



THE ASIAN ESP JOURNAL

# The Asian ESP Journal

December 2018  
Volume 14, Issue 7.1



Chief Editor - Roger Nunn

Associate Production Editor – David Young



Published by ELE Publishing  
(Division of the TESOL Asia Group)

TESOL Asia Group is wholly owned by SITE SKILL TRAINING Pty Ltd (Australia)

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

**No unauthorized photocopying**

Publisher: ELE Publishing

Managing Editor of ELE Publishing: Dr. John Adamson

Chief Editor of the Asian ESP Journal: Professor Roger Nunn

Associate Production Editor: David Young

Production Editors: Alliya Anderson; Ameera Shoukry; Enaam Hunaini; Joud Jabri Pickett; Ronald Jones; Sarah Tatz; Tiffany Cammidge

ISSN. 2206-0979



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Roger Nunn &amp; David Young .....</b>	<b>4 - 6</b>
<i>Foreword</i>	
<b>2. John R. Baker and Ying-Shing Chung.....</b>	<b>7 - 56</b>
<i>Writing about the Writing Center: Exploring What Factors Motivate Writing Center Usage Outside the North American Context</i>	
<b>3. Neslihan Bilikozen .....</b>	<b>57 - 100</b>
<i>Journey Towards Academic Literacy: An Exploration of Challenges Faced in the First Year at University</i>	
<b>4. Li-Chin Chen .....</b>	<b>101 - 128</b>
<i>Do Lecturers Use Questions Differently in English-Medium Lectures Delivered by Native Speakers of Mandarin Chinese and English?</i>	
<b>5. Liang Li, Margaret Franken, and Shaokun Wu .....</b>	<b>129 - 162</b>
<i>Sentence Initial Bundles: A Comparative Study Between Chinese Master's L2 Theses and Published Writing</i>	
<b>6. Delaram Khansari .....</b>	<b>163 - 192</b>
<i>Comparison of Rhetorical Moves in the Method Sections of Two Disciplines</i>	
<b>7. Glen Andrew Stewart .....</b>	<b>193 - 243</b>
<i>Hotels, Tours, and Tables: A Comprehensive Elective CALL Course for Tourism/Hospitality Majors in Asia</i>	
<b>8. Gene Thompson .....</b>	<b>244 - 284</b>
<i>Insights for Efficacy Development from an Exploration of Japanese Business Management Students' EAP Self-Efficacy Beliefs</i>	



## **Foreword**

### **Literacy, Motivation, & Engagement**

**Roger Nunn**

*American University of Sharjah*

**David Young**

*Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi*

Welcome to the December, 2018 Issue of Asian ESP (Volume 14, Issue 2). It is always rewarding as editors to be able to acknowledge the diversity of submissions that we publish. In this issue we look at academic literacy development, professional discourse, and academic discourse - all of these from a variety of angles and cultures, and all in one 7-paper volume.

The impact and potential of writing centers in supporting academic writing should not be underestimated. In “Writing about the Writing Center: Exploring What Factors Motivate Writing Center Usage outside the North American Context”, John Baker and Ying-Shing Chung provide us with invaluable insights into students’ motivation to attend writing centers in an Asian context. His comparative study will support the work beyond cultural contexts of anyone administering or supporting a writing center. What surfaced as most influential was students’ belief in the writing center: if they sensed it could improve their grades, they would go.

The journey towards academic literacy of students starting a new life at university or college is one that needs intensive support. In “Journey towards Academic Literacy: An Exploration of Challenges Faced in the First-Year at University”, Neslihan Bilikozen reports on in-depth

interviews with freshman students over a complete academic year to highlight the importance of “the perceived significance of grades, weakness in reading and writing skills, and doubts about the contribution of these requirements to their general academic and professional development.” Writing centers and advisors/tutors will help, but Bilikozen’s research underlines the need for faculty to be aware of the non-academic difficulties of their students and to be ready to respond.

Li-Chin Chen, in “Do Lecturers Use Questions Differently in English-Medium Lectures Delivered by Native Speakers of Mandarin Chinese and English?” provides us with further insights into our approach to students. In this case, it is the questioning behaviour of faculty in a lecture context. In another comparative study, Li Chen draws on data from the Taiwanese Lecture Corpus and the British Academic Spoken English corpus. Interestingly, it appears that the distinction (which AESP has often questioned) between so-called ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ users of English does not appear to be significant. Perhaps more importantly, this paper provides insights for teachers about how to improve the interactive nature of their lectures. Having found one rather tenuous common thread across three papers, we return now to our initial statement about the diversity of this issue.

In a comparative study between Chinese Master’s L2 theses and published writing, Liang Li, Margaret Franken, and Shaoqun Wu find that the former exhibited an overuse of distinctive textual features, such as general nouns, while flagging an absence of shell nouns, for example. Their paper discusses the reasons behind the students’ choices and signals the need for pedagogic attention (to address this default limitation). The recommendation for and subsequent adoption of corpus-based tools would enable students to broaden their linguistic remit and importantly facilitate the wider use of cohesive devices, amongst other grammatical features, to enhance their writing range.

Delaram Khansari picks up on the theme of approximating academic discourse norms by comparing rhetorical moves in the method sections of research articles in the disciplines of Applied Linguistics and Chemistry. Both disciplines employed the ‘procedure’ move most frequently; however, Applied Linguistics typically favored more moves to explain the method section than Chemistry. The study provides insights into the writing differences

among the members of discourse communities. For instructors and students alike, the clarity this study provides could facilitate meaningful classroom discussion and greater awareness of rhetorical moves that are both common and particular to individual disciplines. Learners would be better prepared and fundamentally more coherent participants in their disciplinary communities.

Keeping with the theme of preparing for entry into a specific discourse community, Glen Andrew Stewart's study focuses on the implementation of an elective CALL course for tertiary-level learners on the cusp of the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan and abroad. Geared to build communicative competence and English-language skills, the course, and its subsequent analysis, demonstrated knowledge and skills acquisition, and perceived usefulness by the participants. Notably, students were able to discern improvements in their listening and speaking capacities, all of which importantly readies them for future employment.

Gene Thompson, in his study, *Insights for Efficacy Development from an Exploration of Japanese Business Management Students' EAP Self-Efficacy Beliefs*, examines the self-reflective performance perspectives of university students majoring in International Business in Japan. The study homes in on students' perceptions of their abilities to complete certain academic tasks and was conducted to evaluate their confidence to meet key program objectives. The results reveal that task difficulty and insufficient practice opportunities feature strongly as reasons for a loss of confidence, and these findings signal where attention is required in both classroom and activity management – to better prepare potential graduates for the workplace.

Although a diverse range, all articles hinge on the significance of literacy and the necessity to equip students with the requisite linguistic skills for their industries and ultimately their careers. Not only does this demand that students reconsider their initial perspectives from one semester to the next, it asks of all of us, educators and researchers alike, to be more open and receptive to how we engage with learners. This can be as simple as rephrasing in-class questions to being more sensitive and responsive to our students' needs.



## **Writing about the Writing Center: Exploring What Factors Motivate Writing Center Usage Outside the North American Context**

**John R. Baker**

*Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ton Duc Thang University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*

**Ying-Shing Chung**

*Faculty of Foreign Languages, Da Yeh University International Language Center*

### **Biodata**

**John R. Baker** has worked with writing and self-access centers and taught writing, ESOL, and literature courses in the U.S.A. and Asia (Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam). His research interests include second language writing and reading, self-access and writing center administration, various literature interests, and how these come together in an interdisciplinary nature.

Email: drjohnbaker@tdtu.edu.vn

**Ying-Shing Chung** is a lecturer at Da Yeh University. She has worked with writing centers and taught EFL, composition, and general education courses in Taiwan. Her research interests include second language pedagogy, teaching writing, and writing centers.

Email: yingshienchung@gmail.com

### **Abstract<sup>1</sup>**

Writing centers have long been a regular part of North American universities. Whether a new center becomes a permanent part of a university, however, is highly dependent on whether it can

---

<sup>1</sup>This paper was funded by Ton Duc Thang University (TDTU), Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Questions regarding this research can be sent to Dr. John Baker, Ton Duc Thang University, 19 Nguyen Huu Tho St, Tan Phong Ward, Dist. 7, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Email: drjohnrbaker@tdtu.edu.vn

prove itself successful to its funding sources. One yardstick used to measure success in North American settings is how many students seek help. Arguing that directors outside North America, like those in the North American context, need to investigate what motivates student help seeking behaviors, this small scale study reports what factors purported to influence students' behaviors in North American contexts were found to influence the motivation of students with high visitation records in one Asian context (i.e., Taiwanese university setting). The study used a closed and open-response attitudinal survey to explore how 12 antecedents and reinforcers related to five motivational factors purported to influence student help seeking behaviors in North American settings are perceived by the target population to influence their help seeking behaviors: (a) faculty participation, (b) students' belief in the writing center's ability to help students improve, (c) public relations, (d) providing self-access opportunities, and (e) convenient access. The study found that one antecedent/reinforcer related to the factor students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve was most influential, i.e., students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their grades. It also found that one antecedent/reinforcer area related to faculty participation was the least influential, i.e., showing a record of all of the students' visits in class. It further found that each of the 12 antecedents/reinforcers was important to the overall local blueprint, albeit in varying degrees. Additionally, it found factors related to the specific setting. With these data in mind (all five factors were found to be influential, variances in weighting, and factors related to the specific setting), the paper illustrates that while the five factors found to be influential in North American settings were influential, writing directors outside the North American context still need to investigate the why's behind their centers' numbers (or lack thereof) by exploring how building blocks reported in North American writing center literature translate (or do not translate) into help seeking behaviors locally.

**Key Words:** Writing Center Administration, Usage, Motivation, Asia, North America

## **Introduction**

Writing centers have long been part of North American universities, since the 1930's (North, 1984). Long term acceptance, however, does not necessarily guarantee an individual center's longevity: Whether a new center becomes a permanent part of an institution is highly dependent on whether its director can prove its success to his/her funding sources (Brown, 1984; Rodis,



1990). One yardstick that has been traditionally used to measure writing center success in North American settings, and one that is still used today, is how many students seek help (Flynn, 1982; Huang, 2012; Moore, 1950; North, 1984; Olson, 1981). However, whether such numbers are represented by raw usage or charted across populations, grades, or departments (Schreiber, 2006), this sort of enumeration, as Brown (1984) argues and others agree (Bell, 2000; North, 1984, 1984b), is only one way to assess a center, and it is, of course, rather narrow (Donnelli & Garrison, 2003). To demonstrate that a center is worth its cost in a more responsible way, i.e., that is that it benefits the university as a whole (Speck, 2012; Upcraft & Schuh, 2000), Lerner (2003) suggests that we need to think more “broadly about our contributions to institutions, considering our writing centers’ contributions to campus life and climate, to general education outcomes, to our institutions’ commitment to academic excellence” (p.73).

Many models and methods, both internal and external (Bell, 2000), have been proposed to help us do this. These have been discussed in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed terms (Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2010; Lerner, 1997, 2001; 2012; Masiello, 1992; Niller, 2003, 2005; Strand, 1997) and posited for use in isolation and via triangulation (Hawthorne, 2012; Kalikoff, 1991). Some of these include drawing on a variety of statistics (Niller, 2003; 2005), end of conference and end of term student and faculty surveys (Bell, 2000; Bishop, 1990), focus groups (Schreiber, 2006; Simpson, 2012), comments on drafts (Field-Pickering, 1993), portfolios (Childers, 2006; Fontaine, 1985; Schendel, 2012), and testimonials from students and faculty (Schreiber, 2006).

These instruments, and still others, have been used to explore a variety of things, not limited to faculty and raters’ perceptions of students’ writing improvement (Bell, 2000; Carino & Enders, 2001; Niller, 2003); grades (Lerner, 1993, 2001); student satisfaction (Thonus, 2002); social and academic integration (Lerner, 2001); freshman retention and graduation rates (Bell & Frost, 2002); the center’s role in writing across the curriculum (Yahner, 1993); and its role in professional development (Yahner, 1993). In short, there is no shortage of ideas about how and what to measure, but the base fact is that nothing can be measured—none of these important investigations can occur—if we can’t get students through the door, and at the core “that means numbers” (Simpson, 2012, p. 209), the number of students we help.

Accepting that the core girding for writing center funding depends on whether centers are attracting students, directors of centers in North American contexts need to know what attracts students to their individual centers. A survey of North American writing center literature identifies a number of motivational factors behind students' help seeking behaviors. For the purpose of this paper, we, drawing on the aforementioned literature review, focus on five: (a) faculty participation, (b) students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve, (c) public relations, (d) providing self-access opportunities, and (e) convenient access. These are discussed in the following sections.

### **Faculty Participation**

Faculty participation (i.e., faculty encouraging students to visit the writing center) has been cited as a strong indicator of whether students will utilize a writing center (Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2013; Brown 1984; Bishop, 1990; Clark, 1985; Gordon, 2008; Moore, 1950). Such compulsory participation, although merited with producing high usage, has also been the focus of critical discussion. North (1984), for example, noted such compulsion does not necessarily result in better writers. And Gordon (2008) critically went as far as to discourage faculty from requiring visits altogether. Van Dam (1985) and Harris (1995), on the other hand, have argued that students who are mandated to go believe that the visits are helpful. Young (2014), reflecting on the fray, contended that mandatory writing center visits encourage writing center use without negative effects. In fact, she argued that many of those required to come actually come better prepared and that both types (i.e., those required and not required to visit) are "about as likely to consider the consultation a success" (p. 53). Clark (1985), like Young, recognizing different sides of the argument, claimed that there is a place for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Clark noted that while some students are extrinsically motivated, others are intrinsically so, and still others are driven by a combination. Referring to the former, she concluded that while many students would not come unless compelled, the chance promise of converting students into better writers is worth the compulsion. Following this logic, she suggests that all writing students should have the opportunity to experience a writing center conference via a compulsory visit.

Two other factors in the area of faculty participation that can be found in the literature are (a) discussing students' visits (with individual students) and (b) publicly sharing students' visits with

the class. With regards to the first, Moore (1950) argued that teachers' recommendations, not compulsion, is a substantial factor in whether a student will go to the center. Olson (1984) supported this, noting that students feel good about coming to the center because their teachers encourage them to do so. Along this line, Rodis (1990) found students reported that a teacher's suggestion, not a requirement, accounted for 60% of visits, whereas 11% resulted from a teacher's requirement. This, however, could be interpreted as belonging to the area of grades, as Bishop (1990) reported that students feel that teachers may look more kindly on them and their grades if teachers know they went to the writing center.

With regards to publicly sharing students' visits to the center in class, Bishop (1990) encouraged the "publication of student responses to a center visit" and "class sharing of visit experiences to alleviate fears and to encourage future visits" (p. 38). Related to the discussion of posting students' visits in the classroom is Olson's (1984) argument that when the whole class is referred instead of an individual student, visits to the center are not seen as negative. Instead the common misconception that only poor writers go to the writing center is dispelled and a more healthy view is molded, one that shows (a) that a visit to the center is part of writing process (Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2010) and (b) that even a high percentage of excellent students visit the center (Olson, 1984).

### **Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve**

Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve has also received attention in the literature. Three areas are often discussed with regards to student beliefs: (a) writing ability (i.e., student efficacy), (b) the writing center's ability to help students improve their writing, and (c) grades. Moore (1950), in a discussion of writing ability, explained that students seek assistance because they believe that they are poor writers and therefore need help. Williams and Takaku (2011) also found that students with lower self-efficacy seek help from the writing center more often than those with higher self-efficacy do. Olson (1984) found the opposite to be true, explaining that students may feel anxious about being seen as less capable if they seek help in that they misconceive the writing center as a place only poor writers go. Specifically, students who perceive themselves as poor writers tend to avoid the writing center, which may have a great deal to do with the house of remediation misconception writing centers have historically dealt with.

The theoretical argument between the second two, better writing and grades, has also swung back and forth. North in 1984 wrote that students come to the center “because, more often than not, they are genuinely, deeply engaged with their material, anxious to wrestle it into the best form they can: they are really motivated to write” (p. 443). However, on further reflection in 1994, he recants this as a romantic idealization and more soberly writes, students are “motivated to (say) [. . .] to have their writing be finished [. . .] to win [. . .] a good grade, whatever they imagine that will take (North, 1994, p. 10).” Morrison (2003) also weighed in on grades, stating “that grades are of substantial, if not primary, interest to most students” (p. 37). Others, however, have reified North’s 1984 early optimism. Brown (1984), for example, found that while mandatory visits compose anywhere from 6% to 90% of writing center usage and that many students come of their own volition (seeking realistic assistance with their papers), others are looking for instant A’s and speedy help that requires little effort. Bromley, Northway, and Schonberg (2013) offered a more stratified response, reporting that the top three reasons for visits are (a) instructor referral, (b) better writing, and (c) grades, with various weighting at different institutions. They also noted that motivation was best described as a combination of factors, with only 4% of students citing grades as their only reason for their visit. Rodis (1990), examining student expectations, reported high expectations for grades and low expectation for writing improvement in one institution and the reverse in others. Rodis argued that the difference, based on how a writing center is set up, is very much dependent on what expectations are encouraged at the center and institutions.

## **Public Relations**

A third area is Public Relations. Public relations can take many forms, two of which are advertising and appointment reminders. The importance of public relations in the form of advertising has received regular attention in North American writing center literature. Advertising has been reported to take many forms, to include bookmarks, brochures, handouts, flyers, posters, campus newsletters, newspapers, radio stations, resource fairs and open houses, class visits, university recruitment presentations, websites, and word of mouth (Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2013; Brown, 1984; North 1979; Ryan, 2015; Welch, 1974). This factor has been reported to be less influential than others. Bishop (1990), for example, reported the influence of advertising to be as low as 3%, and Bromley, Northway, and Schonberg (2013) reported anywhere it to be from 9 to 18%. Nevertheless, advertising has a long history of historical support. North (1979), for example,

argued that “writing centers that survive do so because they are well-known, highly visible” (p. 151). Others have described it simply as standard writing center practice (Harris & Yancey, 1980), in that it is an important part of planning a successful center (Brown, 1984; Simpson, 2012) and part of a director’s job (Strand, 1997).

One area related to public relations (i.e., appointments) that has received some attention, yet little empirical research, is how to schedule and encourage students to keep appointments. Although some explain that there may be a positive side to missed appointments in that a missed appointment may free tutors up to do other tasks in the center (Estes & Martina, 2010), missed appointments can impact scheduling. Missed appointments can also discourage walk-ins as wait times are often required before a walk-in can be taken in place of an appointment. One way to deal with missed appointments is to restrict new appointments for students who miss appointments (Kinhead, et al, 1995). Another method is to deter missed appointments by confirming appointments via telephone (Schreiber, 2006). And a third approach is to send out reminders email or text messages, sometimes using via automated programs such as WOnline or TutorTrac. However, the size of the center and budgets need to be taken into account (Abrahams & Dobbins, 2015), and these products have met with mixed reviews (Grogan & Whitman, 2004).

### **Providing Self-Access Opportunities**

Providing self-access opportunities, that is, where students can find a collection of composition and English texts and can use computers, is also a historical constant in writing center literature, albeit it does not hold as prominent a place as other matters. Stocking the center with a collection of resource texts, for example, has been repeatedly cited as an important part of writing center development (Baker, 2013). Olson (1984) wrote, “stock[ing] the center [. . .] with a collection of composition and English texts” (p. 90) is one of seven “administrative matters germane to the writing center” (p. vii). Harris (1992) likewise explained that one of the goals of the writing center is to serve “as a resource room for writing-related materials” (p. 27). Chromik (2002) similarly pointed out the importance of creating library resource centers to help students with their writing. More recently, Childers (2006), in “Developing a Strategic Plan for a Writing Center,” reiterated the need for the writing center to offer a “library of materials on writing as a resource for students”

(p. 65). Kinkead and Harris (1993), empirically testing how this advice was followed, found that North American university writing centers do indeed provide such resources to help students.

A second concern in the area of self-access is computer access. Providing computers for students to use during the writing process has often been cited as an important part of providing a comfortable writing environment that is conducive to writing, which is a draw for students. However, this should not be confused with (a) providing computer aided instruction (Coogan, 1990; Palmquist, 2003), something that began as early as the 1960s (Wresch, 1984), or (b) the more recent use of online writing centers (Singh-Corcoran & Emika, 2012). Even as computers were slowly finding their way into centers, Slattery (1987) early on noted that the availability of computers students can use while working on their papers “before, during, and after regularly scheduled tutoring sessions” (p. 7) draws students to the center. Harris (2003) later argued that centers, to remain viable, must keep up with the times. Bray (2013) further commented that in a world where there is no writing without technology, providing computers is necessary (Bray, 2013). As a result of this technological trend, computers have become a mainstay in writing centers (Palmquist 2003). In 1984, Carino reports that the at least one computer could be found in 88 of the 184 writing centers cited listed in the Writing Lab Directory (Carino, 1998). Buck (2008) reports that by 1992 this had increased to over 80% of the centers listed in the National Directory of Writing Centers in 1992 reporting to use computers. Today the frequency is even more ubiquitous.

### **Convenient Access**

Three factors with regards to convenient access have been addressed: (a) writing center location (b) opening hours, and (c) wait time to see a tutor. Discussing location, Brown (1984), in a survey of 50 writing centers, found that over 80 % of U.S writing centers that responded (n=36) were located very near or fairly near to the English department office, and 94% responded that they were centrally located on campus. In addition to funding (Kinkead & Harris, 1993), or the lack thereof (Boquet, 2002), politics (Martin, 2012), and the logistical concerns of foot traffic and noise (Boquet, 2002), one of the reasons location is so important is convenience. That is, a location is desirable if it is (a) near departments which may provide clients and (b) centrally located so as to serve students from the university as a whole (Ferruci & DeRosa, 2012; Neff, 1993; Okawa, 1993).

To become more and more convenient, centers have also expanded their reach by adding satellite locations around campus in the form of drop-in sites (Sanford, 2012; Simon, 1993). Sanford (2012) claims that this approach greatly increases student usage and thus reifies the importance of convenient location.

A second area with regards to convenience is opening hours. Snively, Freeman, and Prentice (2012) aptly pointed out that if a writing center's opening hours conflict with students' schedules, access can be problematic. To determine the best plan, Simpson (2012) explains that centers need to explore usage patterns and different group's needs to choose the best opening hours. Considering the need to best accommodate students, many centers open earlier, stay open in the evenings, provide weekend hours, and work with administrators to serve special populations (Fitzgerald & Stephenson, 2012), something that Hawthorne (2012) explains shows administrators that the center is indeed serving the needs of the university.

A third area is wait time. Wait time is a factor related to motivation that is more often found more in North American university catalogues and writing center descriptions than in peer reviewed work, yet a limited amount of empirical literature has demonstrated that wait time is a factor that can impact student usage. Osman (2007), in a survey of student satisfaction, reported that wait time was indeed a concern. Vazquez (2008) similarly found that students expected very little wait time to see a tutor and that extended wait times discourage students from visiting the writing center.

### **Diversity in the North American Context**

This neat and tidy overview of factors from the North American context comes with a cautionary warning. That is, while such tidiness may be comforting, it may also be misleading. This is because that while many universities and writing centers may have quite a lot in common (Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2013), each combination is unique in its own way (Donnelli & Garrison, 2003; Kinkead & Harris, 1993), in that while there may be "some consensus [. . .] as to what constitutes an effective writing center program [. . .] , writing centers tend to be creatures of their individual institutions" (Bell, 2000, p. 13). And therefore, as Brown (1984) noted early on, "what works for one writing center may not work for all writing centers." As such, it is necessary to determine which characteristics of successful "writing centers may vary owing to differences in student population, the colleges themselves, etc." (pp. 146-147).

Accepting that each university-center combination is unique, writing center directors must examine their local context (Bishop, 1990; Ferruci & DeRosa, 2012; North, 1979) and be careful not to, as Brown (1984) argues, simply construct a center based on a blueprint of factors purported to contribute to students' help seeking behaviors at other centers and then sit back and "assume the students will automatically begin using the center's services" (p. 36). The reason is that mimicking another center's blueprint in such a way may not produce similar results locally. Instead, writing center directors need to proactively examine their own centers' settings and investigate the *why's* behind their centers' numbers (or lack thereof) by exploring how these building blocks translate (or do not translate) into help seeking behaviors locally.

### **The Need to Look Beyond the North American Context**

The aforementioned discussion of factors that contribute to North American writing center usage and the need to consider individual settings also holds currency beyond the North American context. That is, on Asian shores. Looking at the Asian context, the literature shows that writing centers in Asia, and, more specifically for the setting of this study, Taiwan, have a much shorter history (Johnston, Yoshida, & Cornwell, 2010; McKinley, 2010, 2011; Morikoshi, 2008; Tan, 2011; Wu, 2013), beginning in Taiwan only in the late 1990s (Chang, 2013), but that the number of centers in this context and their acceptance has been growing (Hsu, 2007).

Hearing North's (1984) North American call for the need for more writing center research, literature focusing on writing centers in Asia (see Hansen, 2009; Johnston, Yoshida, & Cornwell, 2010; Kunde, Sequeira, & Patil, 2015; Matsuda, 2011; McKinley, 2010, 2011; Tan, 2010) and, more specifically for the logistics of this paper, Taiwan, has slowly been growing, albeit it is still very limited (see Baker, 2013; Hsu, 2007; Chang, 2013), especially with regard to what influences students' help seeking behaviors. The lack of literature in this area is troubling as the question of what motivates student's writing center usage in the Asian context is of great concern to local writing center directors (Johnston, Yoshida, & Cornwell, 2010; McKinley, 2010, 2011). The gap is also a concern as the North American budgetary yardstick of how many students seek help also applies to fledgling centers in Asia, for the answer weighs heavily upon whether a center will be funded and how well.



Following Brown's (1984) and others' (Bell, 2000; Bishop, 1990; Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2013; Donnelly & Garrison, 2003; Ferruci & DeRosa, 2012; Kinkead & Harris, 1993; North, 1979) advice that writing center directors need to proactively examine their own centers rather than just mimicking another's blueprint, the purpose of this paper is three fold: To (a) describe one such replicable investigation which took place outside of the North American context (i.e., in Taiwan), (b) report the data that resulted from it, and (c), resounding North's call to Asian shores, offer directions for new discussions in this area in the form of suggestions for future research.

## **Methods**

One approach to investigating what motivates students' help seeking behaviors, and the one that was taken in this paper, is to use Woolfolk's (2010) behaviorist lens to examine the why's behind one populations' help seeking behaviors: students with high visitation records. That is, an exploration of (a) the antecedents (i.e., the events behind the initial visits) and (b) the positive and negative reinforcers (behind repeat visits) to see how students with high visitation records perceive each factor and whether these perceptions motivate (or do not motivate) students' seeking behaviors.

Utilizing this approach, this paper reports the results of a previously unpublished small scale pilot study that was conducted at a university writing center in the Asian context, i.e., Taiwan. Drawing on the aforementioned review of literature, the study explored how the antecedents and reinforcers related to five motivational factors purported to influence student help seeking behaviors in North American settings are perceived in the local setting by students who demonstrate high degrees of help-seeking behaviors.

Reporting the results of this investigation will meet the first and second objective of this paper: To (a) describe one such replicable investigation which took place outside of the North American context (i.e., in Taiwan) and (b) report the data that resulted from it. To meet the third objective of the paper (offer directions for new discussions in this area in the form of suggestions for future research), we report the methods and findings in such a way and in such detail as to allow others to empirically reproduce the study and test its claims, something that Driscoll, and Perdue, (2012)

argue is needed in North American writing center literature and something that is similarly needed in the Asian writing center literature.

To examine the motivators behind the help seeking behaviors of students with high degrees of help seeking behaviors (i.e. high writing center visitation records), an attitudinal survey was administered (see Appendix). After reviewing the literature, it was found that survey instruments addressing some but not all of five factors were available in prior studies. However, no instrument addressed all. Therefore, drawing on the factors identified during the literature review, the survey was created specifically for this study. It was administered at a university of science and technology in Taipei while the author served as director and the coauthor served as assistant director.

The university offers its approximately 9,000 students undergraduate and graduate degrees in 16 majors, to include a modest sized bachelor of arts in applied English. English Composition is only taught to freshman (N=128) and sophomore English majors (N=135). These students made up the majority of the visits to the center (65%). The other 35% was composed of a small number of visits from a variety of different departments.

The center was operated with an emphasis on mentorship, and thus was staffed by paid undergraduate tutors who excelled in freshman writing courses, began tutoring in their sophomore year, and stayed on in future years to mentor incoming sophomore tutors. The center also was fortunate to have a small number of writing faculty who volunteered a few hours each week.

The survey was originally administered to each of the sections of sophomore composition the English department offered, as these students had the most potential contact with the center. This was done for several reasons. (1) They had two years of potential contact with the center whereas the freshman students had had only one. Regarding non majors, no attempt was made to administer it to the non-majors who had visited the center, as the number of visits by non-majors in each major were minimal, only a few students from each section had visited, and their contact period was minimal. (2) The rationale to administer the survey to this population was also based on (a) expectations of return rate and (b) administration protocol. Believing that (a) high response rates result when surveys are administered during regular classes to participants (Brown, 2000) and (b)

not wanting to disrupt classes with few potential respondents, the survey was administered to a class with a large percentage of potential respondents (i.e., sections of sophomore composition)..

To determine the factors that influence students with high visitation records, this study reports the results as they pertain to the respondents in one of the sections of composition at the end of the semester of sophomore composition . The cluster sample (on section, N=15), although small, was purposively identified and appropriately sized because the students that composed the section had (as evidenced by responses to the survey and writing center records) visited the writing center considerably more than the students in the other sections of the course (range  $\mu$  7.33 /  $\mu$  .46). That is, the students enrolled in this section visited an average of 7.33 times whereas the students in the section with the lowest visitations had a mean of .46. Thus, this population could help answer the research question posed for this study: What factors purported to influence students' behaviors in North American contexts influence the help seeking behaviors of students with high visitation records in one Asian context (i.e. a Taiwanese university setting). Results regarding student with low to medium rates were purposively excluded from this discussion and will be addressed in another paper, as the data does not relate to the research question.

As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was created specifically for this study. Items for the questionnaire were drawn from literature which provides lists of factors to consider when seeking high student usage in North American settings. Five areas were selected for study. These areas, as described in Table 1, were organized and adapted to the local context (Hawthorne, 2012) (i.e., the local center's operating procedures) in such a way as to explore the students' perceptions of factors the researchers felt were antecedents and reinforcers (both positive and negative): (a) faculty participation, (b) students' belief in the writing center's ability to help students improve, (c) public relations, (d) providing self-access opportunities, and (e) convenient access. Other areas cited in North American literature (e.g., tutor-tutee rapport and facility comfort) were explored via end of writing conference surveys and were thus not included in this study.

Drawing on Woolfolk's (2010) behavioral lens, several al of the factors were included as both antecedents and reinforcers because the researchers felt that students could encounter them both before and after their initial visit.

**Table 1: Antecedents and Reinforcers**

	Antecedents	Reinforcers
I. Faculty participation		
A. Teacher's requirement for students to visit the center as part of a grade for a paper	X	
B. Teacher's showing a record of all of the students' writing center visits in class		X
C. Teacher discussing students' writing center visits during teacher/student paper feedback sessions	X	X
II. Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve		
A. Students belief in their writing ability (i.e., student efficacy)	X	X
B. Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their writing	X	X
C. Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their grades	X	X
III. Public relations		
A. Posters displayed on the walls around campus	X	
B. Telephone reminder messages the day before writing center appointments	X	
IV. Material Availability		
A. The type of materials available in the writing center	X	X

#### V. Convenient Access

A. The center's location	X	
B. The center's opening hours	X	
C. Wait time to see a tutor		X

---

The questionnaire included both closed and open-response questions. Closed-response questions were included to gain specificity in the types of data received, and the open ended questions were included to offer a more holistic understanding of the responses, as well as insights into unexpected or unusual answers.

During the creation of the questionnaire, to ensure reliability, the questionnaire was translated into the students' L1 (i.e., Mandarin) using a back translation procedure. The translation was then checked with a second translator for accuracy. To further ensure reliability with regards to the translation of the questionnaire, a pretest was conducted with a small number of respondents who were not part of the sample used in the study ( $n = 10$ ). This was done to reveal potential ambiguities that may result due to the translation of the original questionnaire.

To ensure a high response rate, the questionnaire was then directly administered in a group setting during the students' regular class times on the last day of the course (Brown, 2000). To reduce researcher interference (as one of the researchers could be seen as an authority figure in that he was both the course instructor and the writing center director and the second researcher was the writing center assistant director), the survey was administered by a research assistant without the researchers present. To further reduce researcher interference, the assistant explained that participation was voluntary and asked the students to place their questionnaires at the back of the room regardless of whether they completed the survey or not.

After the administration of the survey was completed, the surveys were collected and the data were analyzed. The quantitative data elicited from the closed questions were first analyzed to explore the following research question: Which antecedents and reinforcers related to the five motivational factors purported to influence student help seeking behaviors in North American settings are perceived by the target population to lead or not lead to their help seeking behaviors?

To give breadth to the analysis, the data from the open ended questions were explored. This second analysis was begun by translating the respondents' answers from Mandarin to English. Afterwards, using Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen's (1993) emergent category analysis procedure, each answer was coded separately by each researcher. Finally, "to add strength and fertility to the entire analysis, a second-level group debate procedure was employed" (p. 128-129).

## **Results**

Fourteen of the 15 students enrolled in the course returned the questionnaire, yielding a 93% response rate. The one student who did not was absent on the day of its administration. As the survey was administered on the last day of class, no follow up was attempted. Of those that did participate, 13 were English majors and 1 was a double major (English and engineering); 13 were sophomores and 1 was a senior who was repeating the course; the population had a mean age of 20.07 years (range 19-22); and 3 were male and 11 were female. The disproportionate number of males and females was due to the make-up of the target population rather than any purposeful intent of the sampling procedure.

With regards to the completion rate, 13 of the 14 students answered all of the closed response-questions and varying numbers responded to the open ended ones. The 14<sup>th</sup> respondent completed some, but not all, of the questionnaire. This resulted in varying numbers of responses offered for each question.

Examining the quantitative results, several consistent patterns emerged. The qualitative data were also informative in that they offered added breadth and scope to the students' responses. These are addressed in the following five sections and their sub areas: (a) Faculty Participation, (b) Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Students Improve, (c) Public Relations, (d) Providing Self-access Opportunities, and (e) Convenient Access.

### **Faculty Participation**

In the first section of the questionnaire, Faculty Participation, the students' responses provided insight into three areas: (a) an antecedent (teacher's requirements) and (b) two reinforcers: (1) public feedback in class and (2) private feedback in teacher-student feedback sessions.

**Table 2: Faculty Participation**

Factors	Influential <sup>a</sup>	(i.e. Motivating	Demotivating)	No Influence
Teacher's requirement for students to visit the center as part of a grade for a paper	8	2	5	6
Teacher's showing a record of all of the students' writing center visits in class	4	0	10	4
Teacher discussing students' writing center visits during teacher/student paper feedback sessions	6	0	8	6

<sup>a</sup> Influential = Motivating or Demotivating

### Question Set 1: Teacher's Requirements

For the first question (My teacher required me to go to the writing center as part of my grade for each paper), all of the students assented.

In response to the follow up question (This made me. . .), 6 answered positively (1 strongly wanted to go and 5 wanted to go), 2 reported that the requirement made them not want to go, and 5 reported that it did not influence their decision. Thus, for 8 respondents, this area was influential (either motivating or demotivating) and for 5 it was not. These data are shown in Table 2.

For the open ended question, the 1 student who answered highly positively (strongly made me want to go) responded: "Because the teacher required it."

## **Question Set 2: Public Feedback in Class**

For the second major question (My teacher often showed a record of the students' visits to the writing center in class), all respondents answered positively: The teacher showed the record in class.

In response to the first follow up question, as shown in Table 2, 4 reported that showing student records in class made them want to go (i.e., was influential) and 10 answered that it did not influence their decision (i.e., was not influential).

One response to the open ended question was given by a student who answered that he/she perceived showing student records to be a negative reinforcement: "I could see that other students had come, but I hadn't."

## **Question Set 3: Private Feedback in Teacher-student Feedback Sessions**

For the third major question (My teacher discussed my visits to the writing center during our teacher-student paper feedback sessions), similar to the earlier question about teacher behavior, all answered positively: The teacher had discussed the visits.

To the follow up question (This made me. . . ), 6, as shown in Table 2, reported "want to go" (i.e., it was influential) and 8 reported "it did not influence my decision" (i.e., it was not influential). No responses were offered for the open ended question.

For the second follow up question (How did you feel about what your teacher did?), 3 felt that it was rewarding and 11 felt that it was neither rewarding nor negative, indicating that 3 felt that the feedback was possibly a motivator, whereas the other 11 most likely did not.

## **Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve**

The second section of the questionnaire *Student's Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve* addressed one antecedent (i.e., the students' perceptions of their own ability) and two reinforcers: (a) their belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their writing ability and (b) and their belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their grades.



The students' responses, as shown in Table 3, provided insights into how they perceived these factors.

**Table 3: Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve**

Factors	Influential	(i.e. Motivating	Demotivating)	No Influence
Students belief in their writing ability (student efficacy)	10	9	1	3
Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their writing	10	9	1	3
Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their grades	12	11	1	2

<sup>a</sup> Influential = Motivating or Demotivating

### **Question Set 1: Students' Perceptions of Their Own Ability (Efficacy)**

The first major closed-response question in this section (I believe I am good writer, fair writer, poor writer, etc.) addressed the antecedent student belief, efficacy. For this, 3 students responded that they felt they were good writers, 5 responded they were fair writers, and 5 responded they felt they were poor writers.

The responses to the follow up question (My belief made me. . . ), as shown in Table 2, were also split several ways: 10 influential: 9 positive (2 "strongly want to go" and 7 "want to go"), 1 "not want to go." And 3 not influential: "It didn't influence my decision."

The responses to the open ended question offered more insight into this spread of answers. Four similar responses were given for the open ended question from students who reported their belief

about their ability motivated them: Two from the students who felt they were fair writers and 2 from students who felt they were poor writers, each expressing the idea “I go there to improve my writing.” The one student who reported his/her belief dissuaded him/her from seeking help, reported he/she felt him/herself to be a good writer. This latter response may be related to question sets 2 and 3 (See below).

### **Question Set 2: Students’ Belief in the Writing Center’s Ability to Help Them Improve Their Writing Ability**

The second major closed-response question (I believe the writing center helped me to improve my writing) was posed as both an antecedent and a positive reinforcer, as the belief could be originally perceived before the students’ initial visit and then be affected by the students’ interaction with the center. To this, 10 agreed, 2 neither agreed nor disagreed, and 2 disagreed.

Of those that agreed, 2 offered further information which we coded as “The tutor will help me with my paper.” Of the 2 that that disagreed, 1 offered further information: “I didn’t see any improvement in my paper.”

For the follow up question, “My belief in the center’s ability to help me improve my writing made me . . . ,” the following responses were offered. Ten felt that this was influential: One strongly “want to go,” 8 “want to go,” 1 “not want to go.” And three felt it was not influential: “Didn’t influence my decision.”

One response was also offered for follow up question those who wanted to go: “The tutors can teach me to avoid making the same mistakes over and over.”

### **Question Set 3: Students’ Believe in the Writing Center’s Ability to Help Them Improve Their Grades**

The third major closed-response question was also posed as an antecedent and a positive reinforcer (I believe the writing center helped me to improve my grades in the course). To this, 11 answered positively (4 strongly agreed and 7 agreed) and 3 nether agreed or disagreed.

Two responses were offered for the open ended question. The first was by a student who agreed: “I learned about the mistakes I was making.” The second was offered by one who neither agreed nor disagreed: “I don’t know.”

For the follow up question (My belief in the center’s ability to help me improve my grades made me. . . .), 12 felt it was influential. 11 answered positively (One strongly wanted to go and 10 wanted to go) and 1 reported that it made him/her not want to go. Another 2 reported that it did not influence their decisions (i.e., was not influential).

Three answers were given to the open ended question by students who answered that their belief motivated them. One was about the tutor experience: “The tutors understood the teacher’s assignments because they were once students in the teachers’ classes.” The other two expressed that it “influenced my grades.”

## Public Relations

In the third section, *Public Relations*, the students’ responses, as shown in Table 4, provided insight into two antecedents: (a) advertising and (b) telephone reminders.

**Table 4: Public Relations**

Factors	Influential	(i.e., Motivating	Demotivating)	No Influence
Posters displayed on the walls around campus.	5	5	0	9
Telephone reminder messages the day before writing center appointments	8	7	1	6

<sup>a</sup> Influential = Motivating or Demotivating

## Question Set 2: Advertising

For the first major question (I saw the posters advertising the writing center on the walls around campus), 11 reported that they had seen the posters and 3 reported they had not.

To the follow up question, four reported this area to be influential: One reported that the poster made him/her “strongly want to go”; 4 reported it made them “want to go.” Nine reported that it did not influence their decisions. No responses were offered for the open ended questions.

This result is could be seen as misleading because, as is indicated above, only 11 students reported that they had seen the posters, yet 13 responded regarding the posters’ influence. However, after further analyses, it was found that the 4 who responded “want to go” had indeed seen the posters, as did the majority of those who replied that it did not influence their decision. However, the responses of those who replied that they had (a) not seen the posters and that the posters did not influence their decision raise the question of where to hang the posters for the best result, as visibility is an important factor (North, 1979)

### **Question Set 1: Telephone Reminders**

For the second major question (The telephone messages I received the day before my writing center appointments made me. . . ), 8 reported the messages to be influential: 7 reported positively (3 strongly wanted to go and 4 wanted to go) and 1 reported that it made him/her “not want to go.” Six reported that it did not influence their decision (i.e., was not influential).

Of those that responded positively, 2 offered more information in the open ended question. One response was about personal need: “I made the appointment because I needed help from tutors.” The other response was about using center resources responsibly: “If I had an appointment, I must go because I didn’t want to waste the center’s time.” Further information was also offered by the student who responded negatively. This too was about using center resources responsibly: “The text message is not necessary. It’s a waste of money.”

### **Self-Access Opportunities**

In the fourth regular section of the questionnaire, Self-access Opportunities, students gave insights into (a) what materials attracted them to the center (i.e., an antecedent and reinforcer) and (b) how the availability of these materials motivated (or did not motivate) their first visit and return visits.

### Question Set: Material Use and Availability

This section contained one major question about what materials the students used when visiting the center. The majority of the students ( $n = 12$ ) used computers. Other materials received varying amounts of attention. These data are described in Table 5.

**Table 5: Writing center material usage**

Computers	12	Magazines	0
Student sample paragraphs, essays, or business writing materials	3	Dictionaries	1
Graded readers	2	Published books of paragraphs and essays (anthologies)	2
Novels	4		

For the follow up question (The materials made me. . .), as shown in Table 6, 10 answered that this area was influential (2 replied “strongly want to go” and 8 replied “want to go”). Four replied it did not influence their decision (i.e., was not influential).

**Table 6: Available materials**

Factors	Influential	(i.e., Motivating	Demotivating)	No Influence
The type of materials available in the writing center	10	10	0	4

Two responses were offered to the open ended question by those who answered positively. Each expressed the idea, “When the teacher asked for a book summary, I could go there to check out a book and get help at the same time.”

### Convenient Access

The final section of the questionnaire focused on the area of Convenient Access and three relevant sub areas: two antecedents (i.e., center location, opening hours) and one reinforcer (i.e., wait time).

The students' responses, as shown in Table 7, provided insights into how they perceived these factors (influential or not influential) and how these perceptions influenced their motivation to seek (or not seek) help from the campus writing center.

**Table 7: Convenient Access**

Factors	Influential	(i.e., Motivating	Demotivating)	No Influence
The center's location	8	7	1	6
The center's opening hours	6	6	0	8
Wait time to see a tutor	8	5	3	5

<sup>a</sup> Influential = Motivating or Demotivating

### **Question Set 1: Location**

The first major closed-response question (The center is in a convenient location...) addressed the first antecedent, location. To this, the majority of the students answered favorably: Five respondents strongly agreed, 7 agreed, and 2 neither agreed nor disagreed.

The center's location, as evidenced by the students' responses to the follow up question (The center's location made me. . . ), indicated how the students perceived the antecedent in regards to their motivation to seek (or not seek) help from the center. Eight felt this area was influential: One replied "strongly want to go," 6 replied, "want to go" and; 1 replied negatively, "not want to go." Six replied it did not influence their opinions.

Those who responded positively explained their reasons in the open ended question to be (a) related to location ("It [the center] is located near my classes") and (b) a higher availability of tutors than teachers (e.g., as in teacher-student conferences) ("It is easy to find a tutor when I need one. I don't have to wait for a teacher"). Exploring the one negative response, this too was related to location: "The fourth floor [the location of the center] is too far for me to go."

## **Question Set 2: Opening Hours**

The next major closed-response question addressed the antecedent opening hours (The center's hours—Monday through Friday, 10-5—were convenient). To this, the majority of the students answered in the affirmative: 13 (6 strongly agreed and 7 agreed). One neither agreed nor disagreed.

Of those who answered positively, two offered more information related to need: “No matter where I am, I will go if I need to.” The one negative response was given by the respondent who replied negatively to the previous question. Here, the student reiterated his/her former response: “The fourth floor is too far.”

The students also perceived the center's hours, as evidenced by the students response to the follow up question (The center's opening hours made me. . . ), as motivating or neutrally so: Six answered in the affirmative (“strongly want to go”), i.e., was influential. Eight replied that it didn't influence their decisions, i.e., was not influential.

Seven additional responses were offered for the open ended question. We coded these into two categories: (a) breadth of hours (4 responses) —“It was always open when I was at school and at specific hours”). And (b), as a student schedule match (3 responses): “The hours matched my schedule. I could use my lunch hour and the school's administrative times [times when classes are not scheduled] to go.”

In response to the next question (If the writing center were open in the evenings, would you go?), a potential antecedent for future planning, only 4 respondents replied favorably: Four assented; the rest replied negatively.

## **Question Set 3: Wait Time**

The final major closed-response question in this section (When you visited the center, how long did you have to wait for a tutor?) referenced what the researchers hoped would be a positive reinforcer: wait time. In response, 3 students replied, “I didn't have to wait”; 1 responded, “1-5 minutes”; 5 responded, “5-10 minutes”; and 5 responded, “10-20 minutes.”

The responses to the follow up question “The amount of time had to wait made me. . . .” indicated whether the students saw wait time to be influential as a positive or negative reinforcer: One

indicated the amount of time he/she had to wait motivated him/her to “strongly want to go”, 4 “wanted to go” and 3 indicated it made them “not want to go.” Five reported that “it didn’t influence my decision,” was not influential.

The four responses to the open ended question gave further breadth to the students’ motivations. We coded the responses of the 5 students who answered “It didn’t influence my decision” together. An example is “If I need help, I don’t care how long it takes.” Of the two who answered negatively, we coded their responses together too, an example of which is “I am willing to wait if it doesn’t take too much time.” No responses were given in the other areas.

### **Other Important Questions**

At the end of the survey, three other important open ended questions were presented: (a) “What other things motivated you to go to the writing center?”; (b) “What other things made you not want to go to the writing center?”; and (c) “How can we improve the writing center?” The responses to each question provided valuable insights to both antecedents and reinforcers related to center design and management not specifically identified in the questionnaire.

### **Question Set 1: Other Motivating Factors**

For the first question (“What other things motivated you to go to the writing center?”), 12 responses, as shown in Table 8, were offered. We coded these into two categories: Eleven responses reiterated information offered earlier in the survey. One response fell into a new area, an antecedent related to seeking help with employment related writing: “I wanted to write an autobiography so I could get a job.”

**Table 8: Other Motivating Factors**

Reiterated earlier information	11
Seeking help with employment related writing	1



## Question Set 2: Other Demotivating Factors

For the second question (“What other things made you not want to go to the writing center?”), 13 responses, as shown in Table 9, were offered. We coded 8 as repeated information found in other parts of the survey, 4 as tutor-student rapport, and 1 as student preparedness.

**Table 9: Other Motivating Factors**

Reiterated earlier Information	8
Tutor-student rapport	4
Student preparedness	1

In the area of tutor-student rapport, four sorts of responses were offered. One response was related to appropriation (“Sometimes I had different ideas, but the tutor changed my paper her way”). The second was related to communication (“The tutor had a bad attitude. I wish she would patiently wait for me to answer questions”). The third was related to personalities (“I didn’t like the tutor who was scheduled at the time I was available”). And the last response was related to student preparedness: “I didn’t do the assignment.”

## Question Set 3: Other Ways to Improve the Center

For the final question in this section (How can we improve the writing center?), 12 responses were offered. These are shown in Table 10. One reiterated information reported earlier in the survey, 4 reported that no changes were needed, 4 reported that the center needed more tutors, 1 reported that the computers were too slow, 1 reported that food should be prohibited in the center, and 1 asked for a change of policy: “Students who are late should miss their appointments, so drop ins can see a tutor.”

**Table 10: Other Ways to Improve the Center**

Reiterated earlier information	1
No changes were needed	4

---

More tutors needed	4
Computers need attention	1
Food should be prohibited in the center	1
Late students should be denied service	1

---

## Conclusion

The results of this study provide evidence that both the antecedents and reinforcers related to the five factors purported to influence students' motivation to seek help at writing centers in North American contexts also influence student motivation in an Asian context (i.e., the Taiwanese context), albeit to varying degrees. Exploring the weight of these influences, for example, the study, as shown in Table 11, found, as Morrison & Nadeau (2003) argued, that improving grades was the most influential factor (as either a motivating or demotivating factor). It also found that showing a record of all of the students' visits in class was, as others have argued (Bishop, 1990; Olson, 1984; Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2010) a factor, but, in this case, it was the least important factor.

**Table 11: Overall Weighting of the Five Factors**

Factors	Influential	Motivating	Demotivating	No Influence
I. Faculty Participation				
A. Teacher's requirement for students to visit the center as part of a grade for a paper	8	6	2	5
B. Teacher's showing a record of all of the students' writing center visits in class	4	4	0	10
C. Teacher discussing students' writing center visits during	6	6	0	8

teacher/student paper feedback  
sessions

## II. Students' Belief in the Writing

### Center's Ability to Help Them Improve

A. Students belief in their writing ability (student efficacy)	10	9	1	3
B. Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their writing	10	9	1	3
C. Students' belief in the writing center's ability to help them improve their grades	12	11	1	2

## III. Public Relations

A. Posters displayed on the walls around campus.	5	5	0	9
B. Telephone reminder messages the day before writing center appointments	8	7	1	6

## IV. Material Availability

A. The type of materials available in the writing center	10	10	0	4
--	----	----	---	---

## I. Convenient Access

A. The center's location	8	7	1	6
B. The center's opening hours	6	6	0	8
C. Wait time to see a tutor	8	5	3	5

---

<sup>a</sup> Influential = Motivating or Demotivating

Additionally, student responses to the final three open ended questions provided insight into factors beyond the five factors originally explored. Specifically, the respondents reported two

factors to be influential (i.e., tutor-student rapport and student preparedness) as well as other areas that they were concerned with (i.e., more tutors, better computers, and changes in policy). Each of these can be considered as antecedents and reinforcers that could affect student motivation, depending on how the center addresses the suggestions.

While the study found that each of the factors were important, the findings regarding the weight of each of the five factors, as well as the responses to the three open ended questions, support the idea that writing center directors outside the North American context, like those in the North American context (see Bell, 2000; Bishop, 1990; Bromley, Northway, & Schonberg, 2013; Donnelly, & Garrison, 2003; Ferruci & DeRosa, 2012; Kinkead & Harris, 1993; North, 1979) need to proactively examine their own centers' settings.

### **Discussion and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study had three objectives. We will reflect on each here. The first and second were to (a) describe a replicable investigation which took place outside of the North American context (i.e., the Asian context, e.g., Taiwan) and (b) report the data that resulted from it. Revisiting these two purposes, the study and its findings hold practical significance for the center under study and for centers outside the North American context. Examining replicable procedure and the results, it appears prudent that both the center under study and centers outside the North American context consider the five factors (and their sub areas), as well as the results, i.e., variances in weighting) reported when seeking to influence students' help seeking behaviors. It also appears prudent that the center under study and those outside the North American context consider the responses offered by the respondents regarding areas that were not originally explored in the questionnaire (i.e., tutor-student rapport, student preparedness, the number of available tutors, the quality of the computers, and changes in policy).

Looking to the larger context and returning to the impetus for this study, that is that writing center directors outside the North American context cannot simply construct a center based on a blueprint of factors purported to contribute to students' help seeking behaviors in North America and then sit back and "assume the students will automatically begin using the center's services" (Brown, 1984, p. 36), this study does, by example, have further significance for centers outside the North America. That is, because while it has, in keeping with construct validity, shown that the factors

purported to contribute to students' help seeking behaviors in North America also influence help seeking behavior in the local context, it has, keeping with content validity, also demonstrated that there is a question about to what degree each is important. The additional concerns raised by the respondents. The latter result (i.e. variances and additional information) supports the argument that each university-center combination is unique and thus writing center directors must examine their local context (Bishop, 1990; Ferruci & DeRosa, 2012; North, 1979) and investigate the *why's* behind their centers' numbers (or lack thereof) by exploring how these building blocks translate (or do not translate) into help seeking behaviors locally.

A limitation, however, is noted. The paper sheds light on what motivated students who visited the center often, which was the matter addressed by the research question. With regards to external validity, this data can be the basis for decisions regarding what could attract motivated student populations for future planning at the current site. This data, in keeping with ecological generalizability, also sheds light on how motivated students might be attracted to writing centers at other campuses in Asia. However, it did not report data regarding two other very important groups: (a) students who did not visit the center and (b) those who did so only on a limited basis. Although data for these groups was purposefully excluded in this report, each of these groups deserve further study, because, as Brown (1984) points out, the "writing center should be shaped by the needs of the students" (p. 49), all students. And thus, data regarding student with low to medium rates will be addressed in another paper.

With regards to the third purpose (offer directions for new discussions in this area in the form of suggestions for future research) and reflecting on the data presented in this study and its limitations, this paper, by its example, illustrates the point that writing directors outside of the North American context, like those in North American settings, need to proactively examine their own centers' settings and investigate the *why's* behind their centers' numbers (or lack thereof) by exploring how the building blocks reported in North American writing center literature translate (or do not translate) into help seeking behaviors locally. This is because directors in the Asian context, like directors of North American centers, need to engage in "research and reflection if they are to more clearly understand what they do, and figure out how to do it better" (North, 1984, p. 445). With this in mind, paper offers directions for new discussions in this area in the form of suggestions for future research in that it has provided replicable research which can offer starting point for a

checklist that can be adapted (added to or redacted from) for future investigations in other local settings.

Addressing the third purpose further and reflecting on the claim made earlier in the paper that writing center literature in the Asian context is in short supply, we, the authors, resounding North's (1984) call for the need for more writing center literature, hope that this paper, keeping with the North American writing center tradition of "helping one another and sharing what we have learned" (Harris, 1990), will help to spur a rich body of writing center literature particular to the Asian context. And thus, revisiting Summerfield's (1988) reflection of the early years of North American writing center literature, "the maps have not yet been drawn" (p. 5), we invite our writing center colleagues in Asian contexts to join us to map our journeys.

