have been shown to need a certain amount of vocabulary knowledge as a means to comprehend texts with pleasure. The present study investigates the vocabulary size of Taiwanese EFL learners at tertiary level and to examine whether EFL learners’ vocabulary size affects their selection of books in terms of graded readers or authentic books. A test of vocabulary size was administered to 119 EFL college freshmen before implementation of extensive reading as a supplemental activity in a basic reading class and a questionnaire was given after their participation in the Extensive Reading for five months. The results indicate that the participants with a larger vocabulary size indeed prefer authentic books to graded readers. However, the findings also reveal that EFL learners’ vocabulary size might not be a crucial factor for their choosing ER materials and those with poor performance on the test of vocabulary size chose authentic books as well. This suggests that EFL adult learners might need authentic books instead of graded readers while implementing ER in reading classes.

Keywords: vocabulary size, extensive reading, graded readers, authentic books
Introduction

Vocabulary size is regarded as a significant predictor of second language learning (Meara, 1996), and numerous researchers have investigated English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners’ vocabulary breadth/size (Zahar, Cobb & Spada, 2001; Webb, 2005; Qian, 2008). In addition, the correlation between vocabulary size and reading comprehension has been well explored. Schmitt et al. (2011) assert “there is a fairly straightforward linear relationship between growth in vocabulary knowledge for a text and comprehension of that text” (p. 39). EFL learners’ vocabulary knowledge at the 2000-word and 3000-word level is associated with their reading comprehension in the short answer question test (Zhang & Annual, 2008). In an empirical study, Alavi and Akbarian (2012) maintain vocabulary knowledge is related to reading comprehension, especially Guessing Vocabulary, Stated Detail and Main Idea in TOEFL test items, correlated to overall performance in Vocabulary Level Test. In other research, vocabulary knowledge was found to relate to reading comprehension in IELTS (Kameli & Baki, 2013; Qian, 1999). Vocabulary size indeed plays a determining role in reading comprehension and might be a factor of influencing EFL learners’ reading ability. Accordingly, a quantity of researchers indicate that one of the beneficial methods to improve EFL learners’ reading comprehension and reading ability is to use extensive reading (Krashion, 2004; Pikulski & Chard, 2005; Silva, 2009) and vocabulary size is deemed a dominant issue in choosing proper reading materials to read extensively. The present study therefore aims to investigate EFL learners’ vocabulary size in relation to their choices of extensive reading materials and the role of unknown words played in extensive reading. In the current study the influence of EFL learners’ vocabulary size on their choices of books is considered by addressing the following questions:

1. What is EFL learners’ vocabulary size at tertiary level in Taiwan?
2. Is the EFL learners’ choices of graded readers or authentic fiction related to their vocabulary size?
3. What are EFL learners’ perceptions and their preferences for extensive reading and reading materials?
4. Are unknown words a factor in EFL learners’ choices of extensive reading materials?
Extensive Reading in relation to vocabulary size

Extensive Reading (ER) is widely used as either a primary focus in reading classes or as a supplemental activity to facilitate intensive reading instruction. The benefits of utilizing extensive reading is addressed by a great deal of scholars include raising students’ motivation, increasing their reading comprehension, expanding their vocabulary size (Soltani, 2011), and making gains in various aspects of proficiency in the target language (Hitosugi & Day, 2004; Horst, 2005; Iwahori, 2008; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006). In most extensive reading programs, graded readers are adapted to a great extent, as opposed to the use of authentic materials, and are regarded as an effective and beneficial way of implementing extensive reading. However, for some adult EFL learners, graded readers might not be able to raise their motivation and interests because of simplification of the content and language structure. As Honeyfield (1977) claims, simplified graded readers differ from authentic or so-called normal, unsimplified texts in two important characteristics: information distribution and common structure. These differences disrupt communicative structures for removing various low frequent words, variations in sentence lengths and collocations. He indicates “Although some improved techniques are feasible, it seems that whatever is done, simplification will always tend to obscure important features of unsimplified text, just by being different in significant ways” (p. 436). He suggests that language learners might need to read more advanced or totally unsimplified texts. Swaffar (1985) also asserts that simplified graded readers fail to achieve communicative functions due to lack of authorial cues, repetition, redundancy, and discourse markers. Correspondingly, EFL learners might feel deficiency in authenticity of graded readers and tend to choose authentic books instead. As Lien (2010) states, EFL college learners seemed to prefer authentic books to graded readers because graded readers do not provide interesting content and plots.

Nevertheless, a number of studies show that non-native speakers have to possess a certain amount of vocabulary knowledge to comprehend reading texts for pleasure. Hirsh and Nation (1992) indicate that a vocabulary size of 2000 to 3000 words, which provides a coverage of up to 97% of the words in teenage novels, is necessary to fully understand those novels. However, they also claim that the most frequent 2,000 words do not give sufficient coverage for pleasure reading and EFL learners need to know around 5,000 word family for reading unsimplified texts, such as fictions, magazines, and any authentic materials. Regardless, in a later study, Nation (2006) proposes that 98% coverage of a text is required for unaided
comprehension, and an 8,000 to 9,000 word-family vocabulary is required for understanding written texts and a vocabulary of 6,000 to 7,000 for spoken text. Moreover, Hu and Nation (2000) suggest that 96% to 99% coverage of a text would enable EFL learners to successfully guess from context and Schmitt et al. (2011) claim that EFL learners are capable to understand academic text with estimate 98% text coverage. Based on previous studies (Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2006), EFL learners with vocabulary size less than 5000 word family might be capable of apprehending or able to enjoy authentic books or so-called chapter books and with an 8,000 to 9,000 word-family vocabulary enable them to understand written texts. EFL learners’ vocabulary size conceivably is a factor for their selection of graded readers or authentic books while participating in extensive reading. However, most research on extensive reading predominately emphasize the benefits of using graded readers, but few studies explore whether vocabulary size would be a factor in EFL learners’ choices of books when EFL learners have the chance to choose graded readers or authentic books for their pleasure reading.

Method

Participants

The participants were 119 EFL freshmen who had just passed the College Entrance Examination and enrolled in an English Department in a college in northern Taiwan. They had studied English for seven to fourteen years, with a mean of ten years. In their first year, Reading I is one of the required courses and extensive reading is implemented as a supplemental activity in Reading I class outside the classroom. While implementing extensive reading students are encouraged to read as many books as possible and reading for pleasure is regarded as the major concern. The available books for students to choose from include graded readers and authentic books in the university library.

Different from those common and promoted by most extensive reading programs which only graded readers used in foreign language learning, the available extensive reading materials for the extensive reading program in this study included graded readers from Oxford, Heinemann, Longman, Cambridge, and Penguin, ranging from level 1 to level 6, with 300 to 3,000 headwords respectively, and popular fiction books such as The Twilight series, Harry Potter series, Kite Runner and so on. Enjoyment was the primary concern for
students’ reading choices and encouragement in reading for pleasure was also emphasized in class. The participants were independent in deciding the level suitable for them to enjoy and to be comfortable in reading. Except for implementing extensive reading outside the classroom, intensive reading activities to improve the participants’ reading comprehension, reading strategies, and reading speed were employed in class.

The participants were asked to complete a written report for each book they had finished reading. The purpose of the written reports, with different questions in various report sheets, was to check the participants’ understanding of the books. The questions in the written reports included “Write a letter to one of the characters in the book,” “Top 10 List - list ten things you learned from this book,” or “As a literary agent, write a letter to the publishing company designed to persuade them to publish this book.” Meanwhile, they also recorded each book they read by reporting the information, such as the date they finished reading, the total pages, level of graded readers or authentic book, types of the books such as romance, advance, mystery…etc, the difficult level they thought about the book, the percentage of the unknown words, and the degree of enjoyment about the book. The book records allowed the participants to check their efforts while participating in the extensive reading outside of the classroom.

**Materials and Measures**

**Vocabulary Test**

Learners’ vocabulary size was assessed by Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) (Nation, 2001), which includes items from the 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 5,000, 10,000 high-frequency words and university word level related to academic vocabulary. Each frequent word level contains 30 items except for the university word level with 36 items requiring the respondents to match the words with the 60 definitions. Each three items has six definitions on the opposite. The test taker has to find the best three definitions to match the three given test items. The test has been extensively used to measure students’ range of vocabulary, and its reliability is reported to be quite high, Cronbach's alpha $\alpha=.96$ (Schmitt et al., 2001) and $\alpha=.92$ (Xing & Fulcher, 2007).

The high reliability of the test provides an accurate estimate of the number of words the participants know. However, in the present study a Chinese version of the Vocabulary Levels
Test including 1,000-, 2,000-, 3,000- and 5,000-word levels, 120 items in total, was used and the English version of Vocabulary Level Test was translated by the researcher using back translation techniques to ensure the accuracy of the Chinese version of Vocabulary Level Test. The use of the Chinese version of the Vocabulary Levels Test would detect the participants’ recognition of vocabulary more precisely because the original version of The Vocabulary Level Test might fail to identify if the participants certainly know the word or are just incapable of comprehending the definition of the target word. The reliability of the Chinese version of Vocabulary Test is reported to be good (Cronbach’s alpha $\alpha = .80$) and the test was administered at the beginning of the study before implementing extensive reading as a supplemental activity outside Reading I class.

**Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was administered in the last class of Reading I in order to explore the participants’ English learning background, their reading habits of reading Chinese and English, hours spent in reading outside the classroom, their preferences for graded readers or authentic materials, and the reasons for selecting books to read. In addition to the questionnaire, the participants were also required to complete a book record report giving details of when they finished a book, whether the book was authentic or graded readers (if so, at which level), the title of the book, the percentage of unknown words and their opinions about the book (i.e., whether they had enjoyed it or not).

**Results**

The study was intended to examine if EFL learners’ vocabulary size influences their selections of graded readers or authentic books as their reading materials outside college reading class. The Chinese version of the Vocabulary Level Test (VLT) probed the level of EFL college learners who had learned English for ten years in Taiwan. The Vocabulary Level Test employed in this study contained four level tests, 1000 word, 2000 word, 3000 word and 5000 word and each level test included 30 test items, in total of 120 test items. The maximum score of the test was 120. Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance in VLT. The participants’ performance at 1000 WL and at 2000 WL was 95% ($M = 28.65$, $SD = 1.52$) and 93% ($M = 27.97$, $SD = 2.13$) correct, respectively. The mean score of VLT was 25.60 at 3000 WL with 85% correct ($SD = 3.69$) and was 16.46 at 5000
WL with 55% correctness ($SD = 4.40$). The mean of overall performance was 98.60 ($SD = 9.38$) with 82% correctness. According to Nation (1990), less than 83% correctness of each vocabulary level is regarded as a poor score, which would entail that fewer than 25 out of 30 items in this study. The results in Table 1 shows that EFL college learners in Taiwan seemed not to have sufficient vocabulary size because of the poor performance at 5000 WL (55% correctness) and at 1000-5000 WL (82% correctness) and even 85% correct at 3000 WL.

Table 1

*The Descriptive Statistics of the Participants’ Performance in VLT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correctness %</th>
<th>S. D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 WL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28.56</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 WL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.97</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000 WL</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.60</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000 WL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.46</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-5000 WL</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>98.60</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>9.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Table 2 reveals that 116 students passed the 1000 word level test and 113 students passed the 2000 word level test. In other words, 2.5% and 5% of the participants had a weak score at 1000 WL and 2000 WL, respectively. 25% and 95% of the participants performed badly at 3000 WL and 5000 WL. In fact, only 89 students had a strong score at 3000 word vocabulary level ($N=116$) and five students had a strong score at 5000 WL. This means that EFL college learners in Taiwan might not have sufficient vocabulary size, at least 5000 frequent words, to be able to read authentic books or academic texts in English as claimed by Hirsh and Nation (1992).
Table 2

The Number of Students with Weak or Strong Scores in Each Vocabulary Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1000 word</th>
<th>2000 word</th>
<th>3000 word</th>
<th>5000 word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak score (less than 25)</td>
<td>3 (2.5%)</td>
<td>6 (5%)</td>
<td>30 (25%)</td>
<td>114 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong score (over 25)</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, in the present study, although the participants did not possess an ample vocabulary size for the comprehension of authentic texts, 46 students with weak scores at 5000 word level still chose authentic ones instead of graded readers, as shown in Table 3. This finding demonstrates that EFL learners’ vocabulary size might not be a crucial factor for choosing ER materials. Accordingly, the correlation between the participants’ vocabulary size and their choices for ER reading materials was further examined.

Table 3

Comparison Between Selecting Graded Readers and Authentic Books in Their Performance of Vocabulary Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>1000 word</th>
<th>2000 word</th>
<th>3000 word</th>
<th>5000 word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 25</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To analyze the correlation between each vocabulary level and the participants’ choice, the results in Table 4 display the score of 3000 word level and the overall score were significant correlated with the participants’ choices of book, with $r(117)=.208$ and $r(117)=.189, p<.05$, respectively. The findings indicate the participants’ vocabulary size was related to their choice of books to some degree, especially at 3000 word level and in overall performance, but not very strongly.
Table 4

Correlation Between the Participants’ Choices and Vocabulary Level Test (N=119)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ Choice</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>1000 WL</th>
<th>2000 WL</th>
<th>3000 WL</th>
<th>5000 WL</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.208*</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>.189*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To compare differences between two groups, Table 5 shows that the participants who chose to read authentic books indeed outperform those who read graded readers. However, there is no significant difference between two groups by computing Independent Samples Test. Thus, the participants’ perceptions of extensive reading and ER materials were explored in the following.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Level Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word level</th>
<th>The participants’ choice</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Mean</th>
<th>Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28.47</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28.68</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>27.71</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28.34</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000</td>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24.95</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26.50</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000</td>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>15.95</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall score</td>
<td>Graded Readers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>97.10</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authentic books</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.68</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The questionnaire in the present study investigated the participants’ perceptions of ER and the results in Table 6 shows ten participants who chose to read authentic books indeed enjoy ER very much, comparing to six participants choosing graded readers. 67.2% of the participants were ok with ER. Only fourteen participants expressed they enjoyed ER a little. Overall, the participants, regardless their reading selection, possessed positive attitudes toward ER. The reasons affected their selection of ER materials were displayed in Table 7.

Table 6

Comparison of Participants’ Perceptions of ER (N=119)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enjoy ER</th>
<th>Graded Readers Selectors</th>
<th>Authentic Books Selectors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16 (13.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>80 (67.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9 (7.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked about the factors about choosing ER materials, the majority of the participants regarded book titles (38.7%) and the content of the books (39.5%) as the reasons to choose ER materials. In contrast, only 14.3 % of the participants thought difficulty level affects their choices of ER materials and 7.6% of the participants would take the page number into consideration. In sum, book titles and content were the main reasons for the participants to choose ER materials. The difficulty level and the page number were not that important.
Table 7

**Participants’ Reasons of Selecting ER Materials (N=119)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Graded Reader Selectors</th>
<th>Authentic Books Selectors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The title</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46 (38.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47 (39.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The difficulty level</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17 (14.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pages</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9 (7.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To further investigate with how many percentages of unknown words the participants would enjoy reading, the participants were asked to record the ER materials they finished and also provided the percentage of unknown words in the books they selected. The results were shown in Table 8. A total of 70 participants (58.9%) indicated that they could enjoy reading with less than 10% unknown words and 59 participants (41.1%) with over 10% unknown words. The majority of the participants who chose graded readers could enjoy reading with less than five percent unknown words while more authentic books selectors pointed out that they were comfortable in reading with 6-10% unknown words. Surprisingly, 21% of the participants could keep reading with 11-20% unknown words and even 20 participants (16.8%) even felt comfortable when they read the texts with over 26% unknown words.

Table 8

**Unknown Word Percentages the Participants’ Feel Ok with (N=119)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Graded Reader Selectors</th>
<th>Authentic Book Selectors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5%</td>
<td>31 (44.8%)</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
<td>39 (32.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10%</td>
<td>14 (20.2%)</td>
<td>17 (34%)</td>
<td>31 (26.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15%</td>
<td>4 (5.8%)</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
<td>12 (10.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20%</td>
<td>9 (13%)</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>13 (10.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25%</td>
<td>7 (10%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>9 (7.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30%</td>
<td>5 (7.2%)</td>
<td>5 (10%)</td>
<td>10 (8.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 31%</td>
<td>4 (5.7%)</td>
<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>10 (8.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion and conclusion

The results in the present study show that the vocabulary size of EFL college learners in Taiwan did not appear sufficient because of the poor performance at 3000 WL and 5000 WL. 25% and 95% of the participants performed badly at 3000 WL and 5000 WL, respectively. The results of poor performance on vocabulary test suggest the participants with ten-year English study still do not have an ample vocabulary size. Although high school English education in Taiwan emphasizes the importance of 1000 vocabulary level to 6000 vocabulary level, it seems that these high school graduates did not really acquire sufficient vocabulary they needed before graduated from high school. Thus, it is necessary to reconsider the effectiveness of high school English instruction, especially vocabulary instruction in Taiwan. According to Nation (1990) and Laufer (1992, 1997), achieving at least the 3000 word level is required for efficient reading; thus, 25% of the participants with poor performance at 3000 WL might encounter difficulty when they try to participate in pleasure reading. With weak score at 5000 WL, 95% of the participants, freshmen in English Department, could have trouble in understanding academic texts, as Hirsh and Nation (1992) claimed. Nevertheless, in the present study, although the participants did not possess ample vocabulary size for comprehending authentic texts, 46 students with weak scores at 5000 word level still choose authentic ones instead of graded readers. These findings suggest that EFL learners’ vocabulary size might not be a crucial factor affecting their selection of ER materials and the participants with poor vocabulary size would like to try reading authentic fictions. As Lien (2010) indicates EFL college learners seem to prefer authentic books to graded readers as “adult EFL learners might be more captivated by authentic fiction or non-fiction with complicated plots or concepts” even though “reading authentic books are more difficult and challenging” (p. 203).

In addition to the EFL learners’ vocabulary size, the present study investigated the correlation between the learners’ vocabulary size and their selection for ER materials. The findings reveal that there is a correlation between the participants’ vocabulary size and their books selection to some degree, especially at 3000 word level and in overall performance. However, the participants who chose to read authentic books indeed outperformed those who choose graded readers. Generally, those with bigger vocabulary size might prefer authentic books to graded readers. They might be more confident in choosing authentic books than those participants with a poor vocabulary size.
The questionnaire in the present study investigated the participants’ perceptions of ER and the results showed that most of the participants enjoyed ER. Specifically, the majority of students who do not have an ample vocabulary knowledge still enjoy ER. Accordingly, ER would be a great medium for students with small vocabulary size to motivate their interests and broaden their vision in English reading. Concerning the reasons of their selection of ER materials, title and the content are the students’ primary considerations in either choosing graded readers or authentic books. The results are in line with the importance of content for adult EFL learners while choosing ER materials in Lien (2010). Since the students regard the importance of content, they seem willingly to tolerate the unknown words occurring in reading texts. Half of the participants were comfortable in reading with less than 10% of unknown words and two-fifths of them feel comfortable with more than 10% of unknown words. The outcome reinforces these findings in the present study, which the participants with poor vocabulary size still choosing authentic books and enjoying extensive reading as well. Nevertheless, the result rejects the claims that EFL learners at tertiary level need to comprehend about 95% of the words in a text in order to read extensively (Laufer, 1992; Liu & Nation, 1985; Nation, 2006), to be able to read for pleasure with 98% text coverage (Hu & Nation, 2000) and to be capable to understand academic text with estimate 98% text coverage (Schmitt et al., 2011). However, the results in the present study show that EFL learners at tertiary level with more mature minds and inferring skills might be able to enjoy extensive reading even though they do not have an ample vocabulary size.

Extensive reading has been employed in reading class over decades and the majority of studies on extensive reading emphasize benefits of implementing graded readers in ER. However, EFL college learners might not enjoy graded readers for the simplification of content and language. The present study has scrutinized the vocabulary size of Taiwanese college learners in relation to their selection of ER materials. The findings seem to indicate the insufficiency of vocabulary size of Taiwanese college learners who have studied English over ten years. This result raises two issues regarding the effectiveness of English language instruction in increasing the students’ vocabulary size and whether vocabulary size is important in reading instruction. Since another finding in the present study is that EFL learners even with poor vocabulary size enjoy reading extensively very much and possess positive attitudes towards reading, it seems vocabulary size does not really play an important role in their pleasure reading. On the other hand, the study offers EFL teachers an alternative way of implementing ER in language classroom. Adult EFL learners do prefer authentic texts.
to graded readers for authentic books raise readers’ motivation and the complex plot can keep them reading. Moreover, in the ER classroom, the freedom of choosing graded readers or authentic books allows the participants to think of their needs and make them become more active learners as the results showed that the participants do enjoy ER, even though they choose to read authentic texts that are more difficult for them and far above their reading proficiency level. That is why they can enjoy reading and feel comfortable with high a percentage of unknown words in reading texts.

The findings in the present study provide English instructors ideas about vocabulary size and extensive reading. Vocabulary size seems not to be crucial in reading but reading materials are the key for students to enjoy extensive reading. It might be not so important to give intensive reading instruction in class always but it is more significant to give students some freedom to choose reading materials and enjoy reading.
References


English Language Teaching.


Young Second Language Learners’ Competence and Affective Self-concept

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Abstract
Recent research has distinguished between the competence and affective components of self-concept. Young learners of English as a second language (L2) in Hong Kong (N = 110) completed survey items on both the competence and affective components and their L2 skills. In support of the domain specificity of self-concept, both components were associated with L2-related variables but not with other academic areas. Analyses of variance found significant effects of both components on classwork and homework. The main effect of competence was significant for reading, writing and speaking whereas the main effect of affective was significant for writing, speaking, and listening. Results support the importance of both components of self-concept but also imply some subtly differential effects on young L2 learners.

Keywords: L2; self-concept; elementary education; language

Introduction

Understanding students’ self-concept has captured the attention of both educators and researchers over extended periods of time. Self-concept can be defined as one’s perception of themselves which is formed through experiences with the environment (Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976). Educators have been especially keen to explore students’ self-concept in the academic arena, that is, students’ academic self-concept. This widespread attention is indeed warranted as students’ academic self-concept has a direct impact on the way students act and engage with activities in the classroom (Paris, Yeung, Wong & Luo, 2012).