## References

- Abrahams, E., & Dobbins, Z. (2015). Technology in the Writing Center. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*. *Praxis*, 2 (2). Retrieved from <http://www.praxisuwc.com>
- Baker, J. (2013). *Choosing materials for a writing center resource library in an ELL setting* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 3558065)
- Bell, J. H. (2000). When hard questions are asked: evaluating writing centers. *The Writing Center Journal*, 21(1), 6-27. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Bell, D. C., & Frost, A. (2012). Critical inquiry and writing centers: a methodology of assessment. *Learning Assistance Review*, 17(1), 15-26. ERIC (EJ97340)
- Bishop, W. (1990). Bringing Writers to the Center: Some Survey Results, Surmises, and Suggestions. *Writing Center Journal*, 10(2), 31-44. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Bray, N. (2013). Writing with Scrivener: A hopeful tale of disappearing tools, flatulence, and word processing redemption. *Computers and Composition*, 30(3), 197-210. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2013.07.002
- Bromley, P., Northway, K., & Schonberg, E. (2010). Bridging Institutions to Cross the Quantitative/Qualitative Divide. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*, 8(1). Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Bromley, P., Northway, K., & Schonberg, E. (2013). How important is the local, really? a cross-institutional quantitative assessment of frequently asked questions in writing center exit surveys. *Writing Center Journal*, 33(1), 13-37. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Brown, A. N. (1984). *Writing centers: How they succeed and fail* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 303308821).

- Brown, J. (2000). *Using surveys in language programs*. New York, NY: Cambridge.
- Buck, A. M. (2008). The invisible interface: MS Word in the writing center. *Computers and Composition*, 25(4), 396-41. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2008.05.003
- Carino, P. (1998). Computers in the writing center: A cautionary history. In Eric H. Hobson (Ed.), *Wiring the writing center* (pp. 171–193). Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Carino, P., & Enders, D. (2001). Does frequency of visits to the writing center increase student satisfaction? a statistical correlation study—or story. *The Writing Center Journal*, 21(3), 83-103. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Chang, T. S. (2013). The Idea of a Writing Center in Asian Countries: The Preliminary Search of a Model in Taiwan. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*, 10(2). Retrieved from <http://www.praxisuwc.com>
- Childers, P. (2006). Designing a strategic plan for a writing center. In C. Murphy, & C. B. Stay (Eds.), *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 53-70). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Chromik, M. (2002). *Proofreading, its value, and its place in the writing center*. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ929331)
- Clark, I. L. (1985). Leading the horse: The writing center and required visits. *The Writing Center Journal*, 5/6(2/1), 31–34. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441808>
- Donnelli, E., & Garrison, K. (2003). Tapping multiple voices in writing center assessment. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 7(4), 16-22.
- Driscoll, D. L., & Perdue, S. W. (2012). Theory, lore, and more: An analysis of RAD research in "The Writing Center Journal," 1980–2009. *The Writing Center Journal*, 32(2), 11-39.
- Estes, S., & Martina, A. (2010). *Taking tutor training online*. The Writing Lab Newsletter, 35(3/4), 1-5. Retrieved from <https://writinglabnewsletter.org>



- Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry*. London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Gordon, B. L. (2008). Requiring first-year writing classes to visit the writing center: Bad attitudes or positive results? *Teaching English in the Two Year College*, 36(2), 154-163.
- Grogan, S. & Whitman, S. (2004) Review of TutorTrac: Curse or godsend?: A dramatized dialogue via e-mail about the TutorTrac scheduling program. *The Writing Lab Newsletter*, 29 (3), 12-14. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Ferruci, S., & DeRosa, S. (2012). Writing a sustainable history: Mapping writing center ethos. In Murphy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.) *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 21-32). New York, N. Y.: Routledge.
- Field-Pickering, J. (1993). The burden of proof: demonstrating the effectiveness of a computer writing center program. *The Writing Lab Newsletter*, 18(2), 1-3. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Fitzgerald & Stephenson (2012). Directors at the center: Relationships across campus. In Murpy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.) *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 112-124). New York, N. Y.: Routledge.
- Fontaine, S. (1995). Finding consistency and speculating change: what we can learn about portfolio assessment from the writing center. *The Writing Center Journal*. 16(1), 46-58. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Flynn, T. (1982). Beginning a Skills Development Center in a Small School. In Harris, M. (Ed.). *Tutoring Writing: A Sourcebook for Writing Labs*, Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., p. 170-178.
- Hansen, J. (2009). Mandated Writing Center Utilization among 1st Year English Students in Japan. *Osaka Jogakuin Daigaku Kiyo*, 6, 65-84. Retrieved from [http://www.wilmina.ac.jp/ojc/edu/kiyo\\_2009/kiyo\\_06\\_PDF/2009\\_05.pdf](http://www.wilmina.ac.jp/ojc/edu/kiyo_2009/kiyo_06_PDF/2009_05.pdf)

- Harris, M., & Yancey, K. B. (1980). Beyond Freshman Comp: Expanded Uses of the Writing Lab. *The Writing Center Journal*, 1(1), 41–49. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4344174>
- Harris, M. (1990). What's up and what's in: Trends and traditions in writing centers. *The Writing Center Journal*, 11(1), 15-25. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Harris, M. (1992). *Empowering writing center staff: Martyrs or models?* *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 16(2), 1-5. Retrieved from <https://writinglabnewsletter.org>
- Harris, M. (1995). Talking in the middle: Why writers need writing tutors. *College English*, 57(1), 27-42. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/378348>.
- Hawthorne, J. (2012). Approaching assessment as if it matters. In Murphy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.). *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 237-248). N.Y. York, N. Y.: Routledge
- Hsu, J. (2007). Integrating a writing-across-curriculum program into a self-access learning center. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED496122)
- Huang, L. S. (2012). A Forest of forests: Constructing a centre-usage profile as a source of outcomes assessment. *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue canadienne de l'éducation*. 35(4), 199-224
- Johnston, S., Yoshida, H., & Cornwell, S. (2010). Forum: Writing centers and tutoring in Japan and Asia. In *JALT 2009 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 692-701). Retrieved from <http://jalt-publications.org/>
- Kalikoff, B. (1991). From Coercion to collaboration: a mosaic approach to writing center assessment. *The Writing Lab Newsletter*. 26(1), 5-7. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>

- Kinkead, J. A., Aldram, P., Baker, B. Freer, A. Hertske, J., Hill, S. M., O Bray, J., Parker, T., & Peterson, M. (1995). Situations and solutions for tutoring across the curriculum. *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 19(8), 1-7.
- Kinkead, J. A., & Harris, J. G. (Eds.). (1993). *Writing centers in context: Twelve case studies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Kunde, N. K., Sequeira, V. P., & Patil, M. (2015). A writing centre in India—A case study of the writing centre at Parvatibai Chowgule College of Arts and Science, Goa, India. *International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration*, 5(1), 11-18.
- Lamb, M. (1981) "Evaluation Procedures for Writing Centers: Defining Ourselves Through Accountability." In Hawkins, T., & Brooks, P. (Eds). *Improving Writing Skills: New Directions for College Learning Assistance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 69-82.
- Lerner, N. (1997). Counting beans and making beans count. *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 22(1), 1-3. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Lerner, N. (2001). Choosing beans wisely. *The Writing Lab Newsletter*, 26(1), 1-5. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Lerner, N. (2003). Writing center assessment: searching for the “proof” of our effectiveness. In Pemberton, M.A, & Kinkead, J. (Eds.). *The center will hold: critical perspectives on writing center scholarship*. (2003). Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.
- Lerner, N. (2012). Of numbers and stories: Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Research in the Writing Center. In Schendel, E., & Macauley, W. J. (Eds.). *Building writing center assessments that matter*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 108-112.
- Martin, A. W. (2012). The center has two faces: developing a writing center in a multicampus university setting, In Murpy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.) *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 125-133). New York, N. Y.: Routledge
- Masiello, L. (1992). Qualitative and quantitative strategies for assessing writing center effectiveness. *The Writing Lab Newsletter*, 16(6), 4-6.

- Matsuda, Y. M. (2011). Toward the establishment of writing support systems for international students at Kanazawa University. *Forum of Language Instructors*, 5, 27-41.
- McKinley, J. (2010). English language writing centres in Japanese universities: What do students really need? *SiSAL Journal*, 1(1), 17-31.
- McKinley, J. (2011). Group workshops: Saving our writing centre in Japan. *Studies in Self-access Learning Journal*, 2(4), 292-303.
- Morikoshi, K. (2008). How to start an English writing center in Japan. In K. Bradford Watts, T. Muller, & M. Swanson (Eds.), *JALT2007 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.
- Moore, R. H. (1950). The writing clinic and the writing laboratory. *College English*, 11(7), 388–393. doi:10.2307/586024
- Morrison, J. B., & Nadeau, J. P. (2003). How was your session at the writing center? Pre-and post-graduate student evaluations. *Writing Center Journal*, 23(2), 25-42. Retrieved from <https://writinglabnewsletter.org>
- Niller, L. (2003). The numbers speak: A pre-test of writing center outcomes using statistical analysis. *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 27(7), 6-9. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Niller, L. (2005). The numbers speak again: A continued statistical analysis of writing center outcomes. *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 29(5), 13-15. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- North, S. M. (1979). *Writing centers: a sourcebook* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (303007647).
- North, S. M. (1984) *The idea of the writing center*. *College English*, 46(5), 433-446. doi:10.2307/377047

- North, S. M. (1984b) Writing center research: Testing our assumptions. In Olson, G. (Ed.) *Writing centers: Theory and administration* (24-35). Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.
- North, S. M. (1994). Revisiting "The idea of a writing Center." *Writing Center Journal*, 15(1), 7-19. Retrieved from [www.jstor.org/stable/43442606](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442606)
- Okawa, G. Y. (1993). Redefining Authority: Multicultural students and tutors at the educational opportunity program writing center at the University of Washington. In Kinkead, J. A., & Harris, J. G. (Eds). (1993). *Writing centers in context: Twelve case studies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 127-144.
- Olson, G. (1981). Establishing a writing center in the junior or community college. *Community College Review*, 9(19), 19-26. doi:10.1177/009155218100900204
- Olson, G. (1984). Establishing and maintaining a writing center in a two-year college. In Olson G (Ed.). (1984). *Writing centers: Theory and administration* (pp. 88-100). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Osman, G. D. (2007). *Student perceptions of the effectiveness of a mandatory remedial tutorial program in a developmental program at a historically black university* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 3286867).
- Neff, J. (1993). The writing center at the University of Puget Sound: The Center of Academic Life. In Kinkead, J. A., & Harris, J. G. (Eds). (1993). *Writing centers in context: Twelve case studies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 127-144.
- Neulib, J. (1986) Evaluating Writing Centers: A Survey Report. Writing Lab Newsletter 11(4), 1-5. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>
- Palmquist, M. (2003). A brief history of computer support for writing centers and writing-across-the-curriculum programs. *Computers and Composition*, 20(4), 395-413. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2003.08.013

- Rodis, K. (1990). Mending the Damaged Path: How to Avoid Conflict of Expectation when Setting up a Writing Center. *Writing Center Journal*, 10(2), 45-57.
- Ryan, H., & Kane, D. (2015). Evaluating the Effectiveness of Writing Center Classroom Visits: An Evidence-Based Approach. *The Writing Center Journal*, 34(2), 145–172. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442808>
- Sanford, D. (2012). The Peer-Interactive Writing Center at the University of New Mexico. *Composition Forum*, 25. Retrieved from <http://compositionforum.com/>
- Schendel, E. (2012). Moving from Others Values to Our Own: Adapting Assessable Outcome from Professional and Other Programs on Your Campus. In Schendel, E., & Macauley, W. J. (Eds.). *Building writing center assessments that matter*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 82-107.
- Schmidt, K. M., & Alexander, J. E. (2012). The empirical development of an instrument to measure writerly self-efficacy in writing centers. *Journal of Writing Assessment*, 5 (1).
- Schreiber, E. (2006). Funding the center through a university line. In Murpy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.) *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 414-428). New York, N. Y.: Routledge
- Simon, L. (1993) The Writing Center at Harvard University: A Student-Centered. Resource. In Kinkead, J. A., & Harris, J. G. (Eds). (1993). *Writing centers in context: Twelve case studies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 114-126.
- Simpson, J. (2012). Managing encounters with central administration. Murpy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.). *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 199-212). New York, N. Y.: Routledge.
- Singh-Corcoran, N., & Emika, (2012). "Inhabiting the Writing Center: A Critical Review." *Reviews*. Retrieved from <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/>
- Slattery, P. (1987). *Technology in the writing center: Do we need it?* *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 11(9), 6–7. Retrieved from <https://wlnjournal.org/resources.php>

- Snively, H., Freeman, T., Prentice, C. (2012) Writing centers for graduate students. *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 151-162). New York, N. Y.: Routledge.
- Speck, B. W. (2012). Managing up: philosophical and financial perspectives for administrative success. In Murpy, B. & Byron, S. (Eds.) *The writing center director's resource book* (pp. 213-222). New York, N. Y.: Routledge.
- Strand, S. E. (1997). *Reporting writing center successes: Authentic assessment in the writing center* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 9804312).
- Summerfield, J. (1988). Writing Centers: A Long View. *Writing Center Journal*, 8(2), 3-9. Retrieved from <http://casebuilder.rhet.ualr.edu/wcrp/wcjournal/search.cfm>
- Tan, B. H. (2010). Innovating writing centers and online writing labs outside North America. *Asian EFL Journal*, 13(2), 391-418. Retrieved from <http://asian-efl-journal.com/>
- Thonus, T. (2002). Tutor and student assessments of academic writing tutorials: What is “success”? *Assessing Writing*, 8(2), 110-134.
- Upcraft, M. L., & Schuh, J. H. (2001). Assessing the first-year student experience: A framework. In Swing, R. L. *Proving and improving: Strategies for assessing the first college year*, 7-9.
- Van Dam, D. C. (1985). *Effects of writing center usage and motivation on academic writing performance* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 1640919995).
- Vazquez, L. (2008). What motivational factors influence community college students' tendency to seek help from the writing center? Available from Proquest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI 304461388).
- Welch, George W. (1974). Organizing a reading and writing lab in which students teach. *College Composition and Communication*, 25(5), 437-39.

- Williams, J. D., & Takaku, S. (2011). Help seeking, self-efficacy, and writing performance among college students. *Journal of writing research*, 3(1), 1-18. Retrieved from doi:10.17239/jowr-2011.03.01.1
- Wresch, William. (Ed.). (1984). *The computer in composition instruction: A writer's tool*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Woolfolk, A. (2010). *Educational psychology*. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Wu, D. (2013). *Introducing writing across the curriculum into China: Feasibility and adaptation*. New York, N.Y: Springer.
- Yahner, W. (1993). Explaining and justifying writing centers: One MORE Example. *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 18(2), 5-7.
- Young, B. R. (2014) Using archival data to examine mandatory Visits. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 8(4), 49-56.



## Appendix

### *Writing Center Survey*

---

This survey will take approximately 7-10 minutes to complete. The results will help the writing center improve its services. Your opinions are very valuable. Thank you for participating.

---

Major: ☐English ☐Other \_\_\_\_\_

Enrollment:

☐Freshman

☐Sophomore

☐Junior

☐Senior

Age:

☐18 ☐19 ☐20 ☐21 ☐22 ☐Other\_\_\_\_\_

Gender:

☐Male ☐Female

How many times did you go to the writing center?

☐0 ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 ☐11 ☐12 ☐13 ☐14 ☐15

Other\_\_\_\_\_

Of these, how many were appointments?

☐0 ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 ☐11 ☐12 ☐13 ☐14 ☐15

Other\_\_\_\_\_

Of these, how many were drop ins?

☐0 ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 ☐6 ☐7 ☐8 ☐9 ☐10 ☐11 ☐12 ☐13 ☐14 ☐15

Other\_\_\_\_\_

### **I. Faculty participation**

My teacher required me to go to the writing center as part of my grade for each paper.

☐Yes ☐No

This made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher often showed a record of the students' visits to the writing center in class.

☐Yes ☐No

This made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel about what your teacher did?

- ☐1. It was rewarding.
- ☐2. It was neither rewarding, nor a punishment.
- ☐3. It felt like a punishment.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher discussed my visits to the writing center during our teacher/student paper feedback sessions.

☐ Yes ☐ No

This made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel about what your teacher did?

- ☐1. It was rewarding.
- ☐2. It was neither rewarding, nor a punishment.
- ☐3. It felt like a punishment.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

## **II. Students' Belief in the Writing Center's Ability to Help Them Improve**

I believe I am a

- ☐I am a good writer.
- ☐I am a fair writer.
- ☐I am a poor writer.
- ☐I can't write at all.

My belief in my writing ability made me

- ☐1.Strongly want to go.
- ☐2.Want to go.
- ☐3.Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4.Not want to go.
- ☐5.Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

I believe the writing center helped me to improve my writing.

- ☐1. Strongly Agree
- ☐2. Agree
- ☐3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐4. Disagree
- ☐5. Strongly Disagree

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

My belief in the center's ability to help me improve my writing made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

I believe the writing center helped me to improve my grades in the course.

- ☐1. Strongly Agree
- ☐2. Agree
- ☐3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐4. Disagree
- ☐5. Strongly Disagree

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

My belief in the center's ability to help me improve my grades made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.

☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### **III. Public relations**

I saw the posters advertising the Writing Center on the walls around campus.

☐Yes ☐No

The posters made me

☐1. Strongly want to go.

☐2. Want to go.

☐3. Didn't influence my decision.

☐4. Not want to go.

☐5. Strongly not want to go

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

The telephone messages I received the day before my writing center appointments made me.

☐1. Strongly want to go.

☐2. Want to go.

☐3. Didn't influence my decision.

☐4. Not want to go.

☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### **IV. Material Usage**

I used the following in the writing center:

☐Computers

☐Student sample paragraphs, essays, or business writing materials

☐Graded readers

☐Novels

- ☐Magazines
- ☐Dictionaries
- ☐Published books of paragraphs and essays

The materials made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **V. Convenient Access**

The center is in a convenient location.

- ☐1. Strongly Agree
- ☐2. Agree
- ☐3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐4. Disagree
- ☐5. Strongly Disagree

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

This center's location made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

The center's hours (Monday through Friday, 10-5) were convenient.

- ☐1. Strongly Agree
- ☐2. Agree
- ☐3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐4. Disagree
- ☐5. Strongly Disagree

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

The center's opening hours made me

- ☐1. Strongly want to go.
- ☐2. Want to go.
- ☐3. Didn't influence my decision.
- ☐4. Not want to go.
- ☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

If the writing center were open in the evenings, would you go?

- ☐Yes
- ☐No

When you visited the center, how long did you have to wait for a tutor?

- ☐I didn't have to wait.
- ☐1-5 minutes
- ☐5-10 minutes
- ☐15-20 minutes
- ☐20 minutes or more

The amount of time I had to wait made me

- ☐1.Strongly want to go.
- ☐2.Want to go.
- ☐3.Didn't influence my decision.

☐4. Not want to go.

☐5. Strongly not want to go.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Information**

What other things motivated you to go to the writing center?

---

---

---

Use the back of the page if you need more room.

What other things made you not want to go to the writing center?

---

---

---

Use the back of the page if you need more room.

How can we improve the writing center?

---

---

---

Use the back of the page if you need more room.





## **Journey Towards Academic Literacy: An Exploration of Challenges Faced in the First Year at University**

**Neslihan Bilikozen**

*American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates*

### **Biodata**

**Dr Neslihan Bilikozen** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Writing Studies in American University of Sharjah, UAE. She received her doctorate degree from the University of Exeter, UK. Her current research interests include L2 writing assessment, acquisition of L2 academic literacy, language and identity, critical issues in L2 writing, and technology use in education.

Email: nbilikozen@aus.edu

### **Abstract**

Informed by an interpretive framework of research, this study explores the challenges encountered by six Arab students in their journey towards academic literacy during their freshman year at an American university in the UAE. The findings gained through in-depth interviews conducted regularly with each student throughout an entire academic year and document analysis highlighted the importance of three factors in forming the students' perspectives on the academic literacy requirements: the perceived significance of grades, weakness in reading and writing skills, and doubts about the contribution of these requirements to their general academic and professional development. Starting their academic journey with this perspective, the students faced a number of academic, personal and social challenges. In their attempts to overcome these challenges, they had to reconsider their initial perspectives towards the end of the academic year.

**Keywords:** academic literacies, L2 reading, L2 writing, academic writing, higher education

## Introduction

It is crucial for educators and researchers to learn more about undergraduates' academic literacy development because failure to manipulate academic literacy usually leads to limited success in post-secondary education (Hirvela, 2004). Academic discourse, too often, serves a gatekeeping role, preventing students from progressing educationally (Farr, 1993). The issue of underdeveloped literacy skills as well as the gap in educational standards between schools and universities in the UAE have been addressed in a number of research studies (Durham & Palubiski, 2007; Findlow, 2006; Gobert, 2009; Hatakka, 2014; Hatherley-Greene, 2012; Khoury & Duzgun, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2009) and are also frequently addressed in publications aimed at a more general readership in the UAE (e.g. "Education initiative", 2014; Hameli & Underwood, 2014; Naidoo, 2010; Salem & Swan, 2014).

While concerned authorities, that is, universities, schools and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research are discussing ways to overcome the problem, the students who are trying hard to bridge the gap between their existing competencies and what is expected of them in their degree programs remain the party who suffer the consequences of the disparity.

The dissatisfaction with university entrants' academic literacy skills has not only been a subject of debate in the UAE, but also a common point of complaint in the UK, US, and Australia (Carroll, 2002; Spack, 1997; Horner, 2014; Wingate, 2015). However, few research studies have examined the academic literacy development of undergraduates in this setting. While these studies contributed to our understanding of the significance of the issue, they adopted a narrow definition of academic literacy, focusing exclusively either on writing or reading skills, failing to acknowledge the interrelations between the two skills by design. For instance, defining academic literacy as writing strategies, library research strategies, and general study skills, Hatakka (2014), investigated the academic socialization experiences of male Emirati students enrolled in an engineering program in the UAE. Other studies focused on the development of reading skills (Khoury & Duzgun, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2009) and general academic problems associated with the transition from school to university (Durham & Palubiski, 2007; Hatherley-Greene, 2012). This study, on the other hand, adopts a more comprehensive definition of academic literacy and views it as "the ability to communicate competently in an academic discourse community" (Wingate,

2015, p.6) through “the activity of interpretation and production of academic and discipline-based texts” (Leki, 2007, p. 3).

In comparison to the contexts investigated in previous research studies on academic literacy development around the world, the UAE presents a unique setting in terms of the social and ideological dynamics surrounding the learners and the status of English. Based on Kachru’s Three Circle Model<sup>2</sup> (Kachru, 1985), a great majority of the previous studies on academic literacy development of undergraduates have been conducted in inner-circle countries with participants who are native English-speaking (NES) students and, more recently, non-native English-speaking (NNES) students. The UAE, on the other hand, fits the definition outer-circle countries, where English is not the native language but plays an important role as a lingua franca. The emergence of English as a lingua franca at all levels of the UAE society over the past fifty years has been the subject of some studies conducted locally (e.g. Boyle, 2012; Randall & Samimi, 2010).

Additionally, unlike many of the previous studies on academic literacy development in L2, this study adopts a broad definition of context by describing the role played by social context dynamics in each participant’s academic literacy development. Despite the increase in research on L2 academic literacy since the early 1990s, as Leki (2007) notes, the view of the students and of the students’ experiences have been very limited even in qualitative research studies. Further emphasizing the significance of social context influences, she states that language and literacy development, academic growth, and even the ability to complete course assignments go hand in hand with the extent, stability, and success of socio-academic relations students build and in some cases cannot progress until such relationships are formed (Leki, 2007).

While the shortcomings of academic literacy instruction at higher education, both in L1 and L2, have been addressed in a number of studies, the focus of these studies has been almost entirely on academic writing, for academic reading remains a neglected area in academic literacy research and pedagogy (Spack, 1997; Wingate 2015). This study, on the other hand, acknowledges the interrelation of writing and reading by investigating the participants’ development in both areas

---

<sup>2</sup> According to Kachru’s Three Circle Model, the Inner Circle represents countries where English is spoken as native language such as Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Outer Circle refers to countries such as India, Nigeria and Malaysia, where English is not the native language but has an important role as a lingua franca. Lastly, the Expanding Circle includes countries where English has no historical or governmental role, but is still broadly used as a medium of international communication.

and contributes to the field by turning the attention to a group of learners whose experiences have yet to be documented adequately.

### **Research Questions**

My overarching research objective in this longitudinal study was to investigate how students in their first year of undergraduate careers respond to the challenges they face while attaining the academic literacy requirements of an American university in the UAE. While the impact of these challenges on the students' identity development and their professors' perspectives were reported elsewhere (Bilikozen, 2018), this paper focuses on the following research questions that were generated from the overarching research objective:

1. What are the focal students' perspectives on the academic literacy requirements at the beginning of their undergraduate careers?
2. How do they act in the light of their perspectives?
3. What kind of changes, if any, take place in their perspectives as a result of their actions, in other words, as a result of their ways of dealing with these academic literacy demands?

### **The Teaching and Learning Context**

As briefly noted above, a number of academic challenges, particularly in keeping up with the reading and writing requirements, await students upon their transition to university in the UAE. Troudi and Jendli (2011), who examined Emirati students' experiences of English as a medium of instruction at the tertiary level, noted that especially students from public schools experienced a total shift in the medium of instruction, from Arabic to English. The reported experiences of the participants highlighted the difficulties they faced while trying to meet the required reading and writing skills as well as the gatekeeping role of English as a medium of instruction. In a similar study, Hatherley-Greene (2012) described the experiences of first-year male Emirati students who "move from their pre-dominantly Arabic life-world associated with their families and schooling to the pre-dominantly western culture found in higher education" (p. ii) at HCT, using the Giroux's cultural border-crossing metaphor. The findings showed that majority of students who were placed in lower levels in the college's Foundation program had found border crossing difficult or

impossible and left college for employment opportunities. Focusing on the acquisition of academic writing strategies of first-year male Emirati students studying engineering in a higher education institution with an English medium of instruction (EMI), Hatakka (2014) identified lack of library research strategies, digital literacy skills and sense of ownership as obstacles to success.

The challenges described above are closely linked to the phenomenon of “linguistic-cultural dualism” (Findlow, 2006), which is predominantly the result of the state’s language of instruction policy that implies “throughout childhood, Arabic supplies all or most communication needs, while the transition at age 18 to learning in English requires a substantially changed cultural mindset” (Findlow, 2006, p. 27). Findlow (2006) observes this dualism existing in different systems such as public/private (Arabic in public, English in private sectors) and childhood/adulthood (Arabic in earlier years of education particularly in public schools, English in higher education institutions).

The present study was conducted at an English-medium American university located in the emirate of Sharjah. As indicated in its mission statement, while the university is based upon an American model of higher education, it is also grounded in the Arab culture of the region (Fast Facts, 2015).

Students who receive below the minimum TOEFL/ IELTS score but who otherwise meet the university’s admission standards are required to successfully complete a series of remedial language classes offered by the university’s Achievement Academy Bridge Program (AABP). Having passed the AABP exit tests and scored 76 (540) or above on the TOEFL or 6.5 or above on the IELTS, they are eligible to take the English Placement Test (EPT), a test developed and assessed by a group of professors in the Department of Writing Studies (DWS). Students are placed in one of the three courses offered by the DWS depending on the score they receive on the EPT. The main objectives of the DWS include providing students with the academic language, critical thinking and rhetorical foundations essential to writing and reading successfully in a university environment. It offers a series of three academic writing courses that all undergraduates are required to take either as a pre-requisite or a co-requisite for a large number of courses they have to take to complete their degree programmes: WRI 001, WRI 101, and WRI 102.

## Methodology

The present study is informed by the central underlying principles of the interpretivist paradigm. Within the interpretive paradigm, guided by my research objectives and questions, I mainly draw on symbolic interactionism to understand the participants' experiences from their perspectives. Symbolic interactionists are concerned with the interpretation of subjective viewpoints and how individuals make sense of their world from their unique *perspective*. The notion of symbolic interactionism originates from the work of Mead and subsequently has been associated with researchers such as Blumer, Hughes, Becker, and Goffman (as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Elaborating on Mead's ideas, Blumer (1969, p. 2) laid out the three fundamental premises of symbolic interactionism as follows:

1. Human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.
2. The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.
3. These meanings are handled in, and modified, through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

Perspectives are formed based on the principles stated above. As Charon (2009) aptly explains:

A perspective is an angle on reality, a place where the individual stands as he or she looks at it and tries to understand reality....a perspective is an absolute basic part of everyone's existence, and it acts as a filter through which everything around us is perceived and interpreted. There is no possible way that the individual can encounter reality 'in the raw', directly, as it really is, for whatever is seen can only be part of the real situation. (p. 3)

The above definition foregrounds both the importance of the notion of perspectives as a vital tool for people to make sense of the world and the limiting side of it in that one can only see what their perspective allows them to see.

The main objectives of this study, as stated above, make symbolic interactionism a well suited approach to take in order to understand the participants' experiences from their perspectives. My

choice of various qualitative research methods reflects this theoretical approach. I used frequent in-depth interviews conducted regularly with each student participant and document analysis as the main methods of data collection for this study.

## **Interviews**

In order to grasp as fully as possible the participants' perspectives, I prepared a semi-structured interview guide consisting of a set of data collection questions that had the potential to engage the participants in conversations across as wide a range of areas as possible on the phenomenon under investigation, that is, academic literacy. The students were asked questions on their academic objectives, course readings and study habits, reading and writing assignments across the curriculum, reading and writing strategies, and socio-academic relationships. As the study unfolded, some data collection questions that did not prove to be helpful were eliminated while others that emerged in the course of interviewing and kept the conversation moving, even in unexpected directions, added to or replaced the pre-established ones (A final interview schedule is found in Appendix B).

In addition to the main data collection questions, I developed a set of interview questions to collect data on the students' background (i.e. demographic information, prior educational life, socio-cultural and linguistic background, family life, attitudes towards reading and writing in the family, etc.), some routine questions that I asked each focal student on their coursework in progress, as well as some questions to be asked at the start and end of the semester.

## **Document Analysis**

Another method of data collection used in this study was document analysis. By document analysis, I am referring to examination of documents related to the participants' course work, such as course syllabi, class notes, writing assignments, drafts of papers, copies of exams, and the other similar course materials. The students' answers to many of the interview questions either mentioned or focused on these documents, which I decided to collect and examine in order to have a holistic understanding of each participant's experiences. Having access to these materials during the interviews helped the participants explain the challenges they faced and their general thought of them more clearly and easily. It was also helpful to me, as through this method, I was able to

create a detailed list of the reading and writing requirements the focal students were expected to meet in the academic year of 2011-2012 and understand the assignments the students brought up during the interviews better (see Appendix C).

## **Participants**

Six students, who were Arab L2 speakers of English, participated in the study. (Please see Appendix A for further information on the participants' prior educational life, cultural and linguistic background, and other demographic details.) They were selected based on the criteria of purposiveness and accessibility (Silverman, 2000). In accordance with the purposes of the study, my aim was to access first year students who were non-native speakers of English and found it difficult to cope with the academic literacy requirements of the new academic institution they had entered, that is, an American university in the UAE, of which medium of instruction is English.

## **Procedures**

The data collection for this study lasted two academic semesters, starting in the fall semester of the 2011-12 academic year. The interview guide had been piloted before the data collection with the assistance of two colleagues who had extensive experience in qualitative research methods as well as four freshman students who shared similar cultural and educational backgrounds the participants of the study. They volunteered to take the time to listen to and answer the interview questions and then provide comments on the clarity of these. With the help of this process, the wording and ordering of several questions in the interview guides were changed to make them clearer, easier to understand, more focused, and objective.

I conducted three to four interviews, each of which lasted between thirty to ninety minutes, with each participant in Fall 2011. I followed the same interview schedule in Spring 2012 and managed to conduct three to four interviews with each participant again. The duration of the interviews was the same as in the previous semester. Hence, I conducted six to eight interviews with each student throughout the whole academic year, which resulted in a total of forty-six interviews.



## **Data Analysis**

All of the interviews were audio-recorded and fully transcribed. Following Radnor's (2002) approach to analysing semi-structured interviews in interpretive research, I prepared the data for analysis first by reading the whole transcribed data several times and noting down the topics that emerged from the data. Radnor (2002) calls this stage topic ordering. I made a list of the topics, giving a name and a code (abbreviation) to each. I then read the transcripts very carefully one more time to draw out the categories within each topic. I listed these categories under each topic as sub-headings (see Appendix E: Topics, codes, and categories identified in the data). The next step was reading the transcripts for content, which is going through the text one more time to highlight and code the main quotes that go under each category.

During the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, I also used the strategy of constant comparison of different data sources (i.e. complementary data sources such as the interview log that includes the notes I took after each interview, as well as all the documents I collected regarding the primary participants' course work, such as course syllabi, course notes, class texts, writing assignments, drafts of papers, copies of exams, and the like) and member validation to consolidate and adjust my interpretations where relevant and necessary. In support of this approach, Richards (2003) notes that the relationship between the interview data and other data sources should never be ignored and that it is "incumbent on the researcher to make use of all available data sources in order to get the best possible fix on the information that is presented in the interviews" (p. 92).

## **The Students' Perspectives on Academic Literacy at the Outset**

The students' perspectives on academic literacy at the beginning of the academic year were shaped by three factors: significance of grades, perceived weakness in English and academic literacy skills in comparison to other students, and doubts about the contribution of academic literacy requirements to their academic and professional growth. The table below presents these three factors accompanied by a relevant quote from the interviews as an example.

**Table 1: The Students' Perspectives on Academic Literacy at the Beginning of the Academic Year**

Theme	Example	Number of mentions
1. Significance of grades	I'm scared really of the mark because I am on a scholarship. So that scholarship need GPA above two or 2.5 even, so if it became below than that so I start getting problems holds and I have to delay it you know. (Saif Int 3)	42
2. Perceived weakness in reading and writing skills in comparison to other students	I feel so bad when I don't know how to do something and when I see the others they are doing. They are just working, nananana writing. I'm the only one who is watching the others. (Khairea Int 3)	39
3. Doubts about the contribution of academic literacy requirements to academic and professional growth	Sometimes, I say 'What is the benefit from the writing course while I am engineering?' (Zeina Int. 3)	32

All of the participants stated that being able to read and write well in English at university was important to earn good grades in required academic writing classes, which acted as a pre-requisite or co-requisite for most of the discipline-specific courses they had to take. When asked about their aims and intentions with regards to their progress in academic reading and writing in general, they immediately brought up their objective of receiving high grades that would contribute to their GPA. They stressed that they needed to maintain a good GPA not to disappoint their parents or lose their scholarship. They were aware that having strong reading and writing skills in English was essential for many of their discipline-specific courses which required graded reading and writing assignments, as well as for their professional careers in the long run. They all saw keeping up with the reading and writing requirements of all courses they had to take across the curriculum as a significant determinant of their academic success and GPA.

Zeina, a high-achiever at high school, who graduated with a GPA of 98 out of 100 points, was very disappointed with the sudden drop in her grades. She attributed her falling grades to the change in the medium of instruction, teaching style, as well as the overwhelming course load. As she had graduated from an Arabic-medium high school, she viewed her "weak" English as a major obstacle towards achieving her academic goals. Her biggest concern was over her reading and writing skills, not only in academic writing classes but also in other courses that required graded reading

and writing assignments. Hence, when asked about her general academic goals and more specifically with regards to her reading and writing development, Zeina immediately brought about her concern over her grades:

Like I want my GPA like to be above 3.5 and I want like to be successful in Computer Science and to do programs like related to me and like carry my name and, and some websites also useful websites like Facebook also something like that. I think the most difficult thing is my English language because when I was in school, it was everything in Arabic and my average was high, and like my average in the end of the semester was like 98. (Int. 1)

As seen in the above excerpt, Zeina had very ambitious goals with regards to her academic performance and future career as an engineer. Part of Zeina's concern over her GPA had to do with her parents. She often stressed that her parents, especially her father, was very concerned about her academic standing. Zeina and her four siblings were the first-generation university students in the family and making her parents proud was a big motivation for her to excel in her studies.

Another common theme in my interviews with all participants was their perceived weaknesses in reading and writing skills. Khaireia, for instance, often compared the time and effort she devoted to completing the reading and writing assignments to the time she thought her friends would spend, which she estimated as dramatically less (Please see the relevant quote in Table 1 above). Having studied at a public school in Arabic, Noura also found her proficiency in English, especially in reading and writing, insufficient. She complained that reading and writing were not given much importance at school and that she had never been required to write a full essay before she started to study at university. She added how challenging it was for her to read and write in English, especially longer texts, not only in academic writing classes, but also in other courses. She often noted that she felt "stressed", "upset", and "frustrated" when she could not do well on an exam because of her "poor English" even though she "knew the answer".

At the beginning of the study, when asked about the importance of the required academic reading and writing skills for their life or the outcomes they expected from pursuing their objectives, the students usually brought up their grades and the importance of English for their future careers to

the fore. However, as the semester progressed and the challenges intensified, most of the participants expressed their doubts about the value of learning academic writing and reading skills for a student in their major. To illustrate, Zeina expressed her thoughts as follows:

Sometimes, I say “What is the benefit from the writing course while I am engineering?” But then some people say to me “You will be more expert then in writing and you need it in writing reports and something like that”. Of course my friends in [X] University, they don’t have writing courses. I think like this sometimes, when I bother from writing. But, when I’m thinking carefully it is good... Because I think now English is in everywhere. I think you will need it. (Int. 3)

One of the significant causes of this doubt was the differences in the expected form and strategies needed for various writing assignments across the curriculum. Khaireia questioned how necessary it was for a student in her major to learn the principles of academic writing, especially at the beginning, as she saw no point in transferring the writing skills and conventions she learnt in academic writing courses to her discipline-specific courses. This discrepancy was a significant source of confusion for her and eventually caused her to question the relevance of studying conventions of academic writing for a student in her major. At the end of the first semester, as she was reflecting on what she had initially thought of the required academic writing courses, she noted:

I was thinking, “Why I’m taking Writing?” It is not important. I’m like studying Architecture. I’m like, I don’t want to understand writing. (Int. 4)

The students continued to express their doubts more often towards the end of the semester as they questioned the purposes of some reading and writing assignments.

## **Challenges**

The analysis of data showed that the students encountered six main challenges while trying to meet the academic literacy demands of the curriculum, which are explained in detail below.

**Table 2: Challenges Faced by the Students**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Number of mentions</b>
Lack of time	Khairee: “I haven’t really much time to go to the Writing Center to go through the grammar mistakes and organization.” (Int.3)	51
Transition to English-medium instruction (EMI)	Mahmoud: “I don’t know maybe, the thing is changing from Arabic to English is kind of a little bit difficult.” (Int. 3)	47
Adapting to the changing academic literacy requirements across the curriculum	Osama: “APA is easy, it’s just rules. Yeah, but why? I know where I got it from so what’s the point? Maybe, because all of us have to write it in the same way, but only in writing courses.” (Int. 3)	42
Using the sources in the library and doing research	Saif: “I thought I have time, it’s easy, like I will do it. But it required more research and finding the credible sources takes time.” (Int. 6)	36
Building social and academic relationships	Osama: “The thing is that I don’t think he [the professor] would really help me. (Int. 4)	33
Accessing university services that offer support for academic writing	Noura: “Really, I don’t think they [the Writing Center tutors] are good enough. You know it’s like they are saying like read it for us and half an hour I only read the essay. I don’t know why but it’s like half an hour. And then they said what do you want to do? It’s like you know losing time.” (Int. 1)	31

***Lack of Time***

Over the course of the study, the participants provided accounts of many challenges they faced in their efforts to bring their academic literacy skills on par with the expectations of their university, among which lack of time was the most commonly stated. This was a complex challenge since it intensified or gave rise to the other challenges the students faced. Mostly, lack of time was shown as a reason for not being able to:

- build social and academic relationships with their peers and professors
- go to the university writing center
- complete reading and writing assignments on time
- use the university library to do research

What concerned the students even more about this specific challenge was the constant comparison they made between themselves and their classmates with regards to their use of time. They would always estimate the amount of time they needed to complete the reading and writing assignments as significantly more than what they thought others would need. While talking about the amount of time she spent on her reading and writing assignments, Noura noted:

It's really stressful. You can say most people like take one hour, but I take like two hours or more, double than them. I just see people. It's like from the midterm, I should like study it before two days just to like finish all material and review everything again. (Int. 4)

Zeina added: "I need much more time than my friends for improving because I went to Arabic school". (Int. 3)

Lack of time remained the biggest challenge the participants brought up most frequently also in the spring semester, especially for Osama and Mahmoud, whose GPA was lower than 2.0 out of 4.0 at the end of the fall semester. As a result of their low GPA, Osama and Mahmoud were placed on academic probation in spring and were therefore required to take an additional course called UPA 200: University Preparation for Non-Bridge Students, a non-credit remedial course graded as pass/fail, which demanded extra time from the already overwhelmed, time-stricken students.

### ***Transition to English Medium of Instruction (EMI)***

Another challenge the students faced was the transition to EMI, as a result of which they had trouble in understanding written instructions in various forms of assessment such as quizzes, midterms, final examinations; guidelines prepared for assignments such as lab reports, essays, and projects; as well as written feedback in graded writing assignments and taking notes. Zeina's limited vocabulary prevented her from understanding examination questions asked in most of her classes. In MTH 103: Calculus I, she had trouble in understanding what she called "long questions", often included description of a case or a scenario, and vocabulary she was not familiar with. She expressed her feelings when faced with such questions as follows:

When I don't understand something I feel nervous, and like I will not solve it. In this question, I didn't even try actually. Here, it says "Flies a kite", this I don't know the meaning of "kite". The rest is OK. (Int. 3)

Limited vocabulary was an obstacle to understanding written feedback in graded writing assignments, usually given in academic writing classes. To give an example, Noura did not what "awkward" meant, a comment she usually saw written next to quite a few sentences on her graded essays. Even after looking up the word, she felt confused about how to respond to this specific comment, which she explained saying:

I don't know, it's like I don't know what's the awkward sentence. It's like I don't know English well, so how can I know that this is an awkward sentence you know. This is the problem. (Int. 5)

Another area of difficulty the students often brought up had to do with taking notes in English. To illustrate, although Zeina was taught note taking skills in the Academic Bridge Program before matriculating into her major, she was not able to take notes properly because most of the time she thought the professor spoke too fast. Moreover, she could not understand the notes she took in English if she were to read them a week later unless she translated them into Arabic right after each class.

### ***Adapting to the Changing Academic Literacy Requirements Across the Curriculum***

A significant source of confusion experienced by all participants had to do with identifying, understanding and adapting to the different strategies they needed to follow to complete various reading and writing assignments given in different courses they took across the curriculum. Based on their accounts of the challenges they faced while working on these assignments, it seemed, especially at the beginning, they did not really know how to approach the required reading and writing assignments. In other words, they were not aware that they needed to utilize different reading and writing strategies for different purposes. As a result, they were disappointed and confused when a strategy that worked for one assignment did not work for others, even for the same course. For instance, while reading an assigned article once or twice to get the gist of it was a strategy that enabled the participants to participate in or at least understand class discussions in

various courses, it usually did not bring success in quizzes and exams, which the students came to realize after a series of failing or barely passing grades.

The students faced the same adaptation challenge while dealing with the graded writing assignments given in various courses they took across the curriculum. As mentioned before, the differences in the expected form and strategies needed for these writing assignments confused the students. In academic writing courses they were expected to write formal essays, which usually required a clear argument, carefully organized supporting points, and integration of research following a standard documentation style, APA. Not only were the students unfamiliar with the form, but also had little experience with the process they needed to go through to complete the assignment, which usually required them to produce several drafts, receive feedback from their professor, peers, the writing center, and finally revise their work accordingly. The students were not asked to or even expected to follow most of these requirements in discipline-specific writing assignments. To illustrate, in College of Architecture, Art and Design (CAAD), the evaluated writing assignments lacked clear guidelines, at least from Khairea's point of view. Similarly, in the School of Business, Mahmoud thought the purpose of the graded writing assignments and the guidelines provided were vague. Nevertheless, the students, especially those in the College of Engineering, managed to receive fairly good grades in most of these assignments in contrast to their grades in academic writing classes.

There are a number of possible explanations for this. In the College of Engineering, the graded writing assignments were primarily composed of weekly lab reports assigned in NGN 101, PHY 101 and PHY 102, ranging from four to eight pages. The kind of writing required was usually formulaic with very specific step-by-step instructions. In NGN 101, the students were also asked to write a project report, to be completed in groups, which was expected to be between twelve to fifteen pages long. In all of these writing assignments, the students were expected to use a few sources and list the sources at the end of the assignment. In the School of Business, Mahmoud was required to write a research paper in CHM 105: Chemistry and the Environment referring to a few library sources. However, none of the students were required to cite their sources following a standard documentation style like APA. Consequently, they questioned the value of learning the APA style and other academic writing conventions for a student in their major at some point during the two semesters this study continued.



### ***Using the Sources in the Library and Doing Research***

Another challenge often mentioned by the students had to do with doing research and using the library sources effectively. They all noted that they preferred using online search engines such as Google to using the university library as they were under the impression that the sources in the library were difficult to get access to and understand.

For a project assigned in BIS 101, Mahmoud was required to create an attendance system on Excel. While the project did not require a written report, as he explained, he had to read many sources to find the information he needed to create the attendance sheet. He chose Google over the library as his preferred method of research. He noted:

I didn't go to the library 'cause Google is much easier. I don't know, but I think if I find things, books, I think it will be too much complicated. 'Cause I don't want the whole thing; I only want a part of the things I am working on you know, so Google was helpful. (Int. 3)

While using Google was a strategy that helped them for some projects, it was not useful for some other assignments, especially when a professor asked them to use library sources only. To give an example, the students found it very time-consuming and challenging to look for specific library sources, such as books and articles in academic journals or databases in the library, for essays assigned in WRI 102: Writing and Reading across the Curriculum. They noted that it was difficult for them to look for a relevant source, understand it, and then skim through the entire source to find an idea that they could integrate in their essays. For instance, reflecting on what went wrong on a graded writing assignment given in WRI 102, Saif noted: "I thought I have time, it's easy, like I will do it. But it required more research and finding the credible sources takes time." (int. 6)

### ***Building Social and Academic Relationships with Peers and Professors***

One of the routine questions I asked the students on their courses in progress each semester had to do with their relations with their classmates and professors. The students' responses to this question and accounts of various experiences showed that they usually worked in isolation unless they were required to work as part of a group by their professor or they received an unexpectedly

low grade on an assignment or examination. Khairea explained why she preferred to work alone and why she did not have a wide circle of friends at university, saying:

It's like I have problem with communications. Like, when I'm saying joke, it doesn't make sense because in my language it does make sense but it's translated in English... It's like it's killing the sense. I have friends. I think everyone knows me and it's not really friends, but just "hi, how are you", you know. My only friend is my sister.

She added that she usually spoke to her friends in English rather than Arabic as she thought her Arab friends could not understand her Arabic dialect, which she called "Algerian". Hence, she attributed her limited interaction with her classmates to a lack of common language, in which she could express herself as she wanted to. She also stressed that she had no time to socialize as she had to work part time to help her father pay her tuition fees.

While Noura, Zeina, and Mahmoud continued to socialize with their friends they had met at the Academic Bridge Program the year before they matriculated in their majors or their friends from high school, they had difficulty in building new friendships or interacting with classmates who took the same courses with them.

In cases where they were required to work as part of a team, the participants chose to take on a more passive role, especially in tasks which required their written contribution, mostly due to thinking that their level of English was not good enough. To illustrate, while talking about a group assignment in WRI 101: Academic Writing, which required the group to summarize an assigned article, Noura stated that she thought she needed take a more passive role due to her limited English. She described her role in the teamwork as follows:

I'm the listener most of the time. I put my ideas there when I'm confident, but most of the time I'm the listener, because I should learn and it's like learning process. Because, most of them are better than me in English.

While talking about the same group assignment, Saif brought up a different reason for taking on a more passive role, which was feeling intimidated due to the presence of the opposite gender in the group. He stressed that after studying in gender segregated schools for twelve years, he needed to

go through an adaptation process to get used to studying in a co-educational institution and expressing his opinions freely in group activities where female and male students worked together.

Moreover, there were many times the students did not see their professors to ask for help on many of the challenges they faced in their reading and writing assignments, mainly due to lack of time, as noted before. Most of the time, the students talked to or at least considered talking to their professors after receiving a failing or an surprisingly low grade on an exam or assignment, often to understand their mistakes or sometimes to negotiate a better grade.

### ***Accessing University Services that Offer Support for Academic Writing***

The students were not able to or did not want to make use of the services offered by the Writing Center due to reasons such as lack of time, problems with making an appointment before their assignment deadline, or the doubt some of them had whether the student-tutors would be knowledgeable enough to guide them.

Despite lack of time, most of the students attempted to get help from the Writing Center a few times, but they found it was not a very straightforward process. Osama's first attempt at visiting the Writing Center was unsuccessful as he was not aware of the need to book an appointment in advance. His next attempt failed too as he tried to get an appointment right before his assignment submission deadline, at a time when the Writing Center was fully booked. Hence, he was not able to get any help from the Writing Center throughout the entire first semester.

While Saif and Noura thought it would be helpful to receive as much feedback as possible to improve their essays, they were uncertain that the Writing Center was the right place to get help from. Saif thought the Writing Center was for students "who got very bad mark at the beginning". Although he was not content with receiving a C on his first major writing assignment in WRI 101: Academic Writing, he did not go to the Writing Center for support for any of his assignments, preferring to get feedback directly from the professor.

Like Saif, Noura did not think the Writing Center was helpful enough. Reflecting on her experiences in trying to improve one of her major writing assignments given in WRI 101, she complained that the tutors did not guide her clearly (see the quote in Table 2). She was disappointed as she expected the tutors to identify and correct her mistakes directly rather than being asked to

take on a more active role in the revision process. However, she still tried to get help from the Writing Center whenever her busy schedule permitted.

### **Coping Strategies**

The analysis of the data showed that the students developed three coping strategies to deal with the major challenges, which were described above. These coping strategies are shown in the following table and explained in detail below.

**Table 3: Coping Strategies Developed by the Students**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Number of mentions</b>
Excessive studying	Osama: “And then the thing is that I found out, when I woke up I found out that I forgot to eat that day.” (Int. 2)	28
Corner-cutting strategies	Noura: “I believe that it’s good to have groups in NGN because most of them are better than me in English so whenever I have mistakes in my lab reports they change it for me or edit it. So, I don’t have to think.” (Int. 2)	21
Seeking help and developing more effective study habits	Khaireia: “After the bad grade I got, I decided to go to Writing Center. I was surprised, because what they told me it’s not really helpful, but now I think it is.” (Int. 4)	20

#### ***Excessive Studying***

The students’ accounts of how they studied and worked on the reading and writing assignments given in all their courses throughout the academic year showed that they invested a lot of time and effort in completing these assignments, frequently putting studying before sleeping, socializing, and even eating. The excessive time devoted to studying was, in fact, an indication of the students’ lack of efficient study skills. This coping strategy was used by all participants, particularly at the beginning of the academic year. For instance, Osama revealed that he had not eaten anything for more than 24 hours while narrating how he studied before he submitted one of his major writing assignments for WRI 101: Academic Writing.

The other participants had very similar experiences to Osama’s. What made this issue more challenging to deal with for the students was failing to receive the grades they aimed for in spite of their perceived hard work. The students’ level of disappointment was proportional to the amount of time and effort they invested in studying and it seemed their level of stress and confusion

increased over the course of this study when they repeatedly received failing or barely passing grades no matter how much time they spent on studying.

### *Corner-Cutting Strategies*

When the excessive amount of time and effort invested in studying did not bring the expected level of success, out of desperation, the students resorted to what can be called “corner-cutting strategies”, strategies which they thought would help them save time in completing assignments or simply get a passing grade on a given reading or writing assignment while doing the minimum required from them. These strategies included, but were not limited to, using an online search engine or translation tool to help with their assignments, having someone else do their homework, or avoiding certain parts of the work.

Reflecting on why she might have received a D on her first major writing assignment she wrote for WRI 101, Khairea explained that she had written the essay in French and then used an online translation tool to translate it into English. She noted:

I think why I got this bad grade because I wrote everything in French and I put it in Google translation and I translated directly. And I copy-paste it directly, and I did some changes because, the others, it seems to me like it's correct, that's why. And now I decided never to do that. Maybe I'm going to write directly in English, everything in English, and that's what I did for the second essay. (Int. 3)

Khairea said she had resorted to this strategy because she was disheartened by the low grades she had received on her previous minor writing assignments and quizzes. She had used this strategy before while she was taking remedial English classes in the Academic Bridge Program and believed it helped her to pass the course. The difference was that now she was required to write much longer essays compared to the short paragraphs she was asked to write before. She noted:

When I was in the bridge program, it worked because it was paragraphs. It wasn't one thousand words. I feel stupid doing that, normally I shouldn't do that! Well it was an experience, bad experience. (Int. 3)

Zeina, too, turned to Google for support, searching for summaries of the articles assigned in her academic writing classes or explanations for confusing instructions for assignments in other courses by copying and pasting the instruction in the Google search bar.

The students also acknowledged using avoidance strategies of various kinds. Noura discovered from her experiences in NGN 110 (Introduction to Engineering and Computing) that she could avoid the written parts in group projects by taking on a more active role in non-written parts of the assigned work and started using this strategy in other courses. She had to work with four other students for the final NGN 110 project, which required them to design a car that could cross a 10-meter racetrack in the shortest time yet have the lightest weight. As a team, they had to write a detailed 10-page report of their experiences and the research they conducted to help them design the car. However, as her team members found Noura's writing skills in English quite weak, they asked her to work on parts of the project that did not require any writing. While Noura was upset with their criticism at first, she eventually started to appreciate having one less graded writing assignment. Commenting on how the NGN project was going at an interview, she said:

I believe that it's good to have groups in NGN because most of them are better than me in English so whenever I have mistakes in my lab reports they change it for me or edit it. So, I don't have to think. (Int. 2)

Osama used the same strategy while working on the same project with another group of students. He explained:

I am responsible for building the car. We have the smartest guy in our group. He's the one who takes care of writing; he checks after all of us, he checks spelling and the grammar and everything. We trust him, this guy is smart.

A third avoidance strategy was to ask a friend to do the work, but this clearly carried a risk. Mahmoud asked his roommate to do a writing assignment given in BIS as he was too sick to do it before the deadline. The assignment required him to provide a solution to a problematic business case. He was asked to provide solutions to ten cases throughout the semester, which accounted for ten percent of his overall grade for the course. However, his friend copied and submitted someone else's work electronically on his behalf. Worrying about being accused of plagiarism, he decided

to tell his professor what had happened, but he did not get the reaction he had expected. He expressed his feelings about his meeting with the professor as follows:

He said “Okay, we are done now. Don’t talk to me again about the subject, or I will send you to the dean, or give you an F”. But I’m the one who told him that I did it by mistake; he didn’t know. There are ten cases, which is ten percent. He said “I will give you zero on all of it `cause you plagiarized”. But this is not fair.

Mahmoud was confused and disappointed as he had expected his professor to be more lenient with him in return for his confession. He did not realize that asking someone to do his assignment was also a form of plagiarism.

While corner-cutting strategies such as the ones illustrated above occasionally helped the students in achieving their short term goals, the consequences were more often than not unpleasant. The students continued to use the strategies that worked in the following semester as well; however, those which did not bring the expected positive outcomes forced the students to seek more effective and productive ways to respond to the reading and writing requirements placed on them, such as the ones explained below.

### ***Seeking Help and Developing More Effective Study Habits***

The participants started to talk about how they tried to overcome the difficulties they faced by seeking help from the support system available on campus more often; some by the end of the fall semester, some in spring. Among these developing strategies were visiting the Writing Center, communicating with professors, and getting psychological support from the university counseling services.

The following excerpt shows Khairea’s changing views of the Writing Center towards the end of fall semester. In the example below, she talks about her progress in WRI 101: Academic Writing:

After the bad grade I got, I decided to go to Writing Center. I was surprised, because what they told me it’s not really helpful, but now I think it is. I took my essay that I got bad grade. I went through the whole essay with one of the tutors. She explained me a lot of things and she advised me some stuff. So I tried to make order

in my writing. When I show them my writing, they like it and they said it is good. You have the ideas but you don't know how to express it, just do that. I tried to avoid little bit French, never to google translate! (Int. 4)

Osama managed to get help from the Writing Center in spring after his previous failed attempts in fall. He commented on the kind of support he received from student-tutors at the Writing Center stating:

They are helpful. Like you go and just tell them to read with you and then see what is wrong. Just like the thesis statement and the arrangement of the paragraphs, the outline and some grammar mistakes. (Int. 6)

It became clear to some of the students that they could get much-needed help from their professors. Khaireia approached her professors more often to ask for advice as to how she could improve her overall standing in the course. To give an example, she changed the reading strategies she used to study for DES 122: Modern Developments in Architecture and Design after talking to her professor. As she had taken the previous course, DES 121: Introduction to Architecture and Design History, with the same professor, she said she was more comfortable talking to him this semester. The following excerpt shows the changes that took place in her reading strategies:

I didn't study for the midterm. I got bad grade. I got 50 something. I went to the professor, I told him everything. I'm keeping the way that I'm studying, but I don't know what happened this semester. He was like "It is not the same method". So what I have to do? I have to change the method because I am giving the same method that I used to do in the last semester. So he said like "Yes, change it". And he gave me another way to study and I felt... Today we have a quiz, it's ten per cent, and yes it works [. . .] Before, I'm reading, I am having big idea, but not going through the specific things. (Int. 7)

Zeina, Noura and Mahmoud started to see their professors to receive feedback or ask questions more often and more timely, as well.



Some students showed more individual strategies for seeking help. Osama decided to see a therapist upon a suggestion made by his WRI 102 professor in spring. He explained how he decided to seek psychological support as follows:

I started going to a therapist now. My English professor, after an entry in my notebook... So I'm writing how stressful life is, and then she tells me "You're really stressed, you can try going to a therapist" and I was like, "No"! And then she was like "Take her email and talk to her". And after I went to her once, it was way better, it was quite helpful. (Int. 6)

Saif, who continued to state that he did not have enough time to see his professors or to go to the Writing Center, started paying more attention to the written feedback on his graded writing assignments and made sure to avoid the issues pointed out in his next assignment. While he never visited the Writing Center, he asked his siblings or a few of his friends, whom he thought had stronger English skills than him, to proofread his essays several times before submitting them.

As a result of using these strategies and learning from the lessons they drew from their experiences in dealing with the challenges they encountered, it seemed the students started to develop more assignment-specific, independent study habits. They seemed more aware of the specific assignment requirements in different courses and were more in control of how they studied. For instance, Zeina, who considered her limited vocabulary as the biggest obstacle to her success in assigned reading and writing assignments subscribed to a website that taught her five words a day and started underlining new words in assigned texts. Khairea started to use more effective reading strategies, such as annotating the assigned text while reading it, a strategy she said she had first learnt in WRI 101: Academic Writing.

Mahmoud had difficulties in creating a reference list and incorporating research into his essays following a standard documentation style, especially in fall. However, he started using an electronic citation tool to help him create in-text citations and a reference list in assignments that require research. At an interview towards the end of the spring semester, he noted:

For the APA style I actually use the website quote citation machine now. 'Cause you make sure that hundred per cent you are right. 'Cause sometimes you get mistakes by writing it. (Int. 7)

In the same interview, he also talked about the changes in his reading strategies:

I have to read each text five, six times to understand. I have to underline the words I don't understand. So now I do it early because I know it'll take time. (Int. 7)

### **The Students' Perspectives on Academic Literacy by the End of the Academic Year**

The data presented above suggest that the overwhelming workload, coupled with the lack of effective study skills, prevented the students from developing essential social and academic relationships that could have helped them achieve their academic goals regarding their academic literacy development more easily, especially in the first semester. However, eventually they became more aware of the strategies they should use to achieve their short-term goals and deal with stress, which helped them complete some reading and writing assignments more successfully despite the fact that they did not necessarily see much value them. The students' experiences throughout the first academic year did not change their perspective on the academic literacy requirements. Nevertheless, they often seemed to respond to these requirements more effectively and started to question the purposes behind them towards the end of the second semester.

The following excerpt shows Mahmoud's thoughts about the readings assigned in UPA 200, clearly indicating that he questioned the purpose of the assignments given:

There is some stuff I don't know how they are related to the course or our university. For example, time management, I got it. But brain function! What am I going to do with brain function? The left, right, what does it do, I don't know, there is the middle section. I think this is what got me failed! Things like this I don't know why we need to read. I told the professor and she said this book is made especially to help students to pass out of the probation. But for me I think it's just useless and waste of time. (Int. 7)

He added that he shared his confusion and frustration with his professor, whose response failed to change his initial thoughts about the assigned readings.

In the following quote, Zeina explains why she found one of the reading assigned in WRI 102 pointless:

I found this article difficult because there is like too many vocabularies, I don't understand them. The writer talks about himself and where he live. I read only the first two pages, and after it is hard. She said read it and come to class with questions, but no one read it. The professor say like it's interesting; he talks about his name. His name is Edward Saeed and his name is like English and Arabic. The writer is confusing. I don't find it interesting. Because he's talking about himself, what's the benefit? But now it should be interesting for me! Also because maybe some words are difficult and I feel confused, like this word. [She shows me a word she underlined in the text: "nostalgically"] What is it? (Int. 6)

By memorably adding "But now it should be interesting for me!", she revealed her despair and sense of obligation for academic conformity despite her scepticism about what is institutionally seen as "right" for her. Nonetheless, she made an effort to understand the text using the reading strategies she had learnt such as annotating.

The students felt the same way about some writing assignments. To give an example, the quote below shows Mahmoud's thoughts on a writing assignment given in MIS in the spring semester and how he was not convinced with the professor's justification for the assigned work:

It was the first assignment for MIS. I didn't get the point, because it was the second or third class, and he directly told us to write this case and give me a report or something. I don't know anything about management; management is just a word for me, how come I'm going to understand everything? When I told him this, he said this is the way to get you interested in the course. (Int. 7)

Like Zeina and Mahmoud, the other participants started to develop more effective, course-specific strategies suited to the task at hand towards the end of the second semester as explained in detail as part of the coping strategies developed by the students above (see section 5.2.3.3). Similarly,

their answers to some interview questions showed they could see the professors' reasons why certain reading/writing assignments were given while they were not necessarily convinced by those reasons.

## **Discussion**

In order to understand how students in their first year of undergraduate careers respond to the challenges they encounter while attaining the academic literacy requirements of an American university in the UAE, I examined the data regarding the students' perspectives on academic literacy at the beginning of the academic year; the challenges they faced; the coping strategies they developed; and finally the changes that took place in their perspectives by the end of the academic year. Three factors led the participants to view the academic literacy demands placed on them in a negative light: the significance they attach to grades, their perceived weakness in reading and writing as well as their doubts about the contribution of academic literacy requirements to their academic growth. This negative perspective was intensified by the challenges they faced while trying to meet the academic literacy demands.

The findings of this study in terms of the challenges faced by the students concur with many of the results from previous studies on the academic literacy development of L2 students. Based on survey and interview results, Evans and Morrison (2011) found that limited vocabulary, understanding professors' academic requirements for reading and writing assignments, processing and producing key disciplinary genres, synthesizing ideas and information from multiple sources, and referencing style were the main sources of difficulties faced by 28 NNES undergraduates during their first semester at an English-medium university in Hong Kong. The issue of time management was mostly mentioned in relation to keeping up with the reading requirements. The researchers concluded that the process of disciplinary acculturation takes much more than a semester. In a similar study, Wingate (2015) examined undergraduates' experiences with the first writing assignment during their first semester at a London university through questionnaire, interviews, and diary data. While her participants were mainly native speakers of English, twenty-three per cent were ethnic minorities speaking languages other than English at home. The findings showed that the students identified time management, structure and using sources as the main challenges, while resistance was identified as the fourth theme in reference to the students'

reactions to the restricting literacy conventions and instructions they received. The issue of source-based writing has also been addressed by McCulloch (2013) and attributed to lack of critical reading skills. The difficulties with source based writing, time management, and adapting to changing requirements of academic literacy across the curriculum have been also documented in Leki's (2007) longitudinal study of four L2 undergraduates' academic literacy development, as noted in Chapter 3. Other challenges encountered by the participants of this study such as getting help from the writing center (Leki, 2007, Al Murshidi & Al Abd, 2014, Bruce & Rafoth, 2004; Wingate, 2015), transition to EMI (Findlow, 2006; Troudi & Jendli, 2011), and building socio-academic relationships (Ferenz, 2005; Leki, 2007; Skyrme, 2010, Wingate, 2015) have been all documented in several other studies and confirm the findings of the present study. However, except for the studies of Troudi and Jendli (2011) and Findlow (2006), both conducted in the UAE and discussed in previous chapters, and Evans and Morrison's study (2011) all other studies mentioned above have been conducted in in "inner-circle countries" (Kachru, 1985).

While studies on the academic literacy development of L2 undergraduates usually examine the challenges faced, very few of them explicitly report on the coping strategies used by students. One such study is Howell's (2008) small-scale ethnographic study on five male Arab students' perceptions of social identity and agency and the usefulness of the construct of the Community of Practice for struggling writers in the context of a pre-university EAP program in New Zealand. Using surveys, interviews and documents analysis, Howell addressed the impact of the participants' perceptions on their sense of agency as writers in the EAP program. Based on the findings, the agentive choices made by the participants were identified as "fight, flight, or change", which closely correspond to the coping strategies reported in the present study: excessive studying, corner-cutting strategies, and seeking help.

Encountering these challenges from the very beginning of their academic careers and not being able to fully overcome them with their coping strategies intensified the students' negative perspective on the academic literacy demands of their new discourse community. They all thought trying to complete the reading and writing assignments for all their courses, especially for academic writing classes (WRI 101 and WRI 102), demanded a significant amount of their time, and did not always bring about positive results in the form of high grades they expected. These requirements, the participants in the present study thought, actually prevented them from achieving

their objective of gaining academic excellence, which some of them, such as Zeina and Noura, materialized as an “excellent GPA”. While they did not necessarily see much value in reading and writing assignments for their own sake, they worked hard to complete the assignments to achieve a high GPA that would make their parents proud and help them maintain their financial aid/scholarship. They were often quite worried about not being able to keep up with the required work, receiving a low GPA that may prevent them from progressing towards their degree, and the possibility of losing their scholarship/financial aid. These findings suggest that they all viewed academic reading and writing requirements at university as a source of stress and threat against their immediate academic objectives and long-term career goals. The gatekeeping role of academic writing classes, which acted as a pre-requisite or co-requisite for most of the discipline-specific courses the students had to take, intensified the feeling of stress experienced by each participant and caused them to see the academic literacy requirements as a threat against their personal and academic goals.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings summarized above and their implications, the following recommendations can be formulated for this specific research context. While the implementation of the first recommendation may be far from an easily achievable goal as it requires changing the mind-sets of academic leaders and practitioners about the nature of academic literacy instruction, the subsequent recommendations include more practical suggestions to cater for the students’ needs more effectively without radical changes at institutional level.

The findings showed that many of the problems the students faced while trying to meet the academic literacy demands of the curriculum had to do with reading as much as writing. However, at undergraduate level, many professors take basic reading skills for their students for granted or assume learning reading skills is an unproblematic process (Grabe, 2001). Hence, students’ performance of reading is neither questioned nor supported (Van Pletzen, 2006). It is also considered that academic writing, which in most assessment systems determines failure or success as a high-stake activity, is more prominent and visible than reading (Wingate, 2015). Considering the serious problems the participants of this study had in understanding and keeping up with the required reading in all courses, as well as the findings of relevant research studies some of which

are mentioned above, academic reading should be integrated into the undergraduate curriculum in the UAE over an extended period of time and the critical role it plays in students' success in all courses should be recognized by academic leaders, curriculum developers and professors.

Another important recommendation is that professors, whether teaching academic writing courses or other discipline specific courses, should consider the purpose, content, design, and relevance of reading and writing assignments they give more carefully. They should take into consideration the socio-academic and personal challenges first-year students are faced with, particularly, the challenges associated with transition from school to university.

The findings of the present study have also shed light on the critical role of socio-academic relations with professors and peers on students' academic literacy development. Such relationships can play a critical role in scaffolding their learning process. Hence, students, particularly those who have just started their academic degrees, should be encouraged and guided to make use of the academic assistance available to them, such as the Writing Center and professors' office hours. Professors could perhaps encourage this by appearing to be ready to welcome students to office hours. Both hierarchical (e.g. student-professor or student-advisor) and peer (e.g. student-student) mentoring programs could also be used in a complementary way to help first-year students settle into their new academic discourse community.

The findings also highlighted the ineffectiveness of a remedial course that two of the participants had to take as a result of being placed on probation in the spring semester. Already time stricken, both participants found the required course ineffective and irrelevant. Indeed, one was so upset that he refused to attend the class and eventually failed the course due to his excessive number of absences. The ineffectiveness of this remedial approach, which is often introduced in universities as a quick-fix solution to support student learning, has been revealed in a number of studies. Wingate (2006, 2015) explains that this approach originates from the previous highly selective admission system in which all students were expected to have adequate skills to study effectively at university with the exception of a few 'at risk' students, who were then sent outside the department for help in dedicated learning support centres. The skills most commonly addressed in these generic courses were time management, essay writing, presentation, note taking and revising for exams, similar to the content of the remedial course the two participants had to take in the present study. This general advice is also available in web sites or course materials, such as student

handbooks but usually not embedded in subject-specific courses. This approach is problematic for several reasons: firstly, students do not see generic courses as relevant to their subject (Drummonds et al., 1998; Durkin & Main, 2002). Furthermore, it is not feasible for students who are already overburdened with the amount of reading in their subject area to read through lengthy guidelines or take additional courses on study skills, and transfer them to their particular context. Another troubling aspect of this approach is that it inevitably encourages the epistemological belief that knowledge is an “external, objective body of facts” (Gamache, 2002, p. 277) which can be acquired with certain tricks and techniques taught on these remedial courses. While the skills taught in such courses are necessary for academic success, it is doubtful if the students can learn these skills without the specific academic content (Wingate, 2006) because they are not able to apply the skills to their own context, but treat them as one more new thing they need to learn. All these drawbacks call for an approach in which the teaching of academic literacy is not separated from the student’s study programme, but rather curriculum infused.

While every effort was made to minimize the limitations of the study, certain compromises from the ideal research plan had to be made due to restrictions in time and access to data sources. These limitations can be taken as suggestions for future research. It would be interesting to see the students’ process of academic literacy development and identity construction throughout their entire academic career, not only the first year. Moreover, while I worked towards portraying the participants’ experiences from their perspectives as thoroughly as possible, I was not able to use an additional qualitative research tool, such as class observations, to triangulate the data I gained from the interviews and the documents I collected. In addition, observing the primary students in a number of classes they take across the curriculum would give a more holistic view of their experiences and increase the rigour of the study. Informed by an interpretive approach to research, this study does not have claims of generalizability. However, I hope the findings can be inspiring for those who find themselves in similar teaching environments.



### Appendix A: Background of the Primary Participants of the Study

<b>Student</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Prior education</b>
Khairea	Female	23	Algerian	Architecture	Arabic- First language French- Second language English- Third language	Public school system in French in Algeria
Noura	Female	18	Emirati	Civil engineering	Arabic- First language English- Second language	Public school system in Arabic in the UAE
Zeina	Female	19	Yemeni	Computer science	Arabic- First language English- Second language	Public school system in Arabic in the UAE
Osama	Male	18	Egyptian	Electrical engineering	Arabic- First language English- Second language	Private school system in Arabic and English in Egypt and the UAE
Saif	Male	18	Emirati	Civil engineering	Arabic- First language English- Second language	Public school system in English in the UAE
Mahmoud	Male	19	Saudi	Finance	Arabic- First language English- Second language	Public school system in Arabic in Saudi Arabia

## **Appendix B: Interview Guide**

### **I. Background questions**

1. How would you describe your personal background?
2. Can you tell me about your previous educational experiences?
3. Can you tell me about your previous reading and writing experiences?
4. What is the role of your family or previous education, if any, in these experiences?
5. What languages do you speak? How did you learn each?

### **II. Beginning of the semester questions**

1. How are you feeling about your major? What are you looking forward to? Is there anything you are worried about?
2. What are your aims with regards to your academic reading and writing development this semester? Why?
3. Why do these aims matter for you?
4. What strategies are you using or planning to use in order to realize your aims? Why?
5. How important are the required academic reading and writing skills for your life at university and after your graduation?
6. What outcomes do you expect from pursuing your objectives regarding your academic reading and writing skills? Why?
7. How would you describe yourself as a person?
8. How would you describe yourself as a student?
9. What was your general academic standing like in your previous educational life? Were you content with it?
10. What is your general academic standing like at this university?
11. Are you content with your academic standing now? What makes you feel like that?
12. What do you think of your level of academic reading and writing skills in English? What makes you think that?
13. Does your level of academic reading and writing skills in English affect how you view yourself as a student at this university?

### **III. Routine questions asked on the courses in progress each semester**

#### General questions asked about each course at every interview

1. What did you think about the last few weeks of classes? What stands out for you? What has concerned you? What concerns you about the next few weeks?
2. How do you feel about your overall standing in each class you are taking?

#### **Writing Assignments**

1. What are you working on now or what will you be working on in the next few weeks in each of your courses?
2. Why do you think your teacher gave you this particular kind of an assignment to do? (What is the professor's purpose in assigning it? What does the professor want you to learn from it or get out of it?)
3. What did you learn from doing this assignment? How useful was it for you to do this assignment? (Trying to get at whether what they got out of doing it was worth the effort.)
4. How did you do this assignment? (Did you do it at one sitting, revise a lot, receive any help?)
5. What kinds of problems did you have with this assignment? How did you deal with it/solve it?
6. If you went to the writing center, what did you work on there? How many times did you go and for how long?
7. How did you figure out how to do the assignment? (Did you ask the professor or classmates; were you provided with explicit guidelines [if so, get copy] or a sample students essay of some kind?)
8. What do you have to do to do well in this assignment? What is your teacher looking for in assigning a grade?
9. How does this assignment compare to other assignments you have done? How useful was it to you in helping you learn about the subject or about how to do something in the subject area?
10. Was there anything that you turned in and that was turned to you since the last interview? Exams, quizzes, essays, papers, lab reports, project reports?

11. If so, have you received any feedback on any of these?
12. What comments did you professor make on your assignment?
13. What do you think about these comments? (Do you understand the comments? Are they helpful or not? Why?)

### **Course Readings and Study Habits**

1. How are you studying for this course? How much time do you spend on this course per day? What are you doing? When do you study for this course?
2. What about the reading for this course? How is it related to the lectures/classes?
3. Why do you think your teacher assigned this particular reading for you to do?
4. How well do you have to learn what you read? Do you have to do all the reading, understand it, and know the information from the reading in order to do well in the course?
5. If you aren't reading everything that is assigned, how do you decide what is not important, what you can skip? What have the consequences been of not reading everything assigned?

### **Reading and Writing Assignments to be Completed via Group Work**

1. Are you involved in any group work or do you have any study partners this semester? In which classes?
2. If you have study partners, how do you help each other? Can you give a specific example or show me a specific assignment you did with the help of a peer? Describe how you did this assignment.
3. If you are involved in a group project, did you get to choose the group or was it assigned?
4. What kind of project is the group working on? How do you divide up the work? Can you show me an example of an assignment you have done/ are doing in a group? Which part did you do/work on?
5. When, where, how did you meet to work on the project?
6. Do you ever have problems communicating with study partners or group project members? If so, describe.

### **Social Life**

1. How do you feel about your social life?. How much time do you spend doing things other than studying? When do you relax? With whom? What do you do? Do you feel you have a lot of friends?
2. What do you do besides studying and relaxing? How much time do you spend on those other activities (family responsibilities, work, etc.) How do you feel about these other activities?

### **IV. End of the Semester Questions**

1. How are you feeling about your major now? What are you looking forward to? Is there anything you are worried about?
2. Have you accomplished your aims with regards to your academic reading and writing development this semester? Why?
3. What strategies have you used in order to realize your aims?
4. Which of these strategies have been helpful? Which ones have been ineffective? Why
5. What is your general academic standing like now?
6. Are you content with your academic standing now? What makes you feel like that?
7. Having completed your studies this semester, what do you think of your level of academic reading and writing skills in English now? What makes you think that?
8. Having completed your studies this semester, what do you think about the role of required academic reading and writing skills in your life at university and after your graduation?
9. Have your experiences this semester had any impact on how you view yourself as a person and a student? If so, in what ways?

**Appendix C: An example of list of reading and writing requirements the focal students were expected to meet in the academic year 2011-2012**

List of reading and writing requirements for Khairea in the College of Architecture, Art and Design/Fall 2011		
Course Name	Graded Writing Assignments	Required Reading
DES 121: Introduction to Architecture and Design History	note taking during lectures for success in exams	book chapters assigned for each class, about 15 to 30 pages long each; filling vocabulary cards for each reading, 5 unannounced drop quizzes on the readings assigned
DES 111: Descriptive Drawing I	critique of a drawing done by the student, at least 100 words or above	handouts from various sources
DES 131: Design Foundations	a written midterm exam requiring clear and well-organized explanation	handouts from various sources, articles of various length (usually 3 to 5 pages long) from current periodicals, follow-up class discussions on the readings assigned
WRI 101: Academic Writing	summaries, 3 academic essays which require integration of 2 to 3 outside sources that are documented following APA style; with multiple drafts; 2 to 3 pages long written response to readings final examination: a five paragraph academic essay that requires APA documentation	book chapters (about 10 to 20 pages); readings (essays, articles, etc.) of various length (about 3 to 10 pages) from the text book, follow-up class discussions on the readings assigned, reading to write

List of reading and writing requirements for Khaireia in the College of Architecture, Art and Design/Spring 2012		
Course Name	Graded Writing Assignments	Required Reading
DES 122: Modern Developments in Architecture and Design	note taking during lectures for success in exams	book chapters assigned for each class, about 11 pages long each; filling vocabulary cards for each reading, 5 unannounced drop quizzes on the readings assigned
DES 112: Descriptive Drawing II	N/A	handouts from various sources
DES 132: Design Foundations II	N/A	handouts from various sources, articles of various length (usually 3 to 5 pages long) from current periodicals, follow-up class discussions on the readings assigned
WRI 102: Writing and Reading across the Curriculum	3 academic essays which require integration of 3 to 5 outside sources that are documented following APA style; with multiple drafts; 3 to 5 pages long written response to readings final examination: a five paragraph academic essay that requires APA documentation	book chapters (about 10 to 20 pages); readings (essays, articles, etc.) of various length (about 3 to 10 pages) from the text book, follow-up class discussions on the readings assigned, reading to write
MTH 111: Mathematics for Architects	N/A	book chapters and handouts, instructions and questions

#### Appendix D: Topics, Codes, and Categories Identified in the Data

Topic	Code	Categories
Perspectives at the outset	PO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Significance of grades</li> <li>2. Perceived weakness in reading and writing skills</li> <li>3. Doubts about the contribution of academic literacy requirements to academic and professional growth</li> </ol>
Challenges faced by the students	CHL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of time</li> <li>2. Transition to EMI</li> <li>3. Adapting to the changing requirements of academic reading and writing practices</li> <li>4. Using the sources in the library and doing research</li> <li>5. Building social and academic relationships</li> <li>6. Accessing university services that offer support for academic writing</li> </ol>
Coping strategies	CS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excessive studying</li> <li>2. Corner-cutting strategies</li> <li>3. Seeking help and developing assignment-specific study habits</li> </ol>
Perspectives at the end	PE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased questioning</li> <li>2. Effective strategy use</li> </ol>



## References

- Al Murshidi, G., & Al Abd, K. (2014). UAE University Students' Awareness of Using the Writing Center. *Higher Education Studies*, 4(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v4n3p58>
- Bilikozen, N. (2018). Academic Literacy Development and Identity Construction Interrelations: The Freshman Experience. *English Scholarship Beyond Borders*, (4)1, 33-70
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Boyle, R. (2012). Language contact in the United Arab Emirates. *World Englishes*, 31(3), 312-330. doi:10.1111/j.1467-971X.2012.01749.x
- Bruce, S., & Rafoth, B. (2004). *ESL writers: A guide for writing center tutors*. Portsmouth: Boynton
- Carroll, L. (2002). Rehearsing new roles: How college students develop as writers. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Charon, J. M. (2009). *Symbolic interactionism: An Introduction, an interpretation, an integration*. Boston: Prentice Hall
- Drummond, I., Nixon, I. & Wiltshire, J. (1998) Personal transferable skills in higher education, *Quality Assurance in Education*, 6(10), 19-27
- Durham, E., & Palubiski, B. (2007). Towards graduate outcomes through the English curriculum: Bridging the gap between secondary and tertiary education. In P. Barr (Ed.), *Foundations for the future: Working towards graduate outcomes* (pp. 81-95). Abu Dhabi: HCT Press.
- Durkin, K. & Main, A. (2002) Discipline-based study skills support for first-year undergraduate students. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 3(1), 24-39.
- Education initiative essential for nation (2014, January 5), *The National*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenational.ae/education-initiative-essential-for-nation-1.576000>

- Evans, S. & Morrison, B. (2011). Meeting the challenges of English-medium higher education: The first-year experience in Hong Kong. *English for Specific Purposes*, 30, 198–208.
- Farr, M. (1993). Essayist literacy and other verbal performances. *Written Communication*, 10, 4-38.
- Fast Facts (2015). Retrieved from <https://www.aus.edu/fast-facts-fall-2015>
- Ferenz, O. (2005). EFL writers' social networks: Impact on advanced academic literacy development. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 4(4), 339-351.doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2005.07.002
- Findlow, S. (2006). Higher education and linguistic dualism in the Arabian Gulf. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27, 19–36
- Gamache, P. (2002) University Students as Creators of Personal Knowledge: an Alternative Epistemological View. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 7 (3), pp. 277–293.
- Gobert, M. (2009). Key findings from research and implications for the classroom. In D. Anderson & P. Barr (Eds.), *Cultivating Real Readers*, pp. 53-63. Abu Dhabi, UAE: HCT Press.
- Grabe, W. (2001). Reading-writing relations: Theoretical perspectives and instructional practices. In D. Belcher & A. Hirvela (Eds.), *Linking literacies: Perspectives on L2 reading-writing connections* (pp. 15- 47). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hameli, A., & Underwood, M. (2014). Challenges of abolishing foundation year in the UAE. *The National*. Retrieved 16 October 2015, from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/education/challenges-of-abolishing-foundation-year-in-the-uae>
- Hatakka, M. R. H. (2014). *Indicators affecting the development of first year students' academic literacy skills in an English-medium higher education institute in the Arabian Gulf region*. (Doctoral thesis). University of Exeter, UK. Retrieved October 8, 2015, from <http://hdl.handle.net/10871/15458>

- Hatherley-Greene, P. (2012). *Cultural border crossings in the UAE: improving transitions from high school to higher education*. (Doctoral dissertation). Curtin University.
- Hirvela, A. (2004). *Connecting reading and writing in second language writing instruction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- Horner, B. (2014). Writing in the disciplines/Writing across the curriculum. In C. Leung, & B. V. Street (eds). *The Routledge companion to English studies*. Routledge.
- Howell, E. (2008). *Struggling to write: Learner identity and agency in a pre-university intensive English for academic purposes program* (Doctoral thesis). University of Exeter, UK. Retrieved February 17, 2009, from <http://hdl.handle.net/10036/80834>.
- Kachru, B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk and H. Widdowson (Eds.) *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, pp11-30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Khoury, S. & Duzgun, S. (2009). Reading habits of young Emirati women from the East Coast. In D. Anderson & P. Barr (eds), *Cultivating Real Readers*, pp. 25-33. Abu Dhabi, UAE: HCT Press.
- Leki, I. (2007). *Undergraduates in a second language: Challenges and complexities of academic literacy development*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- McCulloch, S. (2013). Investigating the reading-to-write processes and source use of L2 postgraduate students in real-life academic tasks: an exploratory study. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 12(2), 136-147.
- Naidoo, A. (2010, October 17). Students fail to meet grade expectations. *Gulf News*. Retrieved from <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/education/students-fail-to-meet-grade-expectations-1.697415>
- O'Sullivan, A. (2009). Reading in the Gulf: Is it time for a re-focus? In D. Anderson & P. Barr (eds), *Cultivating Real Readers*, pp. 53-63. Abu Dhabi, UAE: HCT Press.

- Randall, M., & Samimi, M. (2010). The status of English in Dubai. *English Today*, 26(1), 43–50.
- Radnor, H. (2002). *Researching your professional practice: Doing interpretive research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative Enquiry in TESOL*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Salem, O., & Swan, M. (2014). Foundation year at UAE state universities to be scrapped from 2018. *The National*. Retrieved 17 October 2015, from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/education/foundation-year-at-uae-state-universities-to-be-scrapped-from-2018>
- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. London: Sage.
- Skyrme, G. (2010). Is this a stupid question? International undergraduate students seeking help from teachers during office hours. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 9(3), 211-221. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.012
- Spack, R. (1997). The acquisition of academic literacy in a second language. *Written Communication*, 14, 3-62.
- Troudi, S., Jendli, A. (2011). Emirati Students' experiences of English as a medium of instruction in Issa A, Dahan L (eds.) *Global English: Issues of Language, Culture, and Identity in The Arab World*, Oxford: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Van Pletzen, E. (2006) A body of reading: making ‘visible’ the reading experiences of first-year medical students. In L. Thesen, and E. van Pletzen (eds) *Academic Literacy and the Languages of Change* (pp. 104–129). London, New York: Continuum.
- Wingate U. (2006) Doing away with study skills. *Teaching in Higher Education* 11(4): 457-65.
- Wingate U. (2006) Doing away with study skills. *Teaching in Higher Education* 11(4): 457-65.
- Wingate, U. (2015). *Academic literacy and student diversity: The case for inclusive practice*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.



## **Do Lecturers Use Questions Differently in English-Medium Lectures Delivered by Native Speakers of Mandarin Chinese and English?**

Li-Chin Chen

*Department of Applied English, National Taichung University of Science and Technology,  
Taiwan*

### **Biodata**

**Li-Chin Chen** is an assistant professor in the Department of Applied English, National Taichung University of Science and Technology in Taiwan. Her primary research interests include academic discourse, pragmatics, English for Specific Purposes, English for Academic Purpose.

Email: sarachen@nute.edu.tw; elpxo@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

This study compares English-medium lectures (EMLs) delivered by native Mandarin Chinese speakers (NMCSs) with those delivered by native English speakers (NESs) by analyzing the lecturers' use of questions. The data analyzed come from the Taiwanese Lecture Corpus and the British Academic Spoken English corpus. Each set of lectures comprises six individual lectures from business and applied linguistics departments and is pragmatically annotated with references to their corresponding video/ audio recordings. Quantitative and qualitative analyses show that the generic nature of lectures overrides the influence of the contextual variable, English as L1 or L2. To achieve communicative effectiveness in information-dense and knowledge-dissemination EMLs, both NES and NMCS lecturers adopt a conversational style, using wh- questions, question tags and yes/no questions, but they rarely request confirmation/ clarification, solicit agreement, suggest action or use classroom management or rhetorical questions. However, NES lecturers use more audience-oriented questions to obtain student responses more frequently than do NMCS lecturers. NMCS lecturers use less diverse question forms due to language-related insecurity, in

addition to the influence of local Chinese culture. These findings provide new insights into the academic discourse of EMLs delivered by NES and NMCS lecturers, especially in the use of questions. They can be integrated into an English for academic purposes course to enhance lecturers' skills and students' comprehension of lectures.

**Keywords:** English-medium lecture (EML), use of questions, academic discourse of lectures, corpus-based comparison study, English as L1 or L2.

## **Introduction**

Due to growing globalization and the movement of people, information and resources across borders, international competition and cooperation in higher education have increased and become inevitable. For universities in non-English speaking areas, to enhance their global competitiveness and collaboration, English-medium lectures (EMLs) are necessary. However, insufficient attention has thus far been paid to EMLs delivered by non-native English speaker (NNES) lecturers, especially in Asian countries, and even less attention to the academic discourse of EMLs delivered by native English speaker (NES) and NNES lecturers. To bridge the gap, this study compares EMLs delivered by native Mandarin Chinese speakers (NMCSs) and NES lecturers by examining their use of questions, an important pragmatic characteristic of university lectures and one of the useful involvement strategies employed by lecturers to disseminate knowledge in monologic academic lectures (Chang, 2012; Crawford Camiciottoli, 2008; Morell, 2004; Thompson, 1998). Among the many aspects of EMLs studied, such as evaluation, (Swales, 2004), personal pronouns (Fortanet, 2004b), discourse markers (Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007), linguistic variation (Csomay, 2010), laughter (Nesi, 2012) and modifiers (Lin, 2015), questions are particularly vital in learning as they can “cause interactions: thought, activity, conversation or debate” (Chuska, 1995, p.7).

In academic lectures, questions are used by lecturers to guide the students through mutual reflection and thinking processes to discover answers and, accordingly, cultivate their critical thinking and acquire knowledge (Crawford Camiciottoli, 2008). In teaching practice, the use of questions has been encouraged and promoted as a teaching and learning strategy in higher education (Center for Teaching Excellence, 2017; The Teaching Center, 2017). The aim of the study is to explore shared characteristics or disparities in the use of questions in EMLs delivered

by NES and NMCS lecturers (i.e. in the context of English as L1 and L2, respectively). Under this overarching research question, this study aims to answer the following sub-questions.

1. What are the similarities and differences between EMLs delivered by NES and NMCS lecturers, in terms of the frequency, function and form of questions?
2. What are NES and NMCS lecturers' preferred patterns of question use, and how do they differ from each other?
3. How are the discourses of EMLs constructed by NES and NMCS lecturers via the use of questions in two distinct contexts of English, i.e. as L1 or L2?

By answering these questions, we aim to shed light on the similarities and differences in the academic discourse of EMLs delivered by NES and NMCS lecturers, particularly in the use of questions, and thus benefit both NES and NNEs (especially NMCS) participants' learning and teaching in EMLs. The following section presents a literature review of academic lectures, EMLs in Taiwan, and the use of questions in education, particularly in academic lectures in higher education. This is followed by a description of research methods and corpora materials. The use of questions in EMLs delivered by NMCS and NES lecturers is then compared via quantitative and qualitative analyses.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Previous studies on academic lectures and EMLs in Taiwan***

Research on EMLs in the context of L1 English has a long history (Brown, 1987). Using spoken academic corpora, such as the British Academic Spoken English (BASE) corpus and the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) (Simpson, Briggs, Ovens, & Swales, 1999), a wide range of research has considered university lectures conducted in English-speaking countries (e.g. Csomay, 2010; Dafouz, Nuñez & Sancho, 2007; Fortanet, 2004a; Lin, 2012; Nesi, 2012; Swales, 2004). Researchers have only recently turned their attention to EMLs delivered by NNEs lecturers in Austria (Tatzl, 2011), Denmark (Werthera, Denvera, Jensenb, & Meesa, 2014), Germany (Knapp, 2011) and Sweden (Björkman, 2011; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012). Others have gone further and compared lectures delivered in L2 English with those delivered in L1 German (Schleef, 2009), Swedish (Hincks, 2010) and Danish (Thøgersen & Airey, 2011). Although EMLs

delivered by NNEST lecturers have been highlighted in the literature, they are limited to the above European countries (Wächter & Maiworm, 2008).

As in other Asian countries, EMLs have been promoted in Taiwan, where Mandarin Chinese is the L1, to improve competitiveness in international higher education (Mok, 2007). As of mid-2011, 41 universities had introduced 193 programmes delivered in English or other foreign languages (MOE, 2012). In 2006, the total number of international students (including degree-seeking students, exchange students and students studying languages) was 27,023, reaching 110,182 in 2015 (MOE, 2016). Within a decade, the number of international students studying in Taiwan tripled. Most Taiwanese students surveyed agreed that English instruction helped them improve their English proficiency, especially listening, but generally they did not have a high level of comprehension in their EML (Chang, 2010). Some dissatisfaction with the design of immersion programmes with an English-only policy has been reported (Huang, 2012). Researchers have urged that the quality of EMLs can be improved, and they have proposed a new framework for scaffolding content knowledge (Huang, 2011), upgrading curriculum designs to combine the efforts of language and content teachers (Huang, 2012) and including the perspectives of Taiwan's institutions and accreditors (Hou, Morse, Chiang & Chen, 2013).

Many aspects of the implementation of EMLs in Taiwan have been studied via surveys, interviews and email correspondence to understand the attitudes and perspectives of Taiwanese students, lecturers and administrators (Chang, 2010; Huang, 2012; Hou, Morse, Chiang, & Chen, 2013). However, the results of such methods might not accurately reflect all aspects of natural speech (Beebe & Clark Cummings, 1996). In addition, most of the above studies have been limited to the perspectives of local Taiwanese participants or international students in Taiwan (Lau & Lin, 2014). Only recently did Lin (2015) examine authentic EMLs delivered by NMCSs and compare the use of modifiers in lectures by native speakers of English and Mandarin Chinese. Her study found that NMCS lecturers' use of modifiers was possibly ascribable to first language interference, and lectures delivered by NESs seemed to have a higher degree of personal involvement, interactivity and informality.



### *Previous studies on the use of questions in education and academic lectures*

The value of questions in education has been recognized since antiquity. In academic lectures, to achieve communicative effectiveness for both pedagogical and interpersonal purposes, questions have been addressed as one of the interactive features (Csomay, 2002; Fortanet, 2004a; Morell, 2004; Schleef, 2009) of, and in relation, to academic speaking (Thompson, 1998; Bamford, 2005; Crawford Camiciottoli, 2008; Chang, 2012; Björkman, 2012). Some interesting findings about the use of questions in academic lectures have also been made. For example, questions exhibit various forms and functions across distinct communication modes: university lectures, written textbooks and online materials (Crawford Camiciottoli, 2008), and questions have far more similarities than differences among different academic divisions in university lectures (Chang, 2012). However, they merely described a setting in which English is the L1. In Morell's (2004) study, questions are recognized as a significant feature of interactive lectures compared with non-interactive lectures in the context of English as L2.

Similarly, Björkman (2012) discusses the use of questions in the context of English as an academic lingua franca. When compared to their German counterparts, Schleef (2009) found that American instructors and students make academic student-teacher discourse seem more interactive through the use of questions. It appears that Schleef focused on academic style differences between German and American English but examined questions as merely one of many interactive features of lectures in two distinct languages: German and American English. In the same way, other cross-cultural research on EMLs has looked at how NNES lecturers conduct lectures differently in their L1 and L2 (English). It was found that the length of EMLs presented by NNES, Danish lecturers, was longer compared with the same presented in Danish (L1) (Thøgersen & Airey, 2011) and the speaking rate of EMLs by NNES, Swedish lecturers, was slower compared with that in Swedish (L1) (Hincks, 2010). The above does not only indicate a lack of attention to the use of question in EMLs, but also the need for cross-cultural comparison research on EMLs delivered by NES (L1) and NNES (L2), particularly in Asian countries.

To bridge this gap, this study explores the discourse of EMLs delivered by NNESs, NMCS lecturers in Taiwan, comparing to their NES counterparts in the UK, by examining the use of questions in authentic EML data.

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Identification of questions and taxonomies of question form and function***

In this study, questions were identified via a discourse analytic framework considering their syntactic, pragmatic and prosodic properties, as discussed below. To achieve this, transcripts were manually and prudently examined by the author with reference to corresponding video/ audio recordings of their lectures. Each question was tagged with a question mark at its end and pragmatic information, i.e. classifying it into a specific category in a taxonomy of question forms and functions. WordSmith Tools (Scott, 1998) was then used to help us extract all question instances from the pragmatically annotated corpus data for subsequent quantitative and qualitative analyses.

In the categorizing procedure, a couple of problems arose and were tackled. First was the multiple functions of questions. The speaker's meaning of an utterance might be multi-functional in a given context. This is a 'problem of negotiating value along a speech-act gradient, i.e. selecting which one of a series of related illocutionary acts is appropriate/ intended' (Thomas, 1985, p.14). To address this problem, we referred to 'a primary function which was identified for each question from the context in which it occurred' (Freed, 1994, p.625). In other words, we tried to identify the meaning primarily intended by the speaker, and then classified the question according to its 'primary function'. Second, the taxonomies of question functions and forms available in the literature did not fully accommodate our data. Thus, a discourse analysis framework of question forms and functions was introduced, with two main levels:

### ***Syntactic and prosodic level – taxonomy of question forms***

On the syntactic level, questions were identified and categorised as 'wh- questions', 'alternative questions', 'yes/ no questions' or 'question tags' (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999, p.203) (see Appendix 2 for our taxonomy of question forms). They shared two characteristics: subject-verb reversal and prosodic property, i.e. interrogativity is usually accompanied by rising intonation in speech. These are recognised as useful cues that the listener can rely on to register an utterance as a question (Björkman, 2012). Two additional question forms were also identified: a 'declarative question', which is a declarative clause with rising intonation (heard in audio or video lecture recordings) at the end (Thompson, 1998), and an 'incomplete

question’, which is an incomplete sentence with a pause implying that the addressee is invited to provide an answer (Chang, 2012) (Appendix 2).

### **Interactional Level – Classification of Question Functions**

Questions were also defined and categorised on a functional level on the basis of the speaker’s meanings in the context in which the utterance occurred (Leech, 1983). The question functions framework (Table 1) used in this study integrates the categories introduced by Athanasiadou (1991), Chang (2012), Crawford Camiciottoli (2008) and Thompson (1998), who explored several spoken academic situations. They defined two main question functions with seven sub-question functions. First, ‘audience-oriented questions’ function to seek information from the audience; in other words, the audience is invited to respond. Second, ‘content-oriented questions’ are used to convey information to the audience, so no answer is expected from the audience. According to the content of answers, ‘audience-oriented questions’ are sub-categorised into five types: ‘eliciting a response’, ‘classroom management/ engagement’, ‘soliciting agreement’, ‘checking comprehension’ and ‘requesting confirmation/ clarification’. ‘Content-oriented questions’ are sub-categorised into two types: ‘focusing on information’ questions are ‘small’ questions that usually seek precise and explicit short answers; and ‘stimulating thought’ questions are ‘big’ questions or issues that are not easy to answer, so lecturers usually take their time to elaborate at length (Chang, 2012).

**Table 1: Taxonomy of Question Functions**

<b>Main question function</b>	<b>Sub-question function</b>
Audience-oriented	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eliciting a response</li> <li>2. Phatic/classroom management questions</li> <li>3. Soliciting agreement</li> <li>4. Comprehension check</li> <li>5. Requesting confirmation/clarification</li> <li>6. Suggesting action</li> </ol>

Content-oriented	7. Focusing on information
	8. Stimulating thought
	9. Rhetorical

To accommodate our data, this taxonomy of question functions was modified by adding two extra sub-question functions and renaming one sub-question function. ‘Suggesting action’ questions, i.e. indirect questions (Morell, 2004), function as requests for specific action (Example 20: Can anyone volunteer?). The category of ‘classroom management/engagement’ was renamed ‘phatic/classroom management’. In addition to classroom management, our data show that lecturers use questions to elicit students’ personal feelings and show empathy with them (Example 22: Are you depressed? [laughter] Fed up?).

Rhetorical questions were added to the ‘content-oriented’ category. A rhetorical question has the force of a strong assertion and generally indicates no answer is expected (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985, p.825). As a part of the speaker’s expressive style, it conveys information that the speaker already knows to the hearer (Freed, 1994, p.631). In the following discussion, authentic examples are extracted from the corpora previously mentioned to elaborate the definitions and features of individual sub-question functions.

### ***Corpora materials and setting***

The data examined came from the Taiwanese Lecture Corpus (TLC) and a subset of BASE. The TLC collected EMLs delivered by NMCS at Yuan Ze University in Taiwan, which delivers more than 30 per cent of its courses and some degree programmes in English to about 200 international students (3% of the total student population) (YZU, 2015a). The TLC collected EMLs from the Business and Applied Linguistics Departments, where lecturers are required to use English as an instruction medium in accordance with the university’s goal of internationalisation and to meet the needs of international students, who are mainly enrolled in these two departments. The proportion of international students in those EMLs is actually much higher than the average, usually around 50 per cent. International students include those from The Gambia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam, but exclude those from the Republic of China, Hong Kong, Macau and overseas Chinese who share the same Chinese culture and

language (traditional or simplified Chinese), despite variations in dialect and form (YZU, 2015b). Those lecturers who deliver EMLs have usually pursued postgraduate degrees overseas, mostly in English-speaking countries, and they are active in international academic research communities. It is worth noting that although English is used as a teaching medium in these lectures, it is not a lingua franca in social situations outside the classroom (Lau & Lin, 2014).

**Table 2: Breakdown of Corpora Data**

		TLC	BASE	
		Course code	No. of words	No. of words
Academic division	Business	B1	11,704	10,746
		B2	6,503	14,994
		B3	12,520	17,039
	Linguistics and English Language	L1	16,359	15,745
		L2	21,018	8,826
		L2	47,254	7,473
Total		115,358	74,832	

To diminish the influence of the academic discipline, our reference corpus was collected from the same academic divisions in BASE. For the purposes of analysis, identical numbers of lectures were selected from the TLC and BASE (details are shown in Table 2; see Appendix 1 for the original course codes and course names). The numbers of words in the two corpora differed due to the varying lengths of individual lectures. Quantitative analysis was conducted to calculate and compare the frequency of questions per 1,000 words and decrease any associated bias.

## Results and Discussion

### *Similarities & differences of the frequency, function & form of questions in EMLs delivered by NES & NMCS lecturers*

This section presents the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The first part, quantitative analysis, reveals similarities and differences in the frequencies, forms and functions

of questions in EMLs delivered by NES and NMCS lecturers. Average question frequencies (Table 3) show that both NES and NMCS lecturers frequently use questions (16.5 questions per 1,000 words in TLC; 12.96 questions per 1,000 words in BASE).

**Table 3: Question Frequencies in the TLC and BASE**

<b>Academic division</b>	<b>TLC</b>			<b>BASE</b>	
	<i>Course code</i>	<i>No. of questions</i>	Per 1,000 words	<i>No. of questions</i>	Per 1,000 words
<b>Business</b>	B1	318	27.17	184	17.12
	B2	22	3.38	87	5.80
	B3	365	29.15	314	18.43
<b>Applied Linguistics</b>	L1	243	14.85	206	13.08
	L2	341	16.22	99	11.22
	L3	389	8.23	80	10.71
<b>Total/Average</b>		<b>1,678</b>	<b>16.50</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>12.96</b>

Although the frequencies of questions used by individual lecturers in both the TLC and BASE vary, in general, their lecture styles appear to be interactive and akin to conversation (conversation features about 25 questions per 1,000 words (Biber et al., 1999)). In accordance with the findings of previous studies (Chang, 2012; Bamford, 2005; Morell, 2004), the style of lectures appears to be informal, conversational and interactive in both the TLC and BASE.

**Table 4: Distribution of Question Forms in the TLC and BASE**

<b>Question Form</b>	<b>TLC</b>		<b>BASE</b>	
	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>
1. Wh-	755	44.99	408	42.06
2. Question tag	531	31.64	304	31.34

3. Yes/no	249	14.84	138	14.23
4. Alternative	56	3.34	12	1.24
5. Declarative	87	4.77	83	8.56
6. Incomplete	7	0.42	25	2.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,678</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>100</b>

Example 1 What is [a] subsidy? (TLC-B3)

Example 2 ...think that comes under free trade, doesn't it? (BASE-B1)

Example 3 Do you say that? (TLC-L3)

Example 4 Is it by nature or by function? (BASE-B1)

Example 5 Part of that loss of tariff revenue is going to whom? (BASE-B3)

Example 6 **L:** That is defined by the client, which could be the learner or it could be... ? **S:** Sponsor. (BASE-L1)

As shown in Table 4, NMCS and NES lecturers prefer similar forms of questions, with wh-questions (Example 1), question tags (Example 2) and yes/no questions (Example 3) accounting for 91.47% of questions in the TLC and 87.63% in BASE. Notably, wh- questions comprise over 40% of the questions in both corpora. These figures reinforce the fact that both NES and NMCS lecturers are inclined to adopt a conversational style in EMLs, as these three question forms are frequent features of conversation (Biber et al., 1999). As in Chang's (2012) findings, other forms of questions, such as alternative (Example 4), declarative (Example 5) and incomplete (Example 6), appear relatively rarely in both the TLC and BASE.

### ***NES & NMCS lecturers' preferred patterns of question use & their differences***

A comparison of audience- and content-oriented questions within the individual corpora reveals that both NES (75% in BASE) and NMCS lecturers (59% in TLC) use more audience-oriented questions than content-oriented questions (Table 5). However, a comparison of these two corpora reveals that NES lecturers tend to use more audience-oriented questions and NMCS lecturers more content-oriented questions. In other words, compared to NMCSs, NES lecturers use questions to obtain responses from their students more frequently than to convey information to them. The NES lecturers more frequently interact with their students by seeking responses and answers from them,

resulting in more discussion, whereas NMCS lecturers are likely to be more monologic and focus more on delivering information to their students. Although the frequency of questions in the TLC is higher than in BASE, the EMLs delivered by NES lecturers appeared to be more interactive than those by NMCS lecturers.

A quantitative analysis of sub-question functions (Figure 1) indicates that the functions of questions in the TLC and BASE exhibit two similar contours. This suggests that EMLs delivered by NMCS and NES lecturers generally share a similar pattern of question use, but with slight differences. In terms of ‘audience-oriented’ questions, both NES and NMCS lecturers most frequently use ‘comprehension check’ and ‘eliciting response’ questions when seeking responses from students.

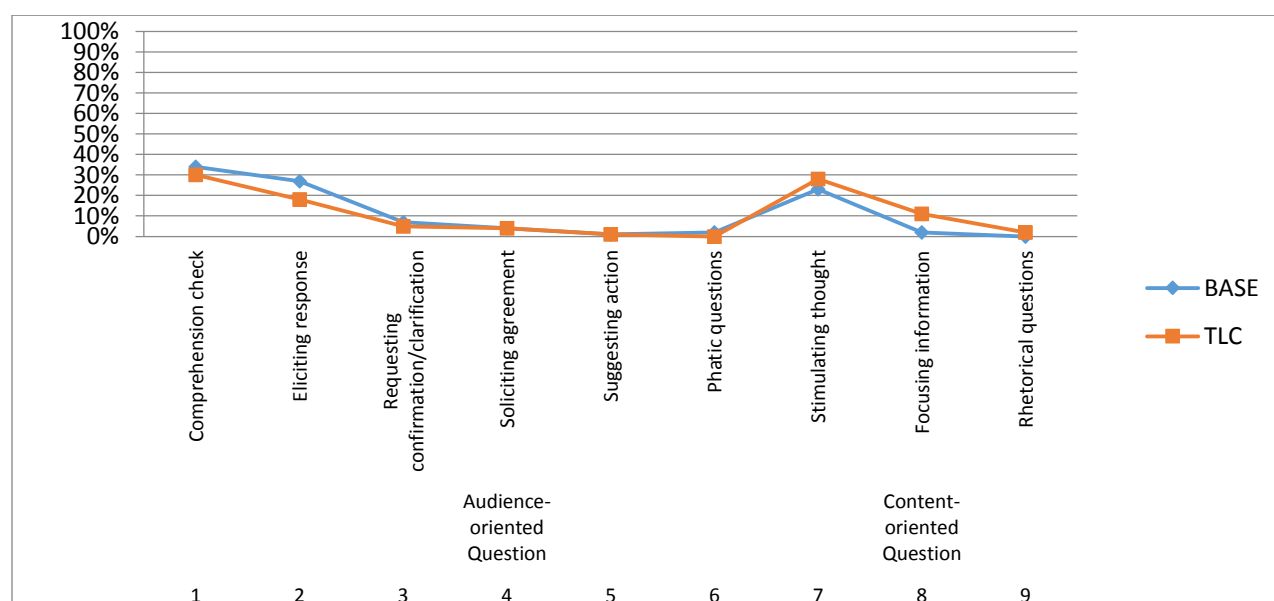
**Table 5: Frequencies and Percentages of Question Functions in the TLC and BASE**

Question function	TLC		BASE	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
<b>Audience-oriented questions</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>75</b>
1. Comprehension check	508	30	326	34
2. Eliciting a response	294	18	261	27
3. Requesting confirmation/clarification	89	5	68	7
4. Soliciting agreement	67	4	41	4
5. Suggesting action	20	1	6	1
6. Phatic/classroom management questions	4	0	23	2
<b>Content-oriented questions</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>25</b>
7. Stimulating thought	479	28	222	23
8. Focusing information	185	11	23	2
9. Rhetorical questions	32	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,678</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>100</b>



However, the lecturers relatively rarely use ‘requesting confirmation/ clarification’, ‘soliciting agreement’, ‘suggesting action’ or ‘phatic/ classroom management’ questions. This reveals that there might be very few truly interactive discussions between lecturers and students. In this sense, the EMLs in BASE and the TLC appear to be monologic. The above, in line with the findings of previous studies (Chang, 2012; Crawford Camiciottoli, 2004; 2008; Morell, 2004), indicates that the main objectives of both NES and NMCS lecturers remain the transmittal of knowledge, guidance and encouragement of students by interacting with them.

This reminds us again that to transmit knowledge remain the most essential purpose of academic lectures overriding the variable of English as L1 and L2 context. Nevertheless, it might be worthy to note that in the U.K., commonly university curriculums integrate seminars and discussion sessions in which students are involved in discussion interaction producing their own ideas, comments and knowledge accordingly. On the contrary, seminars and discussions are not necessary and conventional in universities in Taiwan, a typical oriental culture in which the classroom interaction tends to be teacher-centred. Therefore, it might bring pedagogical benefits to the EML classroom interaction to encourage NMCS lecturers to be able to strategically engage their students in more discussion by using more request confirmation/clarification, soliciting agreement, suggesting action, or using classroom management or rhetorical questions. This might compensate the lack of seminars and discussion sessions in university curriculums in Taiwan.



**Figure 1: Distribution of Sub-question Functions in the TLC and BASE**

In terms of ‘content-oriented’ questions, NMCS lecturers use more ‘stimulating thought’ and ‘focusing information’ questions than do NES lecturers when conveying information to students. This again strengthens the assertion that EMLs in the TLC are more information-focused and monologic than those in BASE. Despite this, both NMCS and NES lecturers tend to use questions to stimulate their students’ thinking, rather than focus on pieces of short new information pertaining to the topics addressed. ‘Stimulating thought’ questions are not usually easy to respond to and require lecturers to take longer to elaborate their answers at length, whereas ‘focusing information’ questions normally lead to short precise answers. As noted by Thompson (1998), ‘stimulating thought’ questions appear to be more interactive and less controlling than ‘focusing information’ questions (as the former seem to give students time and space to think and generate their own answers when listening to lecturers). The very low frequency of rhetorical questions in the TLC and their absence from BASE indicates that their use does not appear to be a significant expressive style for NES or NMCS lecturers.