The Importance of Academic Self-concept

Facilitating academic self-concept is essential because self-concept is an important educational outcome by itself and also an important factor that contributes to other valued educational outcomes (Craven & Marsh, 2008; Craven, Marsh, & Burnett, 2003; Craven & Yeung, 2008). Numerous studies have shown positive relations between academic self-concept and academic achievement (e.g., Guay, Marsh, & Boivin, 2003; Marsh & Craven, 2005, 2006; Marsh & Yeung, 1997a). That is, self-concept has significant positive effects on subsequent academic achievement whereas prior academic achievement also has significant positive effects on subsequent academic self-concept. Importantly, academic self-concept and achievement
share mutually reciprocal relations (Marsh & Martin, 2011). These reciprocal relations were also found to be very domain specific, such that social self-concept and social skills reinforce each other whereas academic self-concept and academic skills reinforce each other (Craven et al., 2003; Craven & Yeung, 2008). Academic self-concept has drawn the attention of researchers and educators because of its particular strength in predicting achievement outcomes and due to its potential for sustaining long-term benefits of skill-enhancement interventions. For example, when students experience success learning L2, their self-concept in this area is enhanced. Then, when a positive L2 self-concept is held, greater success is achieved in learning L2. As such, L2 self-concept plays a critical role in ensuring that success in learning L2 is sustained.

**Emerging Recognition of L2 Self-concept**

Throughout the world, learning English as a foreign language has received an upsurge of popularity, placing second language acquisition high on the educational agenda (Hu, 2007). Examining second language acquisition is particularly relevant in a Hong Kong context because English is taught to every child as a second language in schools. It is one of the eight key learning areas, which comprises up to 20% of the primary school curriculum (Education Commission, Hong Kong, 2002). As English is one of the official languages in Hong Kong (the other official language being Chinese), it is important for young learners to start learning English effectively from their early years of education.

Research has shown that adults are able to differentiate self-concepts in different language domains. For example, Yeung & Wong (2004) found that teacher self-concepts in Mandarin, Cantonese, and English are very distinct factors that are unrelated to each other. Although recent research with primary and secondary students is now recognizing the role of self-concept, specific self-concept in language domains are not commonly incorporated (e.g. Guglielmi, 2012; Henry, 2010). As a result, it is unclear whether young children also differentiate between L2 and mother tongue self-concepts.

Given the demonstrated reciprocal relations between self-concept and achievement (Marsh & Craven, 2005, 2006), it is important to understand students’ self-concept in the early years in order to optimize their learning experiences and outcomes in English. For our sample of first grade L2 students in the present study, the study of self-concept is significant because it will throw light on practical issues related to the learning and teaching processes of English as a second language. This includes recognizing how L2 self-concept is structured, the capabilities of
young children to report multidimensional L2 self-concept and, most importantly, advice on how to best facilitate the acquisition of L2 with young children.

**Competence and Affective Components in L2 Self-Concept**

Recent research has demonstrated a twofold multidimensional structure of academic self-concept (Arens, Yeung, Craven, & Hasselhorn, 2012; Marsh, Craven, & Debus, 1999). Empirical evidence supports the separation of two major components of self-concept (competence, affect) within specific academic domains (e.g., language, math). That is, students can separate their self-perceptions between English and math and can distinguish between how good they are in English and how much they like learning English. This line of research, however, has focused primarily on the self-concepts of students in their preadolescent years and beyond, and considered only a limited number of learning areas. Therefore, it remains unclear whether this twofold multidimensional structure of self-concept (competence, affect) also applies to younger children (e.g., first graders) and to self-concept in second language. Although recent research clearly identifies two major components of self-concept, there is a profound emphasis on the competence component focusing on how well students think they do in academic work, and an apparent disregard for investigating the affective component (Anderman & Midgley, 1997; Harter, 1985; Marsh, Trautewein, Lüdtke, Köller & Baument, 2005; Marsh and Yeung, 1997a; Skaalvik & Rankin, 1995). As such, it is particularly unclear whether the affective component is as domain specific as the competence component shown in the literature.

Based on recent research that has distinguished between the competence and affective components of self-concept (Arens et al., 2012; Marsh et al., 1999), we further assume that L2 self-concept would comprise these two components. Chapman and Tunmer (1995) found higher correlations between students’ competence perceptions in reading and attitude toward reading for grade 1 students than for students in grades 2 and 3. Hence, there is some evidence that grade 1 students seemed to be less able to differentiate between the competence and affective components of academic self-concept. However, recent studies on the competence-affect separation of academic self-concept have only considered verbal self-perceptions related to students’ native language (i.e., German for German students in the study of Arens et al. (2012)) or reading (in the studies of Chapman and Tunmer (1995) and Marsh et al., (1999)). It has thus remained unresolved whether the competence-affect separation of academic self-concept also pertains to first grade students’ self-concept related to a foreign language (e.g., English for Hong Kong students in the present study).
L2 Self-Concepts’ impact on L2 learning processes

Previous self-concept research has extensively demonstrated the facilitative effects of students’ academic self-concept on academic achievement (Marsh & Craven, 2005, 2006; Marsh & Yeung, 1997a) and learning behavior including attribution of success and failure (Marsh, 1984) or coursework selection (Marsh & Yeung, 1997b). However, to date no study has examined the differential effects of the competence and affective components of children’s L2 learning processes. Given the found separation between competence and affective components of academic self-concept (Arens et al., 2012; Marsh et al., 1999), these two components may yield differential relations to outcome variables. Arens et al. (2012) demonstrated higher relations between the competence component of academic self-concept and students’ achievement (i.e., school grades) compared to the relations of the affective component. In contrast, the affective component of academic self-concept was found to be more predictive for students’ view of math being important and students’ course enrollment intentions in math (Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990). In addition, Nagy, Trautwein, Baumert, Köller, and Garrett (2006) found that students’ intrinsic value influenced students’ course enrollment above and beyond the impact of self-concept. Yeung et al. (2010) demonstrated that students’ interest but not students’ perception of competence in physics had a significant impact on students’ aspiration to pursue physics in the future. Hence, it could be assumed that the affective component of academic self-concept might facilitate a student’s approach to learning and learning processes more so than the competence component. This assumption, however, has remained untested for young children learning L2.

Research Questions

The present study attempted to answer the following questions concerning L2 self-concept of Hong Kong students attending the first grade:

RQ1. Are young learners such as first graders able to distinguish between the competence and affective components of self-concept in L2?

RQ2. Are they able to distinguish between self-concept in L2 and self-concept in other academic domains?
RQ3. Do the competence and affective components of L2 self-concepts relate differently to variables reflecting the L2 learning process?

Method

Participants

The participants were 110 Primary one students (i.e., first grade students; aged about 6 years) in a Hong Kong school (56% male; 44% female). Their mother tongue was Cantonese, a major Chinese language spoken by most (over 90%) of the Hong Kong population. In Hong Kong primary schools, English is taught as one of four major academic areas (English, Chinese, math, and general studies). In the participating school, there were seven English lessons (40 minutes each) out of a total of 40 lessons in each week. Like most primary schools in Hong Kong, the other curriculum areas were taught in Chinese. University ethics procedures were followed and consent was obtained before the students completed the survey.

Data Collection Instruments

A total of 20 items were used in the survey (see Appendix). The self-concept measure was adapted from Marsh, Craven, and Debus (1999) where they differentiated between competence and affective components (also see Russell, Bornholt, & Ouvrier, 2002). Marsh et al. (1999) reported reasonable reliabilities for both the competence (alpha=.64-.85) and affective measures (alpha=.78-.90), but found that reliability estimates were increasingly higher for older children. The alpha reliability estimate for each of the scales utilized in the current study is acceptable (see the results section). One item asked the students how good they believed they were in English (the competence component) and another item asked how much they liked English (the affective component). Six items asked how much they liked English classwork and five items were related to English homework. The items related to students’ English classwork and homework were included in order to assess students’ approach to learning (i.e., representing two distinct learning processes). If analyses could demonstrate that they are two distinct and reliable factors, the measures could be used to determine the relationship they have with the competence and affective components of L2 self-concept (see the results section). Four items asked how much students liked the four language skills in English—reading, writing, speaking, and listening to their teachers.
speaking English. Finally, three items asked how much the students liked the other key learning areas in the primary school (i.e., Chinese, math, and general studies). The class teacher read each item aloud in Cantonese and the students responded to each item on a 4-point scale. To minimize the cognitive demand on young children responding to the survey items, we adopted the approach of Russell et al. (2002) using pictures of human faces (Figure 1) to denote a range of responses (1=very low, 2=low, 3=high, and 4=very high).

Figure 1
Student responses on a 4-point scale

Note: Coding 4=very high, 3=high, 2=low, 1=very low.

Data Analysis

Preliminary analysis included alpha estimates of internal consistency for the classwork and homework factors, which had multiple indicators (i.e., 11 items). Principal component analysis was conducted with the 11 items in order to test whether the two learning process factors (liking of homework and classwork) would be extracted. To the extent that the two factors were established, the scores of the items for each factor were averaged to form a factor score for subsequent analyses.

To answer RQ1, we first examined the correlation between Competence and Affect. A reasonably low correlation between the two components will reflect that the students can clearly distinguish between them. This is also a requisite for treating the two components as separate independent variables in subsequent analysis. To answer RQ2 and RQ3, a series of 2 Competence (high vs. low) x 2 Affect (high vs. low) analyses of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The dependent variables included the liking of English classwork, English homework, the four English language skills, and the four major academic areas of the primary curriculum.
Results

Preliminary Analysis

Principal components analysis conducted with 11 items (for classwork and homework) with varimax rotation yielded two distinct factors as expected with eigenvalues of 4.71 and 1.38 respectively, explaining 55.3% of total variance. The factor loadings were good, ranging from .51 to .82. They were .51, .75, .75, .57, .52, and .77 for Classwork, and .82, .69, .81, .71, and .68 for Homework. The alpha reliability estimate for each of the scales was also acceptable ($\alpha = .78$ and .82, respectively). The scale scores of these factors were used in subsequent analyses. The means and standard deviations for the variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations (SD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Competence</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Affect</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Chinese</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Mathematics</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of General Studies</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Classwork</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Homework</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Writing</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Speaking</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Reading</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of L2 Listening</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $N = 110$. Students responded to the items on a 4-point scale (1 = very low; 4 = very high; see Figure 1). Higher scores reflected more favorable responses.
Separation of the Competence and Affective Components

The correlations among the variables are presented in Table 2. In examining the correlation between Competence and Affect, a reasonably low correlation was found between the two components \((r = .38)\), providing a clear answer to RQ1 that the competence and affective components were clearly distinguishable from each other. Thus subsequent analyses were conducted with these two components treated as two distinct factors in ANOVAs.

The scores for the competence and affective factors were used to categorize the students into groups. Those students who scored at or higher than the mean score for Competence \((M = 2.92, \text{SD} = 1.08)\) were categorized as high whereas those who scored lower than the mean were categorized as low in Competence. Those who scored at or higher than the mean score for Affect \((M = 3.14, \text{SD} = 0.97)\) were categorized as high whereas those who scored lower than the mean were categorized as low in the affective component. As a result, four groups were established: (a) high competence–high affect \((n = 42)\), (b) high competence–low affect \((n = 30)\), (c) low competence–high affect \((n = 8)\), and (d) low competence–low affect \((n = 30)\).

Table 2

Correlations Among Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L2 Comp</th>
<th>L2 Affect</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>General Studies</th>
<th>Classwork</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Affect</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Chinese</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Math</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of General Studies</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.49*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Classwork</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Homework</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Reading</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Listening</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domain Specificity of L2 Self-concept

To test the domain specificity of L2 self-concept, ANOVAs were conducted with Competence (high-low) and Affect (high-low) as independent variables. The means and standard deviations of the dependent variables in four groups are presented in Tables 3 to 5. For affect toward three non-English curriculum areas (Chinese, math, and general studies) as dependent variables (Table 3), the ANOVA found that neither the effect of Competency nor Affect was significant, $F$s(1, 106) = 0.39 and 3.88, $MSE = 0.81$ for Chinese, $F$s(1, 106) = 2.40 and 1.22, $MSE = 0.53$ for math, and $F$s(1, 106) = 0.15 and 0.00, $MSE = 0.50$ for general studies, respectively. These results support the domain specificity of L2 self-concept. That is, liking of L2 is clearly different from liking Chinese, or math, or general studies. Hence, in response to RQ2, first graders were able to distinguish between self-concept in L2 and in other academic domains.

Table 3
*Means, (Standard Deviations), and ANOVA Results: Domain Specificity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Univariate F-values ($\eta^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High competence</td>
<td>Low competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.55 (0.89)</td>
<td>3.88 (0.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>3.33 (0.80)</td>
<td>3.27 (1.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.88 (0.40)</td>
<td>3.63 (0.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>3.70 (0.75)</td>
<td>3.73 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Studies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.76 (0.53)</td>
<td>3.50 (1.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>3.57 (0.82)</td>
<td>3.70 (0.70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 110 (ns for high competency-high affect = 42, low competency-high affect = 8, high competency-low affect = 30, low competency-low affect = 30). Univariate $F$-statistics have a (1, 106 df).*
Relations of the Affective Component to Learning Processes and L2 Skills

To answer RQ3, ANOVAs were conducted with learning process variables (classwork and homework) and with different L2 skills (L2 reading, writing, speaking, and listening) as dependent variables. For Classwork (Table 4), the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 12.72$, $MSE = 0.39$, $p < .05$ and Affect, $F(1, 106) = 6.25$, $MSE = 0.39$, $p < .05$. The Competence x Affect interaction effect was not statistically significant. Similarly, for the factor of Homework (Table 4), the ANOVA also found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 12.14$, $MSE = 0.48$, $p < .05$ and Affect, $F(1, 106) = 8.99$, $MSE = 0.48$, $p < .05$. The Competence x Affect interaction effect was again not statistically significant. The results indicate that both components of self-concept (competency and affect in English) were associated with both English classwork and homework.

Table 4

*Means, (Standard Deviations), and ANOVA Results: Processes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classwork</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Univariate F-values ($\eta^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High competence</td>
<td>Low competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.58 (0.61)</td>
<td>3.30 (0.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>3.15 (0.53)</td>
<td>2.70 (0.70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Univariate F-values ($\eta^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High competence</td>
<td>Low competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.60 (0.50)</td>
<td>3.18 (1.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>3.25 (0.66)</td>
<td>2.55 (0.85)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 110 (ns for high competency-high affect = 42, low competency-high affect = 8, high competency-low affect = 30, low competency-low affect = 30). Univariate F-statistics have a (1, 106 df). *p < .05.*

The results of the ANOVA when using the four L2 skills as dependent variables are presented in Table 5. Consistent across the four skills, the Competence x Affect interaction effects were not statistically significant. For the writing skill, the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 8.30$, $MSE = 0.42$, $p < .05$. For the reading skill, the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 10.23$, $MSE = 0.39$, $p < .05$. For the speaking skill, the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 12.34$, $MSE = 0.38$, $p < .05$. For the listening skill, the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, $F(1, 106) = 11.23$, $MSE = 0.41$, $p < .05$.
0.95, \( p < .05 \) and Affect, \( F(1, 106) = 10.08, \text{MSE} = 0.95, \ p < .05 \). Similarly, for the speaking skill, the ANOVA found statistically significant main effects of both Competence, \( F(1, 106) = 11.08, \text{MSE} = 0.90, \ p < .05 \) and Affect, \( F(1, 106) = 23.09, \text{MSE} = 0.90, \ p < .001 \). These results indicate that both the competence and affect components of English L2 self-concept were associated with English writing and speaking skills. However, for the reading skill (Table 5), the ANOVA found a statistically significant main effect of Competence only, \( F(1, 106) = 28.11, \text{MSE} = 0.73, \ p < .05 \). In contrast, for the listening skill (Table 5), the ANOVA found a statistically significant main effect of Affect only, \( F(1, 106) = 17.87, \text{MSE} = 0.95, \ p < .001 \).
Table 5

Means, (Standard Deviations), and ANOVA Results: Skills Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Univariate F-values ($\eta^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High competence</td>
<td>Low competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High affect</td>
<td>3.57 (0.67)</td>
<td>3.00 (1.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low affect</td>
<td>2.93 (1.05)</td>
<td>2.20 (1.13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Speaking |
|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|
|         | High competence | Low competence | Competence | Affect | Competence x Affect |
|         |                                                                 |
| High affect | 3.69 (0.68) | 3.13 (1.36) | 11.08* | 23.09** | 0.58 |
| Low affect  | 2.80 (1.16) | 1.90 (0.92) | (.09) | (.18) | (.01) |

| Reading |
|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|
|         | High competence | Low competence | Competence | Affect | Competence x Affect |
|         |                                                                 |
| High affect | 3.64 (0.69) | 2.88 (1.13) | 28.11** | 3.28 | 2.04 |
| Low affect  | 3.57 (0.63) | 2.23 (1.14) | (.21) | (.03) | (.02) |

| Listening |
|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|
|           | High competence | Low competence | Competence | Affect | Competence x Affect |
|           |                                                                 |
| High affect | 3.76 (0.62) | 3.75 (0.71) | 2.71 | 17.87** | 2.54 |
| Low affect  | 3.17 (1.09) | 2.43 (1.28) | (.02) | (.14) | (.02) |

Note: $N = 110$ (ns for high competency-high affect = 42, low competency-high affect = 8, high competency-low affect = 30, low competency-low affect = 30). Univariate $F$-statistics have a (1, 106 df). *$p < .05$. **$p < .001$.

In sum, to answer RQ3, the relations of the competence and affective components of L2 self-concept are found to be similar to some variables (i.e., L2 homework and classwork, L2 Writing and Speaking); but different to other variables as Competence but not Affect was found to impact upon L2 reading skills and Affect but not Competence
demonstrated effects on students’ L2 writing skills. However, in general, when the outcome variables are L2-related, either the competence or the affective component of L2 self-concept, if not both, would have significant relations to them.

Discussion

Given the reciprocal relationship shared between academic self-concept and academic achievement (Marsh & Martin, 2011), it is helpful to investigate students’ L2 self-concepts in order to strengthen the way in which educators can boost achievement in L2 learning. The present study not only provides valuable advice to L2 educators, but also provides insight into the developmental capacity of young L2 learners.

The present study examined three unresolved research questions regarding the twofold multidimensional structure of English L2 self-concept of young Hong Kong students. The first question addresses whether young students attending the first grade are able to differentiate between the competence and affective components of L2 self-concept. As the competence and affective components were found to have a low correlation in this study, the results demonstrated that even first graders differentiate between these two components of L2 self-concept. This result challenges the findings of Chapman and Tunmer (1995) which implicated a higher association between the competence and affective components of academic self-concept facets. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that the competence-affect separation can be even applied to L2 self-concept. Thus, the competence-affect separation of academic self-concept seems to be generalizable to other self-concept facets in addition to reading and native language self-concepts as evidenced in previous research (Arens et al., 2012; Marsh et al., 1999). Students’ liking of L2 had no effect on students’ liking of other curriculum domains (i.e., Chinese, math, and general studies).

In response to research question two, the results demonstrate that young L2 learners are able to differentiate between self-concepts for different language domains (i.e., Chinese and English; see: Yeung & Wong, 2004). Given the found distinctiveness between students’ liking of English L2 and Chinese, students seem to establish separate affect perceptions for each language instead of a global factor of liking languages (i.e., L2 and Chinese in general). In sum, the present study provided empirical support for the twofold multidimensionality of L2 self-concept as L2 self-concept was found to be (1) domain-specific, hence, different from self-concepts related to other curriculum
domains, and (2) distinguishable into competence and affective components. With these results, this study shows that even young children are able to differentiate between various dimensions of self-concept. Thus, this study replicates the findings of Marsh, Ellis, and Craven (2002) who attest that young students’ self-concept is more differentiated than it was originally assumed. The findings of this study highlight the capacity of young children to distinguish between various self-concepts. This ability does not only pertain to the separation between self-concept domains (i.e., between English L2, math, Chinese, and general studies self-concepts) but extends to the separation within the L2 self-concept domain (i.e., between competence and affect L2 self-concept).

The third research question of this study focused on the effects of competence and affective self-concept on a broad set of dependent variables. This line of inquiry not only assists in determining the distinctiveness of the competence and affective components, but offers direct advice on what facilitates L2 skills and learning processes best – how well students feel they achieve in L2, or how much they like learning L2. Both components of self-concept (competency and affect in L2 English) were associated with both English classwork and homework. Hence, to facilitate both learning processes, both components of L2 self-concept should be emphasized. However, evidence shows that there may be some subtle differences between the effects of the competence and affective components of L2 self-concept on the subdomains of L2 learning. The competence and affective components of L2 self-concept were both associated with the specific L2 English skills of writing and speaking. However, whether the learners like to listen to their teacher speak in English is only influenced by their liking of the language (affect) while students’ reading skill was associated with their perception of competence in English (competence) but not with how much they liked English. This complex pattern of associations between the affective component of L2 self-concept and students’ liking of L2 skills support the twofold multidimensional structure of L2 self-concept (i.e., its differentiation into Competence and Affect).

**Shortcomings**

While interpreting the study findings, several shortcomings should be recognized. First, the competence component and the affective component of students’ L2 self-concept as well as students’ liking of the four L2 skills and curriculum domains were
assessed by single items which might restrict the reliability and validity of the assessment. As this study was only cross-sectional, we could not resolve the issue of causal relations between the measured factors. Given the found reciprocal relations between self-concept and achievement (Marsh & Craven, 2005, 2006), it would be interesting to investigate whether students’ sense of L2 competence, their liking of L2 learning processes (classwork, homework) and L2 skills (writing, reading, speaking, listening) mutually reinforce each other.

Practical Implications

The current findings throw light on the characteristics of young L2 learners’ self-concept. Knowledge about the characteristics of the L2 self-concept of young students enables researchers and educators to establish ways to enhance what might in turn lead to desirable outcomes in terms of L2 achievement and approach to learning. The study has important implications for L2 teaching and learning especially at the very early stages of schooling.

The findings of the current study enhance our knowledge about the way the self-concepts of young children are organized, and indeed, it appears that traditionally the capacity of young children may have been underestimated (e.g. Chapman & Tunmer, 1995). The findings, most importantly, have practical application to our endeavor to promote second language acquisition in Hong Kong, and indeed around the world.

The reciprocal relationship between self-concept and achievement is well documented. With this in mind, we argue that to optimise young learner’s success in L2 acquisition, educators need to do more than focus on skill development and content. Educators must include the enhancement of students’ L2 self-concept as a key cornerstone of their programs in order to boost and sustain L2 achievement.

Educators are keen to foster the learning processes adopted by L2 learners, including their participation in classwork and homework. The current study advocates that both affective and competence components of self-concept should be emphasized to achieve this goal. Importantly, the affective component of self-concept (i.e., how much students like learning L2) should not be ignored. In Hong Kong where English is often learned for its pragmatic values as an asset for academic and career advancement, the affective aspect of learning is often neglected in the teaching and learning process. Learners’
feeling towards the language is usually not the primary concern of course designers or teachers as compared to their competency in the language. However, as shown in this study, the affective component of L2 self-concept has substantial effects on students’ liking of learning processes and liking of English skills either along with the competence component or alone. Hence, researchers and practitioners should find effective ways to successfully promote students’ liking of L2 in order to encourage and sustain desirable learning outcomes.

References


Post-Intensive Instruction Effects on L2 English Lexical Development

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Bioprofile

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Abstract

Prior studies have shown that intensive English preparatory programs have a definite positive impact on students’ susceptibility to L2-English semantic and phonological masked priming effects, therefore indicating the formation of new, more efficient neural connections to lexical items, and bringing L2 lexical response more on-par with L1 performance. Building upon this evidence, this study documents the effects of an L2 English-speaking environment – without explicit English language skill instruction – on the continuing development of semantic and phonological priming susceptibility. The L2 environment effects are quantified and contrasted with the effects of explicit, intensive English language instruction.

In this study, students who had previously participated in a study to measure increases in word priming susceptibility via participating in an intensive English preparatory program are retested a year later while enrolled in general coursework at an English-medium undergraduate degree program in Japan. The relative facilitation effects are compared with the prior test results attained immediately following the intensive instructional period. The changes in reading behavior and relative prime susceptibility are attributed to an “environment effect” of L2 medium content instruction. The results indicate that, while reading speed remains near constant, the subjects’ susceptibility to phonological semantic
masked priming effects diminished significantly, suggesting that environmental input from L2-medium content classes may be insufficient to maintain the lexical and non-lexical pathway development attained during intensive preparatory programs.

**Keywords:** Word Priming, Semantic, Phonetic, TOEFL, EAP, Japan

**Introduction**

In the wake of the changing dynamics of a globalized economy, governments in East Asia have been scrambling to adapt their national educational systems to better emphasize foreign language communication skills. Governments from Thailand to China and Japan have issued decrees enshrining communicative competency as the central focus of L2 coursework in the public educational sphere (Jarvis, & Atsilarat, 2004). In response to this trend, both private (though often with government financial assistance) and public tertiary educational markets have responded in a variety of countries in the region by producing a new wave of English-medium tertiary institutions and degree programs. These institutions and programs are usually founded with an expressed purpose of producing graduates who are prepared to compete in a globalized marketplace, and the language skills they develop through taking all content coursework in English can make them prime candidates on the job market. For the students who attend such programs or schools, motivations vary, but often the English-language environment provided at these institutions offer benefits of language acquisition which put them more on par with studying abroad in English-speaking countries – but without visa hassles, and while paying native/resident tuition rates. Amongst the various English-medium institutions in the region, one finds both older, historical institutions such as Japan’s International Christian University, and newer institutions such as Akita International University (Japan), University of Nottingham Ningbo (China), Tan Tao University (Vietnam), and Xing Wei College (China). Amongst the schools which offer degree programs taught entirely in English are Waseda University (Japan), Ho Chi Minh International University (Vietnam), and Asian Pacific International University (Thailand).

One of the challenges of offering English-medium programs within non-English-speaking countries, even when the admissions process admits only top-level students of English language, is that most of the matriculated students will not yet have reached the requisite academic English proficiency to benefit from the program. Thus, it is not altogether
surprising that a common feature to most English-medium institutions in East Asia is a foundations development program tasked with bringing students’ L2 English abilities up to such a level as to be able to actively participate – and learn from – a wide variety of content coursework taught in the L2. These programs vary in length from school to school, with the time frame usually being dependent on the relative proficiency levels of individual entering students. Common time frames for these intensive programs range from one semester to two years. Williams (2012), in a pre/post test design showed that such programs, even in a single semester, were effective in increasing lexical recall efficiency, as measured by susceptibility to semantic and phonological priming effects in a lexical recognition task. Left unanswered, however, was what would happen to students’ lexical access abilities once they left such intensive programs and began studying content course material.

**Vocabulary Access in Reading**

The *dual route model* or ‘standard’ model (Patterson & Morton, 1985) of reading is based on Coltheart’s (1978) theory that reading – in any language – involves both lexical and non-lexical processes (mediated by phonology), as well as Forster’s *Search Model* (1976), envisioning two parallel lexical pathways conducting simultaneous searches within the mental lexicon when presented with any written word. The dual route model stipulates that visual word recognition works by triggering a mental race for recognition between a lexical pathway and a non-lexical pathway. The first route to match the received input with a word-entry in the lexicon will trigger recognition. As the lexical route allows for word knowledge without phonological access, it can be characterized as a direct means of semantic access. Orthographic clues to word identity also help with word recognition; in languages employing alphabets, we are assumed to partly recognize words based upon shape (Coltheart et al., 2001), which explains why we have considerably more difficulty reading text which has been manipulated in such ways as alternating case (e.g., “It’S nOt So EaSy To ReAd WhEn I wRiTe ThIs WaY, iS iT?” – Akamatsu, 2005). The non-lexical route, by contrast, examines the sound to symbol correspondence, and uses phonological information to decipher words (e.g., “cat” is deciphered by recognition that the letters represent the phonemes /k/, /æ/, and /t/, respectively). Any proponent, teacher, or learner of Phonics should be well aware of how the principle works in alphabets.


**Priming Studies**

A considerable body of evidence has been amassed demonstrating that both lexical and non-lexical routes are engaged in reading tasks. In particular, priming paradigms have been used to show that semantic and phonological information can effectively facilitate or impede lexical access speed, thereby supporting the idea of a dual route search. Neely (1977) found semantic priming facilitation effects when the prime was visible for 250ms. Perea and Rosa (2002), found semantic priming at 66ms of prime visibility, and Bodner and Masson (2003) found effects with prime visibility of a mere 43ms. Phonological priming likewise has a large body of supporting research. Humphreys, Evett, and Taylor (1982) found strong facilitation effects with homophonous primes. Ferrand and Grainger (1992, 1993) found that phonological prime facilitation consistently emerged around 45-50ms and above. The evidence has been so robust as to lead many, such as Lukatela et al. (1993) and Van Orden, Pennington, & Stone (1990), to conclude that it is undeniable that lexical access can be achieved through use of phonological mediation.

**The Study Background**

Given the robust evidence that reading is largely mediated by semantic and phonological knowledge, and that these effects can be measured via priming paradigms, this can become an important means of objectively measuring the improvement in L2 reading proficiency. Instead of merely measuring vocabulary size, such techniques can measure the relative speed with which learners access lexical information. Moreover, semantic and phonological priming paradigms allow us to measure the emergence and development of those particular routes to lexical access. Such information is invaluable to teachers in that it will allow them to target their instruction on reading techniques and vocabulary study in order to assist L2 learners in attaining more L1-reader-like processing abilities. By helping readers to fully utilize all paths to reading comprehension, students are set upon a path to greater learning autonomy.

Williams (2012), in a study on Japanese English learners’ development of lexical and non-lexical routes probed their susceptibility to semantic and phonological priming effects in a lexical decision task. The study was designed to measure how an L2 English foundations course at an English-medium university in Japan affected learners’ development and
efficiency in employing the lexical and non-lexical routes in L2 reading tasks. By measuring semantic and phonological priming effects of subjects both before and after one semester of intensive English training, a snapshot emerged of the two paths in development. The study showed that students’ processing times for lexical recognition had improved across the board after the instructional period. Furthermore, the students developed facilitation effects with phonological primes after the intensive instruction period, which they had not displayed previously. Semantic primes, prior to the intensive training period, were producing a statistically significant delaying effect on target word recognition. After the semester of intensive instruction, the amount of delay had decreased to the point of statistical insignificance; however, the students were still not showing any facilitation effects with semantic primes. This seemed to indicate that lexical pathway development was immature yet, and stood in marked contrast with L1 processing patterns. Left unanswered, however, was whether or not students would continue to improve lexical route use after they finished the intensive language coursework and moved into content courses. Do content courses provide enough stimulation to continue increasing the efficiency of lexical retrieval processes in reading tasks, or does the lack of explicit focus on reading skills cause lexical access skills (and, more generally, vocabulary knowledge) to atrophy? The following study was designed to answer these questions.

The Current Study

This following research study was designed as a follow-up to Williams (2012), and used the same test subjects and a similar test design.

Subjects: Of the thirty freshmen students from Akita International University who were recruited for the 2012 study, only 19 could be located and recruited for this follow-up study. Ten were female and 9 were male. All subjects were Japanese L1 and had normal or corrected-to-normal vision (i.e., wearing glasses or contact lenses). The test was administered approximately slightly less than 14 months after the post-test from the 2012 study. Practically speaking, this meant that – depending upon individual students’ language proficiency level upon entry to the university (and their subsequent placement in level 1-3 in the foundations course), they had been enrolled in content (i.e. non-language-specific) coursework for at least 1 full semester, and in most cases, for 2 semesters prior to participating in the current study. This study did not control for whether or not students had taken courses during the shortened
winter term, so some subjects essentially had undertaken up to 3 semesters (2 regular semesters + 1 intensive, half-time semester) of intervening content coursework between tests. While this does introduce the possibility of a confounding factor, it introduces no more variability than that which already existed from differences in the number of courses students take each semester, and given the small size of the institution, it would be practically impossible to control for course input in absolute terms.

Materials: The post-test, which the students had taken one year earlier was adapted (by changing filler words/control category words) and reused. The test had 150 test items in a masked priming paradigm lexical decision design. The test was created and administered using DMDX software (Forster & Forster, 2003). Half of the items on the test were real English words taken from materials used in the standard curriculum of the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program at Akita International University, and the other half were non-words created by modifying existing vocabulary from the same curricular source. All non-words were constructed in such a way as to follow the rules of English letter/phoneme collocation, so as to not allow students to easily dismiss items due to orthographic illegality (e.g., “fglat” would not have been used, but “tabur” would be). One third of all items were changed from the prior edition of the test in order to minimize memory effects. Three categories of primes for each real-word target were chosen: 1) Semantic prime, wherein the prime and the target bear a semantic relationship: e.g., doctor / NURSE; 2) Phonological prime, wherein the prime and the target are related phonetically: e.g., loan / BONE; and 3) Control, wherein the prime and target have no immediate relationship (and neither facilitation nor impediment to recognition of the target word would be expected): restore / LABEL. Primes were presented before non-words for consistency, but only words were evaluated for this study (see Appendix 1).

Procedures: Subjects were tested individually in sound-controlled, individualized testing areas. They were tasked with identifying whether the displayed letter-strings were words or not, and were requested to answer (via pushing “yes” or “no” buttons) as quickly as possible. Reaction times were recorded for analysis via the DMDX software. The testing employed a masked priming design with a 50ms prime visibility. Standard counterbalancing of test items was employed. The test took approximately 10 minutes per subject, with one break in the middle, and all testing was completed during the first two weeks of the semester, approximately 14 months after subjects had completed the Posttest in the 2012 study.
Analysis: The reaction times of all subjects were compiled and analyzed according to prime type. In this study, the area of primary interest was analyzing whether there were significant differences in the mean reaction time for recognizing words preceded by semantically related primes and/or phonetically related primes (as compared to the control category). Priming effects of non-words (i.e., “no” answers) were not relevant to this particular study. Then, all mean reaction times would be compared to the reaction times from when the students had just finished the foundations program in order to ascertain whether there was a net gain or reduction in subjects’ susceptibility to priming effects. Any change in results can be ascribed to the effect of content course immersion as compared to the intensive language study curriculum that was analyzed in the Williams (2012) study.

Results

Reaction times were slightly faster overall, compared with the results from the previous year. The results were analyzed according to the individual prime types. The results are described in Table 1.

Table 1

*Reaction times for real word recognition across prime types*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priming Type</th>
<th>Average Reaction time (measured in milliseconds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime semantically related to target</td>
<td>689ms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime phonetically related to target</td>
<td>664ms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (no relation between prime and target)</td>
<td>675ms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to frame the results in direct contrast to the results from the earlier (Williams, 2012) study, the results of the post test from that study are listed in Table 2, alongside the results of this study.
As can be seen, there was a slight decrease in reaction times for semantic primes and the control category, and a very small increase in reaction times in the phonological category. The semantic primes still seem to be delaying target word recognition slightly – while this result did not clear the Alpha level threshold, nevertheless it nears significance: $F1=4.25$, $P<0.056$. It should be kept in mind that one of that Williams (2012) reported that one of the effects of the foundations program was the elimination of a delay effect caused by semantic primes that had appeared across all subjects during the pre-instructional testing. It appears that the subjects have regressed slightly in their productive use of the lexical route during the year that they have been studying content courses instead of undergoing explicit language training.

Given the lower reaction times across the board, phonological primes appear to still be facilitating word recognition, but not to a significant degree this time: $F1=.83$, $P<0.38$. Post-hoc analysis did reveal that real-word phonological primes did significantly increase the error rate with pseudo-words: $F_{sub\ error}=35.39$, $P<0.01$ and $F_{item\ error}=10.79$, $P<0.01$, so it seems that phonological primes are being paid close attention to. In fact, the lack of significant effect for the phonological prime category seems to have less to do with any worsening of ability to productively use the non-lexical route to word recognition than it did with the dramatic overall increase in word recognition speed (i.e., by increasing the speed of reading the control, the significance of the prime effect drops). Still, comparing the two years side-by-side, the total measured priming effect (all types) increased significantly over the previous test: $F1=680.73$, $P<0.01$; $F2=42.04$, $P<0.01$; however, as the phonological priming
didn’t move appreciably, this significant effect was largely driven by the increase in the delay effect caused by the semantic prime.

**General Discussion**

The results raise immediate concerns, as they seem to indicate a general regression from the lexical processing abilities displayed the previous year immediately after the intensive English support coursework. Why did the subjects display susceptibility to phonological priming immediately after the EAP program but not one year later? Why does semantic priming (which still was not facilitating word recognition after the EAP program) start moving back towards delaying word recognition? Are the students’ lexical retrieval abilities declining when they take only content classes (i.e., without explicit language support courses)?

While the average reaction time for phonologically primed items did increase by 3 ms., it is unlikely that they are no longer susceptible to this priming, and in fact the consistently lower response times seem to indicate some facilitation. The lack of significant effect, as stated before, seems to be more because of an improved response time in the control category. This is encouraging, as it indicates that, overall, students are recognizing words faster than they were one year previously; however, at the same time, their relative degree of susceptibility to semantic and phonological priming facilitation haven’t increased in the interim. The increase in error rate driven by phonological priming (a result not found in the previous study) gives some credence to the idea that subjects are still using the non-lexical (phonological) path to word recognition; however any change in susceptibility to priming effects was, in effect, drowned out by the overall increase in processing speed. Further evidence to that effect comes from post-hoc examination of individual scores. There was a rather remarkable “flattening” effect among scores – i.e., the lowest performers from a year ago had made the most gains in word recognition speed across the board, while the highest performers from the prior year had made only modest gains or become slower. While individual performances are not convincing from a statistical standpoint, still the trend seemed clear – great progress was still being made by lower-level learners, but there seems to be a point where the development of lexical connections which would drive priming susceptibility comes to a virtual standstill. In effect, what this would indicate is that, while subjects have become more adept at the mental search strategies required to access lexical
knowledge, the lack of explicit language support instruction has caused lexical connections to atrophy comparably. While students are more efficient at scrolling through the mental lexicon, they may have “decoupled” lexical entries, thus preventing significant facilitation by semantic and/or phonological prime types. An alternative explanation could be that, after the conclusion of explicit language support coursework, students reverted to other, less-efficient-overall, routes to word recognition. Japanese L1 speakers, for instance, read kanji (Chinese characters) in their own language in large part by close attention to orthographic cues. If this L1 reading strategy were over-applied to English reading (an imminently arguable proposition – Williams (2010) for example, argues that such indeed can happen in the case of low-level Chinese learners of English), it could cause the lack of facilitating effect for semantic and phonological primes that we see here; however, this would need to be tested.

**Implications**

The overall picture that we are left with, however, is that environmental effects and subject content courses taught in the L2 seem to have little effect on the continuing development of L2 semantic and phonological priming susceptibility, and thus we can assume that very little development of those lexical access routes is occurring. While the priming susceptibility seems to be frozen in amber, the L2 environment of the English-medium university does seem to be helping students to make modest improvements in their overall lexical access speed – but not at all at the rate nor to the degree seen when the students were engaged in language-specific coursework. This presents a challenge to such English-medium institutions: if they want students to continually increase their language skills, this will necessarily have to involve engaging students at the minute level of lexical archiving in order to allow students to make rich connections between lexical entries, which will ensure smooth retrieval ability, and ultimately, more fluent usage. As environment and content-only coursework do not seem to be having the same positive effect on students’ lexical processing abilities as language-specific coursework, it is incumbent upon universities to maintain specialized language support coursework in the curriculum, even after students successfully complete the foundational programs common to such institutions. Such specialized language courses would enable students to continue to grow their mental networks, and would force students to continue to develop lexical processing skills that may differ significantly from what may be particularly “natural” to their L1 (but may be
inefficient for the L2), and hopefully would be invaluable to them in the eventual attainment of more native-like processing skills.
References


An Alternative Approach – Copying: Can it be as Effective as Summarizing to Improve EFL Learners’ Reading and Writing?

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Abstract

In ESL and EFL teaching, reading and writing are thought of as flip sides of the same coin (Tompkins, 1997), and the importance of teaching them in an integrated manner is emphasized. As a way to develop reading and writing skills in English, copying and summarizing are commonly used strategies in Korea. Although copying alludes to plagiarism in the West, the researcher wanted to know if it has certain linguistic benefits when used only as a tool for language learning. Since copying has usually been assigned for low proficiency level students, and summarizing for higher levels, the researcher sought to explore possible advantages of copying and summarizing for various proficiency levels. This study investigated the copying and summarizing processes of different proficiency level students, their awareness of their own learning and strategy use, and effective ways to improve their reading and writing abilities through copying and summarizing. Sixty EFL students in Korea were engaged in either a copying or summarizing task with high-interest texts. Thereafter, eight students participated in think-aloud interviews. This study revealed that copying and summarizing significantly
contributed to both higher and lower level students in improving specific areas of reading and writing by raising their metacognitive consciousness.

**Keywords:** Copying, Summarizing, Reading and writing, Metacognition, Metacognitive reading and writing strategies

**Introduction**

In the contexts of English as a second (ESL) and foreign language (EFL), reading and writing were taught separately for a long time (Kim, 2007; Tsai, 2006), and the focus was primarily on reading, which includes new vocabulary, grammar explanations, and translation from English into the native language (Lee, 2001; Shin & Ahn, 2006; Song, 2000). However, recent research in second language learning and teaching has been emphasizing the importance of integrating reading and writing “which [share] the common [process] of meaning making” (Kim, 2007, p. 60).

As a way to incorporate reading and writing, copying, as well as summarizing, have been widely used for language learning and teaching in Korea. Here, the meaning of copying is ‘transcribing/scribing an alphabet, word, phrase, sentence, or text only for a language learning purpose’; and the meaning of summarizing is ‘restating the gist of a text without including personal opinions or judgments.’ However, copying has not been considered as an effective exercise for advanced level students, as summarizing is not for low level students. Little research has been done on how different levels of students copy and summarize and how they develop their reading and writing abilities. Some researchers have simply stated what advanced and low level students did when a summarizing task was given (Johns, 1985; Johns & Mayes, 1990; Oh, 2007). No attention has been given to what was going on in low level students’ mind while summarizing and how teachers could help them derive advantages from a summarizing task. As for copying, it was usually linked with stealing someone’s idea especially in the West, equating it with plagiarism. Many researchers considered copying on a continuum toward summarizing and concluded that copying would be an inevitable strategy for low level students which would be used only until they became proficient enough to express their thoughts in their own words (Leki & Carson, 1994; Pennycook, 1996; Roig, 2001; Shi, 2004). No discussion was thus made on how a copying activity should be presented and used to scaffold low level students to move on to an advanced level. Figure 1
shows a line of copying and summarizing continuum supported by literature from a Western viewpoint.

**Figure 1**

*Figure 1: A Line of Copying and Summarizing Continuum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copying</th>
<th>Summarizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Low Proficiency Level</em></td>
<td><em>Advanced Proficiency Level</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Teaches spelling, capitalization, punctuation, vocabulary, and grammar</td>
<td>-Enhances reading comprehension and clarifies meaning and the significance of discourse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the researcher was curious about if copying could be as effective as summarizing when a meaningful and interesting text is given and when learners consciously think about what they are doing, she sought to find specifically what advantages copying could possibly provide by comparing it with summarizing. In addition, the researcher wanted to know if copying and summarizing could benefit both higher and lower proficiency level students. This study will, therefore, focus on different proficiency levels of Korean university students’ reading and writing processes while copying and summarizing, their use of strategies, and their development in reading and writing abilities.

**Literature Review**

*Definition of Copying and its Roles, Perceptions, and Use in English as First (L1), Second (L2), and Foreign Language (FL) Contexts*

Copying is defined as “[writing something] exactly as it is written somewhere else” (“Copying,” 2013a), and it can be replaced by ‘transcribing, reproducing, and imitating’ (“Copying,” 2013b). Even though the necessity of verbal imitation in speaking has been highlighted in children’s language acquisition (Brown, 2000; Fraser et al, 1963), the importance and roles of written imitation, that is, copying in reading and writing has never been discussed in any L1 English research. On the contrary, in ESL and EFL contexts,
particularly in Asia, imitating, repeating, and memorizing texts with authorship are considered common educational methods (Kim, 2004; Pennycook, 1994; Shi, 2006). The popularity of copying practice in language learning in Asia can be attributed to collectivism and the strong influence of Confucianism (Kim, 2004). As traditional Asian societies emphasized respect for authority and elders, group consensus, shared property, and group ownership (Kim, 2004), written texts were used as approved authorities and shared knowledge. It was believed that scholarly people would have the ability to identify not only the words they were using but also where the words came from (Moon, 2002). Thus, the people who devoted themselves to their studies memorized and used famous scholars’ words and expressions in their own writing without referring back to the original texts. This means that copying helped people learn proper syntax and idiomatic expressions. In this approach to scholarship, the act of copying is valued as a deep and semantic processing which is associated with higher retention (Moscovitch & Craik, 1976).