***In terms of question use, EML discourses constructed by NES & NMCS lecturers in two distinct contexts of English as L1 or L2***

The second part of our results is a qualitative analysis of individual sub-question functions, it continues by elaborating how the use of questions influences and reflects the shared and distinct essential characteristics of discourse in EMLs in the context of English as L1 and L2. Explicit authentic examples extracted from our data are used in the following discussion.

Of the sub-question functions, ‘comprehension check’ questions are predominant in both corpora (Figure 1). As the main purpose of a university lecture is inevitably to convey information and disseminate knowledge, it may be unsurprising to see that both NES and NMCS lecturers continually check students’ comprehension of the information conveyed during a lecture (see Examples 7, 8, 9). Although students give hardly any responses to ‘comprehension check’ questions, their high frequency manifests the fact that both NES and NMCS lecturers consider students’ comprehension of lecture content vital (Chang, 2012). Simultaneously, this shows that both NES and NMCS lecturers have interpersonal interactions with their students, rather than mechanically conducting one-way information transmission to their audience.

Example 7 ...as far as individual differences are concerned, which, uh, the framework is ... the framework is humanistic models, ok? (TLC-B1)

Example 8 It's only the very last unit that's consumed, all right? (BASE-B3)

Example 9 Everybody clear on what we're doing? (BASE-B2)

'Eliciting response' questions usually seek a piece of information about the lecture from the students. Both NMCS and NES lecturers tend to use more than one question to help students understand and elicit answers from them (Example 10). Prompts, such as, 'Try! Try!' and 'Come on, come on', are used to encourage students' responses (Example 11). However, unlike NES lecturers, NMCS lecturers do not often interact with their students by inviting comments on a new topic when introducing a lecture (Example 12) or quickly survey individual opinions by asking students to raise their hands (Example 13). This suggests that NMCS lecturers may not expect as much in terms of students' personal opinions as do NES lecturers.

Example 10 What does that mean? ... How will it affect their competition with other firms? ... Whether this move will have positive or negative strategic effects on the firm? ... How these things will affect firms' output price or output quantity? (TLC-B1)

Example 11 Who disagrees with that? ... Put your hand up. Come on ... be confident... (BASE-L1)

Example 12 Anybody like to kick off? (BASE-L1)

Example 13 Hands up if you agree/disagree/are not sure. (BASE-L1)

The low frequency of 'requesting confirmation/ clarification' questions (Figure 1) shows that both NMCS and NES lecturers seldom ask for confirmation or clarification from their students (Example 14). Lecturers usually either understand students' comments or hardly interact with the students at all, thus limiting their chances to seek further confirmation or clarification. In this case, despite the lecturers' efforts at prompt interpersonal interaction with their students, few genuine conversations and discussions are found in either corpus.

Example 14 S: I wanted to say about the, er, the teachers using the L1 language...

L: All the time?

S: All the time and in the beginning... (BASE-L1)

The frequency with which lecturers ask 'soliciting agreement' questions is also very low in both corpora (Figure 1). Both NES and NMCS lecturers invite students to agree with their remarks when trying to engage them in conversation (Examples 15 and 16). In doing so, the lecturers lower their high positions as providers of information and knowledge to establish a more equal

relationship with the students, inviting students to comment on the lecturers' remarks. This may put pressure on the students to agree with the lecturers (Thompson, 1998). Indeed, in our data, students appear not to express any disagreements with either the NES or NMCS lecturers' comments. This function is often presented in the form of a question tag. NMCS lecturers usually use 'right', but NES lecturers use a variety of forms such as 'doesn't it', 'isn't it' and 'right'.

Example 15 I think that comes under free trade, doesn't it? (BASE-B1)

Example 16 What kind of feature do you see in those adverbs? Um, those adverbs are used to modify what? To modify what? Action. Right? (TLC-L3)

Indirect questions suggesting action (Morell, 2004) function as requests for specific actions. The addressee usually takes the action as requested. Our data show that although both NMCS and NES lecturers rarely ask their students to take action (Figure 1), they do so in distinct ways. NMCS lecturers engage in longer exchanges to make their students take the action requested (Example 18). When English usage might be a barrier to some students' comprehension of a lecture, NMCS lecturers ask a specific NMCS student who may understand the lecture to repeat its points in Chinese for the other NMCS students, who are about 50 per cent of the whole class (Examples 17 and 18). This is unlike the language policies for the dual usage of Swedish and English at the higher education level in Sweden, where the role of the native language is reinforced (Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012). In Taiwan, English is commonly deemed necessary for success in education and employment (Price, 2014).

In Example 17, a student is offered a bonus to his or her grade in the subject as a reward. This is a widespread practice to prompt classroom interaction in Taiwan, where students are used to competitive learning and must obtain high scores in basic competence entrance tests to apply for senior high school and tertiary education (Wang, 2012). In Example 18, one student's comprehension of another student's comments is checked before the first student is asked to give his or her personal opinion. However, the student is asked to translate the comments of others into Chinese, because he or she requires more time to generate his or her own thoughts. This implies that the student's comments are less important or respected than the content which the NMCS lecturer intends to transmit to the students. In contrast, the NES lecturer invites all the students or nominates one specific student to give comments without offering any reward or engaging in a

long exchange (Examples 19 and 20). Compared to NES lecturers, NMCS lecturers might have more control over the content of their students' responses and answers.

Example 17 Can you repeat [that] in Chinese to [the] other students? ... I will give you one bonus... (TLC-B3)

Example 18 L: ...Pee Vee, do you agree [with] and understand what she is saying?

S: I understand...

L: Say it in your way, then say what you understand about [it], yeah?

S: ... (Silent)

L: You can, you can.

S: Let me think first and ... and I can add something [to] it later.

L: No, no, no, no, just translate what she did, what she said.

S: Okay, what Yang said is that... (TLC-B1)

Example 19 Can anyone volunteer? (BASE-L2)

Example 20 Can you speak up XXX, please? (BASE-L1)

The low frequencies of 'phatic/ classroom management' questions in the TLC and BASE (0.24% and 2% of questions, respectively) indicate that both NMCS and NES lecturers negotiate a rapport or rules in the classroom with their students, but in different ways. When addressing very difficult and heavy content, NES lecturers try to understand students' personal feelings and encourage them through empathy and via a more equal relationship (Example 22). In contrast, in Example 21, the NMCS lecturer seems to maintain a higher power position than the students as she/he still holds the authority of making a final decision on the rules in the classroom. This might illustrate how the underlying British and Chinese cultures are reflected in NES and NMCS lecturers' different approaches to classroom rapport and rules.

Example 21 ...should I give you a little bit of time, or ... Okay ... So now let me give you some, uh... (TLC-L3)

Example 22 Are you depressed? [laughter] Fed up? This is heavy stuff, you know, this is good stuff... (BASE-B1)

Of the content-oriented questions, 'stimulating thought' questions are those most frequently asked in the TLC (28% of questions vs 23% in BASE) (Fig. 1). A series of 'stimulating thought' questions is usually asked in succession to trigger students' thoughts about a specific issue or topic. In Chang's (2012) words, 'stimulating thought' questions are 'big' questions, via which important information is delivered to students. They have no explicit answers but provide an opportunity for lecturers to elaborate at length and motivate students to think (Examples 23 and 24).

Example 23 ...in the past, mistakes have been considered very serious, very serious. Why? Because if the students make mistakes, then people might think they will take it for granted... (TLC-L1)

Example 24 The Fourth Directive is the big one dealing with when the accounts are published. What financial information must be disclosed? What is the content of the annual accounts going to be? And that's what we'll be looking at... (BASE-B1)

NMCS lecturers commonly ask 'focusing information' questions, which comprise 11 per cent of the questions in the TLC compared with only 2 per cent in BASE. Lecturers use 'focusing information' questions to immediately introduce a specific short piece of information or answer required in the process of guiding students towards a topic (Examples 25 and 26). Compared with NES lecturers, NMCS lecturers use more 'stimulating thought' and 'focusing information' questions to deliver their comments or answers to students. This may be related to the influence of Confucianism in Asian classrooms, where the lecturer is deemed to be the only speaker and knowledge provider (Hofstede & Bond, 1988), despite the fact that these NMCS lecturers do have overseas study experience. However, like NES lecturers, in content-heavy lengthy lectures, NMCS lecturers structure their information in a question-and-answer sequence to turn a monologic lecture into a conversational mode of interaction and strategically signal important information to students.

Example 25 What are the benefits? ... buyers pay less... (TLC-B3)

Example 26 What sort of goods are you going to import from the EU? ... if you're Chad, Mali, etc., Uganda, what ... what sort of goods are you going to be importing from the EU? Capital goods, investment goods, intermediate products... (BASE-B3)

Finally, rhetorical questions are hardly used by lecturers, comprising 2 per cent of the questions in the TLC, but absent from BASE. One of the significant features of a rhetorical question is that its answer is implied by the context or interaction between the speaker and addressee. In Example 27, instead of saying 'we don't share the same idea of a dragon or a ghost in our minds', the lecturer presents the statement in the form of a rhetorical question with a strongly implied answer of 'no'. Despite the fact that rhetorical questions are a significant expressive form, their use by NES and NMCS lecturers is not at all common.

Example 27 How do we know that we share the same idea of a dragon or a ghost? Uh, especially a dragon, a dragon is a very, uh, is a, uh, uh, good creature.

It, uh, brings fortune, brings luck in the Asian countries, but it means, uh, something bad in the Western countries... (TLC-L2)

The preceding analysis reveals several significant relationships between the most frequently used functions and forms of questions, including ‘comprehension check’, ‘eliciting response’ and ‘stimulating thought’ questions (Fig. 1). Most ‘comprehension check’ questions are presented in question tags (94% in the TLC, 83% in BASE). Of these question tags, ‘okay’ (Example 7) is extremely dominant (appearing in 80% of the ‘comprehension check’ questions in the TLC and 70% in BASE). However, the question tag ‘right’ is relatively scarce, and ‘all right’ (Example 8) only occurs in BASE (in 16% of questions). Apart from question tags, only a few ‘comprehension check’ questions are presented in the form of complete questions (Example 9). It may be unsurprising to see that over 60 per cent of eliciting response questions in both corpora are ‘wh-’ questions (Example 10), as they are expecting open answers, which give the addressees more flexibility in the content and span of their responses. In contrast, only 30 per cent and 19 per cent of questions are yes/no in the TLC and BASE, respectively. It is interesting to note that although NES lecturers present 6 per cent of ‘eliciting response’ questions in the form of incomplete questions (Example 6), NMCS lecturers do not use any such questions. Wh- questions are also the most common type of ‘stimulating thought’ question (73% of all ‘stimulating thought’ questions in the TLC and 76% in BASE), compared to 20 per cent of yes/no questions in the TLC and 17 per cent in BASE.

These findings suggest that irrespective of the context of English as L1 or L2, both NES and NMCS lecturers prefer to use particular question forms to perform the most frequently used question functions, i.e. ‘comprehension check’ questions in the form of question tags and ‘eliciting response’ and ‘stimulating thought’ questions in the form of wh- and yes/no questions. NES lecturers tend to use a wider variety of question forms to perform an individual question function than do NMCS lecturers (i.e. question forms in the context of English as L1 are more diverse than in the context of English as L2). This is in accordance with Lin’s (2015) findings that Chinese-speaking lecturers use a narrower repertoire of modifiers than NES lecturers, preferring particular softeners with Chinese equivalents and drawing strategically on the same linguistic devices for different pragmatic purposes.

## Conclusion

This corpus-based study integrating both quantitative and qualitative analyses of question use in EMLs by NES and NMCS lecturers, has revealed important findings adding to related fields, the use of questions in EMLs and the academic discourse of EMLs, particularly the comparison between the two different contexts of English as L1 and L2. First, it has shed light on the differences and similarities of question use in EMLs by NES and NMCS lecturers, which are distinct from previous research merely focusing on EMLs by NES lecturers or NNEs in European countries. This study shows that the generic nature of lectures overrides the influence of the contextual variable, English as L1 or L2. That is, to achieve communicative effectiveness in information-dense and knowledge dissemination EMLs, both NES and NMCS lecturers adopt a conversational style, using *wh*-questions, question tags and yes/no questions to perform the most frequently used functions, e.g. comprehension check, eliciting response and simulating thought.

As knowledge transmission is inevitably the main purpose of lectures, lecturers play the role of knowledge providers, with a higher position than their students most of the time in both corpora. Questions are used by lecturers as a form of ‘self-elicitation’ to establish what they think their students do not know but want to know (Bamford, 2005). When knowledge is disseminated via a sequence of questions and answers, students are strategically involved in a dialogue with the lecturer and find answers cooperatively, and an inquisitive and critical approach to learning prospers. Despite lecturers’ attempts to create an equal relationship with their students by inviting them to comment on their assertions (the use of ‘eliciting agreement’ questions), the extremely low frequency of ‘requesting confirmation/ clarification’ questions implies that hardly any genuine discussion occurs, and it suggests that discussion might not be an essential part of EMLs in either corpus.

The issue of interpersonal relationships is also highlighted. Questions are a favoured strategy for checking students’ comprehension throughout a lecture and ensuring that what the lecturers have taught has been understood. Despite being characterised by dense information and knowledge dissemination, the overall discourse of EMLs is conversational, stressing the interactive nature of the lecture with the goal of establishing contact and cooperation with the students in a discourse community (Bamford, 2005).



Second, the differences in question use between NES and NMCS lecturers reflect how the cultural contextual variable, English as L1 or L2, sways the interaction between the lecturer and students, and thereby influences the academic discourse of EMLs. Instead of encouraging students' personal opinions, as NES lecturers do, NMCS lecturers may prefer a 'correct' answer as they are conventionally deemed to be the only speakers and professional knowledge providers in classroom interactions, a designation deeply influenced by Confucianism (Wen & Clément, 2003; Yu, 2004), and which appears to have overcome the effects of their previous overseas study experience or use of English. To encourage student participation, NMCS lecturers offer rewards such as giving the students extra credit points. However, individual students' opinions and comments appear to be less respected or welcomed by NMCS lecturers when compared with NES lecturers. NES lecturers tend to employ more audience-oriented questions to obtain student responses more frequently than do NMCS lecturers, emphasising more interpersonal interaction (Lin, 2015). Such interaction includes checking students' feelings and psychological barriers when they are confronted with difficult content, encouraging them to share personal experiences and asking them to raise their hands to quickly express their individual opinions. As a result, the interactions between NES lectures and students are more active and vivid than those of their NMCS counterparts. NES lecturers tend to focus more on their students' feedback than the content of the lecture itself, while NMCS lecturers do the opposite.

In addition, the barrier to speaking English must not be ignored (Chang, 2010). As the proportions of NMCS and international students in the lectures examined are about equal, NMCS lecturers occasionally opt for the dual use of Chinese and English by asking NMCS students to translate the important points of a lecture for other NMCS students. This may, however, significantly slow the content delivery in lectures (Hincks, 2010; Thøgersen & Airey, 2011). Furthermore, NMCS lecturers' use of less diverse question forms is likely to signal their attempts to overcome language-related insecurity and achieve effective communication (Lin, 2015). In contrast, language problems are not pronounced in EMLs delivered by NES lecturers. Last but not least, the above findings reveal the nature of speech in EMLs, in terms of the question use of NMCS lecturers, which is different from earlier studies using interviews and questionnaires or limited to local participants' perspectives.

Although this study yields interesting findings on the use of questions and academic discourse in EMLs in the context of English as L1 and L2, some limitations should be pointed out. First, the TLC examined is rather small. Hence, the data and findings in this specific context under investigation should be interpreted with caution. To verify the above findings further, larger studies on EMLs delivered by NMCS lecturers or NNEs in other countries or areas are necessary. Second, this study only analyses language use in EMLs. The perceptions of lecturers and students might enrich our understanding of question use and academic discourse in EMLs. Third, only the use of questions is considered. A wider range of aspects of EMLs might give us a clearer picture of the academic discourse of EMLs given by NMCS lecturers.

The implications and application of this study's findings to English for academic purpose pedagogy are clear. Our results of question use in EMLs can serve as a basis for a course preparing both NES and NNEs participants to acquire a corresponding 'interactional literacy' so as to be able to effectively engage in EMLs, particularly important for NNEs who have limited experience of participating in EMLs (Camiciottoli, 2008: 1229). On the other hand, the results can be integrated into teaching tips and materials to facilitate and improve the lecturing and teaching skills of lecturers taking part in EMLs in the context of English as L1 or L2 or other related spoken academic events or activities like seminar, conference, presentation, etc.

## References

- Athanasiadou, A. (1991). The discourse function of questions. *Pragmatics*, 1(1), 107-122.
- Bamford, J. (2005). Interactivity in academic lectures: The role of questions and answers. In J. Bamford & M. Bondi (eds.), *Dialogue within discourse communities: Metadiscursive perspectives on academic genres* (pp. 123-145). Tübingen, Germany: Max Niemeyer.
- Beebe, L. M. & Clark Cummings, M. (1996). Natural speech act data versus written questionnaire data: How data collection method affects speech act performance. In Gass, S. M. & Neu, J. (eds.), *Speech acts across cultures: Challenges to communication in a second language*, 65-86. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. London: Longman.

- Björkman, B. (2011). Pragmatic strategies in English as an academic lingua franca: Ways of achieving communicative effectiveness? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(4), 950-964.
- Björkman, B. (2012). Questions in academic ELF interaction. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 1(1), 93-119
- Bolton, K., & Kuteeva, M. (2012). English as an academic language at a Swedish university: Parallel language use and the ‘threat’ of English. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 33(5), 429-447.
- Brown, G. A. (1987). Lectures and lecturing. In M. Dunkin (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of teaching and teacher education* (pp. 284-289). Oxford: Pergamon.
- Chang, Y. Y. (2010). English-medium instruction for subject courses in tertiary education: Reactions from Taiwanese undergraduate students. *Taiwan International ESP Journal*, 2(1), 55-84.
- Chang, Y. Y. (2012). The use of questions by professors in lectures given in English: Influences of disciplinary cultures. *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(2), 103-116
- Chuska, K. R. (1995). *Improving Classroom Questions. A Teacher's Guide to Increasing Student Motivation, Participation and Higher-level Thinking*. Phi Beta Kappan Educational Foundation, Bloomington, IN.
- Center for Teaching Excellence [Cornell University] (2017). *Using Effective Questions*. Retrieved from <https://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/engaging-students/using-effective-questions.html> (retrieved on 24/Aug/2017)
- Crawford Camiciottoli, B. (2004). Non-verbal communication in intercultural lectures. In: Bondi, M., Gavioli, L., Silver, M. (Eds.), *Academic Discourse: Genre and Small Corpora*. Officina Edizioni, Rome, pp. 35–52.
- Crawford Camiciottoli, B. (2008). Interaction in academic lecture vs. written text materials: The case of questions. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40, 1216-1231.

- Csomay, E. (2002). Variation in academic lectures. In R. Reppen (Ed.), *Using corpora to explore linguistic variation*, John Benjamins, Philadelphia, PA (2002), pp. 203-224
- Csomay, E. (2010). A corpus-based look at linguistic variation in classroom interaction: Teacher talk versus student talk in American University classes. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 6(4), 336-355.
- Dafouz, E., Nuñez, B., & Sancho, C. (2007). Analyzing stance in a CLIL university context: Non-native speaker use of personal pronouns and modal verbs. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 10(5), 647-662.
- Fortanet, Inmaculada. (2004a). Enhancing the speaker-audience relationship in academic lectures. In P. Garcés Conejos, R. Gómez Morón, L. Fernández Amaya, & M. Padilla Cruz (eds.), *Current trends in intercultural, cognitive and social pragmatics* (pp. 83-96). Seville: Editorial Kronos.
- Fortanet, Inmaculada. (2004b). The use of “we” in university lectures: Reference and function. *English for Specific Purposes* 23(1). 45–66.
- Freed, A. F. (1994). The form and function of questions in informal dyadic conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21, 621-644.
- Eslami, Z. R., & Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2007). *Discourse markers in academic lectures*. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(1), 22-38.
- Hincks, R. (2010). Speaking rate and information content in English lingua franca oral presentations. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(1), 4-18.
- Hofstede, G., & Bond, M. H. (1988). The Confucius connection: From cultural roots to economic growth. *Organizational Dynamics*, 16, 5-21.
- Hou, A. Y. C., Morse, R., Chiang, C. L., & Chen, H. J. (2013). Challenges to quality of English medium instruction degree programs in Taiwanese universities and the role of local accreditors: A perspective of non-English-speaking Asian country. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 14, 359-370.

- Huang, Y. P. (2011). English-medium instruction (EMI) content-area teachers' pedagogical content knowledge of scaffoldings: A Vygotskian perspective. *Taiwan Journal of TESOL*, 8(1), 1-32.
- Huang, Y. P. (2012). Design and implementation of English-medium courses in higher education in Taiwan: A qualitative case study. *English Teaching and Learning*, 36(1), 1-51.
- Knapp, A. (2011). Using English as a lingua franca for (mis-)managing conflict in an international university context: An example from a course in engineering. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(4), 978-990.
- Lau, K., & Lin, C. Y. (2014). The role of English as lingua franca in social integration: The case of the interactional students of a university in Taiwan. *The Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 36-49.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*: Harlow, England: Longman.
- Lin, C.-Y. (2012). Modifiers in BASE and MICASE: A matter of academic cultures or lecturing styles? *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(2), 117-126.
- Lin, C.-Y. (2015). An exploratory comparison of the use of modifiers by native speakers of English and Mandarin Chinese in academic lectures. *Text & Talk*, 35(1), 77-100.
- MOE [Ministry of Education], Taiwan (2012) *Higher Education in Taiwan 2012-2013*. Retrieved from [http://www.edu.tw/FileUpload/1052-14816/Documents/%E9%AB%98%E6%95%99%E7%B0%A1%E4%BB%8B2012-2013\(%E6%B2%92%E6%9C%89%E8%A3%81%E5%88%87%E7%B7%9A\).pdf](http://www.edu.tw/FileUpload/1052-14816/Documents/%E9%AB%98%E6%95%99%E7%B0%A1%E4%BB%8B2012-2013(%E6%B2%92%E6%9C%89%E8%A3%81%E5%88%87%E7%B7%9A).pdf)
- MOE [Ministry of Education], Taiwan (2016). Statistics. Retrieved from <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/relfile/8053/51388/b9df72f0-8b96-4e75-a038-6750e9715c96.pdf>
- Mok, K. H. (2007). Questing for internationalization of universities in Asia: Critical reflections. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3-4), 433-454.

- Morell, L. (2004). Interactive lecture discourse for university EFL students. *English for Specific Purposes*, 23(3), 325-338.
- Nesi, H. (2012). Laughter in university lectures. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 11(2), 79-89.
- Price, G. (2014). English for all? Neoliberalism, globalization, and language policy in Taiwan. *Language in Society*, 43, 567-589. doi:10.1017/S0047404514000566
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London: Longman.
- Schleef, E. (2009). A cross-cultural investigation of German and American academic style. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(6), 1104-1124.
- Scott, M. (1998). *WordSmith Tools Manual*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Simpson, R. C., Briggs, S. L., Ovens, J., & Swales, J. M. (1999). *The Michigan corpus of academic spoken English*. Retrieved from <http://www.las.umich.edu/eli/micase/micase.htm>
- Swales, J. M. (2004). Evaluation in academic speech: First forays. In G. D. L. Camiciotti & E. L. Bonelli (eds.), *Academic discourse: New insights into evaluation* (pp. 31-53). Switzerland: Peter Lang.
- Tatzl, D. (2011). English-medium Masters' programmes at an Austrian university of applied sciences: Attitudes, experiences and challenges. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(4), 252-270.
- The Teaching Center (Washington University in St. Louis) (2017). *Asking Questions to Improve Learning*. Retrieved from <https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/teaching-methods/participation/asking-questions-to-improve-learning/>
- Thøgersen, J., & Airey, J. (2011). Lecturing undergraduate science in Danish and in English: A comparison of speaking rate and rhetorical style. *English for Specific Purposes*, 30(3), 209-221.

- Thomas, J. A. (1985). *Complex Illocutionary Acts and The Analysis of Discourse* (Lancaster papers in Linguistics; 011): Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language.
- Thompson, S. (1998). Why ask questions in monologue? Language choice at work in scientific and linguistic talk. In S. Hunston (Ed.), *Language at work* (pp. 137-150). Clevedon, England: University of Birmingham Press.
- Wächter, B. and Maiworm, F. (2008). English-taught programmes in European higher education. *The picture in 2007*, Lemmens, Bonn, Germany
- Wang, K. P. (2012). The impact of nursing students' chemistry learning performance assessment in Taiwan: Competitive versus non-competitive student team achievement division approaches. *Research in Science & Technological Education*, (30)2, 131-149. doi:10.1080/02635143.2012.687717
- Wen, W. P., & Clément, R. (2003). A Chinese conceptualization of willingness to communicate in ESL. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 16, 18-38.
- Werthera, C., Denvera, L., Jensenb, C., & Meesa, I. M. (2014). Using English as a medium of instruction at university level in Denmark: The lecturer's perspective. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 35(5), 443-462.
- Yu, M. C. (2004). Interlinguistic variation and similarity in second language speech act behavior. *The Modern Language Journal*, 88, 102-119.
- YZU [Yuan Ze University] (2015a). *About Yuan Ze*. Retrieved from <http://www.yzu.edu.tw/aboutyzu/index.php/content/view/97/182/>
- YZU [Yuan Ze University] (2015b). *About Yuan Ze*. Retrieved from <http://www.yzu.edu.tw/admin/oia/index.php/content/view/213/557/lang,en/>

### Appendix 1: Original Course Codes and Names in the TLC and BASE Corpora

Academic division	Course name in the TLC	Course name in BASE	Course code in this study
Business	Business Management	sslct007/ Globalisation and Transnational Corporations	B1
	Photoshop	sslct008/ Trade Agreements	B2
	Economics	sslct009/ Economics	B3
Linguistics & English Language	Second Language Acquisition	sslct003/ Applied Linguistics & Language Teaching	L1
	Psycholinguistics	sslct039/ Collaborative Learning and Research	L2
	Stylistics	sslct040/ Methodology: Vocabulary	L3

### Appendix 2: Taxonomy of Question Forms

Question Form	Example
1. Wh- question	What is subsidy? (EC-3)
2. Question Tag	...think that comes under free trade, doesn't it? (sslct007)
3. Yes/No question	Do you say that? (ST-6)
4. Alternative question	Is it by nature or function? (sslct007)
5. Declarative question	Part of that loss of tariff revenue is going to whom? (sslct009)
6. Incomplete question	<b>L:</b> That is defined by the client, which could be the learner or it could be... ? <b>S:</b> Sponsor. (sslct003)





## **Sentence Initial Bundles: A Comparative Study Between Chinese Master's L2 Theses and Published Writing**

**Liang Li, Margaret Franken, Shaoqun Wu**

*University of Waikato, New Zealand*

### **Bio Data**

**Liang Li** is a research assistant in the Faculty of Education. She has just completed her PhD, comparing sentence initial bundles in Chinese L2 and New Zealand L1 thesis writing. Her research interests lie in the area of corpus linguistics, L2 academic writing, and computer-assisted language learning.

Email: [liang.li@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:liang.li@waikato.ac.nz)

**Margaret Franken** is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education. She has had a long-term research interest in supporting second language writers at tertiary level. She is the co-author of a number of articles evaluating the way in which corpora and digital library type's resources can do this.

Email: [margaret.franken@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:margaret.franken@waikato.ac.nz)

**Shaoqun Wu** is a senior lecturer at Faculty of Computing and Mathematical Sciences. Her research interests include computer assisted language learning, mobile language learning, supporting language learning in MOOCs, digital libraries and natural language processing.

Email: [shaoqun.wu@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:shaoqun.wu@waikato.ac.nz)

## **Abstract**

Lexical bundles, like recurrent multi-word combinations, act as discourse frames in a register and so are potentially significant as markers of expertise. The present study compared sentence initial lexical bundles (i.e. bundles at the beginning of sentences) in 43 Chinese Master's theses written in English and 85 published research articles written by L1 or advanced L2 writers of English in terms of their frequency, grammatical structures and related discourse functions. The Chinese Master's L2 texts showed a number of distinctive features, including but not restricted to an overuse of general nouns, pronoun *it* and sentence connectors, and an absence of shell nouns, anticipatory-*it* and some less transparent bundles. This paper discusses some of the possible reasons for these findings and indicates a need for pedagogic attention to cohesive devices and salient bundles which can be implemented with the help of effective corpus-based tools.

**Keywords:** Lexical bundles; Chinese students; Academic writing; Corpus analysis

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the editors and reviewers for their careful and constructive comments and suggestions.

## **1. Introduction**

Lexical bundles, as recurrent multi-word combinations, are identified on the criterion of distribution as they have a high frequency of occurrence and wide distribution across texts (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999). These combinations are extremely common discourse building blocks in a given register, and they act as discourse frames to connect to new information (Biber & Barbieri, 2007) or as interactional devices for the involvement of the writer and engagement of target readers (Hyland, 2005, 2008c). As an effective approach to corpus-based analysis, lexical bundles have attracted an increasing number of studies in the last decade. Bundles have been investigated in relation to their use in different languages (e.g. Kaneyasu, 2012; Kim, 2009; Tracy-Ventura, Cortes, & Biber, 2007), different registers (e.g. Biber, 2006; Biber & Barbieri, 2007; Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2004; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Herbel-Eisenmann & Wagner, 2010; Jablonkai, 2010; Neely & Cortes, 2009; Nesi & Basturkmen, 2006; Schnur, 2014) and different genres (particularly of English) (e.g. L. Chen,

2010; Hyland, 2008a; Qin, 2014; Xu, 2012). Their role in accounting for general language proficiency as well as specific academic competence has also been explored (e.g. Ädel & Erman, 2012; Allen, 2009; Li, 2016; Y.-H. Chen & Baker, 2010; Hyland, 2008a; Staples, Egbert, Biber, & McClair, 2013; Wei & Lei, 2011).

The methodology of studies in these areas is generally similar. Four words are regarded as the most appropriate length for target bundles because these clusters present a wider range of structures than three-word clusters and recur more regularly than five-word clusters (Hyland, 2008b). The frequency threshold is normally 10 to 25 times per million words across 3 to 5 texts (e.g. Ädel & Erman, 2012; Biber et al., 1999; Y.-H. Chen & Baker, 2010; Cortes, 2004). However, some researchers take a relatively conservative approach to manipulating their data to a manageable size, setting the cut-off frequency as 40 times per million words (e.g. Pan, Reppen, & Biber, 2016) across 10% of texts (e.g. Hyland, 2008a, 2008b), or 10 to 20 texts (e.g. Wei & Lei, 2011).

Structural analysis has been an important focus of nearly all studies. In academic prose, noun phrases (e.g. *the use of the*) and prepositional phrases (e.g. *in the present study*) comprise over 60% of all lexical bundles (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2003; Biber et al., 2004; Biber et al., 1999). Together with passive verb phrases (e.g. *can be found in*) and anticipatory-*it* patterns (e.g. *it is important to, it was found that*), these four structures are the most common patterns of lexical bundles in academic writing (Hyland, 2008a). The following discussion mainly reports on the identified differences between L2 writing (particularly Chinese learner writing), and native or expert writing with regard to these four patterns.

Noun phrase bundles, mostly with an embedded *of*, were found to occur more frequently in essays written by native speakers or in journal articles. Chinese undergraduates and Master's students do not appear to recognise the importance of this structure (Chen & Baker, 2010; Hyland, 2008a; Pang, 2009; Xu, 2012). However, in comparison to Chinese undergraduate and Master's writing, the distribution of noun phrase bundles in Chinese PhD writing tends to be closer to their distribution in published writing (Qin, 2014; Wei & Lei, 2011; Xu, 2012).

The use of prepositional phrase bundles in Chinese student writing has been found to increase with their levels of study. At the undergraduate level, Chinese students have been found to use considerably fewer bundles than native writers (Pang, 2009). From the undergraduate to Master's

level, they have been shown to employ a similar proportion of PP-based bundles to native and expert writers, slightly higher than their native peers but lower than expert writers (Chen & Baker, 2010). At PhD level, they appear to rely more heavily on PP-based bundles in comparison to Master's students and expert writers (Hyland, 2008a). It is possible that the students with higher degrees are more likely to be expected to construct longer texts, which may require a wider range of PP-based bundles to elaborate logical connections between units of texts (e.g. *on the other hand*) or to specify pre-conditions of their arguments (e.g. *on the basis of*).

Passive verb bundles were rarely found in Chinese and Swedish L2 university writing (Ädel & Erman, 2012; Chen & Baker, 2010), but were frequent in Chinese students' Master's and PhD theses (Hyland, 2008a; Wei & Lei, 2011). The use of anticipatory-*it* structures also differs across studies. Hyland (2008a), and Ädel and Erman (2012) found that anticipatory-*it* patterns were more common in Hong Kong and Swedish students' writing than in that of journal article writers. In contrast, Xu (2012), and Wei and Lei (2011) report that Chinese learners employ fewer anticipatory-*it* structures than writers of published articles. Differences between the Chinese students' writing and native or published writing are also evident in the use of *to*-clause fragments. Chinese undergraduates show a strong preference for *to*-clause fragments, especially the structure (*in order*) *to + verb* (Chen & Baker, 2010; Pang, 2009).

The above studies provide a justification for investigating and teaching lexical bundles. In these studies, published articles have often been used as a model of writing to explore the divergence of student bundle production. However, many studies did not consider overlaps between bundles. While generating bundles, a corpus tool reads from the first word of each text in the corpus and advances one word at a time. Along with the reading process, the tool stores every n-word sequence (i.e. n-gram) and checks against its previously identified sequences. Therefore, the generating process is highly likely to result in bundle overlaps. Y.-H. Chen and Baker (2010) suggest that bundle overlaps consist of complete overlap and complete subsumption. Complete overlap happens when two short bundles are both part of a long one. As they illustrated, both 4-word bundles *it has been suggested* and *has been suggested that* came from the 5-word one *it has been suggested that* and occurred with the same frequency in their corpus. Complete subsumption refers to the situation that one short bundle occurs more times than another, but both are subsets of a longer one. For example, the bundle *as a result of* was more frequent than *a result of the* in their

corpus, but both bundles were subsets of the 5-word bundles *as a result of the*. Both types of bundle overlaps will inflate the results of quantitative analysis and lead to an inaccurate comparison.

Drawing on the previous research, we aim to focus on sentence initial bundles (i.e. bundles at the beginning of sentences) in the present study. The focus on sentence initial bundles not only avoids the time-consuming and painstaking process of manually checking bundle overlaps, particularly in a larger corpus, but also reveals the specific function of sentence starters. As Cortes (2013) argues in her research, sentence initial and non-initial bundles function differently as *triggers* and *complements*: the former overlap with themes of sentences (Flowerdew, 2013; M.A.K. Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) and function as the departure point of messages to locate and orient the clauses (e.g. *It should be noted*), while the latter act as complements to complete clauses or provide additional information (e.g. *the extent to which*). According to Williams (2003) and Hinkel (2004), starting a sentence is more challenging for writers, as this demands both sequencing the subsequent information and meeting the reader's expectations.

In this study, we compare the use of sentence initial bundles in Chinese Master's L2 theses and published research articles. Published research articles were used as a model of writing to identify the divergence of learner bundle production. We randomly selected the texts in the domain of corpus-based lexical analysis to identify the differences and similarities between the bundles written by Chinese students and published writers. The following research questions were developed to focus our investigation:

1. What are the most frequent sentence initial 4-word combinations (i.e. sentence initial bundles) in the two corpora?
2. How are these sentence initial bundles classified structurally?
3. To what extent do the sentence initial bundles employed by student writers differ from those of published writers?
4. What might be the potential reasons for the differences?

On the basis of our findings, some pedagogical implications will also be explored.

## **2. Corpora and Methods**

The present study is based on a learner corpus of Chinese Master's L2 theses and a published research article corpus, both built within the domain of corpus-based lexical analysis. Although the two genres differ in length, audience and purpose, they both “represent the key research genres of the academy” (Hyland, 2008a, p. 47) with shared moves of research genres. Following the practice of many bundle studies (e.g. Y.-H. Chen & Baker, 2010; Cortes, 2004; Hyland, 2008a; Wei & Lei, 2011), the research articles, “as a model of good academic writing and as an ideal to be emulated” (Hyland, 2008a, p. 47), are used in this study to reveal the divergence of learner bundle production between Chinese Master's students and academics, that is, “the potential disparity between established characteristics of published writing and L2 writing” (Crawford, 2008, p. 269). The Chinese Master's L2 these corpus and published research article corpus were built within the same domain because Tse and Hyland (2009) suggest that the analysis of only one type of text in just one specific domain can be more effective for pedagogy than analyses of general academic English. This study consists of three stages, namely, corpus collection, bundle identification and bundle analysis.

### ***2.1. Corpus collection***

To build the learner corpus, we downloaded 43 Chinese Master's theses, written in English, totalling 839,922 words, from Wanfang Data Knowledge Service Platform. These theses were written by Chinese Master's students of 31 universities in mainland China and published between 2000 and 2012. The students are English majors who have been learning English for at least thirteen years. Their English proficiency can be considered as upper-intermediate to advanced level (i.e. above IELTS 5). It should also be noted here the collected theses are mostly likely to have been revised by the supervisors since published theses are final products of a Master's degree.

To compose the published corpus, we randomly collected 85 relevant research articles, published from 2000 to 2012, totalling 521,259 running words, from 42 different English-medium peer-reviewed journals using the leading research databases — Cambridge Journals Online, EBSCOhost Megafire Premier, and ScienceDirect (Elsevier). The authors of these articles are from 19 countries: about half from English-speaking countries (e.g. the UK, the USA and New Zealand) and another half from non-English-speaking countries (e.g. Iran, Italy, P. R. China, Sweden and

Japan). It is assumed that these articles are representative of high standards because they were all collected from peer-reviewed journals.

## **2.2. Bundle identification**

FLAX (<http://flax.nzdl.org>), a self-access language learning and analysis system, documented in Wu, Franken and Witten (2009; 2010), was used in this study. FLAX can automatically generate four-word lexical bundles from corpora, and categorise the retrieved bundles into sentence initial and non-initial ones in terms of their positions — at the beginning or in the middle of the sentences, making it a useful tool for this study.

In FLAX, the frequency and distribution threshold is pre-set as 3 occurrences across 3 texts to avoid individual author idiosyncrasies. In the literature, the frequency threshold usually ranges between 10-40 times per million words and the distribution threshold is at least 3-5 texts (e.g. Ädel & Erman, 2012; Y.-H. Chen & Baker, 2010; Cortes, 2002, 2004, 2013; Hyland, 2008a, 2008b; Wei & Lei, 2011). In this study, as a result of the distinction between sentence initial and non-initial bundles, we used a less conservative threshold against the size of the corpora and the occurrence of the sentence initial bundles: the cut-off frequency is 5 times for the learner corpus and 3 times for the expert corpus, that is, 6 times per million words for both corpora. The distribution is at least 3 texts. This frequency is comparatively lower than the cut-off points in the literature (i.e. 10+ times per million words). However, a lower cut-off point is usually established for less common bundles. For example, Biber et al. (1999) set 5 times per million words for 5-word and 6-word bundles, and Cortes (2013) chose 8 times per million words for 6-word and 7-word bundles and 6 times per million words for her longer ones. Like longer bundles, sentence initial bundles are less common bundles, so they also deserve a less conservative cut-off point, that is, 6 times per million words in this study.

Content-based bundles (e.g. *The following concordance lines*), the bundles in the headers (e.g. *Available online at www.sciencedirect.com*), footers (e.g. *Further reproduction prohibited without*), acknowledgements (e.g. *We would also like*) and references (e.g. *Paper presented at the*), were manually removed from the data. As a result of the removal, 35 student bundles and 46 published bundles were discarded. Due to the domain-specific content of the texts, more content-based bundles (e.g. *The following concordance lines*) were discarded in this study compared with

the previous research on general or discipline-specific corpora (e.g. Ädel & Erman, 2012; Chen & Baker, 2010).

### **2.3. *Bundle analysis***

In the present study, the structural types and patterns were developed from Biber et al. (1999, 2004), and Chen and Baker (2010). On the basis of the Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus, Biber and his colleagues identified twelve widely-used structural patterns in academic prose, which are:

1. noun phrase with *of*-phrase fragment
2. noun phrase with other post-modifier fragment
3. prepositional phrase with embedded *of*-phrase fragment
4. other prepositional phrase fragment
5. anticipatory *it* + verb phrase/adjective phrase
6. passive verb + prepositional phrase fragment
7. copula *be* + noun phrase/adjective phrase
8. (verb phrase +) *that*-clause fragment
9. (verb/adjective +) *to*-clause fragment
10. adverbial clause fragment
11. pronoun/noun phrase + *be* (+ ...)
12. other expressions

Biber et al. (2004) later developed three broad structural categories to group their structural patterns featuring in conversation, university teaching, textbooks and academic prose. These categories were bundles incorporating verb phrase fragments, dependent clause fragments and noun or prepositional phrase fragments. Along with Biber et al. (2004), but only focusing on academic writing, Chen and Baker (2010) distinguished another three major categories: noun phrase based (NP-based), preposition phrase based (PP-based) and verb phrase based (VP-based) bundles.

With reference to the categories of Biber et al. (2004); Biber et al. (1999), and Chen and Baker (2010), the first two authors of this paper worked independently to code a proportion of about 20% of the data and the inter-coder reliability was around 97%. Disputed cases on coding were resolved



during discussions. Then the first author coded the rest of the data, and codes were double-checked and refined by the other two authors.

Four major groups of bundles were identified: NP-based, PP-based, VP-based and clause-based bundles. In addition, two new patterns were created, noun phrase + verb phrase and conjunction + clause fragments, as a result of the sentence initial and non-initial bundle division. Table 1 gives the examples of each pattern. NP-based bundles refer to any noun phrases with post-modifier fragments, such as *of*-phrase fragments, post-nominal clause fragments, or any other preposition phrase fragments. PP-based bundles are preposition phrases or preposition phrases plus noun phrase fragments. VP-based bundles are composed of verb phrase fragments, (*In order*) *to*-clause fragments in this study. Clause-based bundles begin with independent or dependent clauses, and here refer to *anticipatory it*-clause fragments and the two newly-developed patterns: noun phrase + verb phrase and conjunction + clause fragments.

**Table 1: Major Structural Categories and Patterns**

Categories		Patterns	Examples
NP-based	noun phrase with post-modifier fragment	of	<i>The results of the</i>
		other	<i>The fact that the</i>
PP-based	preposition + noun phrase fragment	of	<i>On the basis of</i>
		other	<i>On the other hand</i>
VP-based	(verb/adjective) +	to-clause fragment	<i>In order to make</i>
Clause-based	anticipatory it +	VP	<i>It was found that</i>
		adjectiveP	<i>It is important to</i>
Other	noun phrase +	VP	<i>The results showed that</i>
	conjunction +	clause fragment	<i>As can be seen</i>
	other expressions		<i>That is to say</i>

### 3. Results and discussion

Regarding research question 1, we identified a total of 91 bundles in the learner corpus and 70 bundles in the published corpus. Appendix presents comprehensive lists of bundles identified in

the two corpora. Eight out of ten learner-preferred bundles rarely occurred in the published corpus. To address research question 2, Table 2 presents a comparison of the structural distribution of the bundles between the two corpora in terms of both type and token. In response to research question 3, log-likelihood tests were conducted using Paul Rayson's calculator (<http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>). The results show that the journal article writers used significantly more NP-based bundles and *anticipatory it + adjective* bundles. The Chinese Master's students used significantly more VP-based bundles, *anticipatory it + verb* bundles, *noun + verb* bundles and other bundles. To better answer research question 3 and 4, the following sections will address the differences between bundles used in the Chinese Master's writing and published writing, and explore the possible reasons. Some typical bundles of Chinese student writing will also be discussed.

**Table 2: Distribution of Sentence Initial Bundles by Structure (types and tokens)**

Categories	Patterns	Types		Tokens	
		theses	articles	theses	articles
NP-based	noun phrase with post-of	7	13*	46	46*
	modifier fragment other	2	3	11	16*
PP-based	preposition + nounof	10	11	122	65
	phrase fragment other	9	10	132	89
VP-based	(verb/adjective) + to-clause fragment	6	0*	46	0**
Clause-based	anticipatory it + VP	12	2*	102	16**
	anticipatory it + adjectiveP	2	8**	17	45**
	noun phrase + VP	28	16	175	65**
	conjunction + clause fragment	8	4	54	21
Other	other expressions	7	3	90	12**
Totals		91	70	795	375**

\* = significant at  $p < .05$  level \*\* = significant at  $p < .01$  level

### 3.1. NP-based bundles

According to Cortes (2013), most nouns in these bundles are shell nouns. Shell nouns are also known by various names: general nouns (M. A. K. Halliday & Hasan, 1976), anaphoric nouns (Francis, 1986), carrier nouns (Ivanič, 1991), enumerative nouns (Hinkel, 2001, 2002, 2004) signalling nouns (Flowerdew, 2003), stance nouns (Jiang & Hyland, 2015) and meta-discursive

nouns (Jiang & Hyland, 2016, 2017). These nouns are pervasive in academic discourse, and carry little or no meaning, but operate to encapsulate the meaning from the preceding and succeeding clauses or noun phrases. Aktas and Cortes (2008) found shell nouns could serve a characterisation function (e.g. the *problem* of this technique), a temporary concept-formation (e.g. the same *result*), and a linking function (e.g. this *fact*) in academic prose.

As shown in Table 3, the journal article writers used a relatively wide range of shell nouns as the subjects in the pattern *the + N + of* to characterise and anticipate the *results/findings*, *analysis*, *aim/purpose*, *reasons*, and *design* of their studies or the *use* of various methods, whereas the student writers rarely deployed these shell nouns, except for *results*. The other two shared shell nouns, *size* and *number*, were used to describe corpora (e.g. *The size of the corpus*) or corpus data (e.g. *The total number of collocations*). This is because we built the two corpora within the same domain of corpus-based lexical analysis and the introduction of the size of a corpus and the number of generated data is crucial for corpus research.

**Table 3: NP+of bundles**

<b>Student bundles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Published bundles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>The results of the*</b>	11	<b>The results of the</b>	10
The second type of	11	The results of this	10
One of the most	10	The analysis of the	8
The examples of the	6	The aim of this	8
The range of the	6	The findings of this	8
<b>The size of the</b>	6	The first of these	6
<b>The total number of</b>	6	The findings of the	6
		One of the reasons	6
		The purpose of this	6
		<b>The size of the</b>	6
		<b>The total number of</b>	6
		The design of the	6
		The use of these	6

\*Sentence initial bundles in bold are shared bundles. Considering the two corpora were of different size, the final frequencies were normalized to 1,000,000 words to conduct a reliable comparison.

Another interesting finding is that nearly half of the *NP + of* bundles in the published writing ended with demonstrative determiners, *this* or *these*, as in:

***The results of this** study are intended to be used with beginning and low intermediate learners of English whose vocabulary size is around 1,000 words. (published corpus, determiners)*

The extensive use of these two determiners, with an immediate referential function, are claimed to enhance the textural cohesion of academic writing (Biber et al., 1999; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hinkel, 2004). However, no demonstratives were found in the student *NP + of* bundles.

In the case of *NP + other modifications*, the nouns of the published bundles, *The **fact** that the*, *One possible **explanation** for*, and *The first **step** in*, were also used as shell nouns, as in the following examples.

***The fact that the** learners in group 3 have spent more time in the target language community probably means that they have been exposed to more input generally. (published corpus, shell noun)*

***One possible explanation for** these historical developments is the unique production circumstances of writing, which permit extensive planning and revision, in contrast to the real-time production circumstances of speech. (published corpus, shell noun)*

***The first step in** the analysis was to identify all recurrent multi-word sequences in these two corpora. (published corpora, shell noun)*

In contrast, the nouns in the student bundles, *The **information** such as*, and *One **thing** to be*, are vague nouns, as in:

***The information such as** the level of students, sex, age, school, the nature or source of the assignment, the category of genre of the writing and even the information about whether dictionary is used at the time of writing are also recorded in the entries of the data collected. (student corpus, vague noun)*

***One thing to be** pointed out is that there is no clear-cut point for distinguishing free combinations, collocations and idioms. (student corpus, vague noun)*

Vague nouns are generic nouns, used to convey generalisation (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985; Sinclair, 1991). This finding is consistent with the findings of Hinkel's (2002,

2004) studies on the overuse of vague nouns in L2 university student writing. However, our finding of NP-based bundles highlights the role of shell nouns and demonstrative determiners in terms of sentence initial bundles, that is, as recurrent sentence starters.

### 3.2. PP-based bundles

A preliminary analysis of PP-based bundles showed that most bundles were complex prepositions (Hinkel, 2004), that is, multi-word preposition sequences used to clue texts (e.g. *based on*, *in spite of*, and *in addition to*). The student writers and their professional counterparts showed similarity in their choice of complex prepositions with many overlapping preposition bundles in the two corpora (see Table 4, the bundles in bold). Three out of the top five bundles in the pattern *PP + of* (*On the basis of*, *With the help of*, and *In the case of*) and all top three bundles of *PP + other modifications* (*In the present study*, *On the other hand*, and *At the same time*) were the same, although they were not sequenced in the exactly same order. The master level students appear to be comparatively competent to employ preposition units to join their ideas. One possible reason is these preposition units as common cohesive devices are often covered in writing courses, which are taught very early on and are frequently used during writing.

**Table 4: PP-based Bundles**

Student bundles	Frequency	Published bundles	Frequency
<b>PP + of bundles</b>			
<b>On the basis of</b>	29	<b>On the basis of</b>	29
<b>With the help of</b>	23	<b>In the case of</b>	25
In the process of	23	In terms of the	13
With the development of	20	<b>With the help of</b>	12
<b>In the case of</b>	12	As a result of	10
As a matter of	10	For the purposes of	8
With the popularization of	8	For the purpose of	6
In view of the	8	In the majority of	6
In spite of the	7	With the exception of	6
In one of his	6	In light of the	6
		In their study of	6
<b>PP + other modification bundles</b>			
<b>In the present study</b>	51	<b>On the other hand</b>	69
<b>On the other hand</b>	38	<b>At the same time</b>	23
<b>At the same time</b>	21	<b>In the present study</b>	21
<b>On the one hand</b>	12	<b>On the one hand</b>	15

<b>In addition to the</b>	8	<b>With regard to the</b>	10
In the same way	7	In this article we	8
In the following section	7	<b>In addition to the</b>	8
In the following part	6	Despite the fact that	6
<b>With regard to the</b>	6	In addition to these	6
		In the first part	6

However, it is important to note the prevalence of *with* bundles (*with the development of* and *with the popularization of*) in the Chinese students' writing. The use of these *with* bundles may originate in the interlingual transfer from the equivalent Chinese expression 随着, and the Chinese students tend to be familiar with this pattern.

Two journal article-preferred idiomatic bundles, *In terms of the* and *In light of the*, were absent in the student writing. Both were used to provide the topic or theme of the arguments, as in:

***In terms of the** occurrence of referential bundles, it was found that they are more common in conversation than academic prose in both Korean and Spanish, which differs from English lexical bundles. (published corpus, idiomatic bundle)*

***In light of the** precision obtained from the last section, even though 94.1% of suggestions contain the appropriate corrections, no evidence shows whether our system can provide the most relevant answers with better ranking or not. (published corpus, idiomatic bundle)*

One possible explanation for the absence of these two bundles in the student corpus is the intransparency of the idiomatic expressions — the meanings cannot be interpreted from the literal meanings of their content words. In contrast, more transparent phrases such as *on the basis of*, *in the case of* and *with the help of*, were pervasive in the student texts. It is possible that the students found little or no difficulty in using the transparent expressions, but were not familiar with the less transparent ones and not confident in using them. However, according to Pawley and Syder (1983) the absence of a nativelike selection is likely to hinder the decoding process and increases the reader's processing load.

### 3.3. VP-based bundles

VP-based bundles were only found in the Chinese Master's corpus and the Chinese students habitually used *In order to* or *to*-clusters (*In order to make*, *In order to get*, *In order to have* and *To put it in*) at the beginning of their sentences to highlight the purposes of their main clauses. However, none of these patterns occurred as sentence initial bundles in the published writing, although the academics employed some in the second part of their sentences. The difference can be seen from the following examples:

*In order to make up for the vocabulary deficiency, Chinese EFL learners tend to adopt repetition of some verbs they assume they are familiar with and avoid some verbs that they felt to be difficult as strategies of communication. (student corpus, in order to)*

*This also shows how important it is for language learners to acquire a large number of phraseologies and patterns **in order to be** admitted into a discourse community, the wish to blend in. (published corpus, in order to)*

The use of sentence initial (*in order*) *to*-clusters may be attributed to the transfer of the Chinese phrase 为了, which usually starts a Chinese sentence. As Williams (2003) points out, long introductory phrases hinder understanding and readers “have to hold in mind that the subject and verb of the main clause are still to come” (p. 138). Therefore, it is more appropriate to start a sentence with its topic rather than the wordy (*in order*) *to* phrase in most cases.

### 3.4. Clause-based bundles

Clause-based bundles consist of anticipatory-*it* bundles, *noun + verb* bundles, and conjunction bundles. Among them, anticipatory-*it* bundles were heavily used in both student and published writing.

#### 3.4.1. Anticipatory-*it* bundles

Anticipatory-*it* bundles were common in this research. The students employed more bundles in the pattern of *It + (modal) + passive verb + that* (i.e. 86%), but the journal article writers used more in the structure of *It + is + predictive adjective + to/that* (i.e. 87%). The use of anticipatory-*it* allows the writer to depersonalise the text and at the same time to take action against or make an

evaluation of the proposition; the use of anticipatory-*it* also accords with the information principle — new or heavy information is usually located at the end of the clauses (Williams, 2003). Hewings and Hewings (2002) identified four categories on the basis of the metadiscousal functions of their anticipatory-*it* data: emphatics (emphasising the writer’s conclusion or drawing the reader’s attention to a particular point), hedges (indicating the writer’s uncertainty), attitude markers (expressing the writer’s evaluation), and attribution (presenting the specific or general reference). Table 5 shows the distribution of the student and published anticipatory-*it* bundles in each category.