Many researchers (Hopkins & Nettle, 1994; McLaughlin, 1990; Shariati, 2007) note that it is important for language learners to not only be consciously aware of the meaning of the word but also practice using the word appropriately within sentences in order to approach a deeper level of processing. Depth of processing is “a hierarchy of stages through which incoming stimuli are processed [and] are concerned with the extraction of meaning” (Schallert, 1976, p. 622) which is different from shallow or perceptual processing: a preliminary stage which “involve[s] the analysis of physical features” (p. 622). Copying in this sense could be considered on an independent continuum which includes different stages: beginning from a shallow or perceptual level of processing to a deeper level of processing.

In the ESL and EFL contexts, only a couple of research studies on copying can be found. In Porte’s (1995) study, for one, low level students practiced copying a text for a limited time. Through reviewing their copies for errors and mistakes, they became more aware of writing conventions. What they did was copying surface structures. However, the focus of the study was dedicated to the advantages of copying in the correct use of spelling and punctuation, not in the appropriate use of vocabulary or grammar.

Another example is Currie’s (1998) study which focused on a deeper level of copying processing. An ESL college student with a low proficiency level was able to develop her syntactic, vocabulary, and expression fluency through a deeper level of copying. She became aware of contextualized usage of terminologies that were commonly used in her field. She
was able to read a text, find key ideas, make connections of ideas and sentences, and add details specific to her own organization. It can thus be inferred that copying is a developmental and natural feature or survival strategy that is used by developing proficiency level students (Bloch & Chi, 1995; Currie, 1998; Moon, 2002; Shi, 2004).

In Korea, perceptual and deeper levels of copying have been commonly and officially recommended strategies in language teaching. Both the Korean and English curricula suggest copying activities be used with elementary school students to help them learn sound-spelling correspondence, parts of speech, correct use of punctuation, grammar, and idiomatic expressions. No further copying activities for English teaching are recommended or specified beyond sixth grade in the national curriculum. However, Lee (2003) describes the important roles of copying in high school classrooms. In her study, two groups of Korean high school students with low English proficiency were compared. The control group memorized new vocabulary and translated a text whenever learning a new chapter, whereas the experimental group copied new vocabulary in English and a text in both English and Korean. The latter showed much greater improvement in reading, vocabulary, and grammar. However, no sentence/paragraph writing test was given. Also, since other kinds of activities such as dictation, filling in blanks with correct grammatical forms and vocabulary were done in addition to copying activities, it is difficult to determine the pure efficacy of a deeper level of copying. No information was given about copying benefits for advanced level students. Nevertheless, the study suggests that a deeper level of copying can be a useful method for high school students at a low proficiency level.

**Definition of Summarizing and its Roles, Perceptions, and Use in English as L1, L2, and FL Contexts**

Summarizing is defined as an activity of writing “a brief statement that represents the condensation of information accessible to a subject and reflects the gist of the discourse” (Hidi & Anderson, 1986, p. 473). It has been considered an essential study skill required in academic settings since it helps students monitor, insure, and enhance comprehension and recall of texts, facilitate long-term memory, and clarify meaning and important discourse (Guido & Colwell, 1987; Joh, 2000; Oh, 2007).
Newfields (2001) explains two types of summarizing: a word level summarizing (making word level transformations while maintaining the original syntax of sentences) and a deep level summarizing (making deep level transformations and morphological, syntactic, and lexical changes of sentences). The researcher will refer to the former as a shallow or perceptual level of summarizing, and the latter as a deeper level of summarizing. Particularly, the latter was found to be useful in recalling the content of reading material as a post-reading activity (Taylor, 1982) and improving the quality of students’ expository writing (Taylor & Beach, 1984). Summarizing thus could be posited as an independent continuum which includes different stages as copying does: beginning from a shallow or perceptual level to a deeper level of processing.

Much of L1 research has focused on identifying the kinds of factors (e.g. age, language proficiency, length/complexity of texts, and motivation) that influence one to write a good summary (Johnson, 1983; Kirkland & Saunders, 1991; Yang & Shi, 2003). However, most researchers addressed the quality of summarizing rather than its benefits for language development. In Wignograd’s (1984) and Johns’ (1985) studies, it was found that students’ language proficiency level, but not necessarily age, greatly influences their ability to produce summaries of varying quality. In terms of the length/complexity of texts, Hidi and Anderson (1986) maintain that the shorter and simpler the reading text, the less difficulty students will have in summarizing. They state that taking into account text length/complexity with students’ proficiency level is important when giving a summarizing task. Yet, they have not tested how text length/complexity affects students’ performance in summarizing.

In addition to text variables, students’ personal variables such as their confidence, background knowledge, and writing experiences are all considered important for them to write better quality summaries. Yang and Shi (2003) found that the more confident students were, the more familiar with the text they were, and the more summaries or other type of writing tasks they had experienced, the better they did on a summarizing task. However, students’ different proficiency levels and the kinds of advantages that summarizing can bring were not taken into account.

In one EFL context, Korea, a shallow or perceptual level and a deeper level of summarizing have been recommended for L1 and L2 learning. Both English and Korean curricula introduce summarizing activities later than copying activities. The stated purposes of summarizing activities in L1 and L2 teaching are to help students enhance the
understanding of texts, finding main ideas and organize them coherently in their own writing, expand vocabulary and grammar knowledge, and learn sentence structure.

Most research on summarizing has focused on what kinds of factors have caused students to write better summaries, what good and poor summaries looked like, and how different language proficiency level students have summarized. No explicit attention has been given to the usefulness of a shallow or perceptual and a deeper level of summarizing for language development except in one Korean study. Joh (2000) believed that a deeper level of summarizing would have positive effects by helping students expand vocabulary, enhance reading comprehension, and develop the quality of expository writing.

To sum up, there is a need to fill gaps in copying and summarizing research in order to provide better reading and writing instruction guidelines for varying proficiency levels of students in language learning. In this study, the researcher will further propose that copying and summarizing be viewed as two independent continuums as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

*Copying and Summarizing as Independent Continuums*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shallow/Perceptual Level of Copying</th>
<th>Deeper Level of Copying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• focusing on letters/structural elements</td>
<td>• focusing on meaning/semantic components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• writing down the alphabet, spelling of words, and contracted forms of words/sentences focusing on punctuation, word order, and meanings of words</td>
<td>• writing down the full text with understanding of the content and awareness of what is being copied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• short-term retention if no continuous practice and efforts are made</td>
<td>• longer retention if continuous practice of copying and efforts of remembering and using words, expressions, and grammar are made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• can help language learners understand and use writing conventions correctly</td>
<td>• can help language learners understand and use vocabulary, expressions, and grammar correctly and appropriately in their writings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shallow/Perceptual Level of Summarizing</th>
<th>Deeper Level of Summarizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• focusing on sentences separately from the whole text</td>
<td>• focusing on sentences within the whole text with enough understanding of the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• making word level changes and maintaining original syntax of sentences</td>
<td>• making deep level changes, making morphological, syntactic, and lexical changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> Language learners at this level have difficulties with deciding what to include or not into their summaries.</td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> Language learners at this level can specify the main ideas and supporting ideas of a text and decide what to include or exclude in their summaries even though it is not perfect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From this perspective, the following three research questions will be addressed:

1. How does the reading and writing proficiency of different levels of students in the copying and summarizing groups change?
2. What metacognitive reading and writing strategies do different levels of students use, and how and why they use them when copying and summarizing in English?
3. How do various levels of students’ familiarity with the text topics and motivation to read them affect their performance in copying and summarizing? How do they perceive of the copying and summarizing activities?

**Theoretical Framework**

**Metacognitive Perspective of the Reading-Writing Relationships**

Employing a metacognitive perspective of reading-writing relationships as a theoretical framework may have explanatory power to explain the processes of copying and summarizing. Metacognition is simply thinking about thinking (Anderson, 2008; Devine, Railey, & Boshoff, 1993), but more broadly it involves the “ability to think about one’s cognitions [sic] [and knowledge of] how to analyze, to draw conclusions, to learn from, and to put into practice what has been learned” (King, 2003, p. 4).

Flavell (1978) puts emphasis on the first dimension of metacognition, knowledge of cognition, which involves three interacting variables: person, task, and strategy. The person variable encompasses people’s beliefs and understanding of how they learn. The strategy variable involves knowledge of choosing appropriate and effective strategies to achieve various cognitive goals (Devine et al., 1993; Flavell, 1978). The task variable includes knowledge about the nature and demands of different tasks (Flavell, 1979). Compared to Flavell, Brown (1978) puts more emphasis on the second dimension of metacognition, that is, the regulation of cognition which includes learners’ planning, monitoring, and evaluating activities that help them control their cognition (Xiao, 2007).

In this study, Flavell’s (1978) and Brown’s (1978) theories of metacognition will be used in investigating the roles of metacognition in reading and writing. When copying and summarizing, students’ metacognition will be assumed to operate differently depending on personal variables. Also, the kinds of metacognitive strategies that students use are assumed to vary. They will use different kinds of planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies.
during copying and summarizing which they believe are more effective. In addition, depending on how motivated students are, how proficient they are, how familiar they are with the reading materials and the summarizing task, and how complex the reading materials are, students can write either good or poor summaries and engage in either a deeper level or in a shallow or perceptual level of summarizing processing. The possibility exists that this could also apply to the copying task although it has not been found in any of the research on copying. In short, within the metacognitive perspective of reading and writing framework, person, task, and strategy variables would interact with one another with planning, monitoring, and reviewing processes. The role of metacognition in copying and summarizing is outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3

*Metacognitive Processes in Reading and Writing*
Knowing that metacognition in reading and writing is essential for successful learning (Scott & Andrea, 1993) and that metacognition plays important roles in copying and summarizing (Kirkland & Saunders, 1991), it would be worthwhile to look at how different proficiency levels of students metacognitively think and learn when copying and summarizing tasks are given.

**Methodology**

**Participants**

Sixty EFL students between the ages of 21 and 39 in a Korean university, located in the capital of Korea, Seoul, registered in the ‘English Teaching Methodology’ course were recruited for the study (18 males and 42 females). They were mostly English or other foreign language education majors, and had diverse English proficiency levels. Many of them were preparing to teach English to secondary school students after graduation. In the first week of the semester, a pre-test was given to ascertain the students’ proficiency level and to decide difficulty levels of texts for copying and summarizing activities. On the basis of the pre-test results, the students were divided into lower and higher level groups. Then about half in each proficiency level were given a copying task while the other half were given a summarizing task. The pre-test mean scores of both lower level groups were statistically similar (t=-.84, p=.406) as were both of the higher level groups (t=-1.52, p=.138). Also, the mean scores of the copying groups and the summarizing groups were statistically similar (t=1.26, p=.212).

**Data Collection Procedures**

**Background information questionnaire**

In the first week of the semester, a background information questionnaire was given to the students in order to gather such information as age, gender, major, areas of interests in reading and writing, topics of interests they wish to read, etc.

**Pre-test and post-test**

A pre-test was given to the students at the beginning of the semester to identify their reading and writing ability levels. The test questions were adopted from *Barron’s TOEFL*
iBT: Internet-based test (Sharpe, 2006) and Barron’s writing for the TOEFL iBT (Lougheed, 2008). A post-test given at the end of the semester was the parallel to the pre-test. The rationale for using the same test for the pre- and post-tests was “to assure an exactly comparable test, thus avoiding the problem of equating different forms of pre-test and post-test” (Song, 1998, p. 43).

The reading part required the students to read the texts and answer the questions about the main or supporting ideas (3 questions), details (4), inference (11), and vocabulary use (5). Eighteen of the reading questions were multiple-choice questions, and five of the vocabulary questions were short-answer questions. In the latter, the students had to replace the underlined words in the text with synonyms or short phrases of their own. They then had to create their own example sentence with each underlined word.

The topic of the writing part was ‘positive and negative aspects of the Internet,’ and the students had to write an essay from their own point of view. Their writings were graded by using an analytic rubric (Appendix A) by two raters (i.e. the researcher and the course instructor) which had five categories: organization, sentence structure/fluency, grammar, vocabularies/idioms, and mechanics.

**Copying and summarizing tasks**

For 12 weeks during the semester, the students read two articles every week and either copied or summarized them. The text topics were selected according to the students’ interests and proficiency level. The difficulty levels of the texts were determined by using the Lexile measures as laid out at the website www.lexile.com. There is a specified relationship between grade level of the U.S. students and the Lexile rankings, and one can calculate the Lexile of a text by using the Lexile analyzer. At the beginning of the semester, easier texts were given so that the students would not become frustrated, and more difficult ones were introduced later.

Once all of the texts had been chosen, explicit guidelines of how to copy or summarize them were provided to the students (Appendix B and Appendix C). In the guidelines, several questions were added to ask the students’ motivation, familiarity, and personal feelings about reading each of the 24 texts. With the guidelines, the instructor explained the purposes, advantages, and procedures of copying and summarizing ahead of time. In the middle of the semester, the instructor had discussions with the students to talk about their difficulties and the appropriateness of the given texts. After completing the task, the students put all of their
work into portfolios and submitted them to the instructor. Later, their portfolios were returned with feedback.

**Think-aloud protocol and follow-up questions**

Think-aloud protocols were conducted in the 11th week of the copying and summarizing stage of the study since it was thought that the students would probably have become quite used to copying or summarizing by that time. Based on the willingness and availability of time, eight students, two from each proficiency level and each activity group, were randomly selected. During the think-aloud task, the students were asked to read a given text (The title was ‘Bringing Online,’ which was about using electronic portfolios in the K-12 classroom) and talk about what kinds of strategies they used to comprehend the text. They were then asked to write its copy or summary, and how and why they used those strategies. All conversations were tape-recorded, transcribed, and translated into English.

In order to check specifically what kinds of strategies the students were employing, the Survey Of Reading and Writing Strategies (SORWS), an adapted form of the Survey Of Reading Strategies (SORS) (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001), was used. Since the SORS was designed to simply measure reading strategies, the researcher developed the SORWS to identify metacognitive strategies that English language learners use when reading and writing academic texts (Appendix D). It was divided into three subsections with 36 items, each using a 5-point Likert scale for responses: planning (7 items), monitoring (22), and evaluating strategies (7).

Before using the SORWS, its reliability was tested with a similar population to the study participants. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient according to their first and second responses to the SORWS was 0.84 and 0.89, respectively. This indicates that there was good internal consistency among the 36 items. In addition, the t-test reliability result showed that there was a statistically no significant difference between the students’ first and the second responses to the SORWS (t=-.53, p =.391).

**Reflection questionnaire**

At the end of the semester, the students were asked to write brief opinions about their perception of the most helpful and most difficult aspects of copying or summarizing.
Data Analysis

To answer the first research question, the students’ performances on the pre- and the post-tests were analyzed. T-test was applied by using SPSS to identify the students’ overall reading and writing ability changes during the semester. In addition, in order to examine specifically which areas of and writing abilities had changed, t-test was used. The percentage gains between the pre- and post-tests were also calculated.

To answer the second research question, the recorded think-aloud conversations were analyzed to discover what kinds of metacognitive reading and writing strategies in the SORWS were used specifically when they were engaged in copying and summarizing activities. Moreover, how and why the students used those strategies were explained with examples.

For the last research question, the students’ answers to the questions included in the copying and summarizing guidelines were analyzed to identify how familiar they were with the text topics and how strongly motivated they were in reading the texts and why. Means and standard deviations of the students’ answers to the familiarity and motivation questions on five-point Likert-scale were calculated and compared among the four groups by using ANOVA. Some of the students’ comments on why they felt certain texts were interesting or not were also identified. Finally, the students’ answers to the open-ended reflection questionnaire which asked about their opinions about the copying or summarizing activity were analyzed.

Results and Discussion

Reading and Writing Proficiency Changes from the Pre- to the Post-test of the Students with Different Proficiency Levels in the Copying and Summarizing Groups

The pre-test and post-test results of the 60 students in the different activity and different proficiency level groups were compared to see how their reading and writing abilities had changed through the copying and summarizing activities. The results are presented according to the nine areas of reading and writing in Table 1 (In order to make it easier to compare the students’ proficiency changes from the pre- to the post-test, the percentage gains are provided with the t-test results.).
Table 1

Comparisons of the Four Groups of the Students’ Pre- and Post-tests Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R_Main/Supp</th>
<th>R_Detail</th>
<th>R_Infer</th>
<th>R_Vocab</th>
<th>W_Org</th>
<th>W_Struc</th>
<th>W_Gram</th>
<th>W_Vocab</th>
<th>W_Mecha</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-6.98</td>
<td>-5.35</td>
<td>12.71</td>
<td>17.84</td>
<td>62.15</td>
<td>61.85</td>
<td>61.11</td>
<td>59.32</td>
<td>55.30</td>
<td>17.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
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<td>-4.90</td>
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<td>-5.44</td>
<td>-4.34</td>
<td>-4.75</td>
<td>-4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.247</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.001**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.66</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>18.32</td>
<td>62.79</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>111.82</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>76.47</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
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<td>-2.10</td>
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<td>-4.66</td>
<td>-8.12</td>
<td>-8.12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.023*</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>44.57</td>
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<td>.671</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.247</td>
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<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.006**</td>
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<td>.003**</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>30.06</td>
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<td>78.26</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-6.01</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.110</td>
<td>.043*</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.49</td>
<td>-3.80</td>
<td>9.42</td>
<td>26.41</td>
<td>65.36</td>
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<td>55.63</td>
<td>64.00</td>
<td>19.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td>.006**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.005**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Note. Each percentage gain was calculated by using the following formula: \[100 \times \frac{\text{Post-test} - \text{Pre-test}}{\text{Pre-test}}\%\]
The students in the four groups showed a 19.01% gain indicating that there has been a statistically significant improvement in their overall reading and writing proficiency from the pre- to the post-test ($t=-4.96$, $p<.01$). Particularly, they showed the greatest improvement in the ‘W_Struc’ and ‘W_Gram’ areas, and the least improvement in the ‘R_Infer’ area. Even though they achieved more than 55% of gain, showing statistically significant improvement in all areas of writing, their scores dropped in the ‘R_Main/Supp’ and ‘R_Detail’ areas among overall reading areas. For each of the four groups, the CL group made the greatest improvement, whereas the SH group made the least improvement. The CH and SL groups showed a similar rate of percentage gain.

Meanwhile, the two higher level group’s mean score changes ($t=1.72$, $p=.096$) and the lower level groups’ mean score changes ($t=1.68$, $p=.102$) respectively did not show any statistically significant difference. That is, the two higher level and the two lower level groups respectively showed similar degrees of improvement. Moreover, the degrees of improvement between the copying and the summarizing groups were also not statistically significant ($t=-2.28$, $p=.026$) indicating that the copying and the summarizing groups showed similar degrees of improvement.

When more specifically comparing the two higher proficiency level groups, they showed different degrees of improvement in different areas of reading and writing. In the four areas of reading, both the CH and SH groups fell behind on the post-test in the ‘R_Main/Supp’ and ‘R_Detail’ areas. Since the CH group did not have to find and include all important ideas and details into their copied texts, they might not have paid much attention to identifying them. The SH group, in comparison, might have focused more on getting a general sense of a text by skimming through it because they could possibly write a summary even though they had not understood all the important ideas and details. In the ‘R_Infer’ area, the CH group became better even though the degree of improvement was statistically not significant. Yet, the SH group became worse in that area. As Diana, who was engaged in a deeper level of copying processing in Currie’s (1998) study, was eager to achieve a deeper understanding of texts in her own way, the CH group might have also tried to go beyond the surface details and find other implied meanings in a text. In contrast, as the SH group had to include the information only stated in the text into their summaries, they might have considered making inferences as less important. If they had been required to add their personal comments and interpretations into the summaries, they might have had more in-depth thoughts about the information outside the text. The only area that both of the groups became better was
‘R_Vocab.’ For example, Yoo-Hee, who was in the CH group, wrote down ‘majority’ as a synonym of the word ‘vast’ on the pre-test which was actually wrong in terms of its meaning and part of speech. She also created her own sentence as follows: ‘When I search the word ‘go’ by the Internet, I got majority of results.’ On the post-test, however, she provided a correct synonym, ‘extensive,’ and created the correct sentence as follows: ‘There were extensive studies about the language acquisition process.’

The researcher wondered if any improvement in overall reading could be found from the higher level students between the pre- and the post-test, but there was no statistically significant improvement. Besides, even when several students who had topped out (i.e., those who received so close to the highest score on the pre-test that they had little room to get a much higher score on the post-test) were excluded, no statistically significant improvement was found in the overall areas of reading (t=-.73, p=.479 for the CH group; t=-.31, p=.765 for the SH group). It is possible that the higher level students gained such a higher score or close to the highest score in reading and thus showed a smaller amount of improvement than the lower level students. Moreover, some of the higher level students gave convincing comments by saying that they were less likely to answer the reading questions on the post-test as carefully as they did on the pre-test because they were given the same reading texts, and most of the reading questions were multiple-choice. However, they mentioned that they paid much more attention to the vocabulary questions in reading because they tried to create their own sentences by using each new vocabulary word. This could be the reason why both the CH and SH groups showed improvement in the ‘R_Vocab’ area even though it was statistically not significant.

In writing, it was very surprising that the SH group, not the CH group, developed the ‘W_Mecha’ ability the most among the five areas. This indicates that even though the SH group students were at the higher level, they consciously gave extra attention to the mechanics in addition to other writing areas by engaging in a deeper level of summarizing processing. For example, the following is part of what Nari in the SH group wrote on the pre- and post-tests for the writing section (From now on, any mechanical mistakes will be underlined in bold texts, and the corrections will be made next to the mistakes in a bracket. Also, any grammatical mistakes will be crossed out, and the corrections will be made in bold italic texts.):
(On the pre-test)

Some people might say access to accessing so much information from the Internet creates problems, But [but] I think using internet [Internet] the Internet to get information is very useful.

First, by access to accessing information from the Internet, people can gather a lot of information without effort. On the internet [Internet], there are is a lot of information [information] in the various fields. People don’t have to look over all the books, newspapers, so on and so on to find the information they need. . .

(On the post-test)

Although some people think access to a deluge of information on the Internet causes many problems, I believe the Internet provides people with a lot of valuable information needed.

First, the Internet allows people to access the newest information immediately. Whenever or wherever something happens, people can find any kinds of information by using the Internet. . .

Nari made several mechanical and grammatical mistakes on the pre-test, but no major mistakes on the post-test.

Different from the SH group, the CH group showed the greatest improvement in the ‘W_Org,’ ‘W_Struc,’ and ‘W_Gram’ areas rather than in ‘W_Mecha.’ Since they did not have to produce their own writing, they might have paid more attention to a large unit of a text, that is, how ideas are presented in a logical sequence, how various sentence structures are used, and/or how grammatically correct sentences are produced, while reading and copying the texts.

Having compared the two higher level groups, let us now look at the two lower level groups. The CL group was the only one who became better in all four areas in reading. They might have given greater attention to understanding the gist and important details of a text in addition to making inferences in order to understand the whole text clearly. In comparison, the SL group became better only in the ‘R_Infer’ and ‘R_Vocab’ areas. In Joh’s (2000) study, it was found that summarizing activities helped low students go through deep-level reading and thus develop their ‘R_Infer’ ability more than ‘R_Main/Supp’ and ‘R_Detail’ abilities.
The students in the SL group might also have wanted to question themselves more about a text and find information outside the text rather than specifically identifying important ideas and details stated in the text particularly when the given text was somewhat difficult. In terms of the ‘R_Vocab’ ability, the CL group showed much more improvement than the SL group. As low level students’ long-term memory of vocabulary had been enhanced through the copying activity by giving special attention to new vocabulary in Lee’s (2003) study, the students in the CL group also might have consciously focused on extending their vocabulary to understand the text better and later made better vocabulary choices in writing. For example, Bora in the CL group wrote down a synonym of the word ‘eliminate’ as ‘get rid of’ but failed to create her own sentence by using it. Yet, she produced a sentence correctly on the post-test: ‘We should eliminate any kinds of racial segregation in the world.’

In writing, similar to the difference between the SH and CH groups, the SL group showed the greatest improvement in the ‘W_Mecha’ area, whereas the CL group showed much more improvement in other areas than in the ‘W_Mecha’ area. Like the SH group, the SL group students might have become aware of their mechanical mistakes and tried to reduce them. Here is an example of how Jung-Eun in the SL group had changed from the pre- to the post-test especially in the ‘W_Mecha’ area:

(On the pre-test)

. . .

First of all, Information [information] is related to wealth [wealth] in a country. For example, Korea lacks of natural resources so that we have to import natural resources such as oil. To survive among other countries, we need to focus on IT industry. By doing this, we can get to know what is going on all around world the world, and we can be more proactive than other countries. Furthermore, we can produce IT products through internet [internet] the Internet.

Some people might say so much information cause causes many problems. However, it all depends on our efforts and times We [we] actually put into using information properly. Besides [,] we should try to have proper ‘[ ] internet [Internet] and information education’ [ ] from government [government] regardless of their our income, geographic location, education, and so on. . .
First of all, we spend plenty of time on the Internet not only to study or work but also to explore various websites without any purposes. Thus, it can be time-wasting. Moreover, it can cause many diseases by sitting on a chair and looking at the screen for a long time. For example, there were several Koreans who were in their early 20s to 30s. They died from anonymous disease. It turned out that all of them spent more than 12 hours a day on the Internet and that made their body weak. Unfortunately, it led them to die even though they were healthy and young.

Secondly, there are increasing crimes on the Internet. Because of the fact that people cannot check out the information on the Internet whether it is true or not, they could be cheated when they purchase stuff. Furthermore, there is a danger of spreading people’s secret pin numbers by computer hacking. So, personal information can be used in a harmful way.

The number of mechanical mistakes that she made was greatly reduced on the post-test. In addition, she often showed quite simple, awkward, or rambling sentence patterns and constructions on the pre-test, but her writing flowed more smoothly and with more varied sentence patterns on the post-test.

In contrast, the CL group students, similar to those in the CH group, might have consciously thought about how ideas are organized, how various sentence structures were used, how sentences were grammatically written, and how vocabulary was appropriately used within sentences. They thus might have been able to develop other writing abilities much more than the ‘W_Mecha’ ability.

In sum, three major findings were discovered from the comparison of the pre- and post-tests results: 1) the students in the copying and summarizing groups had improved their overall reading and writing abilities, and showed more improvement particularly in writing; 2) the students in the summarizing groups showed the greatest improvement in the ‘W_Mecha’ area, whereas those in the copying groups showed more improvement in other writing areas; 3) not only the students in the CL and SH group, but also those in the CH and SL group received great benefits through the copying and summarizing activities in
developing their reading and writing abilities. This implies that the copying and summarizing activities could benefit both higher and lower level students.

Reading and Writing Strategy Use of the Students with Different Proficiency Levels in the Copying and Summarizing Groups during the Think-aloud Task

Towards the end of the semester, eight students were selected from the four groups (i.e. two from each group) for the think-aloud task to see what strategies they would use while reading and copying/summarizing an academic text. The researcher gave attention to not only the kinds and frequency of the strategies that the students used but also the ways of and reasons of using them. The eight students’ background information is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Background Information of the Think-aloud Task Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Hours of reading &amp; writing English per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>2-3</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>1-2</td>
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<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>English Language &amp; Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young-Jae</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>English Education</td>
<td>4 or more</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The students in the different task and proficiency level groups showed some similarities and differences in their use of metacognitive reading and writing strategies during the think-aloud task. All mentioned that they were willing to read various topics given for the copying and summarizing activities during the semester. They reported that they particularly liked the topics related to teaching methods or tips and educational issues because they liked to get new and useful ideas for teaching and wanted to use them in their future career. For example, Su-Eun in the SL group mentioned that all the given texts were much less difficult than the texts for her other classes and thus she enjoyed reading them and thought the summarizing activity helped her improve her overall English proficiency. During the think-aloud task, all students spent some time in checking the text length and skimming through it before reading (planning strategy #4). They used different kinds of marks on the text to increase their
understanding (*monitoring strategy #12*). Moreover, they tried to guess the meanings of unfamiliar words within a context or used a dictionary after reading the whole text (*monitoring strategy #20 and #21*). They re-read certain sentences or paragraphs or went back and forth in the text when encountering difficulties (*monitoring strategy #9 and #17*). They also thought deeply about the text topic or the possibility of applying useful information in the text to their own teaching circumstances (*monitoring strategy #29*). For example, Yoon-Ju in the CL group said that since she was interested in reading the given text topic, she asked herself such questions as why the electronic portfolios were not likely to be used in Korea and how they could be used for teaching Korean students and then tried to answer those questions. Regardless of the proficiency levels, all students made use of many of the same strategies.

However, some differences were found between the copying and summarizing groups. The students in the copying groups used the evaluating strategies less frequently, whereas the students in the summarizing groups used them more frequently. Since the former were writing down the text exactly in the same way as the author had written it, they constantly and frequently checked mistakes in the middle of copying, but did not check possible mistakes on the copied texts once they had finished copying. One of the students, Da-Young, in the CH group gave a clear answer as to why she did not use evaluating strategies compared to other types of strategies:

“I didn’t go back to the text because I already checked everything while I was copying this text. Um…if this was not a copying task but…um…if I was supposed to write an essay for a test, for example, I definitely would have checked my grammar and spelling or something else very carefully after writing.”

In comparison, most of the students in the summarizing groups reviewed their summaries both during and after summarizing. One interesting difference was found when the two groups of students were using the same strategies. To be specific, the copying group of students used re-reading and going back and forth strategies (*monitoring strategy #9 and #17*) in order to remember certain information better or to enhance their text comprehension, whereas the summarizing group of students used the same strategies in order to identify key points of the texts and include them into their summaries.
The more crucial differences were found between higher and lower level groups rather than between the copying and summarizing groups. In Anderson’s (1991) study, it was found that the high and low level students were not different in using the kinds of strategies, but in that the former applied the strategies more effectively than the latter. Similarly, in this study, they used similar strategies, but the former not only used them more effectively but also performed the copying and summarizing tasks more successfully than the latter did. To be specific, the former tended to read the given text by phrase or sentence unit, while the latter word by word. Accordingly, the higher level students seemed to think deeply about how to use words and expressions appropriately within sentences. For example, they were more flexible when dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary. They checked not only the meaning of a word or expression but also its usages from a dictionary. In Yuna’s case, she even looked at some sample sentences in the dictionary when she was curious about the usage of ‘long’ in the following sentence: ‘The use of personal portfolios for assessment and presentation long has been a component of higher education.’ She said:

“I’ve never seen this word placed before a verb. I thought that ‘long’ should be used at the end of the sentence in this sentence. For example, this sentence could be written like ‘The use of personal portfolios for assessment and presentation has been a component of higher education for a long time.’ But, strangely enough, ‘long’ was used before ‘has been,’ and I thought it was somewhat interesting…”

In contrast, the lower level students gave more attention to understanding the meanings of new words/expressions and using grammar and mechanics correctly than other areas of reading and writing (e.g. content and idea organization and sentence fluency). For example, Jun-Su in the CL group often wrote down the phonetic symbols and meanings of certain words on the text when he was not clear about the pronunciation. Yet, he did nothing more to expand his vocabulary. Also, Su-Eun in the SL group did not use a dictionary at all and tried to use simple words that she already knew when writing a summary.

Both the higher and lower level students were aware of what their weaknesses in reading and writing were and what kinds of strategies would help them improve their ability through the copying or summarizing activity. This indicates that they basically had knowledge of cognition which involves ‘person’ knowledge (i.e. knowledge of themselves), ‘task’ knowledge (i.e. knowledge of the nature of the task), and ‘strategy’ knowledge (i.e. knowledge of strategies considered as useful for the task). However, the lower level students
lacked regulation of cognition: knowledge of how to regulate the use of strategies appropriately to their ability, proficiency level, and given task. For example, Yuna in the SH group had an elaborate plan in her mind of how to organize the content of their summary before writing so she was able to reduce the reviewing time of making changes in the content during or after writing. On the other hand, Young-Jae in the SL group used a pen rather than a pencil when summarizing the text which was different from other students. The researcher asked him what he would do if he made any mistakes, and he said:

“If I use a pencil, I feel much relaxed because I can erase and re-write words or sentences anytime. However, if I use a pen, I become more careful about writing each word and sentence. I am taking the Teacher Certification Exam next year, and all the participants are required to use only a pen in writing. I just wanted to train myself to write a paper as fast as possible without making serious mistakes. I usually don’t have much time to practice writing due to a lot of school work and I know that my writing ability is not good enough. So, I use a pen to summarize a text and I re-write the summary if I make any mistakes.”

When he made a grammatical mistake while writing the second sentence of his summary, he, indeed, took out a new piece of paper and then started to re-write it. Although he believed this to be useful, he seemed to have forgotten about what he was going to say from then onwards when he reached that sentence again. He thus had to spend much time re-reading some of the sentences in the text to re-organize his thoughts.

In short, the higher level students were at a deeper level of processing stage, but the lower level students were somewhere between a shallow or perceptual level and a deeper level of processing stage, gradually moving towards the latter. Also, they all successfully thought-aloud about their copying or summarizing processes as well as their reasons for using or not using certain strategies. In addition, their major(s), desire to become English teachers and enhance their overall English proficiency, motivation to read the given texts and do the task and interests in the text topics greatly affected them to take active roles in improving their reading and writing skills through the copying and summarizing activities. Thus, it may be said that the lower level students, though they were not always as successful in performing the copying or summarizing task and in using the strategies, showed more improvement and took more advantages of copying and summarizing activities than expected.
Throughout the semester, the students’ familiarity with the 24 given topics and their motivation to read them were examined to see how their familiarity and motivation influenced their copying/summarizing task performance.

Yang and Shi (2003) articulated the fact that students’ previous writing experiences, their perception of the nature of a given task, familiarity to texts, and motivation to read or write texts were important factors affecting students’ task performance. The researcher thus wanted to know if the students in the four groups would be similar or different in performing either the copying or summarizing task depending on two of their personal variables: familiarity and motivation. The students’ self-rated scores for familiarity and motivation are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Students’ Familiarity with Text Topics and Motivation to Read them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal variables</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. The score ‘1’ meant the lowest familiarity or motivation, and ‘5’ meant the highest familiarity or motivation.

Note 2. Even though it was required, not all of the students rated scores for the familiarity and motivation. Thus, only 55 students out of 60 were taken into account.
All students mentioned that it was their first time to read the 24 given texts. However, they responded that they at least had heard of the topics or had read a few other texts on those topics. When considering each of the groups, no statistically significant differences were found among the four groups in terms of the degrees of familiarity with the text topics as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

ANOVA Table for Mean Differences among the Four Groups for their Familiarity with the Text Topics and Motivation to Read them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal variables</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.254</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>13.338</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>.262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.538</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>1.641</td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>5.116</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.610</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Although the students felt that they were not very familiar with the given topics, they were pretty much motivated to read the texts. Again, no statistically significant differences were found among the four groups in terms of the degrees of motivation to read the texts. It can be thus concluded that most students were quite unfamiliar with the given texts, but generally showed much interest in reading them.

In the portfolios, the students included their comments about if they felt reading each text was interesting or not. Those comments provided more explicit explanations about how familiar the students were with the text topics or motivated to read them and why. Some of the students’ positive comments are as follows:
(Student A)

“I liked this article because this technique seemed to be very useful for both students and teachers. By applying this technique, the students in the article gradually showed much improvement in their writing ability. I think it would be good to use this kind of technique for Korean students and also help teachers assess their students in better ways.”

(Student B)

“I was interested in this topic because I am recently going to the gym these days. I am trying hard to lose my weight and, at the same time, stay healthy. This article gave me very useful information about exercising, and I wish I could learn yoga someday.”

(Student C)

“As the H1N1 flu became a hot issue these days, I was very curious about where it came from, how dangerous it is, if it is contagious, etc. I think this article gave clear answers for the questions that I had in mind.”

The students in general showed much interest in most of the topics. They thus tried to relate the information in the texts to themselves and think deeply about how they would apply the useful information to their real life. However, there were several students who expressed less willingness to read some of the texts due to their lack of interest in the topics or the difficulty level of the texts. Although their interests and the texts’ difficulty levels were considered, not all the topics might have satisfied all students. Nevertheless, they were not very negative about the texts. Overall, the students’ familiarity with the text topics and motivation to read them seemed to affect their task performance positively.

The Students’ Perception of the Copying and Summarizing Activities

At the end of the semester, the students provided their opinions about what they thought as the most helpful and most difficult aspects of the copying or summarizing activity on the reflection questionnaire. Some of their comments are presented in Table 5 (What they thought as helpful were underlined in bold text, and what they thought as difficult were double underlined in italic bold text.).
## Table 5

**Students’ Comments on the Copying and Summarizing Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Students’ Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>(Student A) “What I think the area which I got a lot of help through continuous practice of copying was sentence structure….I heard many times from my professor that I was using very awkward sentences even though they were grammatically correct. Through the copying practice, I was able to use various kinds of sentence structures naturally and appropriately for the writing contexts and also use grammar correctly in my writing.” (Student B) “Some of the texts were a little difficult for me, but by reading about different topics and thinking deeply about new information I got from the texts through the copying practice, I could build my knowledge of various kinds of issues not only in educational field but also in many other fields…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>(Student C) “By continuously practicing copying, I was able to remember and sometimes tried to unconsciously use some of the words and expressions which were frequently shown in many of the texts.” (Student D) “Even though social, economic, political, or cultural issues were not always easy to read and understand, but I felt very happy about reading different kinds of issues.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>(Student E) “…because I usually wrote a paper in English by using a computer, I think I’ve never worried much about mechanics. But, this semester, since I had to write a summary by using my hand, I carefully looked at if I was using punctuation and spelling of some of the difficult words correctly.” (Student F) “… I tried to look for synonyms and antonyms of certain words by using a dictionary and to understand uses of those synonyms and antonyms. Also, while paraphrasing, I’ve tried to structure and organize sentences in better ways and write grammatically correct sentences.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>(Student G) “Because I tried to focus on finding meanings of new words and expressions and using them appropriately in my own writing, I cared much about how to spell those words and expressions correctly. I knew that I sometimes got stuck when writing because I forgot how to spell a word. So, I think I could learn not only many of the new words’ meanings but also correct spelling of those new words.” (Student H) “When reading the texts, I found it very difficult to specify important ideas of the texts and write summaries by using different words from the original texts. But, by reading different kinds of issues in English, I could deepen and broaden my knowledge in different fields. Also, I’ve gotten into the habit of reading English articles regularly.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was somewhat surprising that all the students in the four groups expressed their positive rather than negative feelings about the copying or summarizing activity, though some mentioned about their difficulties they had encountered. As a matter of fact, no one thought that the activity was useless or unhelpful at all. They mentioned that they paid great attention to how text ideas and contents were organized, how words and expressions were used appropriately within contexts, how those words and expressions were spelled, how complex sentences were structured, and how sentences were grammatically written when they were reading the given texts. In addition, they said that they tried to organize content better, use new words and expressions appropriately, use various sentence structures, make their sentences flow well, and use correct grammar and mechanics in their writing. They, thus, thought that their overall reading and writing abilities had improved during the semester. They pointed out that most of the topics were interesting even though some were not very familiar and/or slightly difficult. Accordingly, similar to their responses to the familiarity and motivation questions included in their portfolios, they mentioned in the reflection questionnaire that they could enrich their knowledge on different fields because the topics of the texts aroused their interests. Having a high level of motivation stimulated them to concentrate on what they were reading and writing and what their weaknesses were, and to have clear and specific goals of reading and writing.

**Limitations**

In the process of undertaking this study, some limitations were encountered. First, the students’ significant improvement was found only in the overall writing areas, but not in the overall reading areas. It might have been possible to observe much greater improvement in the overall areas of reading if more open-ended questions had been provided for the reading section.

Second, the students in the study were mostly majoring in English and had strong desire to become English teachers, and thus had higher motivation to improve their English reading and writing abilities. Accordingly, the study results might have been different if the copying and summarizing tasks had been given to non-English majors who had less motivation or willingness to study English. For the future research recommendations, it would be worthy to investigate whether non-English majors who do not have very strong learning goals would get similar benefits through copying and summarizing activities.
Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

The current study has found that copying, as a language learning and teaching tool, would be as effective as summarizing in developing EFL students’ reading and writing abilities. Different from the previous research results, it was found that copying could benefit not only lower but also higher level students and summarizing could benefit lower as well as higher level students. In addition, unlike the expectation, summarizing was found to be more useful than copying for both higher and lower level students to develop the ability to use mechanics correctly in writing. Copying was found to be more useful to develop other writing abilities rather than the ‘W-Mecha’ ability. The four groups of students showed different degrees of improvement in different areas of reading and writing. Nevertheless, both the copying and summarizing groups and both the higher and lower proficiency level groups showed statistically similar degree of improvement in overall reading and writing areas. This implies that both copying and summarizing might equally be used as educational tools to enhance the students’ reading and writing proficiency. Moreover, while copying and summarizing, raising the students’ awareness of using various strategies was found to be crucial to help them reach at a deeper level of processing stage and consequently improve their overall reading and writing abilities. Attitudinal factors such as the students’ willingness and motivation to do the activity were also found to be crucial to improve their language proficiency.

Some of the implications for teaching reading and writing through copying and summarizing for EFL students are suggested as follows. First, prior to considering how to teach reading and writing, it would be essential to survey which topics that students are interested in and which proficiency levels they are at.

Second, in this study, the students who did the copying activity gave much less attention to the correct use of mechanics (i.e. spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) in writing. Thus, when using the copying activity, it would be important to constantly remind students to check the mechanics in their copied texts so that they can correctly use them when producing their own sentences. Meanwhile, the students who did the summarizing activity showed less improvement in applying new vocabulary appropriately to their own writing. Thus, for the summarizing activity, it would be important to give students opportunities to practice creating their own sentences by using new words or expressions they have found from texts.

Third, both the higher and lower level students in the study were less successful in developing the abilities to ‘find main and supporting ideas of a text’ and ‘identify important
details’ than in developing the other two abilities in reading (i.e. the abilities to ‘make inferences’ and ‘guess the meaning of new vocabulary’). Accordingly, it would be a good way to help students practice focusing on finding the gist of a text and distinguishing important points from less important ones. Also, teachers can ask students to find out and highlight a thesis, topic sentence(s), and concluding sentence(s) with different colors on the text to understand its content clearly before they either copy or summarize it.

Finally, as the study participants’ metacognitive awareness of learning and their use of reading and writing strategies played important roles in the process of copying and summarizing, raising students’ awareness would be crucial in helping them improve their overall reading and writing abilities. The higher level students in the study were well aware of which areas they should focus on more in order to overcome their weaknesses, and what strategies they should use and how to use them. However, the lower level students were often not clearly aware of their weaknesses and not very successful in applying the strategies. Nevertheless, they showed their potential ability to use the strategies effectively and approach to a deeper level stage if guidelines and modeling are explicitly provided by teachers. Accordingly, particularly for younger and/or lower level students, it would be important for teachers to introduce different kinds of reading and writing strategies that they can use and then show them when and how to use those strategies. They can also ask students to talk about how and why they used certain strategies, and whether or not using them was successful after completing a task.

In Korea as well as in China, Japan, and other East Asian countries which are influenced strongly by Confucianism and share similar cultural background, copying has been used popularly for language learning and teaching. It was thus regarded as a useful strategy to help lower proficiency level learners, but its possible advantages for higher proficiency level learners had not been examined. Even though Korean EFL students in this study particularly had immense motivation and desire for learning English, both higher and lower level students showed great improvement in reading and writing by paying attention to what they were doing and by working with the texts of their interests. It would be hasty to say that the effectiveness of copying for a specific group of Korean EFL students in this study would apply to all Asian EFL students. However, if EFL teachers in Korea and other Asian countries provide interesting texts to their students and encourage them to consciously monitor their learning processes, teachers could possibly help various proficiency levels of students develop reading and writing abilities. In the meantime, as the benefits of
summarizing activity for various proficiency level students were identified in this study, encouraging Asian EFL students to handwrite a summary and focus on correct use of mechanics would possibly produce positive results. At the same time, reminding the students of being aware of what, how, and why they are reading and summarizing a text, and teaching them how to use strategies effectively might be a lot of help for them to improve their overall reading and writing abilities.