**Table 5: Anticipatory-*it* Bundles**

	Student bundles	Frequency	Published bundles	Frequency
Multi-functions	It can be seen	20		
Emphatics	<b>It was found that</b>	17	<b>It was found that</b>	15
	It is found that	17	It should be noted	15
	<b>It is obvious that</b>	13	It is important to	19
	It is hoped that	11	<b>It is clear that</b>	13
	It is also found	10	<b>It is obvious that</b>	6
	<b>It is clear that</b>	7	It is also important	6
	It can be inferred	7		
	It is expected that	7		
	It shows that the	6		
	It turns out that	6		
Hedges			It is possible that	12
Attitude markers				12
			It is difficult to	
			It is interesting to	12
Attribution			It is also worth	8
	It is suggested that	8		
	It is known that	7		
	It is believed that	6		

The most frequent bundle in the student corpus was *It can be seen*, which did not occur in the published corpus, but fulfilled a wide variety of functions as a discourse organiser, emphatics, and attribution in the student writing, for examples:



***It can be seen that*** in the above lines, there are some modifiers between “learn” and “lesson”. (student corpus, discourse organiser)

***It can be seen that*** the adjective-noun collocational errors is common among the four groups of students. (student corpus, emphatics)

***It can be seen that*** Firth’s definition and explanation of collocation lays a theoretical foundation for further research. (student corpus, attribution)

All the shared bundles between the two corpora, *It was/is (also) found that*, *It is obvious that* and *It is clear that*, fell into emphatics category, used to state the writer’s conclusions or deductions, for example:

***It was found that*** in both tests only around half of the students’ responses were acceptable English collocations. (student corpus, emphatics)

***It was found that*** subjects who used our parallel concordance in the post test made statistically significant improvements over previous translations written with the aid of bilingual dictionaries. (published corpus, emphatics)

Other bundles appeared in the published writing in the category of emphatics, *It should be noted*, and *It is (also) important to*, mostly served to draw the reader’s attention to the limitations of the current or previous research, as in:

***It should be noted that*** this test is not designed to assess all aspects of collocation knowledge. (published corpus, emphatics)

***It is important to*** mention that even though the use of these methods for the teaching of vocabulary and collocations has been widely advocated, there is no specific research on how well they work. (published corpus, emphatics)

Other bundles used by students in the category of emphatics can be further classified into two sub-categories: *It can be inferred*, *It shows that* and *It turns out that* performed the same role with the shared bundles, indicating the writer’s conclusion; *It is hoped that* and *It is expected that* drew the reader’s attention to the implications of the research. The following examples illustrate their different functions:

***It can be inferred*** from this result that in English teaching, teachers should attract great importance to the improvement of learners receptive collocation competence. (student corpus, emphatics-conclusion)

***It shows that the*** learner's mother tongue has a great influence on the appropriateness of the learner's verb-noun collocations. (student corpus, emphatics-conclusion)

***It turns out that*** the incorrect use of prepositions constitutes a major problem to most learners at almost every period of English learning. (student corpus, emphatics-conclusion)

***It is hoped that*** the findings of the study will shed some light on pedagogical approaches of productive vocabulary acquisition. (student corpus, emphatics-implication)

***It is expected that*** the analysis is generalizable for the whole population of Chinese college English learners in their word collocation. (student corpus, emphatics-implication)

The other bundles in the published corpus were used as hedges (*It is possible that*) or attitude markers (*It is difficult to*, *It is interesting to*, and *It is also worth*), as in:

***It is possible that*** some of the problematic usage of linking adverbials by apprentice and NNS writers may not simply be a question of under- or over-use, but may also reflect a lack of knowledge of the specific patterns in which a given adverbial typically occurs. (published corpus, hedge)

***It is difficult to*** know how far we can generalize these results to other L2 learners of a similar ability. (published corpus, attitude marker)

However, hedge and attitude marker bundles were absent in the student texts. For the absence of hedge bundles in the student writing, Yang (2013) suggests two reasons typical to Chinese writers: unfamiliarity with the hedge devices and different beliefs in Chinese academic discourse: “the researchers should be authoritative and their results should be as rigorous as possible” (p. 30).

All the other bundles in the student corpus performed the function of attribution (*It is suggested that*, *It is known that*, and *It is believed that*). In line with Hewing and Hewing's (2002) findings,

these attribution bundles were mostly used as general attribution (15 out of 18), with no referencing. The following is an example:

*It is suggested that the students should have more practice in writing, for example, keeping diaries, writing book reports, making comments on hot issues, etc. (student corpus, attribution)*

### 3.4.2. Noun + verb bundles

The student *noun + verb* bundles were featured by *it*-clauses and *it* was used as a reiteration strategy, referring back to the preceding lexical item or sentence as a cohesive element (e.g. *It is completely a*, *It focuses on the*, *It can also be*, *It can be used*, *It is used to*, and *It can reveal not*). The following are two examples:

*The mutual information score or mutual information index gives a measure of the strength of association between two words. It focuses on the likelihood of two words appearing together within a particular span of words. (student corpus, reiteration it)*

*There are certain classes of English word combinations that cannot be explained with existing syntactic or semantic theories. It is completely a matter of convention. (student corpus, reiteration it)*

In contrast, only one *it*-bundles (*It may be that*) appeared in the published corpus with fairly low frequency. Halliday and Hasan (1976) placed all reiteration forms on a cline from the most specific to the most general: the repetition of the same lexical item, the use of a synonym, near-synonym, superordinate, general noun and pronoun *it*. In comparison to a noun or noun phrase, the use of *it* as a vague reference item in the student writing resulted in a much looser structure.

### 3.4.3. Conjunction bundles

Table 6 shows the conjunction bundles in the two corpora. The students used more sentence transitions to connect their ideas (e.g. *But*, *So*, *And*). The use of these transitions, however, does not necessarily guarantee the flow of the texts (Hinkel, 2004). On the other hand, the high reliance on sentence transitions might be the result of the training received from their writing courses and

it also indicates that the students may have little awareness or knowledge of alternative cohesive devices.

**Table 6: Conjunction bundles**

<b>Student bundles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Published bundles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
As is shown in	13	<b>As can be seen</b>	23
<b>As can be seen</b>	12	If we look at	10
But it is not	7	As shown in the	8
So when the required	7		
When it comes to	7		
And at the same	6		
As has been pointed	6		
As we all know	6		

### ***3.5. Typical bundles in Chinese student writing***

Besides the differences between the student and published bundles discussed above, it was also found that the Chinese students preferred to use a few typical bundles, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Typical Bundles in Chinese Student Writing**

<b>Typical bundles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
That is to say	54
With the development of	20
As far as the (..... is concerned)	14
As a matter of (fact)	10
To put it in (another way/other words)	10
Last but not least	10
With the popularization of	8
When it comes to	7
One thing to be (pointed out is that)	6
As we all know	6

Brown (2007) suggests four major sources of errors: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning and communication strategies. Interlingual transfer refers to the interferences from the acquired language (e.g. L1) to the target language. Intralingual transfer places emphasis on the overgeneralization of the rules in the target language. Context of learning includes the negative influences from teachers or materials. Communication strategies are defined as the strategies used by learners to overcome their incompetent language during communication. On the

basis of Brown's (2007) division, the sources of these typical bundles could possibly be attributable to the above four aspects. The use of the bundles *That is to say*, *With the development/popularization of*, *One thing to be (pointed out is that)* and *As we all know*, is likely to be the result of negative transfer from written Chinese 换句话说, 随着.....的发展, 需要指出的是, and 众所周知. The bundle *To put it in (another way/other words)* is possibly the overgeneralisation of the English combination *In other words*. The overuse of the bundles containing fixed expressions, *As a matter of (fact)*, and *Last but not least*, may largely reflect the negative influence from the English pedagogy in mainland China: excessive emphasis placed on English idioms. The bundles *As far as the (..... is concerned)* and *When it comes to* have the equivalence in the published corpus, *In terms of the*, and the highly marked expressions may be consciously used by the students as a replacement. The following examples are these bundles in the student and published texts:

***When it comes to*** the adverb-adjective (Adv-Adj) collocation, few errors are found.

(student corpus, typical bundle)

***As far as the*** verb-noun collocation is concerned, usually there are two kinds of avoidance. (student corpus, typical bundle)

***In terms of the*** occurrence of referential bundles, it was found that they are more common in conversation than academic prose in both Korean and Spanish, which differs from English lexical bundles. (expert corpus, typical bundle)

Ellis (1994) argues that defining the sources of errors is largely subject to the biases of researchers and it is impossible to give accurate explanations about errors. Although only the possible sources of these typical bundles can be identified, the analyses will have clear implications for pedagogy.

#### 4. Pedagogical Implications

The present study focuses on a list of sentence initial bundles retrieved from two corpora: a Chinese Master's L2 thesis corpus and a structure-correlated published journal article corpus. The Chinese L2 students in this study were seemingly not so competent in using NP-based bundles. Their NP-based bundles contained more vague nouns, and fewer shell nouns and demonstrative determiners. In comparison to NP-based bundles, the Chinese students were fairly competent in employing PP-

based bundles. The training they received in the writing courses and the transparency of many PP-based bundles (e.g. *On the basis of* and *On the other hand*,) may contribute to the successful acquisition. In contrast, the Chinese students did not use two less transparent ones (*In terms of the* and *In light of the*) although both were found popular in journal articles. VP-based bundles, mainly *In order to* and *to* bundles, featured the sentence starters of the Chinese student writing. Clause-based bundles including anticipatory-*it* bundles, *noun + verb* bundles, and conjunction bundles were also used differently in the two corpora. In comparison to the bundles of the published corpus, the student bundle *It can be seen that* served as a multi-purpose expression and no anticipatory-*it* bundle was used to indicate research limitations, hedge conclusions or express personal attitudes. The *noun + verb* bundles were predominantly composed of the pronoun *it*, loosely linking to the previous text. The conjunction bundles with various sentence transitions were also heavily used in the student writing corpus. Both the use of pronoun *it* and sentence transition bundles partially reflect the students' comparatively limited knowledge of cohesive devices.

These findings have clear implications for EAP writing pedagogy. First, the evidence from our corpus-based comparison suggests the importance of introducing lexical bundles rather than single words to student writers, as lexical bundles (e.g. *It should be noted*) always contain lexico-grammatical patterns (e.g. anticipatory-*it* pattern) and serve certain metadiscourse functions (e.g. emphatics). According to Nation (2013), knowing a word involves knowing its form, meaning and use, and the knowledge of lexical bundles tells student writers where, when and how to use a word. Second, the results of the comparison revealed the comparatively limited writing strategies of Chinese students. For example, besides conjunctions, the advanced L2 students seldom chose other cohesive devices such as shell nouns and demonstrative determiners. Both have been regarded as effective cohesive devices (Flowerdew, 2003; Gray, 2010). EAP teachers can refer to Aktas and Cortes's (2008) work on shell nouns and Gray's (2010) work on demonstratives as examples to demonstrate their lexico-grammatical patterns and discourse functions to students. Third, our study indicates the possible transfer of L1 in Chinese student writing. The use of sentence initial *In order to* and *to* bundles could possibly be the negative transfer of the Chinese phrase 为 了, literally translated as *in order to*, which usually occurs at the beginning of sentences. The students were probably uncertain of the difference between the English and the Chinese phrase and might have unconsciously transferred the position of their L1 phrase to the target language. As Paquot (2013)

suggests, “EFL teaching needs to counter the default and sometimes misleading L1-related primings in EFL learners’ mental lexicons” (p. 411).

As to the design of bundle learning activities, teachers can refer to Nation’s (2013) three cognitive conditions for vocabulary learning: noticing, retrieval and creative use. Noticing here means seeing a bundle as a learning target and paying attention to it. During reading, teachers can ask students to collect high-frequent sentence starters or sentence initial bundles if a corpus-based tool (e.g. FLAX) is available. Discussions can be organized on the functions of these bundles in writing (e.g. linking function) or on the differences between students’ source and target language in terms of sentence initial bundles. During writing, teachers can use reformulation (Cohen, 1983) strategy to rewrite students’ sentences, preserving their ideas but replacing the inappropriate sentence starters with target bundles. Bundle noticing can be enhanced by comparing the reformulated writing with the original one. Retrieval refers to the recall process of any previously met bundle and creative use occurs when a previously met bundle is used in a new context. Nation (2013) regards creative use as the most effective condition for vocabulary learning. This has also been supported by Peters and Pauwels’s (2015) study on the effect of formulaic sequence instruction: their use of cued output activities, combined both retrieval and creative use stages, turns out to be a more effective approach than recognition activities. With regard to corpus-based language learning approach, Wu, Franken and Witten’s (2010) argument on collocation learning could be transferrable to bundle learning. Noticing can be enhanced with typographically highlighted bundles in texts. Retrieval can be achieved when student writers negotiate the use of an unfamiliar bundle through searching its content word and browsing its multiple contexts. Creative use occurs when students deploy the target bundle in their own writing.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this study, we focused on analysing a list of sentence initial bundles retrieved from two self-built corpora: a Chinese Master’s L2 thesis corpus and a published journal article corpus. In accordance with the practice of many bundle studies, the published articles were used as a good model of academic writing to reveal the divergence of learner bundle production. The focus on sentence initial bundles avoids bundle overlaps and reveals the particular structures and functions of sentence starters. Caution should be taken in attempting to generalise the results to other domains, disciplines, genres or registers. However, the sizes of both corpora are sufficient to

generate salient differences and similarities in the sentence initial bundles between advanced Chinese students' and published writing. The present study suggests some of the possible reasons for the Chinese students' bundle selection and provides advice for improving it. Future research can be designed to further explore the reasons for these choices. One approach could be to move beyond corpus study to involve actual writers in interviews about their choices (e.g. Li, Franken, & Wu, in press). This would generate more complex and nuanced understandings of writers' bundle knowledge (e.g. NP-bundles and anticipatory-*it* bundles) and would thus also better inform ESP writing pedagogy.



## References

- Ädel, A., & Erman, B. (2012). Recurrent word combinations in academic writing by native and non-native speakers of English: A lexical bundles approach. *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(2), 81-92. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2011.08.004
- Aktas, R. N., & Cortes, V. (2008). Shell nouns as cohesive devices in published and ESL student writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 7(1), 3-14.  
doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2008.02.002
- Allen, D. (2009). Lexical bundles in learner writing: An analysis of formulaic language in the ALESS learner corpus. *Komaba Journal of English Education*, 1, 105-127.
- Biber, D. (2006). *University Language: A corpus-based study of spoken and written registers*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Biber, D., & Barbieri, F. (2007). Lexical bundles in university spoken and written registers. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26(3), 263-286. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2006.08.003
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Cortes, V. (2003). Lexical bundles in speech and writing: an initial taxonomy. In G. N. Leech, T. McEnery, A. Wilson, & P. Rayson (Eds.), *Corpus linguistics by the lune*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Cortes, V. (2004). If you look at ...: Lexical bundles in university teaching and textbooks. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(3), 371-405. doi:10.1093/applin/25.3.371
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. London, United Kingdom: Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Chen, L. (2010). An investigation of lexical bundles in ESP textbooks and electrical engineering introductory textbooks. In D. Wood (Ed.), *Perspectives on formulaic language:*

- Acquisition and communication* (pp. 107-125). London, United Kingdom: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Chen, Y.-H., & Baker, P. (2010). Lexical bundles in L1 and L2 academic writing. *Language Learning & Technology*, 14(2), 30-49.
- Cohen, A. D. (1983). Reformulating second-language compositions: A potential source of input for the learner. from ERIC database (ED 228866)
- Cortes, V. (2002). Lexical bundles in freshman composition. In R. Reppen, S. M. Fitzmaurice, & D. Biber (Eds.), *Using corpora to explore linguistic variation* (pp. 131-145). Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cortes, V. (2004). Lexical bundles in published and student disciplinary writing: Examples from history and biology. *English for Specific Purposes*, 23(4), 397-423. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2003.12.001
- Cortes, V. (2013). *The purpose of this study is to*: Connecting lexical bundles and moves in research article introductions. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 12(1), 33-43. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2012.11.002
- Crawford, W. J. (2008). Place and time adverbials in native and non-native English student writing. In A. Ädel & R. Reppen (Eds.), *Corpora and discourse: The challenges of different settings* (pp. 267-288). Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Flowerdew, J. (2003). Signalling nouns in discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22(4), 329-346. doi:10.1016/S0889-4906(02)00017-0
- Flowerdew, J. (2013). *Discourse in English language education*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

- Francis, G. (1986). *Anaphoric nouns*. Birmingham, United Kingdom: English Language Research, University of Birmingham.
- Gray, B. (2010). On the use of demonstrative pronouns and determiners as cohesive devices: A focus on sentence-initial this/these in academic prose. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 9, 167-183.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London, United Kingdom: Longman.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). London, United Kingdom: Arnold.
- Herbel-Eisenmann, B., & Wagner, D. (2010). Appraising lexical bundles in mathematics classroom discourse: Obligation and choice. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 75(1), 43-63.
- Hewings, M., & Hewings, A. (2002). "It is interesting to note that ...": A comparative study of anticipatory 'it' in student and published writing. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21, 367-383.
- Hinkel, E. (2001). Matters of cohesion in L2 academic texts. *Applied Language Learning*, 12, 111-132.
- Hinkel, E. (2002). *Second language writer's text: Linguistic and rhetorical features*. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hinkel, E. (2004). *Teaching academic ESL writing: Practical techniques in vocabulary and grammar*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

- Hyland, K. (2008a). Academic clusters: Text patterning in published and postgraduate writing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 18(1), 41-62. doi:10.1111/j.1473-4192.2008.00178.x
- Hyland, K. (2008b). As can be seen: Lexical bundles and disciplinary variation. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27(1), 4-21. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2007.06.001
- Hyland, K. (2008c). Persuasion, interaction and the construction of knowledge: Representing self and others in research writing. *International Journal of English Studies*, 8(2), 1-23.
- Ivanič, R. (1991). Nouns in search of a context: A study of nouns with both open- and closed-system characteristics. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 29, 93-114. doi:10.1515/iral.1991.29.2.93
- Jablonkai, R. (2010). English in the context of European integration: A corpus-driven analysis of lexical bundles in English EU documents. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(4), 253-267. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2010.04.006
- Jiang, F., & Hyland, K. (2015). 'The fact that': Stance nouns in disciplinary writing. *Discourse Studies*, 1-22. doi:10.1177/1461445615590719
- Jiang, F., & Hyland, K. (2016). Nouns and academic interactions: A neglected feature of metadiscourse. *Applied Linguistics*, 1-25. doi:10.1093/applin/amw023
- Jiang, F., & Hyland, K. (2017). Metadiscursive nouns: Interaction and cohesion in abstract moves. *English for Specific Purposes*, 46, 1-14. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2016.11.001
- Kaneyasu, M. (2012). *From frequency to formulaicity: Morphemic bundles and semi-fixed constructions in Japanese spoken discourse*. (Doctoral dissertation), University of California, Los Angeles, CA. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1zp613xj#page-1>

- Kim, Y. (2009). Korean lexical bundles in conversation and academic texts. *Corpora*, 4(2), 135-165. doi:10.3366/E1749503209000288
- Li, L. (2016). Sentence initial bundles in L2 thesis writing: A comparative study of Chinese L2 and New Zealand L1 postgraduates' writing (Thesis, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10289/10862>
- Li, L., Franken, M., & Wu S. (in press). Chinese postgraduates' explanation of the sources of sentence initial bundles in their thesis writing. *RELC Journal*.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Neely, E., & Cortes, V. (2009). A little bit about: Analyzing and teaching lexical bundles in academic lectures. *Language Value*, 1(1), 17-38.
- Nesi, H., & Basturkmen, H. (2006). Lexical bundles and discourse signalling in academic lectures. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 11(3), 283-283. doi:10.1075/ijcl.11.3.04nes
- Pan, F., Reppen, R., & Biber, D. (2016). Comparing patterns of L1 versus L2 English academic professionals: Lexical bundles in Telecommunications research journals. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 21, 60-71. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2015.11.003
- Pang, P. (2009). A study on the use of four-word lexical bundles in argumentative essays by Chinese English-majors: A comparative study based on WECCL and LOCNESS. *CELEA Journal*, 32(3), 25-45.
- Paquot, M. (2013). Lexical bundles and L1 transfer effects. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 18(3), 391-417. doi:10.1075/ijcl.18.3.06paq

- Pawley, A., & Syder, F. H. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 191-226). London, United Kingdom: Longman.
- Peters, E., & Pauwels, P. (2015). Learning academic formulaic sequences. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 20, 28-39. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2015.04.002
- Qin, J. (2014). Use of formulaic bundles by non-native English graduate writers and published authors in applied linguistics. *System*, 42(1), 220-231. doi:10.1016/j.system.2013.12.003
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London, United Kingdom: Longman.
- Schnur, E. (2014). Phraseological signaling of discourse organization in academic lectures: A comparison of lexical bundles in authentic lectures and EAP listening materials. *Yearbook of Phraseology*, 5(1), 95-122. doi:10.1515/phras-2014-0005
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Staples, S., Egbert, J., Biber, D., & McClair, A. (2013). Formulaic sequences and EAP writing development: Lexical bundles in the TOEFL iBT writing section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 12(3), 214-225. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2013.05.002
- Tracy-Ventura, N., Cortes, V., & Biber, D. (2007). Lexical bundles in speech and writing. In G. Parodi (Ed.), *Working with Spanish corpora* (pp. 217-231). London, United Kingdom: Continuum International Publishing.
- Tse, P., & Hyland, K. (2009). Academic lexis and disciplinary practice: Corpus evidence for specificity. *International Journal of English Studies*, 9(2), 111-129. doi:10.6018/ijes.9.2.90781

- Wei, Y., & Lei, L. (2011). Lexical bundles in the academic writing of advanced Chinese EFL learners. *RELC Journal*, 42(2), 155-166. doi:10.1177/0033688211407295
- Williams, J. M. (2003). *Style: Ten lessons in clarity and grace* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.
- Wu, S., Franken, M., & Witten, I. H. (2009). Refining the use of the web (and web search) as a language teaching and learning resource. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 22(3), 249-268.
- Wu, S., Franken, M., & Witten, I. H. (2010). Supporting collocation learning with a digital library. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23(1), 87-110.
- Xu, F. (2012). 中国学习者英语学术词块的使用及发展特征研究 [The use and developmental features of lexical bundles in Chinese learners' English academic writing]. *外语与外语教学* [Foreign Languages and Their Teaching], 4, 51-56. doi:10.13564/j.cnki.issn.1672-9382.2012.04.013
- Yang, Y. (2013). Exploring linguistic and cultural variations in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 50(1), 23-36. doi:10.1016/j.pragma.2013.01.008

## Appendix: Sentence initial bundles in frequency order

Student bundles	Tokens	Published bundles	Tokens
That is to say	45	<b>On the other hand</b>	36
<b>In the present study</b>	43	<b>On the basis of</b>	15
<b>On the other hand</b>	32	<b>In the case of</b>	13
<b>On the basis of</b>	24	<b>At the same time</b>	12
<b>With the help of</b>	19	<b>In the present study</b>	11
In the process of	19	It is important to	10
<b>At the same time</b>	18	<b>The results showed that</b>	10
With the development of	17	<b>As can be seen</b>	12
It can be seen	17	<b>It was found that</b>	8
In order to make	15	It should be noted	8
<b>It was found that</b>	14	<b>On the one hand</b>	8
It is found that	14	The fact that the	8
As far as the	12	In terms of the	7
<b>It is obvious that</b>	11	<b>It is clear that</b>	7
The present study is	11	There was no significant	6
<b>The results showed that</b>	11	<b>With the help of</b>	6
As is shown in	11	It is possible that	6
<b>In the case of</b>	10	It is difficult to	6
<b>On the one hand</b>	10	It is interesting to	6
<b>As can be seen</b>	10	<b>The results indicated that</b>	5
<b>The results of the</b>	9	As a result of	5
The second type of	9	If we look at	5
It is hoped that	9	<b>The results of the</b>	5
The following table shows	9	The results of this	5
One of the most	8	Table 1 shows the	5
As a matter of	8	This leads us to	5
It is also found	8	Table 2 shows that	5
Based on the above	8	<b>With regard to the</b>	5
To put it in	8	The analysis of the	4
The reason might be	8	For the purposes of	4
We need a better	8	Table 2 presents the	4



<b>The results indicate that</b>	8	In this article we	4
The results show that	8	<b>In addition to the</b>	4
Last but not least,	8	As shown in the	4
With the popularization of	7	The aim of this	4
In view of the	7	The findings of this	4
<b>In addition to the</b>	7	One possible explanation for	4
It is suggested that	7	It may be that	4
It is completely a	7	The first step in	4
Today it is very	7	It is also worth	4
Twenty years ago it	7	There is also a	3
The information such as	6	Figure 4 shows the	3
In spite of the	6	There was also a	3
In the same way	6	For the purpose of	3
In the following section,	6	In the majority of	3
It can be inferred	6	Table 3 shows the	3
It is known that	6	With the exception of	3
It is expected that	6	This is an important	3
<b>It is clear that</b>	6	The study shows that	3
This result indicates that	6	The implication is that	3
The present study adopts	6	Table 2 shows the	3
The result showed that	6	Figure 3 shows that	3
The third chapter presents	6	The first of these	3
It is based on	6	The findings of the	3
But it is not	6	In light of the	3
So when the required	6	Despite the fact that	3
When it comes to	6	In addition to these	3
Ten years ago it	6	These results show that	3
The examples of the	5	This is because the	3
The range of the	5	One of the reasons	3
<b>The size of the</b>	5	The purpose of this	3
<b>The total number of</b>	5	<b>The size of the</b>	3
One thing to be	5	<b>The total number of</b>	3
In one of his	5	The design of the	3
In the following part	5	The use of these	3

<b>With regard to the</b>	5	In their study of	3
It shows that the	5	In the first part	3
It is believed that	5	<b>It is obvious that</b>	3
It turns out that	5	It is also important	3
Based on this general	5		
In order to get	5		
In order to have	5		
It focuses on the	5		
The following examples are	5		
Another example is the	5		
It can also be	5		
It can be used	5		
The same is true	5		
The reason may be	5		
The samples are all	5		
Each component may be	5		
The results revealed that	5		
This study focuses on	5		
The result shows that	5		
It is used to	5		
It can reveal not	5		
This shows that what	5		
And at the same	5		
As has been pointed	5		
As we all know	5		
There are two possible	5		



## **Comparison of Rhetorical Moves in the Method Sections of Two Disciplines**

Delaram Khansari

*English Department, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan,  
Isfahan, Iran*

### **Biodata**

**Delaram Khansari** was born in Iran. She started her academic career with a bachelor's degree in English translation and continued with a master's in applied linguistics; subsequently, she completed her PhD at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, at Universiti Puteri Malaysia. Her dissertation is related to English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

Email: delaram.khansari@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

Among IMRD sections of research articles (RAs), scant attention has been drawn to the analysis of the Method section, specifically, across disciplines. This study analyzes the rhetorical structure of the Method sections of RAs in these two disciplines. To this end, forty Method sections from applied linguistics and chemistry RAs (20 from each discipline) were analyzed using a modified model proposed by Peacock (2011). The similarities and differences of the Method section in two disciplines were compared in terms of the frequency of occurrences of moves. From the comparison it was observed that common to both disciplines, the *procedure* move was most frequently used. However, the applied linguistics RAs saw it necessary to include more moves to explain the Method section. In addition, two new moves were deemed salient for inclusion to give a more comprehensive description of move patterns that could be used together with the established ones in the model used for the analysis. Differences in the use of headings and

subheadings between disciplines were also found in relation to the structuring of move development.

**Keywords:** IMRD, rhetorical structure, Method section, move, disciplinary variations

## **1. Introduction**

Among the various academic genres, research articles (hereafter RAs) have drawn extensive attention regarding rhetorical structures. This attention owes much to the significant role of RAs in disseminating academic knowledge in a discourse community. According to Swales (2004), the RA is one of the top genres subjected to analysis in peer-reviewed journals in various fields. Studies on this "prestigious genre," to use Swales' (2004) words, have generally aimed at exploring its communicative moves (Bhatia, 1993; Samraj, 2005; Swales, 1990). Move structure analysis is a central notion in ESP texts that gives insights into the communicative goals of a specific genre. Each move involves constituent elements that establish information in recognizable ways.

Moreover, RAs are generally perceived as a genre that embodies stringent academic requirements in terms of both textual organization and linguistic choices. In fact, genre analysis has become a powerful tool for text analysis, which "provides insights into important characteristics of genres" (Le & Harrington, 2015, p. 45). Studies have focused largely on the Introduction (e.g., Gledhill, 2000; Samraj, 2005; Swales, 1990) or the Results and Discussion/Conclusion sections (e.g., Brett, 1994; Holmes, 1997; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Williams, 1999; Yang & Allison, 2003), but comparatively less attention has been given to the Method section (e.g., Bruce, 1983; Swales, 1990) which forms an important component of both quantitative and qualitative studies in research. Kanoksilapatham (2005) also pointed to the scant attention given to the Method section of RAs and lack of a firm framework for the analysis of this section. That being so, it could be difficult to establish guidelines for the rhetorical organization of the specific textual components of RAs.

In general, the Method section in the RA describes the conducting of the study through introduction of the participants, materials and instruments, procedures, and research method used in the research. The importance of the Method section for investigation is related to its function in connecting a particular research method with research procedures based on literature related to previous relevant studies, and making connections among the research questions in the reporting of the Results of the study. In addition, the Method section is likely to highlight and justify the

appropriateness of the utilized research method (Bazerman, 1988). It is significant to note that the writers tend to reinforce the validity and reliability of the results obtained through the use of the chosen procedures so as to eradicate possible doubts concerning the findings and their related discussions. Smagorinsky (2008) stated that the Method section refers as “conceptual epicenter of manuscripts” (p. 390). Swales and Feak (2012) hold that authors tend to exercise great care and caution in writing the Method section because this section is under the particular attention of reviewers, supervisors, editors, and examiners. As stated earlier, a few studies have investigated the rhetorical structure of the Method section in comparison to other sections in RAs. From the literature, Brett (1994) on sociology journals, Nwogu (1997) on medicine articles, Lim (2006) on business management, Kanoksilapatham (2005) on biochemistry, and Stoller and Robinson (2013) on chemistry were identified as the studies which analyzed the Method section of RAs.

Nwogu (1997) based on the analysis of 15 medical articles, presented three moves for this section, namely ‘describing data collection procedure’, ‘describing experimental procedure’, and ‘describing data analysis procedure’ as the communicative acts. Brett (1994) also stated that the Method section seems to have three rhetorical moves or “tasks” (p. 49) to describe the way data was obtained, to explain the functions of concepts and variables, and to mention but not to explain the statistical techniques. On the other hand, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) examined 350 scientific RAs in the fields of physics and biology from 1944 to 1989 and concluded that the science writers did not give that much attention to the methodology section. Their findings did not show less importance of this section in scientific disciplines, but implied that the writers of physics and biology journals did not elaborate on the information in the Method section. Bloor (1998) conducted a cross-disciplinary study by analyzing the Method sections of four disciplines, including applied and hard sciences. He confirmed the more frequent use of justifications and examples in social sciences compared to the hard sciences. These differences, therefore, revealed cross disciplinary variations and also indicated that the readers of RAs in social sciences need more details on the justifications for the methods used.

These differences across disciplines could be explained by the concept of slow (extended) and fast (compressed) texts. Swales and Feak (1994) postulated that this section in social sciences tends to be ‘slow-paced’ by definition, and is inclined to be “explicit about details and procedures” with “justifications, explanations and, sometimes, examples” (p. 165). However, the Method sections

in the sciences, which may be considered ‘fast’ texts, avoid such details due to the availability of ‘standard practices and established methods’ (p.165). In other words, writers put into practice certain assumptions about the text and in turn the manner of reader engagement. The writers of fast texts assume that readers are familiar with the methodology of the study, and therefore, they do not see a need for them to be explicit about the procedures which are ‘heavily clipped’ (p. 220). By contrast, slow texts need to be more explicit about procedures, and therefore, the description is accompanied by justifications and ample examples.

Adding to the perspectives, Lim (2006) carried out a more detailed study by examining 20 Method sections from two business management journals and established a total of three ‘moves’ and twelve ‘steps’, including sub-steps, in the Method section. More recently, Peacock (2011) identified seven Method moves after investigating eight different fields. They are ‘overview’, ‘location’, ‘research aims/questions/hypothesis’, ‘subject/materials’, ‘procedure’, ‘limitation’, and ‘data analysis’. In comparing the disciplines, he found the ‘procedure’ move (100%) present in all the disciplines with the ‘materials/subjects’ move (94%) as the next highest in frequency.

Soodmand Afshar & Ranjbar (2017) analyzed 200 applied linguistic research articles in order to investigate the generic differences between the Introduction section (specifically research questions) and the Method sections of RAs. They assessed the frequency of occurrence of rhetorical moves and steps in two groups of international and local Iranian journals based on Swales’ (2004) model and Lim’s (2006) model, respectively. The results of this study revealed that there was no significant differences in the frequency of occurrence of rhetorical moves in the Method section of two groups. However, some differences were found in the frequency of occurrence of some steps of move 1 (describing data collection procedure) and move 3 (elucidating data analysis procedure) which play a significant role in academic writing. These steps involve describing the sample (S1M1), relating data analysis procedure (S1M3), and previewing results (S3M3). Additionally, Zhang & Wannaruk (2016) investigated the rhetorical move structure of the Method sections of RAs in education field. They recognized three rhetorical moves in this section (describing the research design, describing data collection procedure, and describing data analysis procedure). They found that the structure of the Method section is characterized by complexity and rich description and provide very detailed information in methodology part due to the qualitative aspect of education RAs.

The choice of section headings is also an important issue which has not been clarified in recent studies, even in investigations that analyzed the rhetorical structure of RAs completely in both hard and soft disciplines (Kanoksilapatham, 2005; Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999; Stoller & Robinson, 2013). In fact, different section headings occur due to their communicative goals or their functions. However, the relationship between IMRD sections in RAs leads to differences in the labels of sections. For instance, Swales (1990) declared that the Results and Discussion sections can be merged, and other issues, such as conclusions or implications, are sometimes expressed in this section. Hence, the authors have to choose the section headings based on their primary communicative purposes. The relationships among these sections (Result, Discussion, and Conclusion) and the choice of their headings were neglected in previous relevant studies. In this regard, Yang and Allison (2003) intended to investigate the relationships between these sections in RAs and examine the differences which exist in the section headings. However, based on my best knowledge, the Method section was not analyzed in previous studies in terms of the labels used for this section, specifically as a comparison between different disciplines. Thus it remains as an outstanding topic worth exploring.

In view of the current literature, the present study aims to investigate the Method sections of RAs in two disciplines, applied linguistics (AL) and chemistry (CH), to reveal possible variations in these two disciplines as writers attempt to engage with their readers. The two disciplinary fields of AL and CH were chosen as representatives of different categories of science in accordance with Becher's (1989) taxonomy of disciplines. Applied linguistics falls under the soft sciences, which deal with constructs of human behavior while chemistry is categorized as a hard science in which observations and experimentations are frequently employed. This comparison could add to the study of variations between disciplines. The following research questions are addressed to fulfill the purpose of this research:

1. What are the move structures of the Method section in applied linguistics and chemistry RAs?
2. How is the rhetorical structure of the Method section similar or different in these two disciplines?
3. How are the headings and sub-headings in the Method section used as a move preamble in AL and CH RAs?

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 The Corpus

The corpus used in this study includes the Method section of 40 ISI (Institute for Scientific Information) RAs in two different disciplines, 20 RAs in applied linguistics (AL) and 20 RAs in chemistry (CH) published from 2008 to 2014. The main criterion for selecting RAs in this study is the presence of Swales' (1990) IMRD structure. All the RAs in both AL and CH fields were selected based on the conventional sectional format of an RA: Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion (IMRD). Journals were selected based on the ISI criterion to indicate acceptance by a highly accomplished discourse community which would have notions of conventional practice within the RA discourse. According to the Journal Citation Report (JCR) in 2012 provided by ISI's web of knowledge, all these leading journals have a high impact factor that represent well-written articles in the AL and CH fields.

The selected journals in Applied Linguistics were *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP), and *English for Academic Purposes* (EAP). The journals chosen in chemistry were *Microchemical Journal* and *Chemical Research in Toxicology*. The total number of words for the texts in the two disciplines were comparable in size, which was 128,087 words for the AL and 124,520 words for the CH articles. Table 1 summarizes information pertaining to the data set in this research.

**Table 1: Data Set**

Disciplines	Journal names	Total number of words
Applied linguistics (N=20)	<i>English for Specific Purposes</i> <i>English for Academic Purposes</i>	128,087 words
Chemistry (N=20)	<i>Microchemical Journal</i> <i>Chemical Research in Toxicology</i>	124, 520 words



## 2.2 Analytical Framework

To analyze the rhetorical moves in the Method sections of AL and CH RAs, this research relied principally on Peacock's (2011) model. I chose it based on its relevance in analyzing rhetorical moves in the Method sections of both soft and hard sciences RAs. Table 2 indicates the seven moves in the Peacock model for analyzing Method sections.

**Table 2: Peacock's Model for Move Analysis of Method Sections**

Moves in Method Section (Peacock's (2011) model)
M1-overview
M2-location
M3-research aims/questions/hypothesis
M4-subjects/materials
M5-procedure
M6-limitations
M7-data analysis

Each move, as indicated in Table 2, is explained below accompanied by examples which provide the guidelines for text analysis. The key expressions are underlined to indicate the writers' linguistic choices used to manipulate the moves.

M1, 'overview', is an opening move in the Method section, which provides a brief description concerning the research method.

### Example 1

Because of the complex and multifaceted nature of language use in the global business context, we approach communicative situations drawing on various disciplinary perspectives and adopting different methodologies, as suggested by Nickerson (2005; see also, Bargiela-Chiappini et al., 2007). [AL-13]

M2, ‘location’, delineates the research site as to where the research was conducted. This move mostly justifies why this location was selected for the study.

### **Example 2**

The institution Lee attended is a large comprehensive public university located in the south east of the United States (US) with a student population over 40,000. [AL-5]

In addition, M3, which states ‘research aims/questions/hypothesis’, refers to the purpose of the study and pertinent questions asked in the study and the related hypotheses, if any.

### **Example 3**

In order to address the issues outlined in the introduction, the study aimed to uncover the processes through which the three writers completed their assignments. Two questions were set:

- How did the participants interact with texts in order to solve the cognitive-rhetorical problems posed by the assignments?
- How did the participants interact with other people in order to solve the cognitive-rhetorical problems posed by the assignments? [AL-2]

‘Subjects/materials’, M4, presents information regarding the people or organizations from which data were obtained or instruments and materials employed in the research.

### **Example 4**

T4 polynucleotide kinase and dNTPs were purchased from New England Biolabs (Ipswich, MA). [ $\gamma$ -32P]ATP (specific activity  $3 \times 10^3$  Ci/mmol) was purchased from PerkinElmer Life Sciences (Boston, MA). [CH-4]

M5, ‘procedure’, involves the step-by-step procedures by which data was collected.

### Example 5

To insure that the results obtained from the move analysis would be generalizable to the target discourse, the top five journals in biochemistry were selected. Based on the impact factor reported in Journal Citation Reports (1999), the five journals in biochemistry published in the United States in the year 2000 were.... [AL-9]

‘Limitations’, M6, delineates the constraints and restrictions of the researcher in conducting the study. These limitations can be related to selecting the sample, collecting data, or analyzing the results.

### Example 6

However, identifying moves and steps in the bulk of the discussions, which as described below involved a recursive organization of result-comment sequences, was more problematic. As noted in previous research (Holmes, 1997), one move can be embedded inside another or two moves can be included within one sentence in this highly complex type of text. [AL-1]

Finally, M7, ‘data analysis’, explains how the obtained data were analyzed and interpreted by using statistical methods.

### Example 7

For the purpose of comparison, DMAIII(GS) and DMMTAV at the same concentration levels were also tested in these experiments. Cell viability was measured by Annexin V-FITC and PI staining. Data were acquired on a BD FACS Canto II flow cytometer (Becton Dickinson, San Jose, CA) and analyzed using BD FACS Diva software (Becton Dickinson). [CH-10]

## 2.3 Move Analysis

In my research, the method of analysis was primarily qualitative, whereby each sentence was analyzed carefully for move identification. Identifying moves through particular linguistic features is pertinent in a bottom-up approach, while the realization of moves by content and rhetorical

organization or move structure is a top-down approach (Biber; Connor; Kanoksilapatham; Upton, 2007) Both bottom-up and top-down approaches were used in this study to identify the moves. However, the top-down approach in many previous studies, including the work by Swales (1990), was criticized for its subjectivity in evaluation. In this regard, to counter the threat of misinterpretation in the analysis of the Method moves, a small sample of the data (10 RAs in each discipline) was double-checked by two experienced researchers in AL and CH working independently to verify the realizations of moves and to obtain agreement on the method of analysis.

I used two experts (one for each discipline) to ensure the reliability of move identification for the Method sections of the RAs. The first expert was a PhD student in AL whose dissertation was on analysing the rhetorical moves and linguistic features in research articles. Due to a lack of understanding of this expert in AL about the content of CH RAs, I assigned another expert (a PhD student) in CH for analysing the CH research articles and solving the problems that I anticipated encountering with them in terms of the understanding of the RAs in that field.

To determine the reliability of the analysis, I classified all the moves and selected 10 research articles randomly (five for each discipline) for the coders to analyse the rhetorical structure of the Method sections of RAs. The RAs used for coding comprising 25% of the entire corpus (based on Kanoksilapatham, 2005). Differences in coding led to discussion and clarification in order to reach a consensus about the coding.

This pilot effort helped in assessing the viability of the model and also in stabilizing the qualitative analysis of the moves. To identify the strategies taken by writers in text organization to facilitate reading, sectional headings were also examined as part of move analysis. Essentially the present analysis paid close attention to illustrative examples of linguistic signals offered by the discourse, such as the examples shown earlier, to guide move identification.

Most studies in corpus linguistics use basic *descriptive statistics*. Descriptive statistics are statistics which do not seek to test data for significance. Rather they simply describe the data in some way. The most basic statistical measure in the present study was a *frequency count*. Frequency statistics simply count the number of times that each variable occurs. Frequency data are so regularly produced in corpus analysis that most corpus-based studies undertake some form

of statistical analysis of this nature even if it is relatively basic. In addition, the frequencies are transformed into percentages for comparative purposes. Often times it is difficult to interpret frequency distributions, because the frequencies by themselves are meaningless, unless there are reference points to interpret the numbers. As such, percentages are more useful as there is a fixed basis for comparison.

Objective cut-off points were established to enable the researchers to identify whether moves were obligatory, quasi-obligatory or optional. Moves that had 100% occurrence were considered as completely obligatory moves (Holmes, 1997), while a cut-off frequency of 50% of occurrence was used for deciding whether moves were quasi-obligatory (above 50%) or optional (below 50%) (Swales, 1990). Thus, if a move occurred above 50%, it was considered a quasi-obligatory move and if the frequency of a move fell below 50%, it was deemed optional. In addition, cycling of moves (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988) was taken into consideration. Each cycling was counted as a token of occurrence. Thereupon, frequency counts were made to tabulate the incidences of occurrence and their comparison across disciplines.

## **2.4 Analytical Procedure**

As mentioned earlier, I chose two disciplines of AL and CH as representative of social and natural sciences. The Method section of the selected RAs with IMRD structure were obtained either directly from the electronic versions of the relevant journals or they were manually scanned and converted into Rich Text Format for analysis. The lengths of the overall text discourses in the Method sections were consciously monitored since too great a discrepancy in length could affect the comparison. It should be noted that for counting the number of words in each RA, all the tables, figures, footnotes, and headings were omitted. I calculated the frequency and percentages of each move in both fields. Finally, the rhetorical moves of the Method sections were compared to recognize the possible similarities and differences for the communicative acts across disciplines. The headings and subheadings used in the Method sections were also identified in both fields in order to indicate the variations in these two disciplines.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Move Structures in AL and CH Method Sections

The Method sections consisted of seven moves from Peacock's model: 'overview' (M1), 'location' (M2), 'research questions/aims/hypothesis' (M3), 'subjects/materials' (M4), 'procedure' (M5), 'limitation' (M6), and 'data analysis' (M7). From the pilot analysis of the 10 RAs, I included two additional moves in the model used for analysis. They were 'presenting the utilized framework' (M8) found in the Method section of AL articles and 'identifying lab instruments' (M9) that occurred in CH articles. With these modifications, the chosen RAs were fully analysed and Table 2 shows the comparison of rhetorical moves in both AL and CH articles.

**Table 3: Distribution of the Method Moves in AL and CH Articles**

<b>Rhetorical Moves</b>	<b>AL (N=20)</b>			<b>CH (N=20)</b>		
<b>Method Section</b>	<b>No. of RA</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>No. of RA</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>
M1 - overview	3	15%	3	0	0	0
M2 - location/context	19	95%	25	11	55%	16
M3 - Research aims, questions, hypothesis	4	20%	4	0	0	0
M4 - subjects/materials	20	100%	58	17	85%	37
M5 - procedure	20	100%	32	19	95%	23
M6 - limitations	7	35%	8	0	0	0
M7 - data analysis	18	90%	35	18	90%	22

M8-Describing the utilized framework	8	40%	8	0	0	0
M9-Presenting lab instruments	0	0	0	14	70%	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>			<b>113</b>		

N= Total number of RAs

F= Frequency

The results in Table 2 show that while M1 ‘overview’ was not found in the Method section of CH RAs, it occurred in three AL RAs, making up 15% of the total number of 20 RAs. It was deemed as an optional move (below 50%) at the beginning of the section, with the use of simple past tense as in the following example:

- (1) **In the present research**, the researcher **used** the same methods and definitions and drew on an existing framework of discussion sections developed in previous research in Applied Linguistics (Basturkmen, 2009) to examine discussion in the Dentistry articles. [AL-1]

Regarding M2 ‘location/context’, I found this move in 95% of all AL RAs and it also occurred 25 times in the 19 RA Method sections, which indicated the cycling of the move. However, this move occurred in 11 out of 20 CH RAs, making up 55% of all RAs and was deemed as a quasi-obligatory move (above 50%). The ‘location/context’ move also occurred 16 times in the 11 CH RAs that included this move, indicating the cycling positioning of M2 in CH Method sections. It is worth noting that the occurrences of the ‘context’ move were more dominant than those of ‘location’ in the AL Methods, which in turn reveals a characteristic of the selected corpus in this investigation. However, M2 was identified either by the sampling sites where the research was conducted or by source of materials, which was mostly indicated by specific lexical features such as *purchase by/from* or *obtain from* in the form of passive verbs. The results of this move correspond to the findings by Peacock (2011) in analyzing 288 RAs in eight disciplines in which this move was frequently employed in his corpus. M2 was shown in the AL and CH articles respectively:

- (2) The corpus used in the present study consisted of 20 **research article introductions from two established journals in the field of applied linguistics**. [AL-19]
- (3) Senecionine **was purchased from** Shanghai R&D Center for Standardization of Traditional Chinese Medicine (Shanghai, China). [CH-7]

The findings indicated that M3 ‘research questions/aims/hypothesis’ occurred in only four AL RAs (one time each). This demonstrates that this move is not cycled in the Method section of AL RAs. M3 was employed in 20% of the 20 AL RAs in this study and was considered as an optional move (below 50%) in the Method section. The results of this study correspond to the results of Peacock’s study (2011) as M3 occurred in the languages and linguistics discipline. However, M3 ‘research aims/questions/hypothesis’ did not occur in the Method sections of CH articles. This could be partly due to the fact that the authors did not want to restate the research objectives already stated in the Introduction section. M3 in the Method sections of AL articles was as follows:

- (4) **This study aims to** take a socio-political perspective to record a novice NNSE graduate student’s peer collaboration in writing academic papers with her NSE peers. [AL-5]

As can be seen in Table 2, M4, ‘subjects/materials’, was found in all 20 AL RAs (100%). Establishing M4 as a prevalent move in the Method was consistent with Peacock’s study (2011). This move also occurred 58 times in the Method section of 20 AL RAs. However, M4 was mostly used as an opening move in CH articles with 17 out of 20 CH RAs employing M4. This move was thus deemed as a quasi-obligatory move in CH Method sections. In addition, M4 occurred 37 times in the 17 CH RAs that included this move, which demonstrated that it was frequently cycled. In AL RAs, M4 was found to present both ‘subjects’ and ‘materials’ in the Method section. The identified materials in this corpus extensively covered questionnaires, interviews, taped spoken journals, courses, or some tests for measuring reading comprehension. However, M4 in CH articles was often presented as chemical materials as well as by reference to animal characteristics associated with samples used for the study. The subjects in the Method section of AL RAs were recognized by sub-headings such as *Participants*, *Corpus descriptions*, *The corpus*, *The sample texts*, *Compilation of the corpus*, or *Material analyzed*. It is worth noting that 11 out of 20 AL RAs



had sub-headings in the rhetorical structure of their Method sections. In contrast, the chemical materials in CH RAs were highlighted under headings such as *Chemicals and reagents*, *Compound sets*, *Chemicals*, and *Reagents and standards*. These materials were mostly listed in the Method section. In the current study, this move in the CH Method sections was accompanied by the use of some adjectives such as: *enhanced*, *reduced*, *oxidized*, *balanced*, *distilled*, *purified*, and *diluted*. This can be justified by the fact that CH Method sections provide detailed information about materials. This is because in experimental sciences such as CH, scientists evaluate the findings of previous experiments based on the substances used in the research. Thus, in terms of the materials, the writers point to all properties of materials in the Method section. These adjectives are commonly associated with materials used in laboratory experiments. It is noticeable that sources of materials were also frequently stated in this part. Examples of M4 in AL and CH RAs are presented, respectively, as follows:

- (5) **Eighty RP titles** were separately **chosen** per discipline in English and in Spanish, thus yielding **a total of 480 RP titles** for each language. Furthermore, **15 RVP titles** were separately chosen per discipline in English and in Spanish, thus yielding **a total of 90 RVP titles** for each language. [AL-14]
  
- (6) **Purified** rat liver TrxR1, recombinant human Trx1, and glutathione reductase (GR), recombinant E. coli Trx1, bovine glutathione peroxidase (GPx), insulin, NADPH, 5,5'-dithiobis(2-nitrobenzoic acid) (DTNB), APAP, NAPQI, menadione (2-methyl-1,4-naphthoquinone), **reduced** glutathione (GSH), **oxidized** glutathione (GSSG), phosphatase inhibitors (catalog no. P2850, which contains microcystinLR, cantharidin, and (–)-p-bromotetramisole), and protease inhibitor cocktail (catalog no. P2714, which contains 4- (2-aminoethyl) benzenesulfonyl fluoride, E-64, bestatin, leupeptin, aprotinin, and EDTA) **were purchased from** Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO). [CH-5]

It appeared that the CH Method often consisted of detailed investigations of extremely complex chemical materials and substances and their origin was significant for readers to know. These materials were presented in the form of a list for readers at the beginning of the CH Method section.

Additionally, three CH Methods in this study, before listing the materials, highlighted the *caution* concerning the use of materials. This could be attributed to the fact that the chemicals used in these studies were toxic and the researcher saw the need to warn the readers of dangerous consequences, which was identified by the way lexical items such as *carcinogens*, *hazardous*, *handled with great care*, and *dangerous* were used. This is obviously reflected in the sample texts because the corpus selected in this study was from the *Chemical Research in Toxicology* journal. The cautions are fronted at the beginning of the Method sections in the form of italics as follows:

- (7) **Caution:** *the arsenic species included in this study are toxic and are potential human carcinogens; therefore, they should be handled with great care.* [CH-10]

The results showed that M5, ‘procedure’, in AL Methods was often featured by sub-headings such as *Data collection*. The ‘procedure’, or data collection, move was prevalent in all AL RAs (100%) and was considered an obligatory move. In addition, it occurred 32 times in the Method sections of the total number of AL RAs. Sampling techniques or justification for data collection was also presented in M5 in AL fields. This result is in accordance with Peacock’s study (2011) in which the ‘procedure’ move occurred in all 288 RAs (100%) in the eight disciplines of his study, which covered both the hard and social sciences. However, this move in the current study, appeared in 19 out of 20 CH RAs 23 times. The ‘procedure’ move was the most widespread move in the CH Method and is thus a quasi-obligatory move (95%). It should be noted that the ‘procedure’ move in CH articles was classified at two levels: *describing the experimental procedure*, and *describing the instruments*.

The lexical feature for identifying this move in the Method section of AL articles was the verb tense; the past tense and passive voice were used extensively. The use of simple past tense reveals that the action of compiling the data was already done. Additionally, conforming to the writing convention of academic writing, the writers take a depersonalized stance in reporting the procedures (Weissberg & Buker, 1990). The most frequently used procedural verbs in recognizing the data collection move in AL RAs were: *conducted*, *selected*, *mailed*, *chosen*, *labeled*, *collected*, *compiled*, *extracted*, and *took place*. AL writers employed procedural verbs which are descriptive and convey the characteristics of the selected corpus. However, this move in CH RAs was featured

by the use of some distinctive verbs such as: *wash with*, *synthesize*, *culture*, *treat*, *seed*, *desalt*, *solubilize*, and *measure* in the passive form. The use of these procedural verbs in CH Methods reflects the experimental nature of this discipline, which is based on the observations of experiments. Therefore, the use of procedural verbs in the Method section reflects the nature of that discipline. The following excerpts illustrate M5 in AL and CH RAs, respectively:

- (8) The written curricular component of the corpus, from which the ACL **was compiled**, comprises 25.6 million words from journal articles and text book chapters covering 28 academic disciplines. [AL-20]
- (9) After the MCF-7 cells **were seeded** at a density of 5,000 cells/well in 96-well plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Roskilde, Denmark), the culture media **were then replaced with** phenol red-free DMEM supplemented with 1% charcoal-dextran-treated FBS for 48 h. The MCF-7 cells **were then washed with** PBS and incubated at 37 °C with EtOH (0.1%), E2 (10<sup>-9</sup>–10<sup>-8</sup> M), OP (1<sup>-7</sup>–10<sup>-5</sup> M), or TCS (10<sup>-7</sup>–10<sup>-5</sup> M) for 6 d. [CH-2]

With reference to the figures in Table 2, M6, ‘limitation’, in the Method sections was less commonly used and only found in 35% of AL articles with an occurrence frequency of eight times. This low figure could be explained by the fact that only some studies (a total of seven in this corpus) faced constraints that called for the researchers to point out limitations in the methodology. This finding also corresponds to Peacock’s study (2011) in which the ‘limitation’ move evident in the languages and linguistics discipline was similarly low. In fact, the majority of the selected RAs in the AL corpus were related to ESP text analysis in which the writers focused on analyzing a small number of texts in different sections of RAs. The findings of these studies obtained from analyzing the individual sections of RAs, as Swales’ (1990) claimed, are not generalizable to other studies. Thus, it is the writers’ duty to mention these limitations in the Method section for notifying the readers that the findings obtained in these studies are only limited to the corpus of these studies and that by enlarging the size of the corpus or changing the disciplines, the results could be different. CH authors did not use the ‘limitation’ move in their Method sections of RAs. The absence of this move in CH Methods could be attributed to the experiment-based nature of this discipline. In fact, scientists begin their experiments with a hypothesis formed by previous studies, rather than making direct observations. In this regard, the unexpected findings based on the tested

theories or hypotheses are independently verified by scientists in other laboratories (Averill & Eldredge, 2015).

However, in AL RAs, this move as an optional move, was specifically stated in a separate sub-heading as *limitations* regarding the number of participants as well as the data collection of the study. It should be noted that the ‘limitation’ move in this corpus was indicated by way of lexical items, such as *restricted*, *problematic*, *additional difficulty* and *challenging limitations* as follows:

- (10) This geographical spectrum, as well as the inclusion of the social sciences journals in our study, posed two **challenging limitations** requiring solutions. One is the fact that not all the journals selected are ISI listed, and the other, which is also related to the former, is that, according to data from the UK, social science research is not widely represented in the ISI journal lists (Economic and Social Research Council, 2004), nor are journals written in Spanish. [AL-14]

Regarding M7 ‘data analysis’, the results revealed that 18 out of 20 AL RAs (90%) in the corpus contained the ‘data analysis’ move and only two RAs did not use this move in their Method sections, which was similar to CH RAs in which M7 also appeared as a quasi-obligatory move (90%). The absence of this move in 10% of RAs in my corpus was related to the preference of the writers in these RAs. Surprisingly, the authors of these articles placed the analysis of data at the beginning of the Results section. In addition, this move occurred 35 times in the 18 RA Method sections in the AL discipline; however, the frequency of occurrences of this move in CH articles was 22 times, which indicated that M7 was cycled in the Method sections of RAs in both fields. In interpreting M7 in AL RAs, it was revealed that some issues pertaining to research design (such as *qualitative*, *quantitative*, *comparative method*, and *case studies*) were also highlighted in the ‘data analysis’ move. In addition, one of the significant parts of the data analysis helped to clarify some issues discussed concerning statistical analysis such as utilized test type, software package, or statistical calculations, which might include, for instance, *ANOVA test*, *Chi-square test*, *Infostate software version 2010*, or *Pearson coefficient*. In most cases, the researcher justified the choice of analysis procedure(s) and provided a rationale for selecting certain analysis procedures by emphasizing the accuracy of the procedure(s) selected. This justification in the analysis of data

was also indicated using causal adjuncts (*as, because, the reason*). The chronological order (*the first stage, then*) and the use of the first-person pronouns (*I, we*) in analyzing the data were also found in the corpus of the current study. This is similar to Lim's (2006) findings in analyzing the Method sections of management RAs. He claimed that employing first-person pronouns in data analysis of RAs could lead to "vigorous, direct, clear and concise communication" (p. 290).