Footnotes

1 The abbreviations for the nine areas of reading and writing indicate the following: R_Main/Supp-Ability to find main and supporting ideas in a text, R_Detail-Ability to understand and identify important details, R_Infer-Ability to make an inference, R_Vocab-Ability to guess the meanings of new words/expressions by using context clues, W_Org-Ability to organize sentences/phrases/ideas, W_Struc-Ability to understand and use various sentence structures/patterns, W_Gram-Ability to use correct grammar, W_Vocab-Ability to apply new words/expressions appropriately, W_Macha-Ability to use correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

2 The abbreviations for each group indicate the following: CH-Copying high level group, CL-Copying low level group, SH-Summarizing high level group, SL-Summarizing low level group
References


Appendix A: A Rubric for the Writing Section of the Pre- and Post-tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation for writing</th>
<th>4 Exemplary</th>
<th>3 Accomplished</th>
<th>2 Developing</th>
<th>1 Beginning</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organizational structure fits the topic and establishes relationships between/among sentences, paragraphs, and ideas.</td>
<td>Organizational structure fits the topic and establishes relationships between/among sentences, paragraphs, and ideas although minor lapses may be present.</td>
<td>Organizational structure often does not fit the topic and establishes little relationship between/among some of the sentences, paragraphs, and ideas. The structure is minimally complete.</td>
<td>Organizational structure does not fit the topic and does not establish connections between/among sentences, paragraphs, and ideas. The overall structure is incomplete or confusing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure/ Fluency</td>
<td>The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. It shows extensive variation in sentence structure.</td>
<td>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentence patterns are varied, but some repeated patterns of sentence structure are shown.</td>
<td>The writing flows. There is some variety of simple sentence structure, but many repetitive sentence patterns are shown.</td>
<td>The writing does not flow well. Sentence patterns are monotonous (e.g. subject-verb or subject-verb-object) with a number of awkward or rambling constructions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>The writer makes very few mistakes (less than 3-4) in grammar that distracts the reader from the content.</td>
<td>The writer makes a few mistakes (5-7) in grammar that distracts the reader from the content.</td>
<td>The writer makes several mistakes (8-10) in grammar that distracts the reader from the content.</td>
<td>The writer makes serious mistakes in grammar (more than 10) that distracts the reader from the content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabularies/ Idioms</td>
<td>Vocabularies/idioms are sophisticated and correct as are sentences which vary in structure and length. The writer uses and manipulates subject specific vocabularies/idioms for effect.</td>
<td>Vocabularies/idioms are varied, specific, and appropriate. The writer frequently uses subject specific vocabularies/idioms correctly.</td>
<td>Vocabularies/idioms are used properly though sentences may be simple. The writer uses subject specific vocabularies/idioms correctly.</td>
<td>Vocabularies/idioms are unsophisticated, and not used properly in very simple sentences. The writer uses subject specific vocabularies/idioms too sparingly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>The writer makes very few errors (less than 3-4) in spelling, punctuation or capitalization.</td>
<td>The writer makes a few errors (5-7) in spelling, punctuation or capitalization.</td>
<td>The writer makes occasional errors (8-10) in spelling, punctuation or capitalization.</td>
<td>The writer makes frequent errors (more than 10) in spelling, punctuation or capitalization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B: Copying Task Guidelines

1. You will be given two articles every week for 12 weeks. Read the article that is given to you. Feel free to take notes, underline, or highlight. You can also use a dictionary.

2. ‘Copying’ which is called ‘transcribing, reproducing, and imitating,’ is the same as writing something exactly as it is written somewhere else.
   - Copy each word written in the text on a sheet of paper. Use your own handwriting. Do **NOT** type on a computer.
• Copy the title and subtitles in the text, but do **NOT** copy citations and references.

• Write down the date you are copying on the top of the paper.

The purposes of copying are to

• help you read and understand different topics of texts

• learn new words, idiomatic expressions, grammatical use, sentence structure, etc. within contexts, and

• develop writing skills.

3. Check your copied text with the original text when you finish copying.

4. At the end of your copied text, write down your answers to the following three questions:
   1) Have you ever read this text before? (Circle the one that applies.)
      Yes   No
   2) How familiar were you with the information/topic in the text? (Circle the number that applies.)
      Completely   Heard of it     Read or heard     Read of heard     Very familiar
      unknown       2 or 3 pieces on subject 4 or more pieces on subject (Expert)
      1            2               3                  4                5
   3) How motivated were you to read this text? (Circle the number that applies.)
      Highly     Moderately      Indifferent     Moderately     Highly
      unmotivated unmotivated motivated motivated
      1             2               3                  4                5
   4) Why were you interested OR not interested in reading the text? (Give your reasons in Korean.)

5. Staple each original text to the copied text. Put all of them into a binder. If you have evidence showing how you read and summarized the texts (e.g. lists of vocabulary notes, memos you have taken in the margin of the texts, outlines of your summaries), include them in the binder as well.
Appendix C: Summarizing Task Guidelines

1. You will be given two articles every week for 12 weeks. Read the article that is given to you. Feel free to take notes, underline, or highlight. You can also use a dictionary.

2. ‘Summarizing’ is an activity of restating a text in a shortened form by using YOUR OWN WORDS.
   • Summarize a given text on a sheet of paper.
   • Your summary should include the main ideas and supporting ideas of the text but NOT your personal opinions.
   • A summary should be clear, concise, and accurate in representing the original text.
   • Do not exceed 350-400 words. Use your own handwriting, but do NOT type on a computer.
   • Write down the date you are summarizing on the top of the paper.

   The purposes of summarizing are to
   • help you read and understand different topics of texts
   • learn new words, idiomatic expressions, grammatical use, sentence structure and organization, etc. within contexts, and
   • improve your vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structuring knowledge in your writing.

3. Review your summarized text when you finish summarizing.

4. At the end of your summarized text, write down your answers to the following three questions:
   1) Have you ever read this text before? (Circle the one that applies.)
      Yes   No
   2) How familiar were you with the information/topic in the text? (Circle the number that applies.)
      Completely   Heard of it   Read or heard   Read of heard   Very familiar
      unknown   2 or 3 pieces on subject   4 or more pieces on subject   (Expert)
      1   2   3   4   5
   3) How motivated were you to read this text? (Circle the number that applies.)
      Highly   Moderately   Indifferent   Moderately   Highly
      unmotivated   unmotivated   motivated   motivated
      1   2   3   4   5
   4) Why were you interested OR not interested in reading the text? (Give your reasons in Korean.)
5. Staple each original text to the summarized text. Put all of them into a binder. If you have evidence showing how you read and summarized the texts (e.g. lists of vocabulary notes, memos you have taken in the margin of the texts, outlines of your summaries), include them in the binder as well.

Appendix D: Survey of Reading and Writing Strategies (SORWS)

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the various strategies you generally use when you read academic materials (e.g. reading textbooks for homework, reading journals, etc.) and write academic papers (e.g. writing essays for homework, writing persuasive papers or dialogue journals, etc.) in English.

Each statement is followed by five numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and each number means the following:

‘1’ means that ‘I never or almost never do this.’

‘2’ means that ‘I only occasionally do this.’

‘3’ means that ‘I sometimes do this.’ (about 50% of the time.)

‘4’ means that ‘I usually do this.’

‘5’ means that ‘I always or almost always do this.’

After reading each statement, circle the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) which applies to you. Note that there are no right or wrong responses to any of the items. The whole survey will take about 10-15 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have a clear and specific purpose for reading a text and writing a paper in English and think about what is expected of me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I think about what I already know about the topic or information in a text to understand what I read better.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I think about what I already know about the writing topic to write better.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I skim through a text to see what it is about before reading it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I decide how I should read a text or write a paper to achieve my purpose/goal of reading or writing.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I write an outline of my paper before writing it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I note down words, phrases, or short sentences related to a writing topic before writing.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I take notes (e.g. write down some of the important points of each paragraph or the whole text) to better understand what I read.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I adjust my reading speed or re-read a text when it becomes difficult or when I want to increase my understanding.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I re-read what I have written so far or adjust my writing speed when I come across difficulties in continuing writing.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I stop after a few sentences or a whole paragraph to check if I am writing correctly</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>While reading, I underline, highlight, or circle information in a text to help me remember it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I use reference materials such as books, articles, and Internet resources related to the topic of a text to understand what I read better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I use reference materials such as books, articles and Internet resources related to the writing topic to write better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I look at tables, figures, and pictures in a text to increase my understanding.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I try to picture or visualize information by drawing tables, figures, or pictures to help remember what I read better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I go back and forth in a text to find relationships among ideas in it (e.g. cause/effect, problem/solution, chronological order of events).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>When reading, I skip a paragraph and move on to the next paragraph when it becomes too difficult, and I go back to it later.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>When writing, I skip a paragraph and write another paragraph when I get stuck and later go back to the skipped part.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>When I read, I guess the meanings of unknown words or phrases by using context clues without using a dictionary.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>When I read, I guess the meanings of unknown words or phrases, but later I use a dictionary to check for the exact meanings of them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>When I find new words/expressions when reading and writing, I create a list of them with their meanings/uses to remember them better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>While reading, I use a dictionary right away whenever I see unknown words or phrases.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>While writing, I use a dictionary right away if I don’t know a word or expression in English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>If I don’t know a word or expression in English, I try to use a simple word or expression that I know without using a dictionary.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>If I don’t know a word or expression in English, I write it in my native language and later try to find an appropriate English word or expression.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>When reading, I translate some sentences or the whole text from English into my native language.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>When reading, I think about the information in both English and my native language.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>When reading, I ask myself questions I would like to have answered in a text and try to find the answers for them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>After reading, I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in a text thinking about if the information is fact or opinion, what the author’s stance is, and which stance I personally would take.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>After reading, I review a text (or notes that I took while reading) and try to identify important points in order to check if I understood the text correctly.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>After writing, I make changes in vocabulary.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>After writing, I make changes in grammar.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>After writing, I make changes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>After writing, I make changes in the structures of sentences (e.g. checking for the correct use of subject-verb-objective, noun clauses, prepositional phrases, etc., and revising it).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>After writing, I make changes in the content and ideas (e.g. checking if the content and ideas fit the writing topic and if the ideas are coherently and logically connected, and revising those parts).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Issues in Teaching and Learning EFL Writing in East Asian Contexts: The Case of Japan

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Bioprofile

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Abstract

Amid growing demand for developing English communication skills in the rapidly globalizing world, the need to facilitate students’ acquisition of advanced literacy in English—the ability to accomplish communication by means of writing—has also been pressing even in English as a foreign language (EFL) environments. Accordingly, many EFL countries have implemented English language education reforms, and this is also the case in Japan’s Course of Study (COS) guidelines, which have been revised every ten years. The purpose of this study is, then, to gain an updated understanding of the current state of writing instruction in Japanese EFL contexts by exploring to what extent and in what ways writing is taught to and experienced by students in the classroom at both senior high school and university levels. The research team conducted a large scale questionnaire study of Japanese university students (N = 481) to ascertain their previous writing experience in instructional contexts. The findings indicated that goals for writing instruction consistently emphasized grammatical correctness at the expense of content, and teachers’ approaches were hardly geared toward helping students to become actual writers who convey meaning in a certain rhetorical context. Future directions for EFL writing instruction are discussed to help students develop their real-world communication skills. It is also emphasized that issues in teaching
and learning writing are comparable across East Asian EFL contexts and that writing practitioners in East Asian countries need to cross the border to develop theories and pedagogies that accommodate the unique needs of EFL writers in East Asian contexts.

**Keywords**: EFL writing, FL writing pedagogy, communication skills, genres, English language policy

**Introduction**

With the acceleration of globalization in the world, the mastery of English has proven to be a prerequisite to success in the new global marketplace as well as in scientific research and technology (Hyland, 2003; Schultz, 2011). Accordingly, governments and educational institutions in many Asian countries consider English the primary foreign language to be taught and have implemented language education reforms so that students can successfully participate in the globalizing world (Butler, 2004; Nunan, 2003; Su, 2006). In Japan, too, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) revises Course of Study (COS) guidelines every ten years in response to changing needs for appropriate English language instruction in formal education (Butler, 2007). The 1989 version of the COS (implemented in 1993), for example, featured the introduction of new oral communication courses underpinned by the method of “Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).” The 1999 version (implemented in 2003) addressed the need to develop students’ “practical communication abilities” (MEXT, 1989, 1999). In 2003, MEXT launched an Action Plan to cultivate English communication abilities in Japanese people, articulating several sub-policies to support this plan (MEXT, 2003). Many of the sub-policies have led to major changes in the latest guidelines revised in 2008 and 2009, which took effect in 2011 in elementary schools, in 2012 in junior high schools, and in 2013 in senior high schools (MEXT, 2011a). Significant changes worth noting included the introduction of compulsory English classes for fifth- and sixth-grade elementary school students, the instructional focus on usage rather than prescriptive rule memorization, and requiring teachers to conduct classes in English instead of in Japanese (MEXT, 2011b, 2011c).

Amid this growing demand for developing English communication skills in the globalizing world, the need to facilitate students’ acquisition of advanced literacy in English—the ability to accomplish communication by means of writing—has also been pressing all over the world. This is because, to become active participants in the globalizing
world, students need to be able to write in English in varied social contexts, namely, various
discourse genres that range from simple primary genres of everyday discourse (e.g., emails,
letters, and postcards) to formal secondary genres (e.g., essays, articles, and research papers)
(Gee, 1998). Since different genres require students to use different linguistic resources to
achieve a specific rhetorical purpose (Achugar & Colombi, 2008; Colombi & Schleppegrell,
2002; Schleppegrell, 2004), students need to develop the ability to make appropriate
linguistic choices and convey meaning in a rhetorically appropriate manner in accordance
with the situation, the audience, and the purpose. The pervasiveness and immediacy of new
communicative media, including the World Wide Web, have further heightened the need to
write in many rapidly evolving forms (Prior, 2009).

However, in Japan’s English as a foreign language (EFL) instructional contexts, writing
has traditionally been a less emphasized area and has generally been seen as having a minor
role in the language classroom. Previous literature on Japanese students’ literacy background
has revealed that even though the COS guidelines indicate that writing skills are necessary to
develop students’ practical communication abilities, EFL classes in Japanese high schools
often employ writing-to-learn approaches that encourage learners to produce particular
grammatical construction and lexical items through translation, and few students have
experience with writing multiple paragraphs to convey a specific message to their intended
audience (Hirot a et al., 1993; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002; Sasaki & Hirose, 1996). In other
words, the pre-university preparation for academic literacy afforded by secondary school
systems in Japan has often been insufficient. As a result, many Japanese EFL students, upon
entering university, encountered a number of problems in making the transition to the broader
academic literacies expected there, where writing in various genres was critical to
successfully completing the courses (Kobayashi, 2002).

The relative neglect of writing has become more apparent in the latest reforms of the COS
guidelines for upper secondary schools. The new COS stipulates that all four-language skills
should be integrated for comprehensive learning. Notably, the instructional emphasis on
developing integrated communication skills resulted in the elimination of a separate course
for writing, which was replaced by mandatory English Communication I-III and optional
English Expression I-II courses. The objective of the mandatory English Communication I-III
is to develop students’ overall communication skills by integrating all the four skills, whereas
the optional English Expression I-II courses focus on promoting students’ critical thinking
skills by engaging them in debating and presentations. It is apparent from this directive that
communicative competence is by and large conceptualized as oral proficiency, and written communication abilities take a back seat to oral communication abilities.

Several questions arise here: Is writing really seen by teachers and students, and not only by the revised COS guidelines, as minor in promoting second language (L2) development, despite the fact that writing is an effective form of pushed output (i.e., giving students opportunities to actually use the target language in situationally appropriate ways through the action of producing language, such as writing and speaking) (see Swain, 1985)? Is it still the case that today’s Japanese high school students have received little writing instruction and their writing experience is limited to controlled writing practice?

Given that most of the previous studies on Japanese students’ writing experience were conducted in the 1990s, it can be expected that teachers’ conceptualization of writing and their methods or approaches might have changed during the 1990s and 2010s. By the same token, some changes in Japanese students’ writing experiences might have been driven by the emergence of new communicative media that require them to develop new literacies – the literacies that “involve some form of technologies, synchronous or asynchronous communication networks, such as listserves, discussion groups, or blogs” (Cervetti, Damico & Pearson, 2006, p. 379, italics added).

The purpose of this study, then, is to clarify the current state of EFL writing instruction by exploring to what extent and in what ways writing is taught to and experienced by students in the classroom at both senior high school and university levels. As a pilot for a larger study, a survey of Japanese university students was conducted in fall 2012 to ascertain the kinds of writing instruction given to students and the kinds of genres or writing tasks that students experience in the classroom. We were concerned specifically with how the concept of writing had or had not changed in the decades since the 1990s, when major studies on Japanese students’ writing experience were carried out. This article then discusses the future of Japan’s EFL education in terms of cultivating communication skills that enable students to cross national boundaries.

Japanese EFL students’ writing experience in senior high schools

We will begin the literature review by focusing on the types of writing tasks that students experience in instructional contexts. Before doing this, however, several points need to be
clarified about potential confusion regarding the term “writing.” In the Japanese EFL context, the term “writing” (sakubun) is used broadly to comprise both translation (translating a predetermined Japanese sentence into English) and free composition (expressing one’s ideas or opinions in a short paragraph in response to a specific prompt) tasks. In general, the former is referred to as “eisakubun,” while the latter is described as “jiyu-eisakubun” in Japanese (Ross, 2003). According to Hyland (2003), the translation task requires knowledge of the appropriate lexico-grammatical forms to create the text (system), whereas free composition requires students to deal with higher-order concerns, such as knowledge of the ideas and topics to be addressed (content), knowledge of communicative purpose and rhetorical structure (genre), and knowledge of readers’ expectations (context). Given the nature of writing in the real world as a “social act” (Bakhtin, 1986; Swales, 1990), writing instruction needs to form a coherent progression of tasks, shifting from translation (eisakubun), with its awareness of system or language forms, toward free composition (jiyu-eisakubun) that engages students in using language for a particular purpose and in constructing a specific meaning by paying attention not only to system but also to content, genre, and context. Hyland (2003) argues that in EFL contexts, where learners may have little idea of the situational aspects of language use, any writing task should be “devoted to building students’ understanding of the context in which the target text is used” (pp. 137-138).

Nevertheless, previous studies on Japanese EFL writers and writing instruction in Japan have commonly demonstrated that de-contextualized translation, or eisakubun, remains the major writing task that students experience in the classroom. For example, Kobayakawa (2011) identified that major EFL textbooks used in Japanese high schools (i.e., Pro-Vision, Crown, Powwow, Polestar, Element, World Trek, Power On, Unicorn, Big Dipper, and Vivid) focused on training students in translation tasks (41.4%) in conjunction with controlled writing (33.2%) that guided students to practice specific lexical or grammatical items. On the other hand, free composition tasks that required a longer, more extended response tended to appear to a lesser extent (13.1%) in all of the textbooks analyzed. The results of Kobayakawa’s analysis are echoed in the following questionnaire studies of Japanese students’ pre-university writing experiences. Hirota et al. (1993) demonstrated that approximately 79.5% of the students (n=459) had substantial experience working with translation tasks in high school, whereas about 83.7% of the same participants had never experienced writing multi-paragraph free composition. Interestingly, nearly 59.5% of the students explicitly commented that more time was spent on reading than writing instruction.
and writing was taught as part of grammar exercises and vocabulary learning; 56% revealed that writing-focused classes had not been offered in their high school English curriculum. Likewise, Sasaki and Hirose (1996) identified that, irrespective of L2 proficiency levels, more than 70% of their students (n=70) had regularly practiced translating Japanese sentences into English, but neither group had received explicit instruction on how to write expository essays or strategies for developing coherent paragraphs.

**L1-L2 transfer in writing: Japanese students’ L1 literacy background**

Japanese EFL writers’ literacy background has also been extensively studied in relation to writing experience in their first language (L1, kokugo, native language arts) from the perspective of cross-linguistic transfer. Investigating possible effects of earlier L1 literacy background on those writing in L2 became an important area of study due to the development of (a) the interdependence hypothesis, which assumes that L2 writing relies on an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is transferable across languages (Cummins, 1989, 1991); and (b) the socio-literate theory of academic literacy (Johns, 1997), which argues both that “literacies are acquired principally through exposure to discourses from a variety of social contexts” (p. 14), and that it is through this exposure that individuals develop their own conceptualization of writing and an overall literacy that is transferable across L1 and L2. Empirical evidence accumulated to date has confirmed that some aspects of L1 writing competence, strategies, and beliefs can be transferred to L2 writing (Hirose, 2003; Pennington & So, 1993; Roca de Larios, Manchon, & Murphy, 2006; Sasaki & Hirose, 1996; Uysal, 2008).

From this theoretical perspective, studies have shown that writing difficulties faced by Japanese EFL students might be influenced partly by their limited writing experiences and little explicit instruction on how to write in L1. Kobayashi and Rinnert (2002), in their seminal questionnaire study of Japanese high school students (n=389) and American counterparts (n=66), revealed that Japanese kokugo classes provided significantly more reading-related activities than writing-related ones and significantly less emphasis on writing activities than American classes. The relative neglect of writing instruction in kokugo classes might stem from L1 teachers’ pervasive beliefs about writing development, as reflected by the following comment: “Good writing ability develops after exposure to a variety of prose through reading” (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002, p. 103). The scholars’ other study (Kobayashi
& Rinnert, 2008) provided empirical evidence of the effects of L1 instruction on students’ rhetorical choices in L2 writing. Their findings indicated that Japanese students who had not received formal instruction on expository essay writing in L1 tended to misapply their schema of genre shaped by their earlier experience of writing sakubun (i.e., expressive writing based on personal feelings and thoughts) in elementary school, while those who had received instruction in both L1 and L2 on writing expository essays were able successfully to apply genre-specific rhetorical patterns to their expository essays in both L1 and L2. Due to Japanese students’ genre experiences in L1 that lean toward expressive writing, it has been revealed that they are likely to find academic writing more difficult than personal writing (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996).

The validity of Japanese students’ genre experience in L1 has been addressed by Liebman (1992), who identified that students’ prior writing instruction differed significantly between Japan and Arab countries. As opposed to Arab students (n=54) who reported more experience with transactional writing (i.e., communicative writing done with a specific rhetorical purpose, such as persuasive writing), Japanese students (n=34) perceived their past writing experience as oriented toward expressive writing (i.e., writing that explores the writer’s own feelings) (see Britton, Burgess, & Martin (1975) for the genre classification). Liebman argued that “such differences in a perceived past affect how students from these countries compose and how they perceive what we are asking them to do” (p. 157).

Overall, previous studies have consistently suggested that: (a) translation for grammar and vocabulary exercises constitutes a major part of writing tasks in English classes in Japanese high schools; and (b) in L1 kokugo classes, explicit writing instruction is inadequate, and Japanese students’ genre experience leans heavily toward expressive writing.