In organizing the moves, I found that nine AL RAs allocated separate sub-headings for the 'data analysis' move in the Method section. The sub-headings were *Data analysis, Statistical analysis, Data generation and analysis, Computational analysis, Analysis, Analysis of materials, and Reliability of move identifications*. Moreover, this move was indicated by certain verbs mostly in the simple past tense and was widely seen in the form of passive verb phrases such as *is examined, was analyzed, is coded, were counted, and are calculated*. However, in CH RAs, the 'data analysis' move is manifested in the two categories of statistical analysis and theoretical computations (Stoller & Robinson, 2013). The statistical analysis in ~~this~~ my corpus was more frequently found in analysis of data and mostly occurred under different subheadings such as: *Data processing and statistical analysis, or Data analysis and statistical evaluation*. M7 in CH articles was also identified by way of verbs such as *analyze, calculate, and evaluate*. The following excerpts indicate this move in AL and CH articles, respectively:

- (11) However, for considerations of reliability a subset **was analyzed** by a second rater, who specialists [sic] in second language acquisition research. [AL-19]
- (12) Data are expressed as the mean  $\pm$  SEM. One-way ANOVA with appropriate posthoc testing was performed **to analyze** all tested compounds. For the inhibition experiments, a comparison between every single value and the control was performed, which **was analyzed** with a Dunnett's posthoc test. When all groups were compared, Bonferroni's multicomparison posthoc test was used. Differences were considered **statistically** significant when  $P < 0.05$ . [CH-2]

It should be noted that some individual moves in the Method section allocate specific headings to themselves which are accounted as a subheading of this section. It means that the writer attempts to indicate the importance of this move by explaining it in a distinct heading. These subheadings

mentioned above are related to M7 specifically in our AL and CH corpus. However, the headings of the Method section as a general are discussed in Section 3.3.

### 3.2. Additional Moves Identified in the Present Corpus

I added two additional moves in the present study to Peacock's (2011) model. The emergence of the additional move in AL Method sections is due to the selection of the corpus of this study, which is mostly related to ESP and genre analysis. The authors in the corpus of my research had to mention the framework used for analysis of the study. Firstly, 'describing the utilized framework' was identified in AL RAs, as shown in Table 2. This move was an optional one; it only occurred in 40% of the AL RAs and none of the CH RAs. Sub-headings used to lead this move include *Genre Analysis Tasks*; *Move Analysis*; *the Genre Model*; *Swales' Framework*; and *the Analysis of the Corpus*.

It is interesting to note that this move can be recognized through lexical items such as *following* or *according to*, and the past tense and passive verb forms were characteristic, such as *was employed*, *were used*, *were identified*, *was defined*, and *were analyzed*. The following excerpts illustrate this move:

(13) **Following Swales' analytical framework of move analysis**, textual boundaries between moves in each section were identified based on content and linguistic criteria. [AL-9]

(14) In the analysis of the introductions in the corpus, **Swales' (1990) CARS model** was employed. The model proposes that RA introductions contain three moves. [AL-19]

Another move that I identified in the corpus of CH Method sections is 'lab instruments'. This move is a crucial move in CH Method sections, but in Peacock's model this move is embedded in a general move called 'material' and he did not mention the discussion of equipment used in the study as a distinct move. However, the use of this move was high (70%) in my corpus and this is the reason that I separated it as an additional move. As indicated in Table 2, this move occurred in 14 out of 20 CH RAs, making up 70 % of RAs. This move also recurred 15 times in the 14 CH RAs. This move was identified through the use of verb phrases such as *performed with*, *equipped*

*with, was measured with, was carried out with, and was used*, which helped to identify a software application, a piece of equipment, or a program in order to analyze images, identify proteins, or gain molecular weight information. In addition, the version of the software used in the study along with other relevant details were highlighted in this part. Examples of this are presented below.

(15) A perkin Elmer series 200 HPLC system **equipped with** a Peltier controlled column compartment was coupled to a Perkin-Elmer DRC-e ICP-MS to monitor As and S. [CH-10]

(16) Agilent Feature Extraction **software (version 10.7.3.1, Agilent Technologies) was used** to analyze the acquired whole genome microarray images. [CH-7]

This move was also highlighted in Kanoksilapatham's (2005) model as the 'detailing equipment' move. The percentage of this move in her study was only 10% (only six of 60 RAs); however, this move occurred in 70% of the RAs (14 out of 20 RAs) in the current study and is thus deemed as a quasi-obligatory move. As Kanoksilapatham's (2005) stated, this low occurrence of this move in her study raises more questions as to whether this move reveals an emerging trend in biochemistry or indicates the uniqueness of her study.

### **3.3. Headings in AL and CH Method Sections**

Headings are single words or short phrases that accurately introduce and demarcate move information. (Yang & Allison, 2003). Headings initiate the reader into the sectional discussion and in this case, the Methods involved. A summation of the headings found is presented in the table below. It is clearly shown that AL RAs made use of a greater variety of headings to facilitate the reader's comprehension.

**Table 3: Headings in the Method section in AL and CH articles**

Applied Linguistics	Chemistry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Method(s)</li> <li>• (The) study</li> <li>• Methodology</li> <li>• Research design</li> <li>• Materials and method(s)</li> <li>• Samples and methods</li> <li>• Data and method of analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Experimental procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Materials and methods</i></li> <li>• <i>Methods</i></li> <li>• <i>Experimental</i></li> </ul>

As shown in Table 3, research design, samples, or method of analysis were specified as individual headings for the Method section. This demonstrates that AL writers exercise greater linguistic options than the chemistry writers. The greater variety of headings in the AL Methods reflects the nature of social sciences in describing the methodology. As stated earlier, the authors in AL try to mention all details in the research procedure and provide comprehensive background information to the readers. By contrast, chemists assume that their readers do not need to supplement information in the Method section and only focus on major issues. Hence, the headings chosen for this section are mostly functional and general, such as *Methods* or *Experimental*, as opposed to AL headings that point to specific topics in the methodology, such as *research design* or *sample* (refer to Table 3).

In addition, I found that the number of subheadings in AL and CH Method sections revealed variations in these fields. All 20 CH RAs include subheadings; however, six out of 20 RAs in the AL discipline avoided using subheadings in their Method section structures. This can be justified by the fact that chemists employed several experiments in their research and employed various procedures and methodologies for each experiment, hence they have to mention them in different subheadings, for instance, *Cell culturing and membrane vesicle preparation*, *Purification of S-Nitrosylated proteins*, *Mitochondrial swelling*, or *Isolation of mitochondria and proteinase K treatment*. To the best of my knowledge, less attention has been paid to the headings used in the Method section in the previous studies in both fields of AL and CH, and this, therefore, remains an interesting topic worth exploring in prospective studies.



#### 4. Conclusion

From the analysis of the RAs in two disciplines, some important similarities can be discerned. The manifestation of rhetorical moves in AL and CH Method sections reveals the disciplinary norms in these fields and guides novice and experienced writers to meet the expectations of their discourse communities. Table 4 sums up the features of move manifestation for the Method section in the two disciplines of AL and CH.

**Table 4: Guidelines for Move Manifestation for the Method Section of AL and CH Research Articles**

<b>Applied Linguistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewing the goal of the study</li><li>• Describing the items in questionnaire or interview</li><li>• Presenting the sample characteristics</li><li>• Identifying the context of the study</li><li>• Presenting the utilized framework</li><li>• Explaining how data are compiled</li><li>• Describing the step-by-step procedure of the study</li><li>• Specifying the design and methodological techniques</li><li>• Describing the analysis of data (statistical or descriptive)</li><li>• Explaining the limiting conditions in conducting the research</li></ul>
<b>Chemistry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presenting the list of chemical materials</li><li>• Providing source of substances and background of the materials</li><li>• Giving warning or caution for toxic materials</li><li>• Presenting the lab equipment for conducting the experiment</li><li>• Describing the procedure of the research</li><li>• Describing the statistical analyses</li></ul>

I found that the total number of moves employed in AL articles (N=173) was larger than the number in CH articles (N=113). All seven moves in Peacock's (2011) model were identified in AL RAs, while in the CH RAs, only four moves were identified, which were 'location' (M2), 'subjects/materials' (M4), 'procedure' (M5), and 'data analysis' (M7). This could be due to the

assumption that science methods, as noted by Swales (1990), need no justification or discussion because writers assume that the readers already possess sufficient knowledge about them, whereas researchers in soft fields need a more careful, step-by-step description of methods.

This finding can also be justified on the grounds that the Method sections are fast texts in the hard sciences in comparison to the social sciences in which the Method sections are manifested as slow texts. The writers of fast texts presuppose that readers are familiar with the methodology of the study, and that there is no need for them to explicate the procedures used. Thus, they do not attempt to provide reasons for procedures (Bloor, 1998; Swales, 1990-2004). However, the focus of chemists is highly on materials. For instance, it is very important for chemists to let their readers know the full details of materials. It appears that the Method sections in the CH articles often consisted of detailed investigations of extremely complex chemical materials and substances, implying that their origin was significant for readers to know. These materials were indicated in the form of lists for readers at the beginning of the Method sections of CH articles. Furthermore, slow texts are explicit about procedures and justify them with ample examples. Additionally, the missing of M1, ‘overview’, and M3, ‘the purpose of the study’, in the Method sections of CH articles in the current study, similarly to Peacock’s (2011) investigation, revealed the disciplinary norms in terms of the structure accepted within the relevant discipline which is a way for writers to recognize how to present their methods.

This result is similar to Peacock’s (2011) study in which the rhetorical moves in Biochemistry and Chemistry were found to focus on materials-equipment-procedure. The most frequently utilized moves were M4 and M5, which were completely obligatory moves in the Method sections of AL articles (100%). All the four moves employed in CH Methods were deemed as quasi-obligatory moves (above 50%). M5, ‘procedure’, was the common, frequently used move in both AL as well as CH Methods.

Further analysis of the Method section in these two fields revealed two additional moves in my research. Firstly, the ‘presenting the utilized framework’ move was found in the Method section of AL articles and was considered as an optional move (40%) and secondly, the ‘lab instruments’ move was highlighted in CH articles. This move was deemed as a quasi-obligatory move in the CH Methods (70%). The findings demonstrate that the total number of Method moves (AL=173,

CH=113) and the diversity of moves in AL RAs were higher than those in CH articles. Eight moves were used in the Method sections of AL and five moves were employed by chemists in this section (refer to Table 2). This diversity is also reflected in the variety of headings used for the methodology section in AL articles. However, many very specific subheadings were used by CH RAs which indicate the need to clarify substances and procedures used in the study.

This study contributes to research by bringing greater attention to the Method section as a research area. It affirms an important role of the Method section, which acts as an important connection between two key sections, Introduction and Results, in RAs, without which the results of the study would not be understandable or viable. The rhetorical moves in the Method section serve to inform readers of the research design.

The guidelines developed on the basis of this study's results could be of great value to EAP writers in order to develop their academic writing with the knowledge of the writing differences among the members of discourse communities. The explicit structure of the Methods section could provide helpful classroom discussion concerning the common moves in the Method section and how they function in individual disciplines. In addition, the different ways of handling headings and subheadings used in this section of RAs to give move coherence could direct learners to expectations in disciplinary communities. Finally, we suggest that this cross-disciplinary study could be expanded to cover more disciplines to arrive at more insights into this field of study.

## References

- Averill, B. A. & Eldredge, P. (2015). *General Chemistry: Principles, Patterns, and Applications*. Washington, DC: Saylor Academy.
- Bazerman, C. (1988). *Shaping written knowledge: The genre and activity of the experimental article in science*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Becher, T. (1989). *Academic tribes and territories: Intellectual enquiry and the cultures of disciplines*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Berkenkotter, C. & Huckin, T.N. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication: Cognition/culture/power*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing genre: language use in professional settings*. London: Longman.
- Biber, D., Connor, U., Upton, T. A., & Kanoksilapatham, B. (2007). Introduction to move analysis. In D. Biber, U. Connor, & T. A. Upton (Eds.), *Discourse on the move: Using corpus analysis to describe discourse structure* (pp. 23–41). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Bloor, M. (1998). Variations in the methods sections of research articles across disciplines: The case of fast and slow text. In P. Thompson (Ed.), *Issues in EAP writing, research and instruction* Reading, UK: CALS, The University of Reading, 84-105.
- Brett, P. (1994). A genre analysis of the results section of sociology articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13, 47–59.
- Bruce, N. J. (1983). Rhetorical constraints on information structure in medical research report writing. Paper presented at the ESP in the Arab World Conference, University of Aston, UK, August, 1983.
- Gledhill, C. (2000). The discourse function of collocation in research article introductions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 19(2), 115-135.
- Holmes, R. (1997). Genre analysis and the social sciences: An investigation of the structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16, 321–337.
- Hopkins, T., & Dudley-Evans, T. (1988). A genre-based investigation of the discussion section in articles and dissertations. *English for Specific Purposes*, 7, 113–122.
- Hyland, K. (1996). Talking to the academy: Forms of hedging in science research articles. *Written Communication*, 13(2), 251-281.
- Kanoksilapatham, B., (2005). Rhetorical structure of biochemistry research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*. 24, 269–292.

- Le, Th. N. Ph., & Harrington, M. (2015). Phraseology used to comment on results in the discussion section of applied linguistics quantitative research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 39, 45-61.
- Lim, J. M. H. (2006). Method sections of management research articles: A pedagogically motivated qualitative study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(3), 282-309.
- Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The medical research paper: Structure and functions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16, 119-138.
- Peacock, M. (2011). The structure of the Methods section in research articles across eight disciplines. *Asian ESP Journal*, 7(2), 97-124.
- Samraj, B. (2005). An exploration of a genre set: research article abstracts and introductions in two disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(2), 141-156.
- Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The method section as conceptual epicenter in constructing social science research reports. *Written Communication*, 25, 389-411.
- Soodmand Afshar, H., & Ranjbar, A. (2017). A comparative study of rhetorical moves adopted in research questions and method sections of applied linguistics research articles. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 46-71.
- Stoller, F. & Robinson, M. S. (2013). Chemistry journal articles: An interdisciplinary approach to move analysis with pedagogical aims. *English for Specific Purposes*, 32, 45-57.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres: explorations and applications*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (1994). *Academic writing for graduate students: essential tasks and skills*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, Ch. B. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students*. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.

- Weissberg, R. & Buker, S. (1990). *Writing up research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Williams, I. A. (1999). Results sections of medical research articles: analysis of rhetorical categories for pedagogical purposes. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18, 347–366.
- Yang, R., & Allison, D. (2003). Research articles in applied linguistics: moving from results to conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22, 365–385.
- Zhang, B., & Wannaruk, A. (2016). Rhetorical structure of education research article Methods sections. *The PASSA Journal*, 51(1), 155-184.

## Corpus of the Study

### AL Corpus

- A genre-based investigation of discussion sections of research articles in Dentistry and disciplinary variation [AL-1]
- Novice ESL writers: A longitudinal case-study of the situated academic writing processes of three undergraduates in a TESOL context [AL-2]
- The development of source use by international postgraduate students [AL-3]
- Textual and discoursal resources used in the essay genre in sociology and English [AL-4]
- A non-native student's experience on collaborating with native peers in academic literacy development: A sociopolitical perspective [AL-5]
- English for research purposes at the University of Santiago de Compostela: a survey [AL-6]
- Task requirements, task representation, and self-reported citation functions: An exploratory study of a successful L2 student's writing [AL-7]
- Publishing research in a second language: The case of Sudanese contributors to international medical journals [AL-8]
- Rhetorical structure of biochemistry research articles [AL-9]
- Research article introductions in English for specific purposes: A comparison between Brazilian Portuguese and English [AL-10]
- Two first-year students' strategies for writing from sources: Patchwriting or plagiarism? [AL-11]
- Graduate learners' approaches to genre-analysis tasks: Variations across and within four disciplines [AL-12]
- "English? – Oh, it's just work!": A study of BELF users' perceptions [AL-13]
- Comparative and contrastive observations on scientific titles written in English and Spanish [AL-14]
- Peer review process in medical research publications: Language and content comments [AL-15]
- Legal Problem Question Answer Genre across jurisdictions and cultures [AL-16]

- Developing the Academic Collocation List (ACL) – A corpus-driven and expert-judged approach [AL-17]
- Individualized engagement with genre in academic literacy tasks [AL-18]
- The textual organization of research article introductions in applied linguistics: Variability within a single discipline [AL-19]
- Developing the Academic Collocation List (ACL) – A corpus driven and expert-judged approach [AL-20]

## CH Corpus

- Respiratory Substrates Regulate S-Nitrosylation of Mitochondrial Proteins through a Thiol-Dependent Pathway [CH-1]
- In Silico Identification and in Vitro Validation of Potential Cholestatic Compounds through 3D Ligand-Based Pharmacophore Modeling of BSEP Inhibitors [CH-2]
- Structures of Exocyclic R,R- and S,S-N<sup>6</sup>,N<sup>6</sup>-(2,3-Dihydroxybutan-1,4-diyl)-2'-Deoxyadenosine Adducts Induced by 1,2,3,4-Diepoxybutane [CH-3]
- Biochemical Characterization of Eight Genetic Variants of Human DNA Polymerase  $\kappa$  Involved in Error-Free Bypass across Bulky N<sup>2</sup>-Guanyl DNA Adducts [CH-4]
- Acetaminophen Reactive Intermediates Target Hepatic Thioredoxin Reductase [CH-5]
- Progression of Breast Cancer Cells Was Enhanced by Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals, Triclosan and Octylphenol, via an Estrogen Receptor-Dependent Signaling Pathway in Cellular and Mouse Xenograft Models [CH-6]
- Metabolomic and Genomic Evidence for Compromised Bile Acid Homeostasis by Senecionine, a Hepatotoxic Pyrrolizidine Alkaloid [CH-7]
- Monitoring Cr Intermediates and Reactive Oxygen Species with Fluorescent Probes during Chromate Reduction [CH-8]
- Metabolism of a Representative Oxygenated Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH) Phenanthrene-9,10-quinone in Human Hepatoma (HepG2) Cells [CH-9]
- Dimethylarsinothioyl Glutathione as a Metabolite in Human Multiple Myeloma Cell Lines upon Exposure to Darinaparsin [CH-10]
- Evaluating contamination in the Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* through non-invasive sampling [CH-11]
- Metals in the water, sediment, and tissues of two fish species from different trophic levels in a subtropical Brazilian river [CH-12]
- Stability of arsenic species in hydroponic media and its influence on arsenic uptake and distribution in White mustard (*Sinapis alba* L.) [CH-13]
- Bromate, chlorite, chlorate, haloacetic acids, and trihalomethanes occurrence in indoor swimming pool waters in Italy [CH-14]
- Application of mixed (bimodal) distribution to human health risk assessment of Cu and Ni in drinking water collected by RDT sampling method from a large water supply zone [CH-15]
- Preconcentration of toxic elements in artificial saliva extract of different smokeless tobacco products by dual-cloud point extraction [CH-16]
- Serum seleno-proteins status for colorectal cancer screening explored by data mining techniques - a multidisciplinary pilot study [CH-17]

- Occurrence of arsenic in two large shallow freshwater lakes in China and a comparison to other lakes around the world [CH-18]
- Evaluation of airborne particles at the Alhambra monument in Granada, Spain [CH-19]
- On the use of trace elements in ancient necropolis studies: Overview and ICP-MS application to the case study of Valdaro site, Italy [CH-20]





## **Hotels, Tours, and Tables: A Comprehensive Elective CALL Course for Tourism/Hospitality Majors in Asia**

**Glen Andrew Stewart**

*Bunkyo University, Shonan Campus, Faculty of International Studies, 1100*

*Namegaya, Chigasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan*

### **Biodata**

**Glen Andrew Stewart** has been teaching compulsory and elective English-language CALL courses at the tertiary level in Japan since 2014. His CALL-focused research interests include using CALL courses to improve learners' inter-cultural communicative competence, prepare them for their specific future careers, and motivate them to engage in autonomous learning using CALL-based resources.

Email: [stewartg@shonan.bunkyo.ac.jp](mailto:stewartg@shonan.bunkyo.ac.jp)

### **Abstract**

In this article, I report the results of a study focusing on the implementation of an elective CALL course for tertiary-level learners hoping to work in the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan and abroad. The quite comprehensive course included English-language skill building, inter-cultural communicative competence building, and industry-specific knowledge building. The learners completed role-plays (e.g. checking a guest into a hotel) - and learned relevant inter-cultural information and completed relevant critical-thinking tasks, created a portfolio of English and English resources for their own specific future jobs, and completed an end-of-course simulation. Learners completed an end-of-course questionnaire. Results indicate that, on the whole, the respondents: (1) found several elements of the course to be useful (including the simulation (mean=4.222 (/5), mode=4.000)); (2) perceived themselves to have improved their listening

(mean=6.944 (/10), mode=8.000) and speaking (mean=7.167 (/10), mode=8.000) skills; and (3) would recommend the course to other learners in the same faculty (mean=4.111 (/5), mode=4.000).

**Keywords:** CALL, inter-cultural communicative competence, communication strategies, online tools, tourism, animated videos

## **Introduction**

The number of international tourist arrivals to Asia and the Pacific region (which includes Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Thailand) increased by 9% in 2016 (an increase of 24 million over 2015) (UNWTO, 2017, p. 7). This report also indicates that international tourism in the above countries has been generally increasing year over year since 2010. Looking specifically at Japan, the tourism/hospitality industry is becoming an increasingly important part of the overall Japanese economy (Etzo, 2016; Kawamata & Shiba, 2013). According to the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), the total number of foreign visitors to Japan in 2016 was 24,039,700. Of that total, 292,458 were from the United Kingdom, 505,638 were from countries in Oceania (e.g. Australia and New Zealand), and 1,570,420 were from North America. 20,428,866 were from countries in Asia. These figures would seem to indicate a very large influx of native and non-native speakers of English across that one-year period. Such influxes have been increasing since 2000 (Etzo, 2016), and the fact that the 2020 Tokyo Olympics are fast approaching, there is increased urgency to ensure that university graduates aiming to serve the domestic tourism/hospitality industry are equipped with the knowledge and communication skills that they need to do so. This would also seem to be true for the other Asian countries since the number of international tourist arrivals in the region overall is projected to more than double by 2030 (UNWTO, 2017, p. 15). In addition, given that the large majority of international tourism is actually intraregional tourism (UNWTO, 2017, p. 12), it may be that graduates in all of these countries will need to be equipped to deal mainly with other non-native users of English.

Teachers of elective English-language courses at the tertiary level have more freedom to innovate and can more fully cater to the needs of the intended learners through drawing on the relevant literature and the latest trends of the relevant industry. Elective courses, then, may provide an excellent opportunity for learners to equip themselves with both the knowledge and skills that they

may need once they graduate and to get a taste of the conditions under which they will need to draw on them in the future (if such courses include activities such as simulations).

The elective CALL course investigated in this study was provided at a private university near Tokyo. It was specifically designed to help “International Tourism” and “International Understanding” majors in the Faculty of International Studies to prepare for their future careers in the domestic and international tourism/hospitality industries. The study aimed to elicit a range of data related to the learners’ perceptions of: (1) the usefulness of the course; (2) various elements of the course (e.g. activities, online tools, and materials that were used); and (3) how much they perceived themselves to have improved as a result of taking the course. Though the focus of the study was a course designed specifically for learners in Japan, the design of the course and the results of the study should provide insight into how course designers and teachers in other countries in the region could provide a similar course.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Liberal, Vocational, and International***

Pachmayer, Andereck, and Goodman (2017) recommend the internationalization of tourism curriculums to “give students a global viewpoint and elucidate the connection they will have to make between the local and the global in their careers by instilling in them intercultural competence and cultural awareness” (p. 340). Lyu, Li, and Wang (2016) call for universities to “integrate EL (experiential learning) with traditional teaching activities” (p. 311). They also argue that the task of higher education is: “not only to deliver qualified graduates who will cater to the immediate needs of industry ... it must also create innovators of tomorrow, independent thinkers, and thinkers who are able to ... create the future of the industry” (p. 311). In Japan, improving the quality of tourism is one strategy that the government is using to realize its goal of making Japan a “tourism nation” (Kawamata & Shiba, 2013, p. 22). One potential way to improve the quality of tourism in Japan would seem to be internationalizing English-for-tourism/hospitality courses at universities here and providing a combination of more traditional approaches to tertiary-level education and also practical-skills development opportunities that learners may put to use once they graduate. If they do, learners should graduate having developed in a more balanced way, ready for the opportunities and challenges that they may soon face.

### ***Critical Thinking Skills, Higher-Order Thinking, Collaboration***

Stone, Duffy, Pinckney, and Templeton-Bradley (2017) point out that critical-thinking skills, higher-order thinking, and collaboration are a must for learners who wish to succeed in the tourism/hospitality industry in the future since they will have to deal with significant global challenges (e.g. climate change, peak oil, and terrorism) (p. 80). Opportunities for this kind of skills development have traditionally been the purview of universities. This seems to provide justification for the argument that universities have a significant role to play in helping learners who wish to work in the tourism/hospitality industry to develop the kinds of skills mentioned above.

### ***English-Language Skills***

If the goal of a vocational college is to provide “training and practical skills for a specific occupation” (Lum, 2009, as cited in Lyu, Li, & Wang, 2016, p. 298), then language-skills development may also fit within that purview. It can therefore be argued that a university seeking to help learners to develop the practical skills necessary for working in the tourism/hospitality industry should provide language-skills-development courses. If that is the case, what should such courses focus on? In a recent study regarding Japanese undergraduate students’ perceptions of the importance of English in the tourism and hospitality industry, Bury and Oka (2017) found that learners considered English communication skills, confidence, and listening and speaking skills to be of highest importance (with reading and writing skills also being considered important, but to a lesser extent) (pp. 178, 183). According to Yanata, Ishibashi, and Nomakuchi (2016), Japan is hosting an increasing number of international events, with the country being ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the world for the number of international events hosted in 2014. Zhang and McCornac (2014) point out that, while Japanese souvenir stores have staff who can speak Chinese or Korean, it is “difficult to find someone who can communicate in English well ... travelers from the United States and Europe often have trouble” (p. 115). They also mention that many foreign visitors to Japan have trouble communicating with locals about the complex transportation system. In terms of testing, Hirai (2017) points out the following: “In these tests, while the language content is not very challenging, a broad, often meticulous knowledge of Japanese culture and history is required, as well as some familiarity with the tourism industry.” (p. 13). The tests she refers to are: the National Licensed

Guide, the Travel English Test, and the Tourism English Proficiency Tests (p. 13). It would seem that many learners may have a clear sense of the ways in which they may need to develop their English skills in order to meet the demands of their future jobs. Any course seeking to serve their needs should aim, then, to provide ample opportunities for learners to develop their communication skills, their confidence, their listening and speaking skills, and their ability to have a range of conversations that foreign visitors may seek to engage in as they make their way around the country (whether they are here for travel or some kind of international event). Such a course should also help to increase learners' abilities to give relevant and comprehensive information about the essential aspects of Japanese culture and history (particularly if the learner wishes to become a licensed tour guide in Japan).

### ***Experiential Learning, Flipped Classroom, Educational Technology***

Brown (2007) points out that experiential learning has the power to provide learners with direct and concrete experiences (p. 291). Such experiences are viewed as being important for preparing learners for future roles and performance. Lyu, Li, and Wang (2016) found that, in Chinese vocational colleges and universities, learners enrolled in tourism/hospitality-focused courses considered experiential-learning activities to play a better role in enhancing learning and to be more effective than traditional learning (e.g. lectures). The researchers concluded that this was for three reasons: (1) such activities allowed learners to be “stimulated by something new”; (2) such activities resulted in “better understanding and retention of knowledge”; and (3) some such methods (e.g. guest speakers) give learners an opportunity to “become familiar with the latest news and events in the industry” (p. 305). Davis (2016) points out the benefit of “flipping the classroom” given that most learners may need the most help with the upper levels of Bloom’s taxonomy - specifically, “application, analysis, evaluation, and creation” (p. 229) when they are in class with the teacher. Lee, Sun, Law, and Lee (2016) found that learners may expect “more adoption of most educational software, like simulation and Second Life” (p. 132) (the students were undergraduates in the United States).

Given the above, it may be the case that learners in the Japanese context as well may benefit from a course in which experiential learning plays a role, if not a significant one. There are differences between the two contexts (China and Japan), however. Even so, most learners should see the value

of engaging in a range of practical reality-based in-class activities given how important they consider development of their listening and speaking skills to be. Additionally, such a course should definitely aim to stimulate learners with something new and provide knowledge-building opportunities so that they can become familiar with the latest news and events in the industry. Henderson (2016) provides insight into the rise of the number of Muslim tourists in Japan. Additionally, Japan offers different types of tourism - e.g. “contents tourism” (Seaton & Yamamura, 2014). It is this kind of information that learners would seem to need to be maximally prepared for their future careers. Further, given that such a course may aim to build both knowledge and skills (and perhaps especially skills, but also more knowledge than a regular language course might), it may make sense to “flip the classroom” and have learners do a significant amount of reading at home in order for there to be enough time in class for them to take meaningful part in role-plays, class discussions, and to complete critical-thinking tasks. Finally, given the context, it may also be the case that learners in such a course in Japan may welcome the increased adoption of different educational technology types, especially since, in the case of the current elective course, they will have chosen to take a CALL course (and since inclusion of ALC Press Inc.’s Internet-based application, NetAcademy, in compulsory first-year CALL courses seems to be well received by most learners, at the researcher’s institution at least).

### ***Inter-Cultural Communicative Competence***

It is evident that perhaps more than many other graduates of Japanese universities, those seeking employment in the tourism/hospitality industry should graduate having achieved considerable progress in building their inter-cultural communicative competence. Moeller and Nugent (2014) relate Byram’s (1997) depiction of what a learner should do to build his/her inter-cultural communicative competence: that learner should cultivate “relationships while speaking the foreign language of the other participant”, negotiate “how to effectively communicate so that both individuals’ communicative needs are addressed”, mediate “conversations between those of diverse cultural backgrounds” and continue “to acquire communicative skills in foreign languages not yet studied” (p. 7).

A course aiming to help learners to improve their English-language skills *and* their inter-cultural communicative competence may quickly find itself being overly ambitious. It may be the case that

an additional elective course, which focuses mainly on improving learners' inter-cultural (communicative) competence, could be offered in the same faculty. Therefore, one with a dual focus could instead touch on those aspects which were immediately relevant to the practical communicative skills (e.g. checking a guest into a hotel) of the more skills-focused course. In such a case, the course could include a variety of short, simple activities to help do this. One such activity could involve the learners being asked to complete a role-play in which the customer/guest/patron that they communicate with - among other things - speaks too fast and is afraid of earthquakes. In so doing, the learners will gain experience: (1) negotiating how to effectively communicate based on communicative need (by asking the person to speak more slowly); (2) building knowledge about the similarities and differences between Japanese culture and that of the person in regards to earthquakes; and (3) questioning his/her attitudes about non-Japanese people specifically in regards to this (that is, one should not laugh if one sees a foreign visitor run during an earthquake - the visitor may never have experienced one before!).

## **Justification**

### ***Existing/Previous Courses***

Iwai (2010) sent a survey to hotels, universities, and technical schools in Japan to inquire as to the needs of, and the educational activities taking place within, the hotel industry in Japan. She found that technical schools were providing more ESP (English for Specific Purposes) education for the hotel and tourism/hospitality industry than universities. She also found that universities were offering related courses as electives and that the courses were lasting for one term (which was in contrast to technical schools, which were offering such courses as compulsory courses, and for two terms).

At the researcher's institution, all first-year learners are required to take a number of English-language courses (including CALL courses). These incorporate multiple topics related to the tourism/hospitality industry (e.g. checking into a hotel). However, since the learners are in their first year, the overall aim is to give them brief exposure to a broad range of domestic and international topics both related and unrelated to tourism/hospitality. Given this, learners wishing to further develop their tourism/hospitality-related knowledge must generally seek to do so through their lectures, which are in Japanese. If they wish to further develop their tourism/hospitality-

related English skills, their only recourse may be to seek to take an elective. Below are descriptions of three recent (or recently designed) courses offered at the university or junior-college levels.

Bury (2014) designed an elective course for his institution in Japan and investigated the effects of task-cycling, spaced retrieval, and high-frequency words on learners' self-perceptions of ability and levels of confidence. He had learners read modified authentic texts about international tourist destinations (e.g. Guam and scuba diving, Botswana and safari, Peru and visiting Machu Piccu), use reading strategies, and complete other related tasks. A post-course questionnaire completed by the learners revealed that the learners perceived themselves to have increased their abilities and increased their confidence, most notably with tourism-specific vocabulary.

Amano (2015) designed a hospitality-English course for his junior college in Japan. The course was to be a first-year elective with no pre-requisites. Learners were expected to have TOEIC scores ranging from 210 to 560. He adopted a CLIL (Content-and Language-Integrated Learning) framework since learners would take the course to acquire both skills and industry-specific knowledge.

Bertorelli (2016) reports on a study for first- and second-year university students enrolled in the Department of International Tourism at her institution in Japan (the course did not seem to be an elective). In those classes, learners used authentic materials (i.e. newspaper articles about tourism), were given pronunciation instruction, and engaged in pronunciation and shadowing activities to improve both. A post-course survey completed by the learners revealed that the learners perceived themselves to have improved their pronunciation (including that of key phonemes) and their speaking rhythm, and to have achieved smoother and faster speaking. A majority also indicated wishing to do more pronunciation and shadowing activities the next term.

All three courses would seem to have employed a CLIL framework. They also targeted specific skills to further develop. These were developed in close connection with the texts that were the source of the content of the course. Bury (2014) targeted reading, speaking, vocabulary, and communication skills. Bertorelli (2016) targeted reading, pronunciation, and speaking skills. Amano (2015)'s course drew on "The Language Triptych" (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010) and outlined ways in which learners would acquire "language of learning" (i.e. English needed for the relevant industry), "language for learning" (i.e. English used when learning - e.g. "How do you



spell...?”), and “language through learning” (i.e. English that they may learn, perhaps incidentally, when completing a task with other learners) (pp. 308-309). The current researcher would argue that providing a relatively comprehensive course such as the one proposed by Amano (2015) is needed for faculties in which a fuller range of more tourism/hospitality-focused English-language courses (skills-based and/or content-based) may not be available.

Based on the literature review above, such a course would need to do the following: (1) be internationalized; (2) help learners to improve their tourism/hospitality-industry-specific English-language communication skills, listening skills, and speaking skills, and their confidence; (3) help them to further develop their critical-thinking and higher-order-thinking skills; (4) help them to improve their inter-cultural communicative competence in very practical ways (and also increase their inter-cultural knowledge); (5) incorporate experiential learning activities and appropriate educational technology, and flip the classroom, as needed; and (6) give learners additional opportunities to acquire more industry-related knowledge. Making it a CALL course would allow easy access to materials important to the learning process (e.g. realia) and help to build atmosphere and a sense of realism.

The concern is this: if something is not done to increase the practical skills (and specifically the English-language skills) and knowledge of graduates hoping to work in the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan over the next five years and beyond, then the industry may not be able to meet the challenges posed (e.g. by increasing numbers of native and non-native English-speaking visitors to Japan). Nor may it be able to make the 2020 Tokyo Olympics the success that the country and the world hopes that it will be. The goal of this study is, therefore, to determine what role a more comprehensive elective course like the one outlined above can play in the necessary preparations.

## **Method**

### ***Theoretical Underpinnings***

Cerezo (2015) notes that there have been long-standing calls for theoretical foundations in CALL. The theoretical framework of the current study drew on two areas of the literature - Social-cultural Theory (SCT) and the Interaction Account (IA). In terms of SCT, it was predicted that the learners

would progress (by further organizing and amplifying their higher-order mental functions) as a result of participating in the culturally organized activity that is each class in the course (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2014, p. 221) and through internalization - “the processes through which interpersonal and person-environment interaction form and transform one’s internal mental functions” (p. 221). In terms of IA, it was predicted that learners, during interaction with each other in the L2 classroom or with foreign visitors, will engage in a process of ongoing negotiation and make adjustments as necessary to achieve their communicative goals (Pica, 1991, as cited in, Hubbard & Levy, 2013). What this means for the course in practical terms is this - to accommodate SCT, it means that the course should include demonstrations, opportunities for the learners to imitate the teacher, and opportunities for interaction with higher-ability others; and to accommodate IA, it means that the course should include opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning with the teacher and their classmates, ensuring that they use language, such as “I’m sorry?” and “Could you speak more slowly, please?”, and that they also use gestures, eye contact, and self-correction.

### ***The Context, Course, and Subjects***

The study was conducted at a private university near Tokyo. The learners in the faculty were majoring in either “International Tourism” or “International Understanding”. Most learners were generally aiming to enter the workforce in the tourism/hospitality industry (e.g. as hotel staff or airline ground staff) and in the education industry (e.g. as teachers). A large number of graduates with these majors found employment in industries unrelated to either of these. The course was offered as an elective CALL course for any year level. That is, any learner in their first, second, third or fourth year could take the course. The course was being offered for the first time. In their first year, all learners would be taking/would have taken four compulsory CALL courses featuring ALC Press Inc.’s NetAcademy2 or NetAcademy Next as the resource. However, successful completion of those courses was not, at the time of the study, a prerequisite of taking the elective course. The class met once a week for ninety minutes. A total of twenty-seven learners enrolled in the course, with twenty-six remaining in it for the full fifteen-week course period and completing all necessary assessment items. By far the majority of learners were in their second year.

**Table 1: Number of Learners from Each Year Level Who Completed the Course (Total: 26)**

<b>Year Level</b>	<b>Number of Learners</b>
4	2
3	1
2	23
1	0

### ***Course Design, Content, and Materials***

According to Basturkmen (2010), a course such as the current one (an English course for the tourism/hospitality industry) is an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. The branch of ESP is English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and the sub-branch, English for General Occupational Purposes (EGOP) (p. 6). It is a pre-experience course. The researcher sought to design the course so that it was also a CALL course and so that it met the six requirements listed in the literature review seen earlier. This would mean that the course would be quite similar to the CLIL course outlined by Amano (2015). However, there would be a difference. That difference was the organizing of the current course around eight speaking tasks that the learners would need to complete effectively and efficiently once they graduated. Much of the inter-cultural and industry-specific knowledge building and critical-thinking tasks included would, therefore, center on those tasks.

### ***Needs Analysis***

A basic version of the course syllabus was submitted to the faculty at the beginning of the year. Once the course had started in the spring term of 2017, the researcher conducted a needs analysis to determine how he could customize the course to the needs of the specific cohort taking the course. The eventual updated course syllabus can be seen in Table 3. The needs analysis consisted in part of inquiring as to the future plans of the learners in the course. Table 2 below indicates that a large number of the learners - seventeen out of twenty-four (only twenty-four of the twenty-six learners in the course provided this information) - expressed a desire to work in the tourism/hospitality industry.

**Table 2: Jobs and the Number of Learners Seeking to Do Them (Total: 24)**

<b>Future Job</b>	<b>Number of Learners</b>
Hotel staff member	10
Airport ground staff	1
Tour guide	3
Trading company	1
Restaurant (e.g. waiter)	1
Retail	2
Public servant	1
English teacher	3
Reporter/Journalist	1
Undecided	1

What follows is the course syllabus:

**Table 3: The Course Syllabus**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Contents</b>
1	Course orientation, Distribution of handouts, Explanation of how to use the online tool
2	Introduction of communication strategies/tactics and practice, Speaking pre-check (with learner self-assessment)
3	Information and discussion about the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan and abroad (and how to work abroad)
4	Hotels 1 (Check in, Room service) - Vocabulary, pronunciation review, listening, tactic, speaking, inter-cultural knowledge building, critical-thinking task, writing-task
5	Tours 1 (Schedule, Landmarks) - As above + review
6	Tables 1 (Reservations, Orders, Requests) - As above + review, Readiness Checker 1
7	Review, Self-reflection, Tourism trends mini-lecture and handout (partly homework)

8	Pre-test review, Mid-term test, games
9	Mid-term test feedback, Hotels 2 (Information, Check out) - As above
10	Tours 2 (Japanese culture and history) - As above + review
11	Tables 2 (The Check, Complaints) - As above + review, Readiness Checker 2
12	Global communication skills mini-lectures and tasks - mutual intelligibility, varieties of English, inter-cultural competency, being an inter-cultural investigator, and difficult pronunciation; My future preparation portfolio (set as multiple-class homework)
13	Global communication speaking check with the teacher at the front of the class
14	Simulation preparation, the simulation (with experiential-learning-based self-reflection and planning)
15	Feedback giving, Handout submission, Course evaluation, Research questionnaire

### ***What made it CALL?***

Part of the task of designing the course was deciding to what degree the course would utilize the computers in the CALL classroom. The researcher decided to provide each learner with one four-page, B4-sized handout per class. The handout contained one section for each class step. The following sections were included: attendance taking, review, the topic's goals and learning objectives, introduction of the vocabulary, pronunciation review and practice, listening tasks, the topic's communication strategy/tactic, using the online tool for the current topic, inter-cultural knowledge building, critical thinking, feedback, portfolio completion, and homework. The computers were used, therefore, mainly for the following sections: (1) using the online tool for the current class's topic; (2) inter-cultural knowledge building; and (3) critical thinking (in case they had to look something up).

The online tool consisted of an Internet-based application that the researcher had designed and developed himself. Among other things, it allowed learners to access one or more animated videos for each class's topic. The classroom communication management system in the CALL room where the classes were conducted each week allowed the researcher to randomly match the

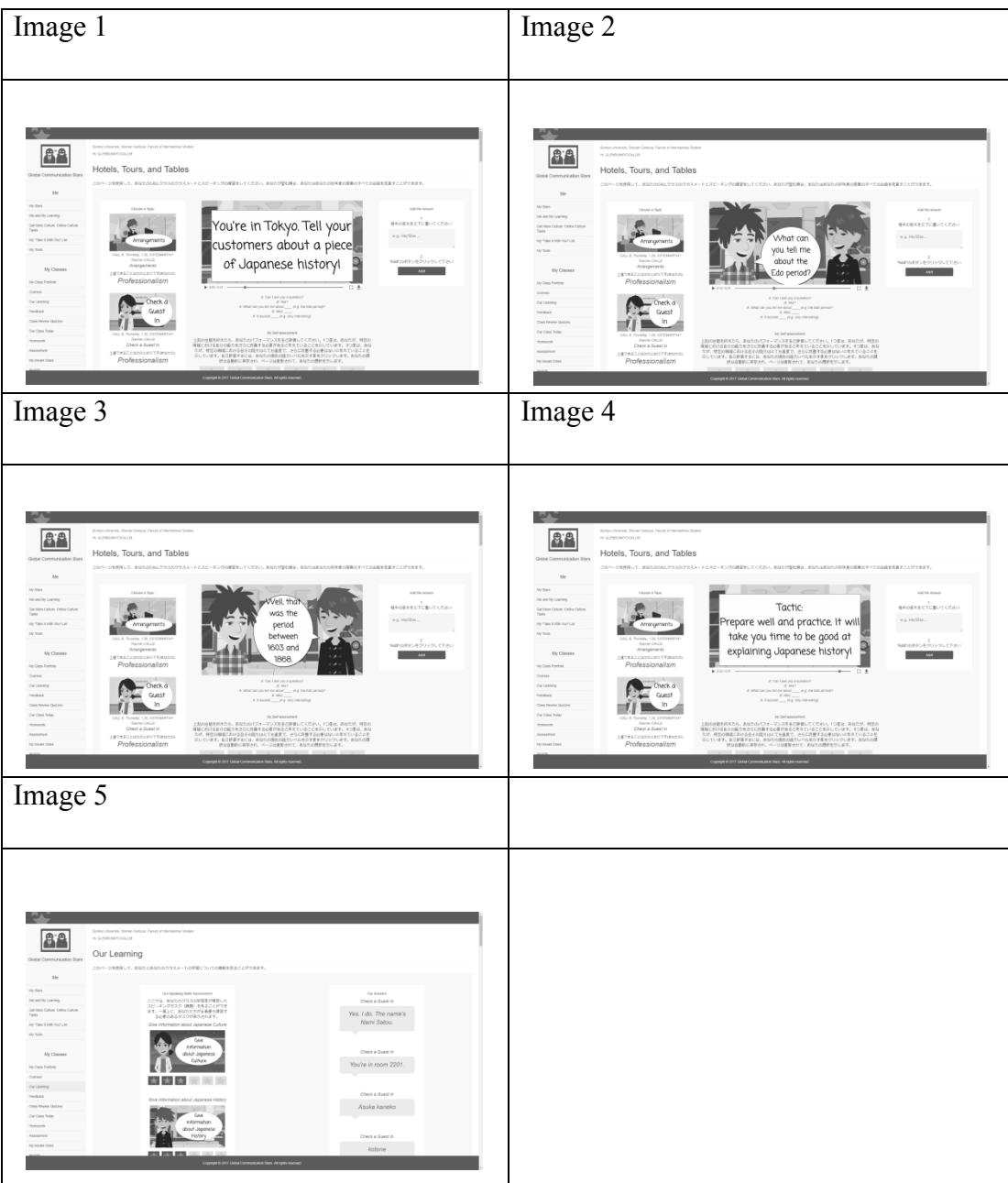
learners. Therefore, the learner sitting at terminal 1, for example, may be randomly matched with the learner at terminal 18. The two learners could then use their headsets (each learner had a pair of headphones with an attached microphone) to complete a speaking task together. Prior experience teaching learners in the same faculty had indicated that the learners found speaking-task completion in this way enjoyable.

### ***Animated vs. Live-Action Videos***

A combination of animated and live-action videos were used across the 15-week course. Animated videos were chosen as the medium through which to provide learners with most of the conversation (i.e. linguistic) content and also information about communication and other strategy-based tactics. Several studies highlight that such videos are being used to facilitate speaking-focused classes (Abdo and Al-Awabdeh, 2017; Niati & Rozimela, 2014; Nuryati, 2016) and also speaking tests (Filice & Sposato, 2017). In Niati & Rozimela (2014), the researchers had learners watch animated videos of fables or fairy tales and then retell one. The experimental group performed significantly better than the control group. The researchers concluded that it was the following that had facilitated the superior performances: (1) the videos had demonstrated facial expressions, pronunciation, stress, and intonation; (2) they had provided backgrounds, costumes, and plots (i.e. they had provided the necessary visual and auditory input). For the animated videos, the current researcher used an Internet-based service called “GoAnimate”. The service allowed the researcher to use a pre-existing set of backgrounds, characters, and objects to create customized animated videos. Although it was possible to add voice over for the characters in the videos, the researcher chose not to given the time and potential expense involved. The animated videos were to be used to demonstrate the conversation the learners would have later in each class (see Images 1-4). As a result, the researcher created each “scene” in the animated videos to have a relevant background, with relevant objects, and two or more characters representing those that would typically take part in the conversation being demonstrated. Given that the course aimed to help learners to build their ability to *serve* customers/guests/patrons in the tourism/hospitality industry in English, the goal of each video was to help the learners to imagine themselves in a specific situation *as the staff member*. Each scene also featured one or more speech bubbles, as necessary. The speech bubbles contained the text of what each character would be expected to say in the situation. Each video consisted of up to 10 scenes in total.

Live-action videos were used at several points throughout the course. They were mainly used to give learners further information about topics relevant to the course. Here are two examples. Example 1: A video had been created by the Australian government and featured two Australian actors (it is presumed) giving information about the Australian working holiday visa program. This video was accessed via the video-sharing website, YouTube. Japanese translations had been added. The learners were shown the video to demonstrate the various sources of information that the Internet may provide - the procedures one must follow to work abroad. Example 2: Another set of videos were also accessed via the video-sharing website, YouTube. They featured individuals from different countries (the USA, the UK, Mexico, South Korea) speaking English as a second or foreign language. This was done to highlight the potential difficulties learners may have dealing professionally with both native and also other non-native speakers of English (and in the case of other non-native speakers, they would be using non-standard and different varieties of English to that of the learners). Overall, the animated videos were used because they allowed the researcher to create a set of videos that would demonstrate the exact set of conversations that he thought should be included in the course. It should be noted, however, that a search for videos on YouTube does reveal that a large number of relevant live-action videos can be found there. Sourcing videos from there could, therefore, serve the needs of other teachers/researchers.

Images 1-4: One animated video used in the course - only four of the eight scenes in the video are shown below; Image 5: on the left side - a display of the average of the learners' self-assessments (e.g. three stars out of six) for different speaking tasks, and on the right side - their typed output of their partners' answers (for the purposes of error correction)



## *Theoretical Underpinnings of the Design of the Animated Videos*

The animated videos were designed with the following in mind: (1) they should provide the learner with contextual information since lower-level learners draw on this to activate the correct schemas - learners do this when they listen and read (Ellis, 2003; Oxford, 2011); (2) they should clearly state the task and demonstrate the content and flow of the conversation with the emphasis being on meaning, as is done in task-based language teaching (Willis & Willis, 2007); (3) the language used in the conversation should be of the appropriate situation dialect (in this case, register) based



on the context and task (see e.g. Fromkin, Rodman, Hyams, Collins, Amberber, & Harvey, 2009); (4) the final scene should feature a strategy-based tactic in the hope that the learners will take it and use it to maximize their success at having the conversation (these could be communication strategies, speech-act strategies, or language-learning strategies, such as meta-cognitive, cognitive, meta-affective, and affective strategies) (see e.g. Oxford, 2011).

An animated video, such as the one featured here (in Images 1-4), was used in the following way: First, the content of the conversation in the video was used for a corresponding pre-speaking listening task. To do this, the learners used their handouts only (i.e. the computer screens were locked and they could not see any content). Contextual information was provided. They were able to listen twice. They took notes. They then answered comprehension questions. Generally, learners performed a listening task for two different conversations (both of which they would later use for the speaking tasks). Second, the learners were able to access their computers and use the videos to complete the speaking tasks with two random partners, as described earlier. As mentioned, the learners did not complete the conversations face to face. Instead, the focus was on listening carefully and relying on verbal communication only, as well as use of communication strategy-based tactics, like confirmation and clarification. No Japanese was to be used. In future classes (pre-simulation), the learners reviewed the conversations face to face.

### ***A Class-by-Class Guide (Please refer back to the course syllabus)***

**Classes 1-3:** In class one, the relevant orientation information and materials were given. In class two, the learners imagined that they were staff members of different companies in the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan. The researcher then took on the role of a customer/guest/patron and made requests, and so on. The learners had to then verbally respond and try to bring the conversation to a successful close. The learners then self-assessed their performance. This was done to encourage them to focus their study efforts going forward. In class three, the learners were provided with a general overview of the tourism/hospitality industry in Japan and abroad, during which they were given the latest information about the number of tourists who were coming to Japan (i.e. that there had been more foreign visitors to Japan in the previous year than ever before), where they were from (e.g. Asia), and also what learners would have to do to work abroad (e.g. in Australia).

**Classes 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11:** In classes four, five, six, nine, ten, and eleven, the learners took the main skills-based classes, as outlined earlier. In regards to speaking, in the class entitled “Hotels 1”, for example, they practiced conversations for both checking a guest in and taking room-service orders. In classes six and eleven, the learners were given a kind of quiz for each of the preceding three classes (a “readiness checker”) (see below). In class seven, the learners were provided with update-to-date information related to tourism/hospitality industry trends. This included information about the popularity of travel among millennials, different kinds of tourism (e.g. “culinary tourism”), boutique hotels, the increased popularity of co-living while on vacation, and “smart” hotel rooms. The learners were then asked to reflect about themselves and Japan and how the information informed their preparations for their own future careers.

**Classes 12-15:** In class twelve, the learners were provided with information, and they also completed tasks, about what they would need to do to be prepared for successful communication around the globe. They were reminded, for example, that the goal of communication was mutual intelligibility (see the syllabus for details). The learners were also assigned multiple-week homework (see below). In class thirteen, the learners did a kind of speaking test with the researcher. They did this in pairs. This consisted of the researcher giving the learners a situation and a task and having them complete the task. The two learners did this individually at times and also together at times. They also used the “Global Communication Speaking Check” handout and demonstrated how they would repair communication breakdown in a number of inter-cultural situations. They then returned to their desks and self-reflect. This speaking check was the counterpart to the one the learners did in class two. During self-reflection, it was hoped that the learners noticed some improvement between the two speaking checks. In class fourteen, the learners were taken to a non-CALL classroom and a simulation was conducted (see below). In class fifteen, the learners were given feedback about various aspects of their performance. They also submitted all necessary handouts, and filled out the course evaluation and the research questionnaire.

### ***Writing Tasks***

For three of the skill-based classes, the learners were assigned a writing task for homework. One such task was: “The hotel has received this email from a recent guest who has lost an item. Please

respond.” The learners’ completion of these was assessed and feedback was given. According to Ellis (2003), “authenticity concerns whether a task needs to correspond to some real-world activity, i.e. achieve situational authenticity” (p. 6). The current researcher would argue that, given the goals of the course and those of the learners, it should include as many authentic tasks as possible. This is mainly because their language-learning goals for this specific course are so specific and so connected to future real-world outcomes.

### ***Readiness Checkers***

As Harmer (2007) points out, learners benefit from repetition at spaced intervals. The researcher therefore decided to create a three-page, B4-sized handout for the learners to use to review the core vocabulary and grammar of each skills-focused class. To use this, the learners listened as the researcher dictated the six most important words for the specific class the checker was for and wrote them on the handout (e.g. Hotels 1 - “check a hotel guest in”). They then saw multiple prompts on the same page and wrote all of the English that they may need when serving a customer/guest/patron in that situation (e.g. “May I help you?” and “You’re in room 2001. Here’s your key card. We hope that you have a lovely stay.”). They used the one handout to do this for the three preceding classes (i.e. Hotels 1, Tours 1, and Tables 1). Different to a quiz, these readiness checkers were designed for the learners to do as many times as they wished. An electronic version of the handouts as well as an audio recording of the dictation component was sent to the learners by email. In the email, the learners were informed that they could practice as many times as they liked at home. They were also informed that they would submit their best attempts at the end of the course.