As can be seen, the review of previous literature indicates the possibility that, because of the limited instructional focus on writing activities both in EFL and L1 kokugo classes, the literacy schemata Japanese EFL high school students drew on for the immediate task of writing in L2 was not fully developed. Significant questions that arise from the literature review include: Is translation-oriented practice still prevalent in current English classrooms? Or is it that instructional practices and students’ experiences have somehow changed along with a series of educational reforms in response to the needs of the changing world? If so, in what ways? How much background knowledge about writing do students bring to university? Given that most of the studies reviewed above were based on data collected two decades ago,
the findings need to be updated by investigating current teaching practices and students’ experiences. Gaining an updated understanding of current practices will offer insight into future directives of writing instruction and language education policy in Japan. To this end, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What kinds of writing tasks and genres do students experience in high school English classes?
2. What aspects of writing skills are valued by teachers in high school English classes?
3. How much do students know about the writing they are expected to produce in university-level English-language courses?
4. To what degree do students feel they are prepared for university-level writing tasks?

Method

Participants

At the broadest level, Japanese universities are divided into the following two general categories based on their foundation: public (established by the Japanese government or local public entities) and private (established by educational corporations). As of 2011, a total of 780 universities are operating in Japan, of which 181 are public and 599 are private (MEXT, 2012, p. 6). To obtain an accurate representation of this variety of higher education system, this study employed a “dimensional sampling strategy” (King, 2013, p. 329), which led us to conduct a multi-site study focusing on six universities in Japan. More specifically, data were collected from three national universities and three private universities located in various regions (i.e., Kanto, Chubu, and Kyushu) across the country. In addition to the type of universities, students’ academic background or areas of specialty also needed to be taken into account in order to obtain a sample that was as diverse as possible. Thus, those who enrolled in different departments, ranging from humanities to natural sciences in the six universities, were selected for the study (N = 481). To make it easier for the students to recall their previous learning experiences both in high school and in university, those who were enrolled in sophomore-level college English courses were selected.
Instrument

A questionnaire was administered in October 2012 to investigate the current state of writing instruction in high school and students’ perception of their transition to university-level writing requirements. Questionnaires are widely used in L2 writing research for collecting large amounts of data about learners’ views and experiences of writing (Hyland, 2003). It has been shown by L2 researchers that questionnaires are particularly useful not only for exploring students’ past writing experiences, attitudes and expectations, but also for identifying issues that lead to the development of language education or curricular policies (e.g., Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002; Sasaki & Hirose, 1996). These premises suit the purpose of this study, and thus the research team decided to utilize a questionnaire to investigate the four research questions presented above.

As noted earlier, the purpose of this study is to gain an updated understanding of the current state of EFL writing instruction in Japan’s higher education, in comparison with that in the 1990s. Thus, the questionnaire was constructed with reference to the questions used in previous studies (Hirota et al., 1993; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002; Sasaki & Hirose, 1996) to explore how current students respond to the same questions and whether there is any difference in students’ writing experiences between the 1990s and 2010. After considerable refinement of the wording, based on the comments and feedback from the research team members as well as outside researchers, the final questionnaire was constructed to consist of seven questions, containing 67 separate items. Appendix A provides the exact questions used in the questionnaire (translated from Japanese by the author).

To answer the four research questions, the questionnaire consisted of two major parts: writing instruction and experiences in high school (RQs 1 & 2) and in university (RQs 3 & 4). All questions were close-ended. Four-point scale questions were used instead of 5-points because, in odd-numbered scales, students tend to answer with a neutral, noncommittal opinion, such as 3 for moderate; thus, even-numbered options more effectively establish definite opinions (Brown, 2001).

In the questionnaire, the students were asked about their previous experience with writing instruction and practice in high school, including the kinds of writing tasks and genres, amount of writing, and perceptions of writing goals. They were also asked to evaluate their transition from high school to university in terms of what they know about writing and how well they can write in English. To maintain ethical standards, the questionnaire sheet noted
that participation was voluntary. It also clearly stated that we would not make public any information that pertains to individuals.

Results

Types of activities offered in high school English classes

Table 1 below shows the rank order with means and SDs of 25 types of language activities the students were engaged in during their high school English classes. The students were asked about the degree of frequency of each type of language activity based on a 4-point scale: 1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently. As illustrated in the table, the top five most frequent activities centered around developing receptive language skills, including reading and listening: (i) translating an English text into Japanese (M=3.66, SD=.63), (ii) practicing the grammar and vocabulary used in the reading passage (M=3.56, SD=.68), (iii) understanding the outline and information necessary in order to answer reading comprehension questions (M=3.30, SD=.81), (iv) reading a passage in English with a focus on target grammar or topic (M=3.26, SD=.79), and (v) listening to a CD related to the textbook (M=3.18, SD=.90). In contrast, language activities for productive language skills, including writing and speaking, were relatively infrequent.

Within the six types of writing activities, Table 1 shows that the most frequent activities with means over 3.0 include practicing writing, with attention to accuracy in grammar and wording (M=3.14, SD=.81), and translating a short passage in Japanese into English (M=3.04, SD=.89). Figure 1 below also clearly shows that the 95% CI values for these two types of writing activities do not overlap with those for writing that concerns global issues (such as writing a summary, writing one’s own opinions, and writing in fixed settings and situations). These findings indicate that, as shown by previous studies, current writing instruction in Japan still puts a primary focus on eisakubun-type of writing exercises, addressing local issues in order to develop students’ declarative knowledge in correct usage of grammar and wording.
Table 1

*Mean reported frequencies of classroom activities in high school English classes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Translating an English text into Japanese</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Practicing grammar and vocabulary exercises</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading an English text with a focus on the outline and necessary information in order to answer reading comprehension questions</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading an English text with a focus on the target words, phrases and grammar and the topic development</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Listening to a CD related to the contents of the textbook</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Practicing writing with attention to accuracy in grammar and wording</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Translating a passage in Japanese into English</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reading with a focus on all the details of a given passage</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Practicing English pronunciation with an emphasis on rhythm and intonation</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Listening to English sentences and writing down what you hear (dictation)</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reading an English text aloud in order to convey the contents and your interpretation to the listener</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Writing a summary in English based on aural or written input</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Listening to audio material or watching videos or DVDs about something unrelated to the textbook</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Writing your opinions or thoughts about a particular issue</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Writing with a purpose based on fixed settings and situations</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Revising your writing based on feedback from your teacher or classmates</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Extensive reading of material other than the textbook (stories, newspaper articles, internet articles)</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Answering your teacher’s questions in English about what you have read or listened to</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Talking in English about familiar topics in pairs or groups</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Integrating the skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Making a speech about a particular issue in public</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Singing a song in English</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Discussing in English the content of what you have read or listened to</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Debating whether you are for or against a particular issue</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Preparing and performing a skit or role play based on a model</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently
Types of writing in further detail

Table 2 below describes the frequency of writing activities the students experienced in their high school English classes by length and genre. The frequency ratings were based on the 4-point scale described above. The table shows that, with respect to length, students perceived writing separate, independent sentences out of context as the activity they had done most frequently in high school English classes (M=3.53, SD=.65). On the other hand, writing on a given topic in a particular context using a paragraph consisting of several sentences (M=3.04, SD=.88) or more than one paragraph (M=2.76, SD=.97) occurred to a lesser extent. In Figure 2 below, the 95% CI values for the mean values of the three writing activities do not overlap with one another, indicating that the differences are reliable. This finding thus indicates that, as shown by Figure 1 above, current high school English classes in Japan still tend to train students in the decontextualized eisakubun type of writing, while the jiyu-eisakubun multi-paragraph type of writing is less common.
Table 2

*Mean reported frequencies of writing activities by length and genre*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separate, independent sentences</td>
<td>out of context</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A paragraph consisting of several</td>
<td>sentences</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A text consisting of at least two</td>
<td>paragraphs</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Summaries of reading materials</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emails and letters</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essays (opinion or argumentative)</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blogs and diaries</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative writing (stories or poems)</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impressions of reading</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journalistic reports (school newspaper or newsletter)</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scientific reports (short reports on experiments)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently

In terms of genre experiences, Table 2 shows that the mean values are generally low across all genres, and therefore Japanese high school students might not have experienced writing in a variety of genres in English class. However, as represented in Figure 3 below, it is notable that of all possible genres, writing a summary of the reading was rated as most frequent (M=2.63, SD=1.05), substantially more than other genres including essays such as opinion and argumentative (M=1.72, SD=.95). Interestingly, essay writing, which has traditionally been the most common genre on university entrance exams (Ross, 2003; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2008), is not practiced more often in high school English classes. This finding indicates that summaries might be more highly valued by current English teachers than those in the 1990s. The possible reason for this change could be that the significance of summary writing skills has been more widely recognized by teachers because of the accumulated evidence on the relationship between summary writing and reading comprehension or content acquisition (Dovey, 2010; Kirkland & Saunders, 1991; Shi, 2004, 2010; Winograd, 1984; Yu, 2007).
Another important finding is that the frequency of writing emails (M=1.86, SD=.97) and blogs (M=1.71, SD=.94) is relatively higher and overlaps with that of writing essays, as depicted in Figure 3. These two “new communication genres” (Harper, 2005, p. 99) did not appear in previous studies on Japanese students’ experiences with writing genres in the classroom. Obviously, emails and blogs are new channels of communication that were not yet widely used in the 1990s. This finding might be a sign that today’s teachers are becoming more aware that writing instruction needs to satisfy learners’ newfound need for practical communication in real-life situations.

Figure 2 95% CI values for writing activities (by length)
Elements of writing emphasized as goals

Table 3 below summarizes the students’ perceptions of the elements of writing valued by teachers. The students were asked to evaluate to what degree a variety of writing components (i.e., grammatical accuracy, lexical appropriateness, cohesion, organization, and content) were valued or emphasized by their teachers, in response to the writing assignments they submitted, based on 4-point Likert scales: 1=least valued, 2=less valued, 3=somewhat valued, 4=highly valued. As can be seen, accuracy in local aspects, such as grammar (M=3.56, SD=.57) and lexical appropriateness (M=3.50, SD=.61), is perceived to be more highly valued by teachers than global components such as cohesion (M=3.30, SD=.69), organization (M=2.96, SD=.84), and content (M=3.02, SD=.74). Figure 4 below clearly shows that the 95% CI values for lexico-grammatical accuracy are notably higher than those for cohesion, organization, and content. It is also noteworthy that organization and content are perceived by the students as the least emphasized areas, remarkably less than lexico-grammatical accuracy.
and cohesion. This finding indicates that teachers’ goals for writing assignments consistently emphasized lexico-grammatical accuracy (form) rather than structure and content (meaning), according to the students’ perceptions.

Table 3

*Elements of writing valued by teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical accuracy</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical appropriateness</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion (linking sentences)</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents of the writing</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph structure</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1=least valued, 2=less valued, 3=somewhat valued, 4=highly valued

Figure 4 The 95% CI values for the valued components of writing

165
**Types of writing in university**

Table 4 below shows the frequency of writing activities by length and genre in university English courses. The students were asked to rate the frequency of each activity based on a 4-point scale: 1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently. The table shows that writing on a given topic using a paragraph consisting of several sentences (M=3.15, SD=.88) is the most frequent writing activity in university, followed by writing a multi-paragraph text (M=3.08, SD=.96) and writing separate, independent sentences out of context (M=2.88, SD=.96). Figure 5 below demonstrates that the 95% CI values for paragraph writing do not overlap with those for decontextualized sentence-producing, indicating reliable differences between the two types of writing. This reflects that Japanese students learn to write more in university, and that their writing experiences tend to shift from the decontextualized *eisakubun* sentence-by-sentence practice from high school toward the topic-based *jiyu-eisakubun* multi-paragraph compositions of university.

As for the students’ genre experiences in university, the patterns were quite similar to those in high school. Although the overall frequency ratings are relatively low across the genres, the students perceived that writing a summary of what they read was the most frequent writing activity (M=2.15, SD=1.05). The mean values were notably higher than those for essays (M=1.89, SD=1.08), a prototypical “school-sponsored genre” (Leki, 1995) that is emphasized in many college-level academic writing textbooks. Figure 6 below depicts reliable differences between summaries and essays. This finding reflects that teachers raise awareness of the importance of summary-writing skills, as writing in a university setting mostly involves integrating one’s individual opinions with existing information from textual sources (Shi, 2004). The instructional emphasis on summary writing might also be associated with the existing evidence that L2 writers’ ability to cite outside sources is frequently unsatisfactory (Campbell, 1990; Kim, 2001; Pecorari, 2003, 2006; Pennycook, 1996).

Both Table 4 and Figure 6 also show that the students had experience writing blogs (M=1.72, SD=.99) and emails (M=1.67, SD=.92) to the same degree as writing essays. As discussed in the high school writing section above, university English teachers might also see these new communication genres as important for students to learn in response to the real-life needs of society. In contrast, the data shows that other communicative genres, such as research papers (M=1.23, SD=.61), creative writing (M=1.35, SD=.61), and journalistic articles (M=1.23, SD=.59), were less emphasized in university English courses. Overall, the
results showed that across high school and university, there is a general trend towards summaries and essays as genres preferred for use in the writing classroom, and that blogs and emails are also gradually being incorporated into the classroom as important new genres that students are expected to master.

Table 4

Mean reported frequencies of writing activities in university English courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A paragraph consisting of several sentences</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A text consisting of at least two paragraphs</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Separate, independent sentences out of context</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Summaries of what you read</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essays (opinion stating or argumentation)</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blogs and diaries</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emails and letters</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impressions of what you read</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative writing (stories or poems)</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journalistic reports (school newspaper or newsletter)</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently
Figure 5 The 95% CI values for writing activities (by length)

Figure 6 The 95% CI values for writing activities (by genre)
Figure 7 below describes the degree to which the students felt they were prepared for university-level writing assignments. The students were asked to evaluate to what extent they felt prepared for university-level writing assignments in terms of both background knowledge and experience and skill in writing, based on a 4-point Likert scale: 1=totally unprepared, 2=fairly unprepared, 3=somewhat prepared, 4=very well prepared. The results showed that about half of the students (n=244) perceived themselves as fairly unprepared for the writing tasks required of them in university English courses, and 22.2% (n=107) said they felt totally unprepared. That is, approximately 72% of all the students (n=351) perceived themselves as not prepared for university-level writing assignments in terms of specific knowledge and experience.

![Figure 7 The students’ perceptions of their preparedness for university writing requirements](image)

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The goal of this research is to identify the current state of writing instruction in Japanese EFL contexts in comparison with the findings from previous studies conducted two decades
ago. All in all, our questionnaire study demonstrated no substantial changes in a general trend in types of writing activities in the classroom. In high school, translation or eisakubun guided writing is still common and constitutes a major writing task in the classroom. On the other hand, free composition or jiyu-eisakubun writing, which requires students to express their ideas in a given rhetorical context, is less frequently employed in the classroom. Accordingly, in the high-school classroom, teachers are more likely to focus on local accuracy and appropriateness than either global textual structure or clarity of the content communicated to readers. A majority of our students therefore evaluated themselves as not ready for writing assignments that required them to write a jiyu-eisakubun multi-paragraph extended text at the initial stage of their university English courses. In other words, they may not have been equipped with the meta-knowledge necessary to construct a text. Their unpreparedness and undeveloped meta-knowledge perhaps stemmed from a lack of explicit instruction on basic conventions of paragraph writing in high school English classes.

Regarding the students’ writing experiences in terms of genre, the results of our questionnaire study implied that some changes have occurred due to the changing needs of society. While essays have traditionally been regarded as a common academic genre, this study showed that, besides essays, the summary has been most frequently incorporated into the classroom, and a large number of students had experience writing a summary in high-school English classes. Interestingly, this trend is observed in university, too. As Spack (1988) argued, summary writing, or the complex ability to write from texts, is the most important skill that English teachers need to engage students in since summary writing promotes students’ learning disciplinary content as well as how to cite another author’s ideas in their own writing. The findings of this study reflect that teachers in Japan have become increasingly aware of the significance of this reading-to-write activity.

Besides the summary, emails and blogs have also emerged as new genres that are addressed in current writing instruction, both in high school and university. It is obvious that this change has been driven by the pervasiveness of new communication tools on the Internet. This appears to be a meaningful move in terms of writing and language development because emails and blogs are so-called real-world genres capable of gauging students’ ability to use appropriate language that is functional for communication (Yasuda, 2011).

The results of this study call for the need both to redefine writing instruction in Japan and to reconceptualize the role of writing in language development. The findings that teachers’
goals for writing in high school often end in highlighting grammatical accuracy at the expense of content imply that their approaches are hardly geared toward helping their students become actual writers (Reichelt et al., 2012). This kind of teaching approach might have been influenced by the emphasis on entrance exams in compulsory education, and teaching and learning correct usage of grammar might have been justified by the need to promote success on exams. However, the heavy emphasis on decontextualized grammatical and lexical knowledge continues to make writing and language instruction separable, such that students are unable to apply their language knowledge to functional use in writing, despite their ability to complete grammar exercises correctly on exams. Overcoming these challenges requires the reconceptualization of writing instruction that facilitates “a departure from a traditional perspective of grammar, which defines grammar as a set of sentence-level, decontextualized rules for correct usage” (Gebhard et al., 2013, p. 108) and a shift toward teaching grammar as grammaring (Larsen-Freeman, 2003), as a set of resources that construct meaning in a variety of communicative situations. In other words, the ways in which language works in authentic texts and contexts, rather than language systems, need to be made visible to students.

In this light, the types of writing tasks in high school need to go beyond L1-to-L2 translation exercises, which make it difficult for students to realize the potential meaning in functional grammatical concepts. In real-life communication, we choose a particular lexicogrammatical resource to convey a message to our audience based on our perception of the intricate relationship between audience, purpose, and language choice. For example, we often say “I was wondering if you could” rather than want-based forms such as “I want you to” when writing a request by email to a higher-status recipient. In scientific writing, nominalization or so-called grammatical metaphors (Byrnes, 2009, 2011) are generally preferred over the use of clauses because these resources enable the meaning to shift from subjective to objective or from concrete to abstract (Ryshina-Pankova, 2010). In this way, there are different ways to describe the same situation in real-world communicative contexts, and it is our awareness of social factors that enables us to choose maximally appropriate meaning-making choices. However, accuracy-oriented translation exercises regard the differences between various choices as a matter of simple syntactic transformations and overlook the fact that “a difference in syntactic form always spells a difference in meaning” (Lianmkina & Ryshina-Pankova, 2012, p. 273). Although translation exercises are necessary to build a solid grounding in grammatical structures that will enable students to produce their
own sentences, an overemphasis on this kind of controlled writing prevents students from trying out new lexical items and more complex syntactic forms, or testing out emergent lexicogrammatical forms in new contexts (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Williams, 2012).

This might fail to align with the revised COS guidelines’ advocacy of the importance of developing communicative competence. It can thus be argued that writing instruction in Japanese high schools needs to shift from controlled translation (eisakubun)-oriented writing that focuses on language systems toward free composition (jiyu-eisakubun) types of writing that raise students’ awareness of using language for a particular social purpose to construct a specific meaning. It is particularly crucial for teachers to make conscious efforts to create a social context in the classroom to raise students’ rhetorical awareness given that Japanese EFL students are rarely exposed to the full meaning potential of English outside the classroom. Naganuma and Yoshida’s (2006) study is worth emphasizing here, as they revealed that in Korean high schools, content- and context-focused writing tasks are much more frequently offered in their English classes than writing for grammar exercises (see also Midorikawa, 2006). As DeKeyser (2007) argued, facilitating students’ access to the declarative knowledge available to create meaning is crucial in the initial stages of L2 acquisition, such as in high school English education.

Growing interest in genre-based pedagogy in Japan might be an emerging sign of teachers’ efforts in response to the need for such reconceptualization of writing instruction (e.g., Author 1, 2011; Matsuzawa et al., 2011). Genre has long been used in the writing classroom, mainly in Australian elementary schools and in ESL classes in American universities, as an important construct that “facilitates learners’ access to a range of social practices in different domains of social life” (Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010, p, 12). Genres are therefore considered central to the language learning opportunities that writing can generate (Ortega, 2012). The findings of this study showed that in terms of genre and purpose, writing activities in the classroom both at high school and at university put a very narrow and limited focus on school-sponsored genres such as summaries and essays, although there have been some changes since the 1990s. However, these ubiquitous school genres are neither almighty nor applicable to every educational context because, as Ortega (2010) argued, the value of genre and purpose for writing is not inherent but locally created.

Thus, it is necessary for teachers to exercise their agency to engage genres and purposes that make sense in their classroom (Ortega, 2010) in order to make writing serve as an ideal
A myriad of possibilities exist for developing writing tasks, such as tasks that connect students to non-academic types of writing in a variety of non-academic contexts, such as writing a letter to a host family, writing an article for the school newspaper, or writing blogs and emails that are nowadays often seen in technology-mediated environments (Ortega, 2012). The findings that emails and blogs have been increasingly used in the classroom could indicate today’s teachers’ growing awareness of the importance of connecting students to their real-life writing.

Importantly, then, whatever activities, tasks, or genres students are asked to write must be based on their needs; doing this can engender a sense of ownership and promote engagement with the writing. The constructs of needs, ownership, and engagements are the key to both the language and writing development of L2 learners. This is why genres matter, and why genres could play a pivotal role in allowing both teachers and students to reconceptualize writing. It is our hope that the present study can serve as a springboard for teachers, educators, and administrators, those not only in Japan but also in other EFL countries, to redefine the meaning of communication skills often advocated in the national guidelines and develop tasks for comprehensive language learning in a way that enables students to see English as an empowering resource that has a direct connection to who they are, what they do, and what they could do in the future.

**Future Research**

Although the findings of this study have significant implications for teachers, educators, and administrators in higher education in Japan, the results should be followed up by further studies with a larger population of Japanese university students to improve reliability. Furthermore, given that only a questionnaire was used in this study, other qualitative research methods, such as classroom observations, interviews with students, and diary studies, could also provide more reliable insight into the current state of EFL writing instruction in Japan. From the perspective of L2 writing research and pedagogy, it will be meaningful to investigate whether the findings of this study could be extrapolated to student populations in other East Asian countries, where English is taught as a foreign language in formal education systems, just like Japan. The research from this perspective is important, given that many features of EFL writing contexts are distinct from ESL settings, and EFL writers’
idiosyncrasy has just recently arisen as a crucial area needing further investigation (e.g., Manchón, 2011a, 2011b). More importantly, specific focus should be placed on East Asian EFL contexts because EFL writers in East Asian countries are different from those in European EFL countries in several unique ways: the linguistic differences between English and Asian languages, the limited opportunity to interact with native speakers, and the developmental speed of language proficiency due to less exposure to the target language. In this regard, one of the reviewers suggested that cultural traditions and educational philosophies also differ between the two EFL contexts, and this might have led to idiosyncratic features of Asian EFL writers. Considering the issues noted above, it is important for researchers in East Asian countries to cooperate with each other and to cross the border of texts, contexts, writing practices and writing instruction. Such study will not only help develop writing curricula that can meet the contextual needs in East Asian countries but may also increase “the capacity of L2 writing as a field to produce theoretically robust knowledge that can be useful in improving L2 writing across different settings” (Ortega, 2004, p. 8). It is hoped that this study constitutes a first step toward this goal.

Acknowledgement

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http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/groups/sds/harper_ieee_05.pdf


Plenary delivered at the 9th Symposium on Second Language Writing. University of Murcia, Spain, May 20-22.


Appendix A

Translation of sample items from the Japanese university student questionnaire

The purpose of this survey is to find out about the current situation of English writing education in high schools and universities in Japan. We would like you (who are currently studying in Japanese universities) to tell us what kinds of classes, tasks, and genres you have experienced and what you have learned both at high school and in university. We will not make public any information that pertains to individuals.

1. About your English classes before you entered university

A. The contents of your high school English classes

The items below refer to what you actually did in your high school English classes. For each question, circle the most appropriate response in terms of frequency.

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>practicing grammar and vocabulary problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>understanding the outline and necessary information in order to answer reading comprehension questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>comprehending all the details of a given passage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>reading an English text with a focus on the target words, phrases and grammar, and the composition and development of a paragraph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>translating an English text into Japanese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6</td>
<td>extensive reading of material other than the textbook (stories, newspaper articles, internet articles)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7</td>
<td>translating a short passage of Japanese into English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A8</td>
<td>writing correct English with attention to grammar and wording</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A9</td>
<td>writing a summary in English based on aural or written input</td>
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<tr>
<td>A10</td>
<td>organizing your ideas based on aural or written input and writing them in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>A11</td>
<td>writing in English with a purpose based on fixed settings and situations (example: writing a letter of self introduction to your friends in foreign countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A12</td>
<td>organizing the content into paragraphs paying attention to the overall composition and development of your writing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A13</td>
<td>improving your writing based on feedback from your teacher and classmates</td>
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<tr>
<td>A14</td>
<td>integrating the skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking (for example: reading a newspaper, discussing the contents, writing your opinion, making a presentation)</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A15</td>
<td>talking in English about familiar topics in pairs or groups</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A16</td>
<td>discussing in English the content of what you have read or listened to</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A17</td>
<td>answering your teacher’s questions in English about what you have read or listened to</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A18</td>
<td>summarizing your ideas to make a simple speech in English</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A19</td>
<td>discussing various topics in English with regard to the causes and problems of an issue and debating whether you are for or against the issue</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A20</td>
<td>preparing and performing a skit or role play based on a model</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A21</td>
<td>practicing English pronunciation with an emphasis on rhythm and intonation</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A22</td>
<td>listening to a CD related to the contents of the textbook</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A23</td>
<td>watching videos or DVDs or listening to audio material about something unrelated to the textbook</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A24</td>
<td>listening to English sentences and writing down what you hear (dictation)</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A25</td>
<td>singing a song in English</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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### B. Experience of writing in English

How often did you experience the items below in your high school English classes?

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently

| B1  | separate, independent sentences | 1--2--3--4 |
| B2  | a paragraph consisting of several sentences | 1--2--3--4 |
| B3  | a text consisting of at least two paragraphs | 1--2--3--4 |
| B4  | a diary or blog | 1--2--3--4 |
| B5  | a book review | 1--2--3--4 |
| B6  | a story or poem | 1--2--3--4 |
| B7  | a summary of a text you have read | 1--2--3--4 |
| B8  | an essay (opinion or argumentative essay) | 1--2--3--4 |
| B9  | a contribution to a school newspaper or newspaper | 1--2--3--4 |
C. About your English writing teacher and his/her guidance and planning

How do the items below apply to your English writing teacher’s way of teaching and methods of evaluation at high school? Circle the most appropriate response.

1=least valued, 2=less valued, 3=somewhat valued, 4=highly valued

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<td>C1</td>
<td>correct grammar</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>appropriate words and phrases</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>linking sentences</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>appropriate paragraph structure (Intro, Body, Conclusion, Thesis statement etc.)</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>contents of the writing</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
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2. English classes and English study at university

D. Your English classes at university

D1 Have you taken a class specifically for teaching writing? 1: no 2: yes

D1 those who chose (1: no), skip questions D2 to D4 and go to E.

D2 In D1, those who chose (2: yes), how many writing courses have you taken since entering university? ( )

D3 How many of those courses were taught by a native speaker? ( )

D4 How many of those were not taught by a native speaker? ( )

E. About your experience of writing in English in university English classes

In the next item, regarding your experience of writing English in university classes, circle the most appropriate answer.
How often have you done the following writing tasks in your university English classes?

1=never, 2=not often, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently.

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<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>separate independent sentences</td>
<td>1--2--3--4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>E2</td>
<td>a paragraph consisting of several sentences (one paragraph)</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
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<td>E3</td>
<td>a text of at least two paragraphs</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
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<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>diary or blog</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>E5</td>
<td>book review</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
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<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>stories or poems</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>E7</td>
<td>summary of an English text you have read</td>
<td>1--2—3- -4</td>
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<td>E8</td>
<td>essay (opinion or argumentation)</td>
<td>1—2—3--4</td>
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<td>E9</td>
<td>article for the school newspaper or newsletter</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
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<td>E10</td>
<td>explaining scientific experiments and experiment reports</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>E11</td>
<td>letters and emails</td>
<td>1--2--3—4</td>
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F. What is expected in university writing classes

F1 | Before entering university, to what extent did you prepare for the level of writing required at university? Circle the most appropriate response.
   1=totally unprepared, 2=fairly unprepared, 3=somewhat prepared, 4=very well prepared

G. What you have learned and reflections on your university writing classes

From the items below, put a circle by those where you “hadn’t explicitly been taught this concept before entering university, but learned this for the first time at university” and put a Δ in the places where you “were not explicitly taught this concept at university either.”

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<td>G1</td>
<td>paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>thesis statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>topic sentences &amp; supporting sentences</td>
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<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>introduction-body-conclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>cohesion</td>
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<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>coherence</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>G7</strong></td>
<td>unity of a paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>G8</strong></td>
<td>process writing (planning, drafting, revising, and editing, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G9</strong></td>
<td>development of a text (description, classification, definition, comparison &amp; contrast, cause &amp; effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G10</strong></td>
<td>other ( )</td>
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Book Reviews


Reviewed by Anna Husson Isozaki, Gunma Prefectural Women’s University, Gunma, Japan

A broad coalition of teachers and researchers across the Asian region examined codeswitching (CS) in English classrooms, between English and the L1 languages of the university students. The resulting case studies along with analysis and theory-building make up *Codeswitching in University English-Medium Classes: Asian Perspectives.*

The volume is composed of an introduction by the editors Barnard and McLellan, an overview by Ernesto Macaro, and eight chapters of paired case studies and commentary. An afterword reviews some notable points in the case studies, and touches on other research as well.

In their introduction, Barnard and McLellan delineate their multi-layered rationale for compiling the volume. Population shifts and the rise of multicultural societies have made codeswitching a natural part of daily life and English is often a communication bridge between social groups and across physical borders. How, though, should this be reflected in education? Many Asian countries have shifted their education policy toward English being both taught as a foreign language and used as the medium for teaching other subjects. How is this English emphasis playing out in present administrative goals, instructor beliefs and classroom practices? The editors summarize the volume’s case studies, which provide some examples and food for thought in reply to these questions.

Ernesto Macaro, in his overview, then shares what is known about CS, and what needs further examination. Macaro proposes criteria suggesting classrooms relevant for CS-use analysis would be those where the target language is the base for classwork, where the classes aim for “communicative competence” skills for students (pp.20-21) rather than comparative L1 and L2 analysis (p.13), and where CS is used in less than fifteen percent of the instructor’s student-directed speech (p.14). He points out that the goal of a lesson should be clear before carrying out targeted observation for CS and concluding whether CS was helpful or not (p.13). Potential benefits bilingual teachers can share with learners by choosing and utilizing L1 or L2 in carefully considered ways is highlighted (pp.19-20), and subsequently
demonstrated in the entry by Lili Tian, in which instructors explain new English terms in the language with the clearer equivalency – rather than “defaulting” to L1 (pp.49-50).

Given the wide region covered, the study settings range from having had little or no previous research literature on CS (Thailand, Bhutan, and Indonesia), to the Philippines, which has had a great deal, dating back four decades (p.175). The case studies, therefore, vary in many respects, from the number of teachers participating and methods of data collection and analysis, to how many of Macaro’s framework criteria are met. In the commentary sections, other researchers examine the case studies and then, often, offer comparative examples and data. Where included, as in the commentary section regarding Indonesia’s tertiary education, a survey of student opinions on their instructor’s use of CS is fascinating (p.139-141). As Macaro’s framework emphasizes CS is valid for exploration if “accepted by all participants in that classroom (both teachers and learners)....” (p.12) it would have been interesting to have inclusion of learner feedback in the other case studies.

The volume is also of interest for glimpses of L2 English teaching in contexts across Asia, which generally share great distance between their L1 languages and English, with consequent challenges for EFL learners (Stephens, 2011). Endemic issues between languages favored at central government levels and the languages used in homes emerge in a number of case studies, and add another aspect to consider in addition to the tensions regarding the positioning of English (see for example the commentary sections on China, Bhutan, and Singapore).

The report from Japan was striking for its opposites. The case study, of two instructors’ English classes for eleventh graders in an engineering-technical school, involved ninety percent of one instructor’s speaking time in Japanese, and seventy-two percent in the other. The commentary case study, in contrast, was at a university with instructors whose determination to use English was high, and use of L1 in class was low. Instructors who were ethnically Japanese discussed their commitment to teach English-in-English in terms interpreted by the researcher as “identity” decisions (p.85-87), but there might be a case for the choice being pedagogical; providing language-use role models for their learners (Murphey, 1998).

In the overview, Macaro writes:
The hypothesis here is that some learners might be more willing to communicate and take risks if they are not forbidden to use brief bursts of their L1. However, willingness to communicate, in my view, is a necessary but not a sufficient outcome. This research would need to measure whether, in the long term, being allowed to codeswitch in task leads to some form of development. (Macaro, p.22)

This critical question remains open and of deep interest because the case studies and commentaries necessarily cover limited timespans. While the authors support CS in some circumstances, their research is exploratory, and mostly takes a nonjudgmental approach. One positive commonality that emerges among the instructors across the region is articulated in the section on Brunei: “What is clear... is that the learning process is given priority...”(p.154).

As a whole, the careful construction of the volume makes it a valuable resource for the CS debate. It may open up research possibilities for some readers, or reflection on theories and practice for others – productive results, whatever the conclusions.

References


https://www.academia.edu/1902745/Motivating_with_near_peer_role_models

In a world where information and communications technology is almost ubiquitous, foreign language teachers need to come to terms with how technology is revolutionising the way in which languages are taught and learnt in formal settings. In this landscape, Technology Enhanced Language Learning: Connecting Theory and Practice by Walker and White offers current views, discussions, perspectives, and tools for teachers. The intended audience is teachers who work with children, teenagers, or adults at university level.

The book is divided into twelve chapters and it features a companion website from which readers can access the links and resources included in the book. Each chapter opens with quotes and includes the chapter aims through questions. Additionally, chapters contain an introduction, a summary, and suggested further readings. Chapters 3-11 also feature carefully instructed tasks aimed at making readers experience TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) themselves and think about how to implement those tasks and Web 2.0 tools with their learners so as to build bridges between theory and their situated practices.

In Chapter 1, Walker and White introduce TELL and assert that it is based on the view that technology is one of the elements where language operates. This position is elaborated in Chapter 2 through the relationship between context, communication and digital technologies. In this relationship, Chapter 2 sheds light on language construction and microblogging, authorship and voices, technolect, and orthography, among other features of digitally-mediated conversation. One illuminating discussion in Chapter 2 is that about “digital natives vs. digital immigrants.” The authors put forward that it may be misleading to think that young people are intrinsically interested and experts in digital technologies.

Chapters 3-5 deal with language skills. In Chapter 3 the authors focus on spoken language on the internet with a pedagogical intent. They review the literature on listening skills and strategies for language learning before sharing ideas for teaching listening skills through the use of technology. A similar approach is found in Chapter 4 where they summarise the differences between L1 and L2 reading. Only then do they address how technology has influenced what and how we read, and how technology can aid teachers at promoting reading
skills through digital graphic organisers or interactive stories. In turn, Chapter 5 moves to writing and presents an informative outline of product and process approaches. Plagiarism and notions of authorship and ownership are particularly examined given the exponential amount of writing in cyberspace.

Chapter 6 discusses the role of visuals in language learning and how visual literacy is as important as learning to read words. This leads to an understanding of multimodality and learning and how both teachers and learners can now manipulate all the modes available. In this regard, Walker and White contend that one of the central roles teachers will have is that of helping learners become critical users and developers of multimodal texts. This chapter should be seen as a running thread throughout the book since the different tasks and resources suggested amalgamate different modes as well as language and thinking skills.

Chapters 7 and 8 show the scope of the book in terms of learner ages. Chapter 7 explores TELL with university learners. Plagiarism is reexamined and framed in higher education practices. The authors also reflect on the use of VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments) in face-to-face or online learning, and offer ways to develop evaluation skills towards reliability of sources and academic writing features such as referencing. Chapter 8 centres on learners between the ages of seven to eleven. The authors address the role of technology in the curriculum and return to the now challenged dichotomy of digital natives vs digital immigrants. Although their main concern seems to be on online safety and cyber-bullying, they move on to more literacy-related topics such as the use of tactile interfaces or storytelling through TELL.

As it is usually the case with ELT coursebooks, assessment is found almost at the end. Chapter 9 explores the advantages and disadvantages of using CATs (Computer-adaptive tests) and other traditional (e.g. multiple choice tests) and alternative (e-portfolios) electronic assessment tools and the washback effect on language learning and teaching. Yet, the authors build up a case for promoting technology in testing and assessment. While their supporting views are valid, readers may note that concerns which may emerge through the process are not equally problematised.

Chapters 10 – 12 focus on teachers as users of technology themselves and their roles in TELL. The authors assert that, following a pyramid of skills, teachers need to move from basic ICT competence to creating their own style and digital materials based on informed decisions. Therefore, these three chapters highlight TELL as part of teachers’ professional
development and provide suggestions for evaluating TELL materials and adding some of them to a coursebook, which the authors see as a work plan. Chapter 12, emphasises the complementary nature of TELL materials and explores how mobile devices and games are aspects which need to be examined in the fast changing techn-ecology teachers and learners inhabit.

Overall, the book is a useful resource for newcomers to the profession as well as experienced teachers since the book does not explore technology in isolation. Walker and White have carefully built a pedagogical framework and their conceptualisations, tasks, and pyramid of skills run across the contents thus connecting theory and practice. Indeed, the authors do not plunge into foreign language learning and pedagogies from the start but first paint a picture of current language use and development in these digital times. In so doing, they aim at helping readers reflect on the status of languages, their evolution, and also how language adjusts to our dynamic realities as human beings and language users. In general, the authors write in simple terms to a wider readership. Nevertheless, at times the intended audience seems to be teachers in contexts where technology is affordable, reliable, and up-to-date.

Dr Darío Luis Banegas is an associate fellow at Warwick University (UK) and a teacher trainer and curriculum developer at the Ministry of Education of Chubut (Argentina). He is involved in online and face-to-face teacher education programmes and leads projects on action research and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). He is the current editor of the Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics. His main interests are: CLIL, materials development, action research, and pre-service teacher education.
Guidelines for Submissions

Submissions for the Quarterly Issue

Submissions guidelines
The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly is a fully peer-reviewed section of the journal, reviewed by a team of experts in EFL from all over the world. The Asian EFL Journal welcomes submissions written in different varieties of world Englishes. The reviewers and Associate Editors come from a wide variety of cultural and academic backgrounds and no distinction is made between native and non-native authors. As a basic principle, the Asian EFL Journal does not define competence in terms of native ability, but we are a strictly reviewed journal and all our reviewers expect a high level of academic and written competence in whatever variety of English is used by the author. Every effort will be made to accept different rhetorical styles of writing. The Asian EFL Journal also makes every effort to support authors who are submitting to an international journal for the first time. While major revisions may be requested, every effort is made to explain to authors how to make the necessary revisions.

Each submission is initially screened by the Senior Associate Editor, before being sent to an Associate Editor who supervises the review. There is no word minimum or maximum.

There are two basic categories of paper:
* Full research papers, which report interesting and relevant research, try to ensure that you point out in your discussion section how your findings have broad relevance internationally and contribute something new to our knowledge of EFL.

* Non-research papers, providing detailed, contextualized reports of aspects of EFL such as curriculum planning. Very well documented discussions that make an original contribution to the profession will also be accepted for review. We cannot accept literature reviews as papers, unless these are "state of the art" papers that are both comprehensive and expertly drafted by an experienced specialist.

When submitting please specify if your paper is a full research paper or a non-research paper. In the latter case, please write a paragraph explaining the relevance of your paper to our Asian EFL Journal readership.
Authors are encouraged to conform to international standards of drafting, but every effort will be made to respect original personal and cultural voices and different rhetorical styles. Papers should still be fully-referenced and should use the APA (5th edition) format. Do not include references that are not referred to in the manuscript. Some pieces submitted to the quarterly issue may be reclassified during the initial screening process. Authors who wish to submit directly to the Teaching Articles section should read the separate guidelines and make this clear in the submission e-mail.

**Referencing:** Please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.) – Contributors are also invited to view the sample PDF guide available on our website and to refer to referencing samples from articles published from 2006. Due to the increasing number of submissions to the *Asian EFL Journal*, authors not conforming to APA system will have their manuscripts sent back immediately for revision. This delays publication and taxes our editorial process.

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All submissions should be submitted to: asian.efl.journal@yahoo.com

i) The document must be in MS Word format.

ii) Font must be Times New Roman size 12.

Section Headings: Times New Roman (Size 12, bold font).

Spacing: 1.5 between lines.

iii) 'Smart tags' should be removed.

iv) Footnotes must not 'pop up' in the document. They must appear at the end of the article. Use the superscript font option when inserting a note rather than the automatic footnote or endnote option.

iv) Citations - APA style. (See our website PDF guide)

Use the APA format as found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA), 5th Edition, for headings, citations, reference lists and in text referencing. Extra care should be taken for citing the Internet and must include the date the site was accessed.

About APA Style/format: [http://www.apastyle.org/aboutstyle.html](http://www.apastyle.org/aboutstyle.html)

APA Citation Style: [http://www.liu.edu/cwis/CWP/library/workshop/citapa.htm](http://www.liu.edu/cwis/CWP/library/workshop/citapa.htm)
APA Style Workshop:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/index.html

v) Keywords: All articles must include Keywords at the beginning of the article. List 4-6 keywords to facilitate locating the article through keyword searches in the future.

vi) Graphs and Charts - either in the body of the document or at the end. In certain cases, a graphic may not appear in the text of the web version of the Asian EFL Journal but a link to the graphic will be provided.

vii) Paragraphs. Double space between paragraphs. Indent the beginning of each paragraph with three strikes of the space bar except those immediately following a heading, quotation, example, figure, chart or table. Do not use the tab key.

viii) Keep text formatting (e.g., italics, bold, etc.) to the absolute minimum necessary. Use full justification. All lines to be against Left Hand Side Margin (except quotes - to be indented per APA style).

ix) Abstract

The abstract should contain an informative summary of the main points of the article, including, where relevant, the article’s purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, types of data analysed, subject information, main findings, and conclusions. The abstract should reflect the focus of the article.

x) Graphs – to fit within A4 size margins (not wider)

Thank you for your cooperation. (asian_efl_journal@yahoo.com)

Please include the following with your submission:

Name
School affiliation
Address
E-mail
Phone number
Brief Bio Data noting history of professional expertise
Qualifications
An undertaking the work has not been published elsewhere
Abstract

Any questions regarding submission guidelines, or more detailed inquiries about less common citation styles, may be addressed to the Editorial Board.

Book Reviews:
The *Asian EFL Journal* currently encourages two kinds of submissions, unsolicited and solicited. Unsolicited reviewers select their own materials to review. Both teachers and graduate students are encouraged to submit reviews. Solicited reviewers are contacted and asked to review materials from its current list of availability. If you would like to be considered as a solicited reviewer, please forward your CV with a list of publications to the Book Review Editor at: asianefljournalbookreviews@yahoo.com.

All reviewers, unsolicited and solicited, are encouraged to provide submissions about materials that they would like to suggest to colleagues in the field by choosing materials that they feel have more positive features than negative ones.

Length and Format:
1. Reviews should be prepared using MS Word and the format should conform to 12 pica New Times Roman font, 1.5 spacing between lines, and 1 inch margins.
2. The reviewer(s)' full names including middle initial(s), title, school affiliation, school address, phone number, and e-mail address should be included at the top of the first page.
3. The complete title of the text, edition number, complete name(s) of author(s), publisher, publisher's address (city & state), and date of publication should be included after the reviewer(s)' identifying information.
4. Reviews should be between 500-700 words.
5. A brief biography of the author(s) should be included after the review.
6. A statement that the submission has not been previously published or is not being considered for publication elsewhere should be included at the bottom of the page.

Organization:
Reviewers are encouraged to peruse reviews recently published in the quarterly PDF version of the Journal for content and style before writing their own. While creativity and a variety of writing styles are encouraged, reviews, like other types of articles, should be concisely written and contain certain information that follows a predictable order: a statement about the work's intended audience, a non-evaluative description of the material's contents, an academically worded evaluative summary which
includes a discussion of its positive features and one or two shortcomings if applicable (no materials are perfect), and a comment about the material's significance to the field.

**Style:**

1. All reviews should conform to the Journal's APA guideline requirements and references should be used sparingly.
2. Authors should use plural nouns rather than gendered pronouns such as he/she, his/her him/her and adhere to the APA’s Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language, which can be found at: [http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html](http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html).