### ***My Future Preparation Portfolio***

Dornyei (2001) recommends that teachers seeking to bolster learners’ motivation should point out the instrumental value of what the learners are being taught. Further, as Todaka (2017) has found, learners are able to maintain their motivation if it is they, themselves, who determine the reasons for their English study. Dornyei et al. (2014) introduce the novel construct of “directed motivational current”. They describe it as “an intense motivational drive which is capable of both stimulating and supporting long-term behavior” (p. 9) and it “unfolds over time and impacts its participants in a significant way” (p. 11). Given this, in class twelve, the learners were assigned

multiple-week homework. To complete it, they would use a four-page, B4-size handout which they would use to self-reflect about their own futures and prepare for it. The main focus was English. Using this handout, they did the following: (1) they wrote the job that they would likely seek to do in the future (e.g. flight attendant); (2) they wrote a collection of English vocabulary items related to that job that they thought they would need to do the job successfully (with a view to getting help from the researcher about how to pronounce the words, use them properly, and so on) (e.g. cabin, pilot, overhead bin); (3) they wrote three conversation task names and the English that they would need to complete the tasks (e.g. Welcome passengers on board - “Hello!” and “Do you have your boarding pass?”); (4) they self-reflect and wrote about what communication strategy-based tactics would be useful to them in the future given the job that they were likely to do (e.g. FP - formality and politeness - “I will work in the service industry, so...”); (5) they did research online and wrote the names of three websites that would be useful to them as they prepared for their futures and why each one was or looked useful (e.g. [englishfortourguides.com](http://englishfortourguides.com)); and (6) they self-reflect and wrote one English-related problem that they thought they may have when doing their job in the future and how they would solve it. The main motivation for having learners complete this was the fact that some of the learners had indicated *not* wanting to work in the tourism/hospitality industry. Therefore, to better serve the needs of such learners, the researcher decided to offer this homework. This could be seen to provide a form of differentiated learning (see e.g. Watson & Agawa, 2011). It was hoped that a task such as this - something so self focused - would motivate learners both over the short and long term to prepare for their own futures.

### ***The Simulation***

This consisted of the learners taking part in a series of situation-based, task-based role-plays (see Nakatani, 1997). This was a “content-full” simulation (Szumal, 2000), specifically designed to give learners the opportunity to experience completing speaking tasks that they were likely to once they started their careers. As mentioned above, this was conducted in class fourteen. It consisted of the researcher placing photos depicting different workplaces that the learners may find themselves in after they graduate around a non-CALL classroom. The learners were then given a list of tasks for each location and fifteen minutes to complete as many tasks as possible. The learners were asked to complete the different tasks with different classmates. After the fifteen-

minute period had ended, the learners sat down at a desk and self-reflected (see Table 5). Part of this process involved the learners making a plan for the next fifteen-minute period. After self-reflection and planning, the learners once again completed/repeated as many of the tasks as they could in the second and final fifteen-minute period. They then self-reflected and planned for the future.

**Table 4: An Example Simulation Task**

Place	Task	Result (Take notes - e.g. room number, etc.)
Hotel	There's a guest at your hotel. Check the guest in.	

**Table 5: Part of the Handout Used by Learners During the Simulation**

My Experiential Learning			
		The first 15 minutes	The second 15 minutes
1.	What happened?		
2.	How was it? What was good? What was not so good?		
3.	Why did those good and bad things happen?		
4.	What will you do differently next time? Make a plan!		

### ***The Questionnaire***

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher (though some questions and response items on the final page had been drawn from the questionnaire developed by Bury (2014)). It had three main purposes. The first was to elicit data related to biography (e.g. gender), major, educational history, and the learner's post-graduation plans for employment. For this, ten closed-ended questions (nominal scales) and one open-ended question ("Why did you choose to take this course?") were used. The second was to elicit data related to his/her impressions of the various aspects of the course - the animated videos, the "readiness checkers", the simulation, if he/she thought the course actually needed to be a CALL course, and if he/she would recommend the course to other learners in the same faculty. For this, a five-point Likert scale was used. The third was to ascertain the degree to which the learner felt that he/she had improved his/her English (including his/her listening skills, speaking skills, and tourism/hospitality-related vocabulary), his/her inter-cultural knowledge, and his/her critical-thinking skills as a result of taking the course. Again, a Likert scale was used. This one, however, was a ten-point scale given that the learners were self-assessing their improvement and a five-point scale may not have offered enough options. In two different places, the learner was provided with a box into which he/she could write any additional comments. The questionnaire was written in English and translated into Japanese by a professional translator. The English and the Japanese were checked to make sure they matched. The questionnaire was then piloted and small updates made.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

At the end of the course, the learners were informed that their teacher (the researcher) was conducting research and they were then asked to consider taking part. Learner completion of the questionnaire was, therefore, voluntary. The learners were informed that their participation would also be anonymous and strictly confidential. Any learners who wished to take part were presented with an informed consent form and were asked to sign and submit it.

### ***Data Analysis***

The statistical program JASP was chosen for the data analysis (<https://jasp-stats.org/>). The data was initially entered into a spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel). The data was then cleaned. There were

a total of nineteen skipped questions (this represents missing data). This constituted just two percent of the total (684). It was therefore determined that the missing data could be substituted with the average for each variable (see Creswell, 2012). This was done manually by the researcher (directly into the data sheet). To determine the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the researcher used JASP to calculate Cronbach's alpha for items on the questionnaire which one could expect to correlate. This was to determine the degree of consistency among different key items on it (Creswell, 2012). According to Kline (2000), a coefficient of .7 could be considered acceptable (if one was trying to determine the internal consistency of an overall test). It was decided to set this as the minimum acceptable coefficient for any questionnaire items expected to correlate. The researcher then used the same software to create correlation matrices for the same items. Doing so enabled him to determine convergent and divergent validity. It should be noted that, given the nature of the questionnaire, it was not expected that it would have high overall internal consistency. This was because the questionnaire asked about a number of unconnected elements of the course.

The researcher then used JASP to compile the various descriptive statistics. Independent samples t-tests were then conducted for relevant items, as well as tests of normality (Shapiro-Wilk) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's) for any which produced significant differences. For the t-tests, the assumptions of homogeneity held, but those of normality were violated. Therefore, the researcher used the Mann-Whitney t-test, not the Student's t-test.

## Results

**Table 6: Reliability and Convergent Validity**

<i>Live-action videos are more useful than animated videos for understanding how a conversation should flow. and It would be better to have live-action videos and animated videos.</i>	<i>Speaking skills and communication skills</i>	<i>Listening confidence and listening improvement</i>
Cronbach's alpha: 0.713	Cronbach's alpha: 0.818	Cronbach's alpha: 0.882

Pearson's $r = 0.573$	Pearson's $r = 0.692$	Pearson's $r = 0.789$
P-value = 0.013	P-value = 0.001	P-value = <0.001

There would seem to be somewhat strong consistency among these items, which is to be expected. These same items would also seem to have medium to high correlation. Given this, it is possible to be reasonably confident that these key items of the questionnaire have adequate internal consistency and that they also add to the convergent validity of the questionnaire.

### ***Who responded to the questionnaire?***

Of the twenty-six remaining learners in the course, nineteen completed questionnaires. One questionnaire could not be used since only one of the four pages had been completed. That left a total of eighteen respondents.

**Table 7: Data for Gender, Major, and Future Plans**

Gender	Major		Planning to Work in the Tourism/Hospitality Industry in the Future		
Male	6	International Tourism	9	Yes	9
Female	12	International Understanding	9	No	7

Twice as many female learners completed the questionnaire as male learners. This may reflect the somewhat negative attitudes of some of the male learners in the class.

### ***What level were the respondents?***

On the questionnaire, the learners were asked to choose from four choices - “beginner” (1), “high beginner” (2), “intermediate” (3), and “advanced” (4). The mean was 2.333 (/4). This would indicate that, on the whole, the respondents considered themselves to be between the high beginner and immediate levels.



The following table provides descriptive statistics for the items on the questionnaire.

**Table 8. Descriptive Statistics**

		Mean	Mode	Standard Deviation
“Is your motivation for English study high?”		3.722 (/4)	4.000	0.6691
“The readiness checkers were useful for remembering the important vocabulary and expressions of the course.”		4.222 (/5)	4.000	0.8085
“I feel that the simulation was useful preparation for my future.”		4.222 (/5)	4.000	0.8085
“How much do you think joining this course has improved your...?”	Listening skills	6.944 (/10)	8.000	1.514
	Speaking skills	7.167 (/10)	8.000	1.689
	Use of communication strategies	6.611 (/10)	6.000	1.720
“I have more confidence in my communication skills now because I did the simulation.”		3.167 (/5)	3.000	0.7071
“Live-action videos are more useful than animated videos for understanding how a conversation should flow.”		4.056 (/5)	4.000	0.8024
“It would be better to have live-action videos <i>and</i> animated videos.”		4.167 (/5)	4.000	0.6183

“I recommend that the teacher continue to use animated videos for this course.”	4.222 (/5)	4.000	0.8085
“Animated videos are more interesting than still pictures or photos.”	4.056 (/5)	5.000	0.8726
“It was better that this was a CALL course than not.”	4.278 (/5)	4.000	0.8264
“I (will) recommend this course to other learners in my faculty.”	4.111 (/5)	4.000	0.8324

The data seems to indicate that “International Tourism” majors were more likely to recommend the course than “International Understanding” majors. Looking at Table 9, we can see that a significant difference was found based on major type ( $p = 0.023$ ).

**Table 9: Independent Samples T-Test (Mann-Whitney) and Descriptives - “I (will) recommend this course to other learners in my faculty.”**

	W	p	Rank-Biserial Correlation		
I (will) recommend this course to other learners in my faculty.	64.50	0.023	0.593		
	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE
	1	9	4.556	0.527	0.176
	2	9	3.667	0.866	0.289

**Table 10: Perceived Effect of the Course on Skill and Confidence**

	Perceived effect of the course on skill	Perceived effect of the course on confidence
Mean	6.704	6.510

	Perceived effect of the course on skill	Perceived effect of the course on confidence
Median	6.670	6.670
Mode	6.670	6.670
Std. Deviation	1.173	1.027

To summarize the above: (1) Table 8 shows that the majority of respondents indicated: being highly motivated; that they could recommend the course to other learners in the same faculty; that the course should remain a CALL course; that animated videos should continue to be used (perhaps preferably in combination with live-action videos); and that they perceived themselves to have improved their speaking and listening skills more than their ability to use communication strategies; (2) the table also shows that the respondents considered live-action videos to be superior to animated videos in their ability to facilitate the respondents' understanding of how a conversation should flow (i.e. how the discourse should start, the turns that each speaker should take, and how it should finish; the respondents may also have considered paralinguistic cues, such as gestures, here); (3) the table additionally shows that a majority of the respondents indicated that both the readiness checkers and the simulation were useful, but that the respondents were also uncertain that their doing the simulation made them feel more confident; and (4) Table 10 shows that the respondents indicated a *slightly* higher perceived effect on their skills (6.704) than their confidence (6.510).

## Discussion

The most important findings will now be discussed.

### *Like a professional school course?*

In the final comments box on the questionnaire, one respondent wrote:

*"I think that class is the same as a professional school's. I'm happy to take the class and it's very useful."*

English-language classes are skills based (i.e. the focus of the teacher as facilitator is on encouraging the further development of the learners' language skills). The comment above may indicate a desire for more of such classes since they may allow learners to further develop their communication skills in preparation for their future jobs. The above would seem to confirm the results found by Bury and Oka (2017) regarding Japanese undergraduate students' perceptions of the importance of English in the tourism and hospitality industry. Further, it would seem to speak to the kind of "vocalization of higher education" in the field of tourism/hospitality that has been happening in China and elsewhere, and it may indicate that learners may be open to such changes. Recall that Iwai (2010) sent a survey to hotels, universities, and technical schools in Japan to inquire as to the needs of, and the educational activities taking place within, the hotel industry in Japan. Only 23.4% of the responding hotels indicated that they were offering English classes. If a learner finds him/herself working at a hotel that does not offer such classes and he/she feels the need to further improve, he/she may be forced to cover the cost of classes elsewhere, and such costs can be considerable. This may bolster the argument for having more tourism/ hospitality-focused English-language skill-building courses at the tertiary level in Japan.

### ***The Course Was Useful***

The majority of the respondents would recommend the course to other learners in the same faculty. Though further research is needed, this may lend support for the comments made in the paragraph above. As detected during the course itself, the data also reveals that it was "International Tourism" majors who were more likely to recommend the course. This makes sense given that the focus of the course was on skill- and knowledge-building for the tourism/hospitality industry. The result for the current course was a mean of 4.111, a mode of 4.000 (/5), and standard deviation of 0.8324. This would seem to be comparable with the findings of Bury (2014). He reported a mean of 6.79 and a mode of 7.000 (/10) for an item on his questionnaire which asked if respondents would recommend the course to their friends.

The respondents in the current course indicated that two of the central elements of the course were useful (i.e. the "readiness checkers" and the simulation). *"Thanks to readiness checkers, I could practice listening, speaking... I think it's great."*

It would seem that the “readiness checkers” were useful not only for their intended purpose (i.e. for remembering the vocabulary and expressions of the course). Given all of the above, one can conclude that the course was of use to the learners as they prepared for their futures. That said, both the readiness checkers and the simulation need further development and follow-up research is needed to determine the effectiveness of these two tools.

### ***The Simulation May Have Shocked***

When asked if the simulation was useful preparation for their futures, the mean was 4.222 (/5). However, when asked if they felt more confident in their communication skills because they had done the simulation, the mean was 3.167 (/5). A mean of 3.167 is very close to the “uncertain” value (i.e. 3). It would seem, then, that the learners may have found the simulation to be quite a shock, perhaps because the majority of them were only in their second year (and as can be recalled, they had not prepared that well). The benefit of having done the simulation and prepared a four-page portfolio of English and English resources for their specific futures is that it may motivate them to work harder autonomously going forward.

Wang and Sun (2014) surveyed 126 fourth-year students at three universities in Taiwan and 20 hotel employees from three five-star hotels in Taiwan. Seventy-four percent of the employees reported having 5-10 years of work experience. They had the respondents self-rate their industry-related listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills (e.g. “I can introduce facilities in the hotel to customers in English.” (p. 113)). The means for the hotel employees on all fifty-two items on the survey were significantly higher than those for the university students. The researchers suggested that this may have indicated that either the hotels hired generally more highly skilled staff or they did not, and instead, on-the-job experience had helped to further develop their skills once they had started. Whatever the case, it would seem that learners hoping to be employed by hotels like those of the employees in the study may need generally higher English-language skills. Such improvement could happen on the job. However, having skills approaching those of existing employees could help learners during the job-hunting process. The implications for the current course may be that a similar survey could be completed by staff already working in the industry in Japan. Future learners of the course could then also complete it. They could then be shown the

difference in means between themselves and the existing staff in the industry. That may serve to further motivate them to work harder autonomously in preparation for job hunting.

When having learners complete a dialog or role play for assessment purposes, Brooks (2008) recommends that teachers video-tape the learners so that they may take the task more seriously and practice in advance. Such a suggestion may prove useful for the simulation of the current course. If the learners practice in advance and then video record their best performance, it may serve to maximize their accuracy and therefore their sense of self-efficacy. That said, Ellis (2003) reminds us that doing this may limit the representativeness of the task and the validity of the result. It is, after all, a simulation. Teachers will need to take this into consideration if they decide to make use of this. It may be useful to keep in mind one tactic that Dornyei (2001) has suggested - if you would like to help maintain/build learners' motivation, give them opportunities to experience success. For teachers not wishing to videotape, it may also help to categorize simulation tasks into levels and allow the learners to complete them one by one, progressively moving up and onto the more challenging tasks. They may therefore experience success with those on the lower levels first, which may have benefits for self-efficacy and motivation.

### ***The Learners Improved***

As already mentioned, a recent study by Bertorelli (2016) had learners read news articles related to tourism and also complete pronunciation and shadowing activities. She reported that: first-year learners agreed or strongly agreed that they were speaking more smoothly (57% and 71%) and also faster (53% and 55%) as a result of having taken the course; and second-year learners agreed or strongly agreed that they were speaking more smoothly (60%, 57%, 48%) and also faster (55%, 50%, 40%) for the same reason. The respondents in the current study indicated improvement in their listening (6.944 (/10), mode=8.000) and slightly more improvement in their speaking (7.167 (/10), mode=8.000) skills (the results for speaking improvement would seem to be comparable to those found by Bertorelli (2016)). The slightly higher mean for speaking may reflect the fact that there was more of an emphasis on speaking-skills development across the course. Despite reasonably positive respondent perceptions of the extent to which they had improved, more listening and speaking tasks and assessment items will be included in future iterations of the course (with perhaps some of it being done autonomously). Helping learners to achieve real improvement

in their listening and speaking was one of the main goals of the course. Obviously, however, achieving that across a four-month, 15-week course is somewhat unrealistic, but certainly more can be done.

What should also be considered is the effect the simulation may have had on respondents' perceptions of how much improvement in listening and speaking they had achieved. As above, without the simulation, respondent perceptions may have been more positive. Looking at Table 10, we can see that the perceived effect on the respondents' skills was higher than that on their confidence. It may be the case that it was the simulation that in part brought about such a result. By doing the simulation, they were reminded of how much work they still had left ahead of them. Given the centrality of learner perceptions of their own competence/proficiency to their putting effort into improving (see e.g. Otoshi & Heffernan, 2011) and their willingness to communicate (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), it is incumbent upon teachers to provide appropriate feedback in situations like this. Thinking again of the example drawn from Zhang and McCornac (2014), there is a need to help learners to get to the point where they will be able to provide the kind of verbal assistance that foreign visitors from China and South Korea seem to benefit from in their own native languages. Further, enabling learners to provide verbal assistance during international events in Japan (see Yanata, Ishibashi, & Nomakuchi, 2016) and giving information about Japan culture and history verbally (see Hirai, 2017) should also be one of the highest priorities. As always, the learners themselves need to take on more of the responsibility themselves. One idea may be for the teacher to give a short presentation at the beginning of term which clearly shows why the learners must improve their English to add a sense of importance and urgency to the course goals. Further at the end of term, he/she could do the same, this time highlighting progress achieved by the learners.

### ***More of a Focus on Communication Strategies Is Needed***

Each tourism/hospitality topic (e.g. checking a hotel guest in) included information about what communication strategy-based tactics may be useful for the situation. The learners were then encouraged to use those during speaking task completion for the topic. Later in the term, the learners completed a kind of speaking test (week 13) during which they had to demonstrate successful use of such tactics. Their multiple-week homework also had a section asking them to

predict what specific tactics they would need for their own future jobs and why. That said, the respondents indicated less improvement with this than with listening and speaking (6.611 (/10)). Clearly, in future courses, there should be more emphasis on helping learners to further develop their ability to use such tactics. This is especially the case since, as previously reported, the large majority of international tourism is intraregional. Therefore, graduates in Japan are going to need to be able to use communication strategy-based tactics to facilitate successful communication with other non-native users of English from other countries in Asia. Given the different varieties of English that are being used within the region, it may be that such tactics will prove to be *essential* to such attempts at communication.

### ***It Should Continue to Be a CALL Course***

The findings would seem to confirm that the course should continue to be taught as a CALL course. As mentioned earlier, Lee, Sun, Law, and Lee (2016) found that their tertiary-level students in the United States expected more adoption of more educational technology. The results of the current study may reflect a similar expectation, at least among the respondents. It may be the case that a CALL classroom allows the learners to do things which they cannot in a non-CALL classroom. It may also be because they indicated that animated videos were more compelling than still pictures or photos, though this was a general question since no still pictures or photos were featured in the course.

### ***A Combination of Live-Action and Animated Videos Should Be Used***

The learners indicated that live-action videos are more useful for understanding how a conversation flows than animated videos are. The problem, of course, is that it is far easier and far less expensive to create an animated video with multiple scenes and speech bubbles than to video record each different conversation that one wants to include in a course using a team of amateur/professional actors (in the case that an existing commercial product cannot be sourced). Additionally, one may think of additional ideas for conversations to include in the course and it is not necessarily feasible to bring such a team back together at short notice and do more recording. Given this, the most realistic option may be to use both types of videos to complement each other. This is especially the case since the respondents indicated being in favor of the course continuing to feature animated videos (4.222 (/5)), to whatever extent.



### *Too Comprehensive?*

It seems questionable that everything that a faculty may want to help learners to achieve could be achieved by providing them with compulsory first-year English-language skill-building courses and then through a teacher offering a single, one-term elective course, like the one provided here (in some cases, learners may be required to take/offered additional English-language skill-building courses in their second and third years which may not have a tourism/hospitality focus). The “vocalization of higher education” - if it is desirable in this case - can also be achieved in part with the addition of more tourism/hospitality-focused English-language skill-building courses, such as those offered by Bury (2014) and Bertorelli (2016). It can also be achieved in part by ensuring that the industry-related lectures that the learners take in Japanese cover industry-specific background information and also the latest news and events and/or incorporate experiential-learning activities. That said, all texts given to the learners in Japanese in the current course were also provided in English (e.g. the latest information about trends in tourism, like boutique hotels). Though not helping to make the course content-based, it did add an element of additional English study beyond the focus on skills development. During the course, when asked about such materials, the learners indicated that they were interesting and useful and that they were not obtaining that kind of information from other courses in the faculty. Given this, and respondent perceptions of the course overall, it may be that such a comprehensive course offered over one or more terms could serve the needs of learners, especially if it is not possible for the faculty to offer a fuller-range of tourism/hospitality-focused English-language skill-building courses.

In future courses, the researcher intends to ask the learners specifically about their perceptions of the difficulty level of the course. That said, a course that is generally perceived to be too difficult is probably not one that respondents on the whole would recommend to other learners in the same faculty. Therefore, it may be safe to assume that this course was not overwhelming, at least for the respondents - and this is significant given that they had, on the whole, indicated considering themselves to be *between the high beginner and immediate levels*. Even so, this will be an ongoing issue as falling enrollment numbers Japan wide results in learners with lower levels of English proficiency being accepted into courses that may have formerly catered specifically to higher-proficiency learners.

Yoshida and Morikoshi (2011) have developed a three-course hospitality and tourism program for a two-year junior college in Japan. The program offers the “Internship Program” (learners travel to Hokkaido and spend time staying and working in a hotel), “Introduction to Hospitality” (learners watch a series of guest lectures by experts in or related to the field of hospitality (and the learners take two field trips to explore tourism resources)), and “Hospitality and Tourism” (a content-based English class). Evaluations for the course “Introduction to Hospitality” indicated very positive feedback from the learners. The four courses/proposed courses referred to in this article - Yoshida and Morikoshi (2011), Bury (2014), Amano (2015), and Bertorelli (2016) - were CLIL/content-based courses. Helping learners to achieve progress at improving their tourism/hospitality-industry-specific English-language skills in such courses is possible, and two of the studies above have demonstrated this. However, at this juncture, it is essential that any course with such an aim incorporate a significant amount of function-based skill building (e.g. checking a guest into a hotel). That is, it is essential for learners to engage in tasks in class which have them prepare for real-world communicative tasks. Given Yoshida and Morikoshi’s (2011) comments regarding the need for institutions to offer courses which allow learners “to learn practical intercultural skills” (p. 21), it is presumed that the content-based English class does incorporate a significant amount of such skill building (or that may be covered by a future, yet-to-be-announced course). It would certainly seem to be the case that all four of these courses - and the current one - can be drawn on by other course designers/teachers wishing to offer their own tourism/hospitality-industry-specific courses. An initial task would be to do a needs analysis based on context, major, and cohort to determine what combination of elements could best serve one’s own institution and learners.

### ***Post-Course Evaluation***

Though determining the pedagogical effectiveness of the course was beyond the scope of this study, it is helpful to reflect on it to determine its strong and weak points.

**Table 11: The strong and weak points of the course**

Area	Literature support	Reason
CLIL	See: Amano (2015),	(+) The course had a CLIL framework to a certain extent. Tourism/hospitality-industry-related content was taught

	Coyle, Hood, & Marsh (2010)	through English (albeit, with Japanese- language support, where needed). Such information updated learners on the latest tourism trends, for example. Learners were also given some tasks requiring them to solve problems using English resources on the Internet.
		(-) The framework of the course could be updated to provide more of a balance of content and language in a way similar to that of the course in Amano (2015). See page 304. Learners would benefit from acquiring more of the background industry knowledge (e.g. the concept of tourism/hospitality) through English. (Skill and knowledge building related to interacting with people from other cultures will be left to another course being offered in the same faculty, however.)
Constructivism	See: Schcolnik, Kol, & Abarbanel (2006)	(+) Learners were given opportunities to construct new knowledge about topics related to their futures (e.g. through completing the speaking tasks and the simulation - both forms of experiential learning). At different points in the course, they were also able to make choices about what to practice. In addition, they did research about the English that they would need for their future jobs and created the “My Future Preparation Portfolio”.
		(-) Additional pre-study schema activation could have been included, however.
Interactional	See: Fujii, Ziegler, &	(+) Near the beginning of term, the learners were taught about communication strategy-related tactics, such as confirmation and clarification. When they completed the speaking tasks (e.g. checking a guest into a hotel) with different partners later in the course, they could have used such tactics to elicit interactional modifications. In addition, their knowledge of what to say and when was assessed in the mid-term test in class 8, and their ability to

modifications	Mackey (2016)	<p>modify and elicit modifications was assessed in class 13.</p> <p>(-) There is no recorded evidence of them engaging in interaction modifications when completing the speaking tasks, however. To remedy this, the researcher will add such questions as, “I’m sorry, what do you mean?”, to the relevant section of the application. He will also assess learners’ interactional modifications during speaking-task completion in each class that they do them.</p>
Inter-cultural communicative competence	See: Byram (1997)	<p>(+) At multiple points across the course, the learners were provided with information which may have led to increases in their inter-cultural knowledge (e.g. in each speaking-focused class (e.g. classes 4, 5, and 6), and through the tourism trends mini-lecture and handout, and the global communication mini-lectures in class 12. They also completed specific tasks to help with this (e.g. the critical-thinking tasks). In addition, such retention of such knowledge was assessed in the mid-term test in class 8, and their ability to modify and elicit modifications (also for inter-cultural purposes) was assessed in class 13.</p> <p>(-) There needs to be more evidence of progress in this area. The researcher will aim to achieve this by quizzing more and also adding an additional section relevant to this to the “My Future Preparation Portfolio”.</p>

Chapelle (1998) offers suggested criteria for designing CALL applications based on the interactionist perspective. She recommends that: (1) any key linguistic elements be made salient; (2) it be possible for the linguistic input to be modifiable (e.g. through repetition, simplification, non-verbal cues, reference materials); (3) learners be given opportunities to produce comprehensible output; (4) learners be given opportunities to notice their errors; (5) learners be given opportunities to correct their linguistic output; (6) interaction between the learner and computer be modifiable; and (7) such activities be task-based (e.g. by the learner achieving a non-

linguistic goal). Of these seven criteria, the current researcher would argue that criteria one, four, and five may be those that require the most attention when it comes to the current course. That is, the key linguistic elements were not made salient in the application. Further, though learners were given opportunities to notice common errors (see Image 5) and correct them at that time, it may have been too impersonal. The application and the task design can be updated so that the suggested criteria here can be better met. It should be noted that, instead of the learner interacting with the application, he/she interacts with another learner *through* the application. This in part allows criteria three, four, five, and six to be met. In the case of criteria four, the learner can notice his/her errors through his/her interaction with the other learner. To better meet this criteria, then, the in-class handout could be updated to provide space for learners to note their own specific errors and provide corrections for them.

Time should also be taken to consider to what extent each of the speaking “tasks” included in each of the skills-based classes can be considered task-like. The current researcher would argue that they met most criteria set out by Willis and Willis (2007). That said, the linguistic elements to be used in the conversations were provided explicitly in part because of the relatively low level of the learners. This meant that there was more of a focus on form during task completion than would normally be allowable if the activities were to be considered strictly task-like. Further, there could be more of an emphasis on the learners achieving a goal or outcome - and their success being judged in terms of that. Again, the in-class handout could be updated to provide space for learners to note the specific details of the outcome of the task (e.g. in the case of checking a guest into a hotel, the guest’s name, room number, etc.). In addition (or as an alternative), the learners could be provided with the overall course goal of operating a hotel, with that hotel offering tours and also a restaurant (the learners could be put in pairs or groups, assigned to different hotels, and during speaking tasks, take turns being staff and customers/guests/patrons for each other). In each skills-based class, they could be asked to record details about the speaking tasks completed in a related portfolio. A focus on goal completion and success could be achieved through doing this. The overall course goal would be to operate the hotel *successfully*. Success could be measured in part using things such as learner-generated “customer” satisfaction surveys. This overall process would also involve self-reflection, with learners assessing their readiness to work successfully in each of the three main situations of the course (in a hotel, as a tour guide, in a restaurant). Doing this would also do much to prepare learners for the simulation near the end of the course.

Given that the majority of learners in the course were in their first term of their second year, the level of this course should be adjusted downwards. To help achieve this, the researcher aims to add a number of activities which are specifically suited the needs of lower-level learners. They are as follows.

**Table 12: What should be added to the course?**

	Literature support	The form it could take
Chunk-based reading	see e.g. Kato & Tanaka (2015)	As in Bury (2014) and Bertorelli (2016), the learners could be given modified authentic texts or news articles related to the tourism/hospitality industry and asked to read them and then complete relevant tasks.
Reading aloud	see e.g. Kato & Tanaka (2015)	The learners could be given scripts of short talks that they may need to give in the future. They could then do reading aloud with the researcher and in pairs.
Longer Dictation	Kiany & Shiramiry (2002)	The researcher could begin many of the classes with a dictation-based review listening activity. These texts could vary in length, but should include longer texts.
More acquisition of language <i>through learning</i>	Coyle, Hood, & Marsh (2010)	The researcher could have learners do a larger range of authentic tourism/hospitality-related tasks through which learners could acquire new language. Such tasks could include: (1) design a notice to put in each hotel room to remind guests to...; (2) organize for a wedding reception to be held at the hotel; and (3) decide the rules needed for your hotel's pool and write the list in English.

What should also be considered here is the extent to which learners in the current course had been *ready* to take the course. As mentioned, there was no prerequisite and the clear majority of learners in the course were in their second year at the university. Hasegawa (2017) asserts that learners who take an ESP course should have already “mastered a sufficient breadth of vocabulary, set phrases, and grammatical rules” (p. 577). In the case of the current course, there was an explicit focus on

lexis and forms roughly at the same level of those included in their first-year courses, and also multiple opportunities for review of those that had been in those courses. Therefore, it may be possible to argue that, even if the learners had not been “ready”, the design of the course allowed for some remedial work. Further, the inclusion of some form of differentiated learning in future iterations of the course should see that those learners who require additional remedial work receive it.

### ***Qualification Tests***

As Iwai (2010) points out, institutions could also consider providing preparatory courses for the Tourism English Proficiency Test (TEPT). According to her, this is “the only ESP qualification test in this field” (p. 100) and “the first grade examination ... has questions about cultures and geography of Japan and the world, international relationships among countries, and basic knowledge about global tourism” (p. 101). The current course could be updated to provide reading materials and tasks for such content.

### ***Advice***

For any course designers/teachers wishing to provide a course similar to the current one, the following advice could prove useful:

In this course:

- Many learners did not seem to want to get and complete a fresh copy of the readiness checkers as many times as may have been necessary for them to get the best score that they could.
  - Advice: Find a way to motivate the learners to do this. (Certainly, one way would be to make them Internet-based so that the process was less labor intensive, more interactive, and randomized.)

- Many learners did not seem to want to have the role-plays (e.g. check a guest into a hotel) face to face multiple times so that they could maximize their accuracy, fluency, and sense of self-efficacy.
  - Advice: Consider making such review part of the start of each class and consider giving the learners a score for their efforts *each class*. You may also like to have them use their smart-phones to record themselves completing the role-plays (audio only or audio and video) and then have them self-reflect for homework and then submit their self-reflections multiples times across the term.
- The majority of the learners in this cohort were only in their second year at the university, and therefore, some of the content and activities may have been a little too complex/demanding - or, in fact, forward looking. It may have been the case that a majority of the learners, while appreciating the usefulness of the content and practice opportunities, were not far enough along in their university experience to be motivated *to act with more urgency*.
  - Advice: Consider offering the course in the fall semester only - or to third- and fourth-year learners only (perhaps this is not feasible at most universities in Japan, however). (That said, their in-class behavior may have reflected the general motivation level and attitudes of the learners.)
- Upon seeing the syllabus for the course earlier in the year, the head of the relevant committee decided to recommend the course to all learners in the faculty (a leaflet in Japanese was distributed to them). An unintended consequence of that was that one learner who eventually took the course admitted that he had no real interest in tourism/hospitality since he was planning to become an English-language teacher. I was able to help him realize that he may, in fact, be *teaching* this kind of course in the future, so the current course could be useful to him. Even so, it is clear that a course



focused on the tourism/hospitality industry is not one that learners should take simply because it aligns with their major and their faculty. Nor should it be a replacement for a more generalized “workplace English” course.

- Advice: Recommend the course, but make sure all learners are very aware of exactly what will be covered in the course and have them decide how well it matches their own plans for the future. As Kim, Lin, and Qiu (2015) found, “only those interested and committed” (p. 384) will probably attend, so in order to maximize both the size of the cohort and attendance, it makes sense to provide learners with the specifics in advance of them choosing the course. Amano (2015) points out that learners who do take such courses but do not see themselves working in the relevant industry in the future may have low motivation. In such a case, some degree of customization might be useful. (What should also be noted: an exciting-sounding syllabus plus a recommendation from Japanese professors would appear to help maximize the size of the cohort for the elective in question quite markedly.)
- A review of the relevant literature reveals that some should-have-been essential elements were left out of the course, including topics and activities.
  - Advice: Consider the inclusion of topics, such as sustainable tourism. Including English texts on topics like sustainable tourism would both inform the learners and help them to review important vocabulary and expressions. One topic that must be included is tourism resources - such as historical heritage and the natural environment (Kawamata & Shiba, 2013) - and how they can be preserved. Another obvious topic for the near-term is the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- First-year compulsory English courses at the university level cover a broad range of topics depending on the focus of the individual course. If a university offers one or more first-year compulsory CALL courses, learners

may be required to use an Internet-based application like ALC Press Inc.'s NetAcademy2 or NetAcademy Next. The topics featured should be of general interest to most learners. Some of the topics included (presumably by design) are those related to the tourism/hospitality industry.

- Advice: You may like to re-use/recycle such texts for a course like the current one and set them as “autonomous learning review” tasks (to be included in the grading for the course) or simply use them as part of the main content of the course.

### ***Recommended Learning Objectives for Future Courses***

What follows is a list of recommended learning objectives for teachers who may wish to teach a similar course. Achieving all of this in one course may be difficult depending on the level of the learners. Therefore, teacher discretion is recommended.

By the end of the course, the learners will be able to:

1. Demonstrate improved tourism/hospitality-related listening and speaking skills;
2. Demonstrate improved tourism/hospitality-related vocabulary and expression retention;
3. Complete the range of situation-specific communicative tasks during the simulation to a satisfactory level (as determined by the teacher);
4. Produce a portfolio of English and English resources that helps themselves and others prepare for their futures;
5. Evaluate a tourism/hospitality-related problem/issue critically and solve it;
6. Identify some of the latest trends in tourism/hospitality.

### **Limitations**

The results of this study should be viewed with caution. First, it was a convenience sample and the sample size was extremely small - twenty-six learners in total could have completed the questionnaire. Second, of the twenty-six learners who completed the course, only eighteen

completed the questionnaire. Third, of the eighteen respondents, twelve were female (double the number of males). Fourth, nineteen items of missing data were substituted with the average for the category of item that was missing in each case. Fifth, there is a small chance that some of the learners were “faking good” in the hope of receiving a higher grade (since it was possible for the researcher to match a respondent’s name to his/her completed questionnaire by way of the informed-consent form and the learners may have been aware of this - both pieces of paper had the same letter written on them - e.g. “A”). Sixth, some of the questionnaire items were overly wordy and the small amount of jargon used may have been confusing (e.g. the term “live-action video”) - though the learners used their dictionaries and asked the researcher questions, as needed. Seventh, there were “forced choice” items on the questionnaire. This fact was evidenced by two different respondents not choosing either choice for a specific item and instead writing in their own choice (i.e. instead of circling “Yes” or “No”, they wrote “I’m not sure yet.”). Other respondents, however, not seeing an appropriate choice for themselves, may have instead chosen one anyway (albeit the “closest” one) even though it was not the right choice for them. Eighth, there were a number of leading questions. All of the above may therefore have resulted in some degree of response bias.

### **Future Research**

As Heift and Chapelle (2012) point out, when it comes to CALL, what applied linguistics researchers want to know is this: What technology leads to successful learning outcomes? Why? How? To what end? Unfortunately, it was not within the scope of this study to investigate the effect of the technology used in the course on the learning outcomes. This can be the focus of follow-up research. In addition, the following avenues of research should be pursued: (1) given the emphasis here on the “vocalization of higher education” and the classes having incorporated both skill- and knowledge-building activities, future research efforts should seek to ascertain learners’ perceptions of that combination (and the extent to which they may perceive the course to be difficult/overwhelming); (2) given that no pre-test, post-test data was elicited, future research efforts could seek to do this for one or more of the following: course-specific vocabulary, listening skills, speaking skills, inter-cultural communicative competence, retention/use of inter-cultural information/knowledge, and/or critical thinking skills; and (3) given the potential design

issues mentioned in the previous section, I intend on replicating the study taking care to deal with each of the issues.

## **Pedagogical Implications**

### ***For Teachers***

If you teach in a relevant faculty and it does not appear that an elective course like the one investigated here is currently being offered, you could consider offering to design and teach a similar one to it/your own version of it. There are ample resources available on the Internet - industry websites and YouTube, in particular, are of great use. Teaching it as a CALL course is not necessary, of course. That said, clearly learners appreciate the inclusion of educational technology to some extent (particularly because the Internet is a main method of information delivery and dissemination for the tourism/hospitality industry). Neither is it necessary for you to be that well acquainted with the industry. You can buy one or more existing books and you can do research on the Internet, find out the latest news and trends, for example, and then make your own materials (Japanese translations will be necessary, however). You will certainly learn a lot as you go along.

### ***For Institutions***

Twenty-six learners completed the course. English-language electives taught by native-English speakers in the researcher's faculty typically attract 5-15 learners. The relative popularity of the course should indicate that learners are not only aware of the importance of English for a future in the tourism/hospitality industry, but that they are also motivated to take and work hard to complete such a course. If it is possible, however, it may be more appropriate to offer learners a wider range of tourism/hospitality electives if a more comprehensive one may prove too overwhelming. These could target specific skills, such as speaking and pronunciation.

## **Conclusion**

Readying tertiary-level learners for their futures in the tourism/hospitality industry in any country in Asia (and for intraregional tourism) is a process that necessarily involves helping them to further build both their skills and their knowledge (e.g. English-language skills, inter-cultural

communicative competence, critical-thinking skills, inter-cultural knowledge, industry-specific knowledge). What appears to be possible is the combining of efforts to do this into one or more quite-comprehensive elective English-for-tourism/ hospitality (CALL) courses (incorporating animated and live-action videos). What this study would seem to indicate is that such an approach may be popular among learners - and it may be one that they perceive as both useful and one that they could recommend to other learners in the same faculty. Hopefully, their taking such a course will increase their chances of success post-graduation - and help them to improve the quality of tourism in their respective countries (and across Asia as a whole) in whatever small ways that they can.

## References

- Abdo, I. B, & Al-Awabdeh, A-H. (2017). Animated videos prove to be beneficial in teaching English grammar as EFL: A neurological study of how students learn and retain English grammar. *Creative Education*, 8, 1415-1423.
- Amano, T. (2015). Developing and teaching a ‘hospitality English’ course - A case of adopting a CLIL’s ‘4C’ framework at a junior college in Japan. *北陸学院大学・北陸学院大学短期大学部研究紀要*, 8, 301-312.
- Basturkmen, H. (2010). *Developing courses for English for specific purposes*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bortorelli, C. (2016). Pronunciation and shadowing in tourism English. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 15, 93-105.
- Brooks, M. (2008). Developing an “English for hospitality” course: Reflections and suggestions from a pilot course. *英語教育研究所紀要(CELE Journal)*, 16, 15-22.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interaction approach to language pedagogy*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education Inc.
- Bury, J. (2014). Developing texts for an English for tourism course: The effect of using task-cycling, spaced retrieval and high-frequency words on students’ self-perceptions of ability and levels and confidence. *The Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*, 2(2), 181-194.
- Bury, J., & Oka, T. (2017). Undergraduate students’ perceptions of the importance of English in the tourism and hospitality industry. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, 17, 1-16.
- Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Cerezo, L. (2015). Theoretical approaches to CALL research: Toward a psycholinguistic perspective. In R. Leow, L. Cerezo, & M. Baralt (Eds.), *A psycholinguistic approach to*

- technology and language learning* (pp. 23-46). Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter, Inc.
- Chapelle, C. A. (1998). Multimedia CALL: Lessons to be learned from research on instructed SLA. *Language Learning and Technology*, 2(1), 22-34.
- Coyle, D., Hood, P. & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Education research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (fourth ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Davis, N. L. (2016). Anatomy of a flipped classroom. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, 16(3), 228-232.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., Muir, C., & Ibrahim, Z. (2014). Directed motivational current: Energising language learning through creating intense motivational pathways. In D. Lasagabaster, A. Doiz & J.M. Sierra (Eds.), *Motivation and Foreign Language Learning: From Theory to Practice* (pp. 9-29). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Etzo, I. (2016). The impact of migration on tourism demand: Evidence from Japan. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*. Retrieved August 6, 2017, from [https://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/72457/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_72457.pdf](https://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/72457/1/MPRA_paper_72457.pdf).
- Filice, S., & Sposato, E. (2017). Is there a place for creativity in second language learning? A go animated experience. In A. T. Damascelli (Ed.), *Digital Resources, Creativity and Innovative Methodologies in Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 270-287). United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., Hyams, N., Collins, P., Amberber, M., & Harvey, M. (2009). *An Introduction to Language* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Cengage Learning Australia Pty Limited.

- Fujii, A., Ziegler N., & Mackey, A. (2016). Peer interaction and metacognitive instruction in the EFL classroom. In M. Sato & S. Ballinger (Eds.), *Peer Interaction and Second Language Learning: Pedagogical Potential and Research Agenda* (pp. 63-90). Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Harmer, Jeremy (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (4th ed.). England: Pearson Education.
- Hasegawa, H. (2017). The critical role of universities in impacting upon English education in Japan. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences, Special Issue, 3*(1), 567-585.
- Heift, T., & Chapelle, C. A. (2012). Language learning through technology. In S. M. Gass & A. Mackey (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 555-570). London, UK; New York, NY: Routledge.
- Henderson, J. C. (2016). Muslim travellers, tourism industry responses and the case of Japan, *Tourism Recreation Research, 41*(3), 339-347.
- Hirai, M. (2017). A general overview of English tests administered in Japan. *Shiken 21*(1), 12-22.
- Hubbard, P., & Levy, M. (2013). Theory is computer-assisted language learning research and practice. In B. VanPatten and J. Williams (Eds), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 24-38). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Iwai, C. (2010). Analysis of ESP education for the hotel industry at universities, technical schools, and hotels in Japan. *JACET Kansai Journal, 12*, 92-103.
- Japan National Tourism Organization (2016). *2016 Foreign Visitors and Japanese Departures*. Retrieved August 6, 2017, from: <https://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/ttp/sta/PDF/E2016.pdf>.
- Kato, S., & Tanaka, K. (2015). Reading aloud performance and listening ability in an L2: The case of college-level Japanese EFL users. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics, 5*, 187-206. Retrieved August 8, 2017, from: [http://file.scirp.org/pdf/OJML\\_2015042014291808.pdf](http://file.scirp.org/pdf/OJML_2015042014291808.pdf).



- Kawamata, K., & Shiba, T. (2013). The current state of tourism education and research in Japan. *京都産業大学マネジメント研究会, 第22号*, 19-41.
- Kline, P. (2000). *The handbook of psychological testing*. London: Routledge.
- Kim, Y., Pearl M. C. L., & Qiu, H. (2015). Experiential learning: Being a real-event planner. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism, 15*, 382-401.
- Kiany, G. R., & Shiramiry, E. (2002). The effect of frequent dictation on the listening comprehension ability of elementary EFL learners. *TESL Canada Journal, 20*, 57-63.
- Lantolf, J. P., Thorne, S. L., & Poehner, M. E. (2013). Sociocultural theory and second language development. In B. VanPatten and J. Williams (Eds), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 208-226). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, P. C., Sun, S., Law, R., & Lee, A. H. (2016). Educational technology in hospitality management programs: Adoption and expectations. *Journal of teaching in Travel and Tourism, 16*(2), 116-142.
- Lyu, J., Li, M., & Wang, D. (2016). Experiential learning and its effectiveness from the perceptions of hospitality students. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism, 16*(4), 296-315.
- Moeller, A. J., & Nugent, K. (2014). Building intercultural competence in the language classroom. *Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education*. Paper 161. Retrieved December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015, from: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/teachlearnfacpub/161>
- Nakatani, Y. (1997). Simulation activities for Japanese EFL college learners. *ARELE (Annual Review of English Language Education in Japan), 8*, 117-126.
- Niati, B., & Rozimela, Y. (2014). The effect of animated films on students' speaking skill of narrative text at grade x sma plus binabangsa pekanbaru. *English Language Teaching (ELT), 2*(3), 64-72.

- Nuryati, S. (2016). *Utilizing cartoon videos to improve students' speaking skill*. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from:  
<http://journal.student.uny.ac.id/ojs/index.php/elt/article/viewFile/5660/5403>
- Otoshi, J., & Heffernan, N. (2011). An analysis of a hypothesized model of EFL students' motivation based on self-determination theory. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, 13(3), 66-86.
- Oxford, R. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies*. Great Britain: Pearson Education.
- Pachmayer, A., Andereck, K., & Goodman, R. (2017). Internationalizing the tourism curriculum via study abroad. In P. Benckendorff & A. Zehrer (Eds.), *Handbook of teaching and learning in tourism* (pp. 336-350). Massachusetts, USA: Edward Elgar.
- Scholnik, M., Kol, S., & Abarbanel, J. (2006). Constructivism in theory and in practice. *English Teaching Forum*, 4, 12-20.
- Seaton, P., & Yamamura, T. (2014). Japanese popular culture and contents tourism - Introduction. *Japan Forum*, 27(1), 1-11.
- Stone, G. A., Duffy, L. N., Pinckney, H. P., & Templeton-Bradley, R. (2017). Teaching for critical thinking: Preparing hospitality and tourism students for careers in the twenty-first century. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, 17(2), 67-84.
- Szumal, J. L. (2000). *How to use group problem solving simulations to improve knowledge, skills, and teamwork*. Retrieved August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, from:  
<http://www.hsnz.co.nz/docs/default-source/default-document-library/Sourcebook2000Integrated.pdf>
- Todaka, Y. (2017). How to motivate de-motivated Japanese college EFL learners. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(4), 87-113.
- UNWTO (2017). *UNWTO tourism highlights, 2017 edition*. Retrieved February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, from:  
<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284419029>

- Wang, M., & Sun, L. (2014). Development of learners' ESP competence in the hotel industry. *The Asian ESP Journal, Special Issue*, 101-126.
- Watson, K., & Agawa, G. (2011). Differentiated Instruction in a university English CALL setting. In A. Stewart (Ed.), *JALT2010 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.
- Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yanata, S., Ishibashi, K., & Nomakuchi, T. (2016). *Tourism-oriented policy, economy, and tourism English in Japan*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Education and New Developments, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- Yashima, T, Zenuk-Nishide, L., & Shimizu, K. (2004). The influences of attitudes and effect on willingness to communicate and second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 54(1), 119-152.
- Yoshida, K., & Morikoshi, K. (2011). Developing a hospitality and tourism curriculum in a two-year college in Japan. *TEAM Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 8(1), 19-29.
- Zhang, R., & McCornac, D. C. (2014). Challenges for the international tourism industry in Japan - An agent for economic recovery and development. *Almatourism - Journal of Tourism, Culture, and Territorial Development*, 5(10), 109-124.



## **Insights for Efficacy Development from an Exploration of Japanese Business Management Students' EAP Self-Efficacy Beliefs**

**Dr Gene Thompson**

*Department of Global Business, College of Business, Rikkyo University*

*3-34-1 Nishi Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo, Japan*

### **Biodata**

**Gene Thompson** is an Associate Professor of Language and Communication at the College of Business, Rikkyo University, Japan. He researches teacher and learner cognitions about language learning, with specific interests in self-efficacy for language learning and teaching, content and language integrated learning, and teaching English as an international language.

Email: [thompson@rikkyo.ac.jp](mailto:thompson@rikkyo.ac.jp)

### **Abstract**

This study examined the academic self-efficacy beliefs of second year university students majoring in International Business at a university in Japan. In the program, students start English medium instruction (EMI) from their third year, and complete EAP and ESP courses in their first and second years as part of a preparatory program. Students' perceptions of their capabilities to carry out academic tasks for studying business in English were investigated to evaluate students' confidence for carrying out key program objectives. Exploratory factor analysis identified four latent constructs of academic self-efficacy beliefs that corresponded to four different usage situations, where student efficacy was significantly weaker for one dimension of activity related to spontaneous language use in oral presentation question and answer time. Analysis of interviews with four students identified student perceptions of task difficulty and a lack of practice

opportunities to be the primary reasons for weaker student confidence. Findings indicate that students heavily attend to past experience in the assessment of their efficacy beliefs and provide insights into relatively simple affordances for classroom and activity management that may enhance the development of learner efficacy towards EAP activities in preparatory programs.

► Academic self-efficacy and challenges for future EMI learners ► EAP efficacy beliefs ► Difficulty of spontaneous public speaking tasks and QA time ► Curriculum and task affordances for developing learner efficacy beliefs

**Keywords:** self-efficacy; EAP; ESP; program evaluation; factor analysis, thematic analysis

## 1. Introduction

As English becomes the lingua franca for business (BELF), business management programs at universities across Japan are joining the trend in Asia towards English-medium instruction (EMI) (Byun et al., 2011; Evans & Morrison, 2011; Nunan, 2003), where local and international learners study using English as the shared language. Academic (EAP), specific-purpose (ESP), and content-integrated instruction are used in preparatory programs with the purpose of helping local students master "enough English, and the right English, to succeed in learning their subjects through the medium of English" (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 2).

This study investigated second-year Japanese business management students' perceptions of their capability to complete academic tasks for studying business in English (i.e., self-efficacy beliefs) as part of the course evaluation from their final course before undertaking EMI instruction. The research was carried out at a university in Japan, where a foundation program within a business management school has the overall goal of developing undergraduate students' competence as future EMI learners and BELF users. As part of the bilingual program, students begin with academic English and specific-purpose courses in their first two years, before moving on to English-mediated lectures with local and non-Japanese students. The preparatory program has objectives related to the development of student competence and capability for academic writing, note taking, public speaking, and discussion skills.

## 2. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs are individuals' task-focused beliefs about their capability to achieve outcomes (Bandura, 1997). They are future-oriented task-focused cognitions about capability that are proposed to reflect individuals' assessments of task difficulty and perceived competence towards the activity (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Efficacy beliefs are developed from attributions (i.e. perceptions) of past success (e.g. successfully completing an academic essay), observations of others (e.g. watching other students public speaking performances), social persuasion (e.g. teacher feedback), and physiological responses (e.g. shaking from feeling nervous) (Bandura, 1977, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2009).

Considerable evidence suggests that self-efficacy beliefs mediate choice, effort, and motivation in academic settings (see Pajares, 1996). In other education fields, self-efficacy beliefs have been shown to predict future academic success (Pajares, 2003), and significant positive relationships have been noted between self-efficacy beliefs and achievement in studies of foreign language learners (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2006, 2007) with some evidence that self-efficacy beliefs mediate achievement for EAP learners (Phakiti, Hirsh, & Woodrow, 2013). For example, in a study of English as an additional language (EAL) users' in their final semester of a foundation studies programme at a university in Australia, Phaktini et al. (2013) identified self-efficacy as a mediating variable between personal factors (such as motivation, self-regulation, and values), achievement, and GPA. As a result, studies (Graham, 2011; Van De Poel & Gasiorek, 2012) have called for EAP programs to focus on not only developing student competency (i.e., actual skills) but also student efficacy (i.e., perceived capability) towards different areas of academic activity. This is because self-beliefs, such as perceived ability, may have a stronger influence than actual capability on student choices and avoidance of activities (Pajares, 2003). With respect to the current study, this suggests that students' perceived capability towards different academic tasks may influence their future choices about joining or avoiding different EMI courses (e.g., students with weak efficacy towards presentation may avoid courses that require significant public speaking).

Accordingly, student efficacy information may be useful for EAP programs, as such information may be useful for identifying areas of activity where student perceived confidence is strong (i.e., areas where the program has been effective in developing agency beliefs), tasks or domains of use

where student efficacy is weak (i.e., development may be needed) and areas where program organization and structure can be changed to maximize the benefit of instruction on the development of learner agency beliefs. For example, in a study of students' foreign language self-efficacy beliefs at a university in the USA, Gorsuch (2009) identified that learning and practice activities needed to be more clearly connected to (future) L2 use outside the classroom in order to maximize the influence of classroom learning experience on agency. The author suggested that the addition of learning goals would help learners to see the meaning of their study, where instructors should focus classroom learning on helping students develop mastery experiences towards such goals. Due to such benefits, ongoing assessments of student efficacy towards overall program objectives are incorporated into course evaluations at the institution where the current study was conducted.

Language learner self-efficacy is an area receiving more attention in the literature. For example, recent studies have investigated Korean university students' efficacy beliefs towards general language usage tasks (Wang & Kim, 2011; Wang, Kim, Bong, & Ahn, 2013), and Taiwanese learners' reading self-efficacy beliefs (Shang, 2010). However, as Graham (2011) has noted, few studies have focused on self-efficacy in EAP contexts, where there is much potential for further investigation due to the potential benefits of strong self-beliefs for learners. The current study contributes to develop knowledge about this gap in the research literature by investigating learner self-efficacy in the Japanese EAP setting. The study may also be of use to other preparatory EAP programs tasked with preparing learners for EMI, by providing information about learner self-efficacy beliefs towards different academic challenges, including how these self-beliefs may be developed and strengthened.

### **3. Key Challenges for EAP Learners Studying Business in English**

The study began with a simple question: As our students move toward EMI, what tasks are they more confident about? While studies have shown that general English language proficiency is associated with performance in EAP programs (Lee, 2009; Phakiti et al., 2013) and in business contexts (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010), success is also dependent on specific knowledge of vocabulary, genre, and strategies for activities related to individual contexts (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010), where self-beliefs may mediate effort and

achievement (Phakiti et al., 2013). EAP learners, in particular, may develop negative self-beliefs about capability from perceived failure, even for tasks crucial for EAP study such as not being able to follow a lecture (Graham, 2011). This section briefly reviews the range of skills and usage challenges that are important for learners as they move to EMI or BELF contexts.

The primary purpose of the current study was to investigate which EAP tasks and domains of activity students were more confident towards. Previous studies have shown a range of activities and skills that different EAP learners find challenging. For example, it has long been established that discussion, debate and discursive classroom practices are challenging for EFL learners (Atkinson, 1997; Saito & Ebsworth, 2004) and EAL users joining academic settings (Jones, 1999). Studies have also noted the challenge for EMI learners of vocabulary, writing, note taking, and oral presentation (Clerehan, 1995; Evans & Morrison, 2011). For example, in a study of 28 students at a university in Hong Kong, Evans and Morrison (2011) identified four key aspects of academic English that students found most challenging: understanding specialist vocabulary, listening to lectures, writing in an appropriate academic style, and meeting the requirements of the institution. Meanwhile, a study of East Asian graduate students studying at a university in the USA found that students perceived oral presentation skills and listening ability to be key challenges, particularly spontaneous usage situations such as asking for and responding to direct questions or participating in class discussions (Kim, 2006).

Given that success as English users is dependent on context (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010), some areas of English usage may be more important and difficult for BELF users and students studying business via EMI. A number of studies have investigated the use of English for business in Hong Kong, where Evans (2010, 2012, 2013) has shown the need of English for written communication, and focused on the importance of email for BELF users (Evans, 2012). Findings have also shown that spoken language use appears to have become more important over time (Evans, 2010), and studies of spoken language use for business graduates (Crosling & Ward, 2002; Evans, 2010) and BELF users (Evans, 2013; Kassim & Ali, 2010; Rogerson-Revell, 2008) have shown the difficulty of spontaneous language use in meetings, presentations, and video conferencing. For example, in a study carried out in Hong Kong, Evans (2013) highlighted the importance of oral presentation for BELF users and identified four specific difficulties concerning oral presentation: building audience interest, dealing with questions, speaking in a natural manner,



and using technology (e.g., PowerPoint). Overall, findings from BELF user and EMI for business contexts have suggested that spontaneous language use in structured group settings is a key challenge and important task for BELF users. Accordingly, another purpose of the current study is to explore student cognitions towards key skills that may be important in their future careers, which few previous self-efficacy studies have done.

To what extent do students' self-beliefs for task capability align with different academic activities? Bandura (2006) has suggested that self-efficacy judgments may vary by level, generality, and strength. In other words, students' may have different levels of efficacy (e.g., confidence for giving a presentation to three friends versus confidence for presenting to three teachers), generality of efficacy (e.g., students may be confident towards different domains of activity (e.g., for listening versus speaking), and have different strength of efficacy for different tasks (e.g., towards giving a presentation versus writing an essay). It has been shown that language learner efficacy beliefs can be generalizable (i.e., efficacy for using English), but also be divided by the domain of activity (e.g., listening, speaking) (Wang et al., 2013; Wang, Kim, Bai, & Hu, 2014). For example, in a study of Korean university students, Wang et al. (2014) found that learners' self-efficacy beliefs were weaker for listening tasks in comparison to reading, speaking, and writing tasks.

One key goal for EAP and ESP programs is to help students master the "right English" to be successful as EMI users and BELF users (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 2). However, an area of language activity that may be overlooked by curriculum developers is the extent to which activities are multimodal or comprise different genres of use, where student self-beliefs may be significantly different for different aspects within the same activity. For example, instructors and courses may discuss and focus on 'presentation' skills in preparatory programs, but the underlying skills, communicative purposes, and patterns of use within different parts of the same activity may be significantly different, where student self-beliefs may be significantly stronger or weaker for different aspects of a task. Previous studies have suggested that the 'question / answer' (QA time) part of a talk is very different to the structured presentation monologue (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2012, 2014; Warren, 2014; Wulff, Swales, & Keller, 2009). While the communicative purpose of a monologue is focused on the sharing of information using pre-prepared materials, QA time involves a stronger *evaluative* aspect in a spontaneous setting, where the speaker may have to defend or extend about their ideas in a dialogic manner. QA time is characterized by greater use

of paralinguistic non-verbal communication features (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2012), may be built around shared knowledge, commonly involves hedging, and often makes use of repeated patterns for introducing and responding to ideas (Wulff et al., 2009). In other words, this genre of use may require users to draw upon separate skills, and accordingly users' underlying self-beliefs about capability may be significantly different towards the different aspects of the task. However, few studies have empirically shown such differences for EAP learners. Although previous studies have investigated the underlying dimensions of self-efficacy beliefs for language learning (Wang & Kim, 2011; Wang et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2013), few have explored the strength and generality of learner beliefs towards different academic English tasks. The current study investigates this gap in the research literature by using statistical analyses to examine differences in learner beliefs towards separate areas of EAP performance, alongside qualitative analysis of interviews with learners to better understand what factors influence their beliefs.

Finally, a key concern for EAP curriculum designers may be about how to develop student confidence towards different academic tasks? Strategy and verbalization training appears to be beneficial for helping students develop agency beliefs (Graham, 2011), while past experience and perceptions of task success should, theoretically, contribute to efficacy development as these may act as mastery experiences. From interview findings with students studying in an EAP program in Hong Kong, Evans and Morrison (2011) suggested that practice was a key aspect in the development of EAP abilities, where students "developed their skills by 'doing' – be it making notes, giving presentations or participating in seminars" (p. 204). Extant research on note taking has also shown the importance of structured practice and worked examples, where Clerehan (1995) has suggested that techniques such as checking notes with others and being introduced to examples of authentic notes may help learners improve the quality of their academic notes. In other words, another concern for EAP program developers may be identifying affordances for the development of positive learner self-beliefs towards different academic English different tasks. This study contributes to knowledge about ways in which student confidence towards EAP tasks may be encouraged and strengthened.

In summary, extant research has suggested that EAP students and BELF users face a number of challenges related to academic writing, academic speaking, note taking, and spontaneous language use during meetings and presentations. However, few studies have investigated EAP learner

beliefs about their capability towards such skills, the strength of students' EAP efficacy beliefs, the extent to which different tasks reflect different underlying dimensions of language activity, and ways in which EAP learner efficacy may be encouraged. This study addresses these gaps in the research literature, with five research questions:

Which academic tasks do students have stronger efficacy towards?

What are the underlying dimensions of self-efficacy beliefs for these tasks?

Are there significant differences in student efficacy for different dimensions of activity?

Why do students have stronger or weaker efficacy towards different tasks and dimensions of activity?

In what ways can student efficacy towards EAP tasks be strengthened?

#### 4. Current Study

The study investigated student self-efficacy beliefs towards different academic tasks using data collected as part of the course evaluation from students' final course before beginning EMI. As part of this evaluation, students are asked to assess their efficacy for 14 tasks related to overall program objectives related to writing, presentation, discussion, and note taking. As self-efficacy beliefs are task-focused beliefs, survey instruments should be contextualized and tailored to the domain of activity (Bandura, 2006). Therefore, a 14-item self-efficacy scale was developed to reflect these objectives as efficacy statements (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Course Objectives Expressed as Self-Efficacy Items**

<i>How confident are you that you can effectively</i>	<i>1 -</i>
	<i>10</i>
1. comprehend long, complex passages in business textbooks	
2. scan quickly through a business textbook to find relevant information	
3. write a well-structured business report	
4. avoid plagiarism by properly citing all information from sources	
5. use a good range of specialized vocabulary for matters connected to international business	

6. take detailed notes while reading business texts so that they will be useful to complete assignments
  7. take detailed notes during a lecture, recording all major facts and opinions expressed by the speaker
  8. use your notes to explain key concepts from the textbook or lectures in your own words
  9. give a clear, well-structured presentation on a topic related to international business
  10. formulate and ask relevant questions after a presentation or lecture
  - .
  11. effectively deal with questions about your presentation
  - .
  12. actively participate in academic discussions on topics related to international business
  - .
  13. lead a discussion that promotes group participation and facilitates understanding
  - .
  14. develop clear ideas and arguments in your discussion, and support them with persuasive evidence
- 

## **5. Methodology**

A sequential multi type mixed method design (Collins, Leech, Onwuegbuzie, & Slate, 2007) was used with two primary stages: (1) the study analysed evaluation questionnaire data for the 14 self-efficacy items presented in Table 1; and (2) follow-up interviews were carried out with student volunteers to investigate the factors that learners considered in the assessment of their self-efficacy assessments.

### ***5.1 Stage 1 Participants, Instrumentation, and Data Analysis***

In order to maximise the sample size (Stevens, 1996), student evaluation questionnaire data from two years (2013 = 105 responses, 2014 = 139 responses) were analysed in this study. Of the 308 students who took the course during 2013 and 2014, a total of 217 students (92 male, 119 female,

6 did not report) completed the self-efficacy for future EMI study questionnaire section of the online evaluation survey in English and had agreed to make their responses available for research purposes. Respondents rated the strength of their confidence on a 10-point Likert type scale where 1 corresponded to a complete lack of confidence and 10 to complete confidence in being able to complete the task. Data were analysed using the statistic software package, IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 21). In order to investigate research question one, descriptive statistics were generated, including the reliability coefficient for the self-efficacy scale ( $\alpha = .95$ ), which suggested that the scale measured the same construct, with adequate reliability.

As the purpose of the study was to explore student efficacy beliefs, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was carried out to identify latent dimensions of efficacy beliefs underlying student responses to the course objective efficacy items. EFA is a parsimonious means of exploring whether “a larger set of measured variables” can be interpreted by “a smaller set of latent constructs” (Henson & Roberts, 2006, p. 394) for generating theory. In other words, it is a reduction technique that was carried out to explore whether the strength of student efficacy beliefs towards course objective items (i.e., variables) reflected underlying latent belief constructs (e.g., beliefs towards note-taking or towards tasks that involve speaking). The sample size met the 5:1 minimum ratio of responses required for EFA (Stevens, 1996), and parallel analysis was carried out to determine the number of factors to extract (Zwick & Velicer, 1986), indicating that four factors was appropriate (also confirmed by scree test). Four factors were extracted via principal axis with promax rotation. As noted by Costello and Osbourne (2005), EFA is an iterative process where item removal may be required, and their guidelines were used to remove one cross-loading item (item 4, loading above .3 on two factors). The factorability of the four-factor solution for 13 items was confirmed. Firstly, the factor correlation matrix values were above .32, which confirmed that oblique rotation was appropriate (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007); the Kaider-Meyer-Olkin measure verified sampling analysis (KMO = .93), with the diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix all above .5; there were zero non-redundant residuals with values greater than .05; no items had communalities below .3; all items had extracted communality values above .4; and Bartlett’s test of sphericity  $\chi^2(217) = 2269.05$ ,  $p < .001$  indicated that the items were satisfactory for factor analysis. Factor scores were extracted by calculating composite averages for items loading above .3 on the pattern analysis. This method was used as it allowed for further analyses to be carried out on the same scale, did not rely upon loading values, and could be calculated easily from the raw

data for future datasets (i.e., future evaluations). However, it had the weakness of over representing weakly loading items and underrepresenting strongly loading items (Distefano, Zhu, & Mindrila, 2009).

In order to investigate research question three, a one-way within-subject ANOVA was carried out to examine whether there were significant differences between the strength of efficacy towards different dimensions of self-efficacy. Histograms and normal Q-Q plots of standardised residuals for each factor were checked, indicating that the data were normally distributed. However, as is common in social science research (Salkind, 2010), Maunchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated  $\chi^2(5) = 43.22, p < .001$ , increasing the chance of (incorrectly) identifying significant differences between the strength of efficacy for the different dimensions (i.e., a type 1 error). Accordingly, Greenhouse-Geisser corrections are reported ( $\epsilon = .89$ ), as these counteract for the violation of sphericity, reducing the chance of a type 1 error.

## ***5.2 Stage 2 Participants, Instrumentation, and Data Analysis***

A second, interview, stage was carried out to help enhance the interpretation of the statistical findings from stage one. A total of 40 students from the researchers' 2016 classes were approached to participate in interviews about their 'confidence' towards academic tasks. Individual semi-structured interviews of approximately 20 minutes were carried out with four students (one male, three female) who volunteered to participate (see Table 2). Interviews were carried out in English, were recorded (with the participant's permission), and transcribed. The self-efficacy items (see Table 1) were used as a stimulus, where participants were asked to rate their 'confidence' for the items, asked to explain what 'factors' influenced their ratings, and asked to compare the strength of two items (primarily the items with the strongest and weakest strength of efficacy). Finally, participants were asked to explain what was needed to help them strengthen their efficacy towards tasks with weaker ratings, that is, what ways in which teaching, materials, and practice activities to could be altered to provide opportunities for efficacy development (research question 5).

**Table 2. Interview Participants**

<b>Student A</b>	<b>Student B</b>	<b>Student C</b>	<b>Student D</b>
Male (20)	Female (20)	Female (20)	Female (21)
TOEIC score: 780	TOEIC score: 885	TOEIC score: 760	TOEIC score: 890

One limitation of the current study is the small number of participants who agreed to participate in this stage of the study. Furthermore, as the participants were self-selecting, the views of these students may not reflect the full range of student voices (e.g., students with stronger efficacy may have agreed to participant). The proficiency levels of the students reflect the mid to high level of the cohort, indicating that the views of lower level students may not be represented by this group of participants. However, insights from these four students enhance the interpretation of the statistical findings and provide insights in to some ways in which efficacy may be enhanced in EAP programs. Although Bandura (2006) has argued that qualitative analysis of interview data can help develop a better understanding of efficacy beliefs, few studies have used interviews and other means of collecting richer data about language learner efficacy. Thus, while the range of voices is limited, insights from these interviews provide sufficient information to enhance the interpretation of stage one findings, and add to knowledge in the wider field about the ways in which language learner efficacy can be enhanced.

Interview data were analysed using ‘theoretical’ thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a technique for identifying repeated patterns within the (interview) data set. As the analysis was ‘theoretical’, coding was influenced by the factors theorized to influence efficacy assessment (i.e., perceived skill and perceptions of task difficulty, see Gist & Mitchell 1992) and development (i.e., mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological response), therefore interviews were examined to identify patterns of responses across the data set about factors influencing the assessment and development of participants’ efficacy beliefs. Interviews were coded with factors that students perceived to influence the strength of their efficacy beliefs (e.g., ‘task’ when students focused on the difficulty of the task when discussing their efficacy towards it), and sources of efficacy information (e.g., +SP was used to refer to a source of efficacy information involving positive social persuasion). These codes were then grouped and named according to common elements (e.g., one general source of efficacy across the interviews was

‘familiarity’ which grouped together codes related to positive past experiences, existing skills, and experience with the task). For more about the interview coding and thematic analysis process, see Appendix A.

## 6. Results

### 6.1 Which academic tasks do students have stronger efficacy towards?

Efficacy scale findings, shown in Table 3, indicated that learners (as a group) were most confident about their capability for ensuring academic honesty and using appropriate strategies to cite and reference outside sources (Item 4: Med = 8; M = 7.64; SD = 1.75). The preparatory program includes a number of specific workshops and training sessions focused on plagiarism, and this result – along with interview findings - suggest that such strategy training has influenced students’ perceived capability towards academic honesty.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for EAP Efficacy Items**

	<i>How confident are you that you can</i>	Min	Max	Med	M	SD
1.	comprehend long, complex passages in business textbooks	1	10	7	6.74	1.54
2.	scan quickly through a business textbook to find relevant information	2	10	7	6.43	1.64
3.	write a well-structured business report	1	10	6	6.23	1.51
4.	avoid plagiarism by properly citing all information from sources	2	10	8	7.64	1.75
5.	use a good range of specialized vocabulary for matters connected to international business	2	9	7	6.35	1.57
6.	take detailed notes while reading business texts so that they will be useful to complete assignments	2	10	7	6.85	1.56
7.	take detailed notes during a lecture, recording all major facts and opinions expressed by the speaker	2	10	7	6.58	1.68



8.	use your notes to explain key concepts from the textbook or lectures in your own words	1	10	7	6.8 3	1.7
9.	give a clear, well-structured presentation on a topic related to international business	2	10	7	6.8 2	1.5
10.	formulate and ask relevant questions after a presentation or lecture	1	10	6	6.2 2	1.93
11.	effectively deal with questions about your presentation	1	10	6	6.2 0	1.8
12.	actively participate in academic discussions on topics related to international business	2	10	7	6.6 9	1.67
13.	lead a discussion that promotes group participation and facilitates understanding	2	10	7	6.5 0	1.68
14.	develop clear ideas and arguments in your discussion, and support them with persuasive evidence	2	10	7	6.6 3	1.61

On the other hand, findings also suggest that students have weaker efficacy towards writing and structuring texts for business (Item 3: Med = 6; M = 6.23; SD = 1.51), a key activity for students moving towards EMI courses, which usually require reports as the primary written text. An interesting result concerned the three tasks related to oral presentations (i.e., items 9, 10, 11), where measures of central tendency indicated stronger confidence towards presentation performance (Item 9: Med = 7; M = 6.82; SD = 1.5), but weaker confidence towards tasks related to asking (Item 10: Med = 6; M = 6.22; SD = 1.93) and answering questions at the end of a presentation (Item 11: Med = 6; M = 6.20; SD = 1.8). These findings were explored further in the student interviews.

## ***6.2 Are there underlying dimensions of self-efficacy beliefs for these tasks?***

In EFA, ‘factor loadings’ indicate the shared variance between different items on the efficacy scale. In other words, these loadings indicate the extent to which different items from the scale can be grouped together to reflect underlying dimensions of beliefs. Principal axis extraction with promax rotation identified four underlying factors of efficacy beliefs that explained 73.79% of the

underlying variance. Table 4 shows the loading values for the pattern coefficients (i.e., pattern matrix) for the four dimensions of academic efficacy beliefs.

**Table 4. Factor Loadings for Student EAP Efficacy Beliefs Towards Course Objectives**

Items	Factor				Extracted Commun ality
	NT	AT	GD	QT	
How confident are you that you can...					
take detailed notes while reading business texts so that they will be useful to complete assignments	1.04				.899
use your notes to explain key concepts from the textbook or lectures in your own words	.805				.695
take detailed notes during a lecture, recording all major facts and opinions expressed by the speaker	.774				.747
scan quickly through a business textbook to find relevant information		.913			.721
comprehend long, complex passages in business textbooks		.855			.717
write a well-structured business report		.751			.649
use a good range of specialized vocabulary for matters connected to international business		.407			.583
give a clear, well-structured presentation on a topic related to international business		.326			.647
lead a discussion that promotes group participation and facilitates understanding			.893		.782
develop clear ideas and arguments in your discussion, and support them with persuasive evidence			.888		.841
actively participate in academic discussions on topics related to international business			.760		.758

formulate and ask relevant questions after a presentation or lecture	.92 6	.776
effectively deal with questions about your presentation	.85 8	.778

Notes: Loadings below .3 suppressed; Extraction method = Principal axis factoring; Promax rotation with Kaiser normalization; NT = *Note Taking*; RP = *Academic Tasks*; GD = *Group Discussion*; QT = *Question Time*

After examining and considering the common aspects between the items that loaded together for each factor, latent constructs were labelled by the researcher. The four dimensions were labelled (1) '*Note Taking*', which included items related to taking and using notes from readings and lectures; (2) '*Academic Tasks*', which included items focused on the research and presentation of knowledge via prepared written and oral modalities – including item 9 that loaded primarily, although weakly, on this factor; (3) '*Group Discussion*', which included items related to the sharing of ideas in group settings for argumentation and debate<sup>3</sup>; and (4) '*Question Time*' which included items that reflected the spontaneous use of English for dialogic purposes in large-group, public settings. There were strong positive correlations between each factor, which indicated that students with higher confidence towards one dimension of activity also have stronger efficacy for others. This finding suggested that each factor measured different dimensions of the same construct (i.e., EAP efficacy beliefs).

### ***6.3 Are there significant differences in student efficacy for different dimensions of activity?***

Factor scores were calculated using composite averages for items loading above .3 on the pattern analysis. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of the composite factors scores for the four dimensions. A one-way within-subjects ANOVA with a Greenhouse-Geisser correction was carried out to investigate whether there were significant differences in efficacy strength for different factors. Results revealed that there were significant differences between dimensions of efficacy,  $F(2.70, 576) = 14.10$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\omega^2 = .01$ . Pairwise post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni

<sup>3</sup> Follow-up interviews confirmed that 'discussion' was interpreted by students to refer to situations where students work in smaller groups, seated, with shared responsibility for the task.

correction and effect sizes ( $r$ ,  $\eta^2_p$ ) were calculated. *Question Time* ( $M= 6.21$ ,  $SD=1.77$ ) significantly differed from *Note Taking* ( $M=6.75$ ,  $SD=1.51$ ),  $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2_p=.12$ ,  $r=.34$ ; *Academic Tasks* ( $M=6.51$ ,  $SD=1.31$ ),  $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2_p=.05$ ,  $r=.23$ ; and *Group Discussion* ( $M=6.61$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ),  $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2_p=.07$ ,  $r=.27$ . Thus, although the composite averages for the different dimensions of academic EAP efficacy beliefs look similar, these findings indicate that the difference between the strength of student efficacy for *Question Time* versus other dimensions is not due to chance, indicating that student efficacy towards this area of activity is significantly weaker than for other dimensions of academic efficacy beliefs.

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for the Composite Factors Scores by Dimension**

Dimension	No. of items	$M$	$SD$	$\alpha$
<i>Note Taking</i>	3	6.75	1.51	.91
<i>Academic Tasks</i>	5	6.51	1.31	.90
<i>Group Discussion</i>	3	6.61	1.54	.87
<i>Question Time</i>	2	6.21	1.77	.92

Notes: N = 217

#### ***6.4 Why do students have stronger or weaker efficacy towards different tasks and dimensions of activity?***

Interview findings suggested that students dynamically assessed the task difficulty against the skills they perceived to be available to them whilst considering past experiences and other sources of efficacy information - providing support for models of efficacy belief assessment (e.g., Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Student interview findings also supported the primary findings of the analysis of the questionnaire data; all students gave lower rating to items related to *Question Time* in comparison to the presentation monologue item.

#### ***Perceived Mastery: ‘I’m used to it’***

Past experiences (i.e. perceived mastery experiences) with the task were the primary source of stronger student efficacy towards future EMI usage, as these influenced perceived competence towards the task. For example, Student A suggested that he was more confident towards note

taking because he had studied strategies in class and had successfully completed the task many times with L1 speakers, explaining *“I think I can take the very detailed notes because I could take notes from guest speakers”*. When talking about item 6 regarding note taking for readings, Student C echoed his comments, revealing *“I’m just used to taking notes because in each EAP class, we get [that kind of] assignment”*, while Student B commented about item 2, *“we had so many readings and so many things to read. Whenever I don’t have time, which is most of the time, I have to scan quickly, [so] I’ve done that”*. Findings aligned with previous studies of EAP learners (e.g., Evans & Morrison, 2011) where task practice appears essential for developing positive beliefs, as these provide opportunities for mastery experiences and strengthen beliefs about perceived competence (Bandura, 1997).

### ***Efficacy Assessment: ‘That’s a bit harder’***

However, while practice appeared to positively influence efficacy beliefs, perceptions of task difficulty also influenced the strength of participants’ efficacy towards different tasks. For example, Student C added that she was less confident towards note taking for oral lectures (i.e., item 7) in comparison to taking notes from business texts, where *“reading is like a book, right? So, I can read it several times, and understand it, but a lecture, if I miss what the speaker said - I have to take notes, but I don’t understand fully”*. In other words, students appeared to be dynamically assessing the task requirements against the skills they perceived to be available to them when considering their efficacy towards different tasks *within* the same dimension of activity.

### ***Task Difficulty and Perceived Skill: ‘I can’t prepare for it’***

Participants’ comments about responding to questions at the end of presentation (i.e., item 11) were primarily focused on their perceptions of task difficulty. In particular, students focused on the unpredictability of QA time in comparison to the monologue. For example, Student C explained *“[f]or the presentation, I can prepare for it and I can practice, so I’m very confident, but when it comes to the questions, we don’t know what other students [are] going to ask about, so, I can kind of prepare for it, but not necessarily, so I get very nervous”*. Her comments were echoed by Student D, who explained, *“it’s hard when you get asked a question, you cannot predict what kind of question will be asked”*.

### ***Social Tasks: ‘I can’t ask a stupid question’***

For the task of formulating and asking questions as an audience member (i.e., item 10), three of the four students discussed the social nature of the task, and a perceived lack of skill. For example, Student A suggested that the strategy training currently provided to students was not comprehensive enough for students to feel confident about formulating questions. He explained, *“I think that if we have [more] classes to create the good questions... there are lots of other methods to create the question... so if we have [such training], we can be a more creative audience”*. Student C revealed that she did not perceive her English skill to influence her capability for asking questions, but rather her skill to develop *quality* questions, and her anxiety about how her questions would be considered by other audience members - particularly as the content became more difficult in EMI classes. She explained, *“[a]sking a question is like, no problem for me because I don’t get nervous to speak in front of many people, but, thinking [of] the question... I feel like I have to ask relevant questions because I’m speaking to the whole class. I feel like I can’t ask a stupid question... what’s [my teacher] going to say if I say this, or what other students are going to say if I say, like, this question”*. In other words, her perceived capability towards the task appears to be influenced by the social nature of the task and anxiety about negative evaluation. Social fear of speaking in class is well established in the literature (Gilkinson, 1942), and this finding aligns with other studies of L2 learners (Kitano, 2001; Wang & Roopchund, 2015; Zappa-Hollman, 2007) that have shown anxiety about negative peer and teacher evaluation to influence learner beliefs and behaviour.

### ***Efficacy Development: ‘I’ve practiced that with my friends’***

Respondents discussed prior experiences they perceived to be successful or failures (i.e., enactive mastery and non-mastery experiences) and how these influenced their efficacy towards QA time items. All students had participated in a three-week overseas EAP course during the summer vacation in their first year, which is one of the primary sources of presentation skills instruction. Interview findings suggested that students drew upon their experiences from these programs when considering their efficacy, and suggested that the practice opportunities they engaged in influenced their confidence. Student B, who in comparison to other participants, was relatively more confident towards QA time explained, *“when I went to [the program], I had to do lots of research and then*

*I had to answer lots of questions and it was kind of pressure at first, but then, after a while, you get used to it, and it becomes, a little bit... fun to answer those questions – it's kind of satisfying".* When asked about what made her change her view of the task, she added *"I would say that the amount that we practiced, and also it's just practicing with your friends"*. She continued, *"when you're asked questions, you feel nervous, because you think that you don't really know the answer"* but practice *"makes us comfortable and more confident"*. This was echoed by Student D, who noted that although *Question Time* was difficult, *"I've practiced how to deal with questions [and] I know phrases I can use"*. She indicated that practicing with her friends during the summer EAP program, in a low stress environment, had helped her *"feel more confident"* towards the task. These responses suggested that efficacy development for social tasks, such as QA time may be influenced by perceptions of 'audience congeniality' (MacIntyre & MacDonald, 1998; MacIntyre & Thivierge, 1995; MacIntyre, Thivierge, & MacDonald, 1997).

The preparatory program often uses small group presentations (i.e., groups of four students presenting to each other) for class activities. Respondents noted that while such opportunities have provided them many experiences to master the presentation monologue and associated skills (e.g., gestures, eye contact), there is little time for practicing QA time tasks in small groups. Student B suggested that putting a greater focus on question development (for listeners) and question answering (for speakers) in that small group setting would help as preparation for presentations to larger audiences. She explained *"it's just practicing with your friends, so it's not really pressure"* while Student C suggested that *"maybe it's more relaxed because it's a small group"*. Such situations may provide opportunities to practice skills (i.e., opportunities for mastery experiences) where the physiological response burden on individuals is reduced (i.e., less nervousness with a smaller group of friends) with lower demands on mental resources. In other words, small group practice may allow individuals to focus on task demands rather than coping strategies for emotional control (Bandura, 1997).

### ***Towards Stronger Efficacy: 'Perhaps, if we have more time?'***

Beyond less-stressful practice opportunities, respondents suggested other affordances in task management that could help them to develop stronger efficacy – highlighting opportunities in course or activity organization. Student C suggested that simply giving students more time to think

of questions would help, a reminder to instructors that students cannot operate as quickly when working in their L2 (Hincks, 2005). She also suggested that allowing students to formulate and/or check questions with a partner or in a group would reduce social fear of negative evaluation by providing a step for identifying whether her question ideas were appropriate.

***Teacher Influence: ‘They always ask really hard questions’***

Finally, interview findings highlighted the role of the teacher as an actor in the classroom, and suggested that teachers may need to consider the immediate (i.e., upon the student towards which questions are directed) and vicarious (i.e., upon observing students) impact of their questions on student efficacy development. Student D explained “[my teacher] always asks really hard questions” while Student C commented “if I see [my teacher] raise their hand, I get kind of scared about that”. Three of the respondents indicated that they had enactive experiences of failure when addressing teacher questions. Student A explained, “I remember when I was [overseas], I got a question from the [teacher], but I could not completely understand [and] answer the question.”

Teacher questions may also negatively influence non-participants (i.e., students observing the task). Student C discussed how her teacher had asked an extension question to a speaker that involved new information, explaining “[my teacher] gave the question about some new information... [they] did it in today’s class, to somebody, and I was like, if that was me, I would be, dying right now”. Overall, interview findings suggested that teacher interactions during QA time (as opposed to feedback) were a strong *negative* influence on learner efficacy towards this dimension of activity. It may be that teacher questions are primarily focused on challenging students to further develop and apply ideas to “see how much I know” (Student D). However, such a focus may not give opportunities for students to develop skills, where provocative and demanding questions – or even facial expressions - may lead to anxiety for students (Radzuan & Kaur, 2011). Teacher ‘immediacy’ or behaviours which help reduce psychological distance between individuals (e.g., smiling, eye contact, praise, humor, see Mehrabian, 1971) has been shown to reduce anxiety for more anxious learners (Ellis, 1995), and this finding highlights the importance of direct and indirect teacher feedback on learner beliefs.



## 7. Discussion and Implications for Teaching

This study has explored the self-efficacy beliefs of L2 learners towards the course objectives of a preparatory EAP program, identifying four underlying dimensions of efficacy beliefs towards different areas of use. Findings suggest that the strength of learner beliefs vary by the dimension of activity, where students are less efficacious towards certain tasks (e.g., business report writing) and domains of use (e.g., QA time). Results align with previous studies of business students (Crosling & Ward, 2002; Evans, 2010) and BELF users (Evans, 2013; Kassim & Ali, 2010; Rogerson-Revell, 2008) that have identified the spontaneous use of English in presentations and meetings to be a difficult task for EAL users. It is generally accepted that prior experience influences self-efficacy beliefs by providing opportunities for perceived skill development (Bandura, 1997; Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), and interview findings confirm that task experience is a vital source of information informing efficacy beliefs.

### 7.1 *'Presentation Skills'*

Findings from the first stage of this study develop knowledge in the EAP and ESP field by providing some empirical support for the contention that QA time is a significantly different domain of activity to presentation (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2012, 2014; Warren, 2014; Wulff et al., 2009). Specifically, results suggest that oral presentation, as an activity, reflects two underlying dimensions of efficacy beliefs – where users had significantly weaker efficacy towards that more spontaneous QA time genre of use. This finding may be an important one for teachers and materials developers to recognize, where 'presentation skills' encompasses two very different types of tasks, which both need attention.

Furthermore, interview findings highlighted pedagogical problems within the preparatory program, some of which may be generalizable and useful for consideration by other EAP contexts. Participants suggested that teaching interventions for the development of 'presentation skills' are focused on skills informing the monologue rather than attending to learner needs for QA time, where learner agency beliefs are weaker. Accordingly, results suggest a number of areas where change in course materials and teaching interventions may be needed. For example, these may focus on language training (e.g., hedging, patterns for introducing ideas, patterns for responses) (Wulff et al., 2009) and sociocultural instruction about the purposes and structure of QA time,

which may be relatively unfamiliar to L2 Japanese users (Jones, 1999) but has been to be important for future EMI study (Evans, 2010).

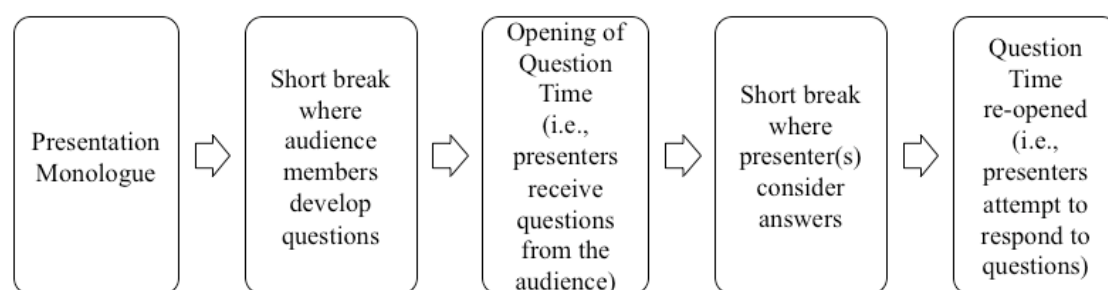
While these findings may not be generalizable to other contexts, results highlight issues that could be considered by other preparatory programs and suggest areas for future research. For example, future studies could investigate the breakdown of instruction across different aspects of presentation skills (e.g., monologue, QA time) within texts, classes, and programs, and whether these are perceived to meet learner needs. Future studies could also investigate learner beliefs about presentation on a wider scale.

## ***7.2 Social Tasks, Time Pressure, Anxiety, and Efficacy Belief Development***

Interview findings from the follow-up study provide further evidence for the theorized ways in which perceived task difficulty influences efficacy beliefs (Gist & Mitchell, 1992), and suggest a number of ways in which pedagogy for EAP tasks can be developed. The study highlights two factors that appear to influence language learner efficacy beliefs. As tasks become more social and involve greater time pressure (e.g., QA time), findings indicate that learners attend to perceptions of task difficulty and associate tasks with negative psychological states. Nash, Crimmins and Oprea (2015) have suggested that student learning experiences for public speaking may be “essentially emotional”, where cognition is influenced by affective filters such as fear and anxiety (p. 10). Interview findings highlighted student anxiety related to the time pressure of QA time, where EAP users cannot operate as quickly in their L2 (Hincks, 2005), and require extemporaneous speech - a considerable challenge for L2 learners (Zappa-Hollman, 2007). Studies have noted that QA time is a social activity that involves spontaneous language use in a setting where the quality of the question or answer is likely to be evaluated by other actors (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2012), and findings develop knowledge by providing evidence that learners consider negative audience evaluation in the assessment of their efficacy beliefs.

In terms of EAP pedagogy, results highlight the importance of strategy training and activity organization for reducing learner anxiety during skill development and practice. Interview findings revealed that efforts to reduce the influence of spontaneity and social embarrassment for learners may be effective for influencing efficacy development. Specifically, in order for learners to focus on mastery goals that inform cognitions of perceived success, relatively small affordances in task

organization may relieve student perceptions of task difficulty (e.g., time, social fear). For example, rather than jumping straight from the presentation monologue to QA time, efficacy development for the learners who are asking questions may be positively influenced by having a short break where they can collaboratively develop questions. Furthermore, breaking up question/answer time may help presenters focus on the task of successfully dealing with questions. In other words, taking another short break between the asking and answering of audience questions may positively influence presenters' self-beliefs towards the task. Simply giving presenters some time to prepare answers (see Figure 1) may be useful for helping students focus on strategies for successful completion of the task.



**Figure 1. Affordances for Reducing Time Pressure During Presentation QA Time**

Furthermore, interview results highlighted other means for reducing the impact of social fear (i.e., negative evaluation of audience members), as opportunities to ‘desensitize’ audience members of social fear may be required to address anxiety about negative peer and teacher evaluation. Specifically, interview findings indicate that greater student collaboration may positively influence efficacy. For example, encouraging students to develop questions in pairs or groups, as suggested by Student C, may encourage learners to participate, reduce social fear as a desensitization procedure, and provide opportunities for students to practice skills related to QA time. Such procedures may be particularly relevant for use with groups of Japanese (and other East Asian learners from Confucian cultures) learners who are likely to value collective action (Kitao & Kitao, 1985) and may give more weight to other ‘other-oriented’ evaluations (Phan & Locke, 2015).

Results also have implications for teacher behaviour in EAP classrooms, and the importance of facilitating a ‘welcoming’ atmosphere for QA time. Previous studies have suggested that teacher immediacy behaviours and the facilitation of a positive atmosphere have a significant influence on

the development of student confidence towards public speaking (Ellis, 1995; Morita, 2000) and willingness or communicate (Fallah, 2014). This study highlights this issue and provides specific areas of teacher activity that may need consideration by EAP instructors. Specifically, findings suggest that instructors need to carefully consider the difficulty of the questions they pose to students, as learners appear to strongly attend to such experiences, and therefore these may significantly influence efficacy development.

Finally, findings also provide further support for the contention that EAP students learn by doing (Evans and Morrison, 2011). This study builds upon previous work by highlighting the value of small-group practice opportunities for efficacy development. Respondents talked about the ease of practicing with friends, and individuals who perceive positive audience reactions may be able to ‘desensitize’ public speaking anxiety (MacIntyre & MacDonald, 1998). In other words, practice in a less threatening environment may allow learners to focus more on the mastery of skills.

Of course, the affordances introduced in the previous paragraphs can be reduced over time (e.g., less time to no preparation time; group preparation to individual preparation; concept check questions to extension questions) to provide more authentic experiences and greater challenge to students as they move through the preparatory program. Also, while the suggestions listed in this section are specific to the current program, one value of this study is that it provides specific ideas, developed from analysis of interviews with learners, about how L2 EAP efficacy beliefs may be developed. Furthermore, suggestions may be generalizable to the wider field (i.e., other EAP and ESP preparatory programs), in that many other programs are likely to have students completing presentations with QA time that involves extemporaneous speech in a public setting.

## **8. Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study has explored the EAP self-efficacy beliefs towards EMI preparation program objectives of second year Japanese university business management students. The study has shown how quantitative analysis methods can be used as part of EAP/ESP studies to better understand student needs (Gollin-Kies, 2014) and has provided empirical evidence that QA time is a significantly different domain of activity to the presentation monologue, where learners were significantly less confident towards QA time in comparison to other domains of EAP activity. Findings from the follow up study helped to develop the interpretation of this finding, by highlighting perceptions of

task difficulty and the social nature of QA time. Findings also identified areas where efficacy towards QA time can be developed, some of which may be generalizable to other EAP and ESP contexts.

The study has a number of limitations. One concerns the specificity of the course objectives and context of use (Hyland, 2002). Although the program objectives are designed to reflect the key activities for EMI study, these may not include all key EAP domains of activity and findings are limited to one specific EAP program in Japan, making it difficult to generalize to other EAP contexts. Other limitations in the research design are the time frame of the study. Although the program did not significantly change over the course of the study, follow-up interviews were carried out with a different group of students to those who completed the survey. Another weakness of the study is that only a small number of students volunteered to participate in the interviews, limiting the extent to which findings reflect all students' views. However, these limitations also provide opportunities for future studies to explore, such as wider studies of factors that influence student efficacy. For example, studies have shown that perceptions of English proficiency may also influence learner efficacy and anxiety (Phakiti et al., 2013; Zappa-Hollman, 2007). This study has also not considered other demographic factors that may be related to stronger or weaker efficacy and has not examined student efficacy in relation to achievement. Accordingly, future studies could investigate the interaction between these factors and student efficacy beliefs towards different domains of academic English. This study has explored EAP self-efficacy and future studies, using new samples, could investigate the factor structure of the scale using confirmatory factor analysis and other SEM techniques.

Although this study investigated student efficacy in one preparatory program at a university in Japan and therefore the generalizability of the findings to other contexts is limited, results may have implications for similar programs in Asia and the wider EAP community. For example, the study has highlighted the treatment of 'presentation skills' in the program, where strategy training and practice activities need to be more focused on QA time, which is becoming recognized as an essential, and difficult task for future EMI and BELF users (Evans, 2010, 2013; Rogerson-Revell, 2008) and requires learners to develop specific skills (Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez, 2012; Warren, 2014; Wulff et al., 2009). This article has also provided a number of suggestions about how EAP programs can scaffold learning opportunities to develop learners' skills and agency

beliefs as they prepare for English medium learning. Overall, it remains important for teachers to consider curriculum, materials, and activity management as potential sources for learner belief development, where the affective influence of classroom activities may provide important opportunities for student efficacy belief development.

## References

- Atkinson, D. (1997). A critical approach to critical thinking in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(1), 71-94.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In F. Pajares & T. C. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 307-337). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Bong, M., & Skaalvik, E. M. (2003). Academic self-concept and self-efficacy: How different are they really? *Educational Psychology Review*, 15(1), 1-40.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Byun, K., Chu, H., Kim, M., Park, I., Kim, S., & Jung, J. (2011). English-medium teaching in Korean higher education: Policy debates and reality. *Higher Education*, 62(4), 431-449.
- Clerehan, R. (1995). Taking it down: Notetaking practices of L1 and L2 students. *English for Specific Purposes*, 14(2), 137-155. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906\(95\)00003-A](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(95)00003-A)
- Collins, K. M. T., Leech, N. L., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Slate, J. R. (2007). Conducting mixed analyses: A general typology. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 1(1), 4-17.

- Costello, A. B., & Osborne, J. W. (2005). Best practices in exploratory factor analysis: Four recommendations for getting the most from your analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 10(7), 1-9. <http://pareonline.net/pdf/v10n7.pdf>
- Crosling, G., & Ward, I. (2002). Oral communication: The workplace needs and uses of business graduate employees. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(1), 41-57. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(00\)00031-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00031-4)
- Distefano, C., Zhu, M., & Mindrila, D. (2009). Understanding and using factor scores: Considerations for the applied researcher. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 14(20), 1-11.
- Ellis, K. (1995). Apprehension, self-perceived competency, and teacher immediacy in the laboratory-supported public speaking course: Trends and relationships. *Communication Education*, 44(1), 64-78. doi: 10.1080/03634529509378998
- Evans, S. (2010). Business as usual: The use of English in the professional world in hong Kong. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(3), 153-167. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.11.005>
- Evans, S. (2012). Designing email tasks for the business English classroom: Implications from a study of hong Kong's key industries. *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(3), 202-212. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2012.03.001>
- Evans, S. (2013). "Just wanna give you guys a bit of an update": Insider perspectives on business presentations in hong Kong. *English for Specific Purposes*, 32(4), 195-207. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2013.05.003>
- Evans, S., & Morrison, B. (2011). Meeting the challenges of English-medium higher education: The first-year experience in hong Kong. *English for Specific Purposes*, 30(3), 198-208. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.01.001>
- Fallah, N. (2014). Willingness to communicate in English, communication self-confidence, motivation, shyness and teacher immediacy among Iranian English-major undergraduates:

- A structural equation modeling approach. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 30, 140–147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2013.12.006>
- Gilkinson, H. (1942). Social fears as reported by students in college speech classes. *Speech Monographs*, 9(1), 141-160. doi: 10.1080/03637754209390068
- Gist, M. E., & Mitchell, T. R. (1992). Self-efficacy: A theoretical analysis of its determinants and malleability. *Academy of Management Review*, 17(2), 183-211.
- Gollin-Kies, S. (2014). Methods reported in esp research articles: A comparative survey of two leading journals. *English for Specific Purposes*, 36, 27-34. doi: 10.1016/j.esp.2014.04.001
- Gorsuch, G. (2009). Investigating second language learner self-efficacy and future expectancy of second language use for high-stakes program evaluation. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42(3), 505-540.
- Graham, S. (2011). Self-efficacy and academic listening. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(2), 113-117. doi: 10.1016/j.jeap.2011.04.001
- Henson, R. K., & Roberts, J. K. (2006). Use of exploratory factor analysis in published research: Common errors and some comment on improved practice. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(3), 393-416.
- Hincks, R. (2005). Measures and perceptions of liveliness in student oral presentation speech: A proposal for an automatic feedback mechanism. *System*, 33(4), 575-591. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2005.04.002>
- Hyland, K. (2002). Specificity revisited: How far should we go now? *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(4), 385-395. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(01\)00028-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(01)00028-X)
- Hyland, K., & Hamp-Lyons, L. (2002). Eap: Issues and directions. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 1(1), 1-12. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585\(02\)00002-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585(02)00002-4)



- Jones, J. F. (1999). From silence to talk: Cross-cultural ideas on students participation in academic group discussion. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(3), 243-259. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(97\)00059-8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(97)00059-8)
- Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2010). “English? – oh, it’s just work!”: A study of belf users’ perceptions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(3), 204-209. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.06.004>
- Kassim, H., & Ali, F. (2010). English communicative events and skills needed at the workplace: Feedback from the industry. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(3), 168-182. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.10.002>
- Kim, S. (2006). Academic oral communication needs of east Asian international graduate students in non-science and non-engineering fields. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(4), 479-489. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2005.10.001>
- Kitano, K. (2001). Anxiety in the college Japanese language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(4), 549-566. doi: 10.2307/1193075
- Kitao, K., & Kitao, S. K. (1985). Effects of social environment on Japanese and American communication. ERIC Database.
- Lee, G. (2009). Speaking up: Six Korean students’ oral participation in class discussions in US graduate seminars. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28(3), 142-156. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.01.007>
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Renée MacDonald, J. (1998). Public speaking anxiety: Perceived competence and audience congeniality. *Communication Education*, 47(4), 359-365. doi: 10.1080/03634529809379142
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Thivierge, K. A. (1995). The effects of audience pleasantness, audience familiarity, and speaking contexts on public speaking anxiety and willingness to speak. *Communication Quarterly*, 43(4), 456-466. doi: 10.1080/01463379509369992

- MacIntyre, P. D., Thivierge, K. A., & MacDonald, J. R. (1997). The effects of audience interest, responsiveness, and evaluation on public speaking anxiety and related variables. *Communication Research Reports*, 14(2), 157-168. doi: 10.1080/08824099709388657
- Mehrabian, A. (1971). *Silent messages*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Mills, N., Pajares, F., & Herron, C. (2006). A reevaluation of the role of anxiety: Self-efficacy, anxiety, and their relation to reading and listening proficiency. *Foreign Language Annals*, 39(2), 276-295.
- Mills, N., Pajares, F., & Herron, C. (2007). Self-efficacy of college intermediate french students: Relation to achievement and motivation. *Language Learning*, 57(3), 417-442.
- Morita, N. (2000). Discourse socialization through oral classroom activities in a tesl graduate program. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2), 279-310. doi: 10.2307/3587953
- Nash, G., Crimmins, G., & Oprescu, F. (2015). If first-year students are afraid of public speaking assessments what can teachers do to alleviate such anxiety? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1-15. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2015.1032212
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-pacific region. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613. doi: 10.2307/3588214
- Pajares, F. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in academic settings. *Review of Educational Research*, 66(4), 543-578.
- Pajares, F. (2003). Self-efficacy beliefs, motivation, and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 19(2), 139-158. doi: 10.1080/10573560308222
- Phakiti, A., Hirsh, D., & Woodrow, L. (2013). It's not only English: Effects of other individual factors on English language learning and academic learning of ESL international students in australia. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 12(3), 239-258. doi: 10.1177/1475240913513520

- Phan, N. T. T., & Locke, T. (2015). Sources of self-efficacy of vietnamese EFL teachers: A qualitative study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 52, 73-82. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2015.09.006
- Querol-Julián, M., & Fortanet-Gómez, I. (2012). Multimodal evaluation in academic discussion sessions: How do presenters act and react? *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(4), 271-283. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2012.06.001>
- Querol Julián, M., & Fortanet Gómez, I. (2014). Evaluation in discussion sessions of conference presentations: Theoretical foundations for a multimodal analysis. *Kalbotyra*, 66, 77-97.
- Radzuan, N. R. M., & Kaur, S. (2011). Technical oral presentations in English: Qualitative analysis of malaysian engineering undergraduates' sources of anxiety. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29(0), 1436-1445. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.383>
- Rogerson-Revell, P. (2008). Participation and performance in international business meetings. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27(3), 338-360. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2008.02.003>
- Salkind, N. J. 2010. *Encyclopedia of Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Saito, H., & Ebsworth, M. E. (2004). Seeing English language teaching and learning through the eyes of Japanese EFL and ESL students. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37(1), 111-124. doi: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.2004.tb02178.x
- Shang, H.-F. (2010). Reading strategy use, self-efficacy and EFL reading comprehension. *Asian EFL Journal*, 12(2), 18-42.
- Stevens, J. P. (1996). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon/Pearson Education.

- Tsou, W., & Chen, F. (2014). Esp program evaluation framework: Description and application to a Taiwanese university esp program. *English for Specific Purposes*, 33, 39-53. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2013.07.008>
- Usher, E. L., & Pajares, F. (2009). Sources of self-efficacy in mathematics: A validation study. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 34(1), 89-101.
- Van De Poel, K., & Gasiorek, J. (2012). Effects of an efficacy-focused approach to academic writing on students' perceptions of themselves as writers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 11(4), 294-303. doi: [doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2012.07.003](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2012.07.003)
- Wang, C., & Kim, D-H. (2011). *Examination of the psychometric properties of a self-efficacy scale*. Paper presented at the Roundtable paper presentation at the Annual Conference of American Educational Research Association (AERA), New Orleans, LA.
- Wang, C., Kim, D-H., Bai, R., & Hu, J. (2014). Psychometric properties of a self-efficacy scale for English language learners in China. *System*, 44, 24-33. doi: [10.1016/j.system.2014.01.015](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2014.01.015)
- Wang, C., Kim, D-H., Bong, M., & Ahn, H. S. (2013). Examining measurement properties of an English self-efficacy scale for English language learners in Korea. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 59, 24-34.
- Wang, P., & Roopchund, R. (2015). Chinese students' English-speaking anxiety in asking questions in the msc TESOL classroom. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(2), p1.
- Warren, M. (2014). "Preparation is everything": Meetings in professional contexts in hong Kong. *English for Specific Purposes*, 36, 12-26. doi: [10.1016/j.esp.2014.03.001](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2014.03.001)
- Wulff, S., Swales, J. M., & Keller, K. (2009). "We have about seven minutes for questions": The discussion sessions from a specialized conference. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28(2), 79-92. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2008.11.002>

Zappa-Hollman, S. (2007). Academic presentations across post-secondary contexts: The discourse socialization of non-native English speakers. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(4), 455-485. doi: 10.3138/cmlr.63.4.455

Zwick, W. R., & Velicer, W. F. (1986). Comparison of five rules for determining the number of components to retain. *Psychological Bulletin*, 99(3), 432-442. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.99.3.432

## Appendix A. Transcription, Interview Coding, Thematic Analysis Procedures

This appendix provides further information about the interview codes used (Table 6); transcription conventions; and short example from one coded interview (Figure 3). It also includes a table with the procedures followed for the thematic analysis of interviews and the table of key findings (Table 7). Firstly, Table 6 provides a list of the coding schedule used for the interview data.

**Table 6. Transcription Conventions and Interview Codes**

Assessment of Efficacy	Codes	
Task demand (i.e., focus on task difficulty)	Task	
Perceived Ability (i.e., focus on individual skills towards the task)	Skill	
Theoretical sources of efficacy information	Codes	
Mastery Experience (from personal experience)	+ME	-ME
Vicarious Experience (from observation of others)	+VE	-VE
Social Persuasion (encouragement by teacher, other students)	+SP	-SP
Physiological States (perceived anxiety, nervousness, calmness)	+PS	-PS
Initial marginal remarks	Themes	
Group practice; Pair practice	Practice	
Strategy training; teaching	Training	
Pair work, group work, more time	Affordances	

### *Transcription conventions*

00:00	<i>Time (Speaker)</i>
...	Material omitted, unable to be transcribed
-	Hesitation, pause
[      ]	Exclamations; extra information added to clarify the subject or topic
<i>italics</i>	Japanese words
(      )	English translation for Japanese words

05:50 Researcher

So, now we are down to things which you are relatively less confident about, for example, you're quite confident or more confident about giving a presentation, and a little bit more confident about asking questions, but less confident about thinking about questions and less confident about answering questions, can you tell me a little about these ones?

06:12 Student C

Um, like, asking a question is like, no problem for me - because I don't get embarrassed and I don't get nervous, like, to speak in front of many people, so that's because I don't get, like, I'm kind of confident about giving a presentation - but - like, I can speak, but, like thinking [of] the question is - like, I feel like I have to ask, um, like relevant questions because I'm speaking to the whole class - I feel like I can't ask, like, a stupid questions, so I always think, like, what's [my teacher] going to say if I say this... [laughter] or other people, like what other students are going to say if I say, like, this questions, so like

07:03 Researcher

So, you mean, you're kind of evaluating whether your questions going to be good or not

07:13 Student C

[Laughs], yeah, so that's why, I mean, yeah so thinking about the questions are like, kind of - if I have a question, then - I will, like, raise your hand and like, ask the presenters, but - until the question comes up, y'know, it takes time...

08:13: Researcher

So, like the English that you want to use isn't the problem?

08:16 Student C

No, it's the questions, itself - maybe - because I don't have, like, not enough knowledge to like, connect the information, between like what the presenter gave us, and I, my, like, knowledge, so like, um, my questions are always gonna be something like - for example, in ESP, something like if one person gives like some vocab meanings, the questions going to be like, always 'Is that - like - this?' - but like [my teacher] always gives like 'So...' the connecting, like, other ideas, and like 'So, you said this, is there something da da da' but I can't think of those questions

**Figure 3. Example from Coded Interview (Student C)**

Table 7 shows the steps and processes followed in the theoretical thematic analysis, which were based on six steps outlined by Braun and Clark (2006), involving familiarisation with data; initial coding; initial themes, them review, theme definition; and the production of a report (Table 8) with key findings. Examples in Table 7 and 8 refer to findings introduced and discussed in this study.

**Table 7. Thematic Analysis Processes with Examples (for more, see Braun & Clark, 2006)**

Steps	Processes
Familiarization	The interviews were transcribed, corrected, read, and re-read
Initial coding	<p>Factors considered by participants in discussing the assessment of their efficacy were highlighted and ‘tagged’ to assign a unit of meaning (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994) for ‘task’ or ‘skill’ according to the theorized factors influencing of efficacy <i>assessment</i> (see Gist &amp; Mitchell, 1992). For example, when a participant mentioned their relatively weak confidence towards asking questions at the end of a presentation, “I think I don’t have enough info or knowledge”, it was coded with ‘skill’.</p> <p>Transcripts were reviewed and <i>sources</i> of self-efficacy belief information were coded, that is, mastery experiences (ME), vicarious experiences (VE), social persuasion (PS), and physiological states (SP) (Bandura, 1997). In addition, + or – symbols were used to indicate whether the source mentioned was positive or negative. For example, when a participant was asked to explain her relatively strong confidence towards answering questions at the end of a presentation, she mentioned a positive past personal experience “I would say that [it’s] the amount that we practiced - it’s just practicing with your friends - so it’s not really a pressure”, it was coded with ‘+ME’.</p> <p>Finally, ‘marginal remarks’ (Tuckett, 2005) were added to the transcripts for students’ suggested ways to increase their efficacy (i.e., activities to help increase confidence) or key , the transcript was tagged with a noun for the task. For example, when a participant explained what he felt would help increase his confidence for asking questions, “if we have [more] classes to create the good questions, like [our teacher] told us 5W and 1H... there are lots of other methods to create the question... so, if we have [such training], we can be a more creative audience”, it was coded with ‘strategy training’.</p>
Initial themes	Codes were analysed to identify <i>repeated</i> patterns – involving actors (e.g., teachers) or repeated ideas. For example, a number of positive past experience codes (i.e., +ME) related to familiarity were grouped together in a theme called ‘familiarity’ (e.g., “I’ve done that” and “I’m used to it”). There was some overlap of themes when themes had different focuses, such as on the task (e.g., social tasks) and particular actors (e.g., teachers). For example, “[my teacher] gave the question about some new information... [they] did it in today’s class, to



	somebody, and I was like, if that was me, I would be, dying right now”. This responses was was coded –VE and included in the theme ‘Social tasks’ and ‘Teacher’.
Theme review	Themes were reviewed iteratively (i.e., checking notes, re-listening to the interview, comparing examples) to ensure clarity of coding for themes and across marginal remarks. For example, this statement “if we have [more] classes to create the good questions, like [our teacher] told us 5W and 1H... there are lots of other methods to create the question... so, if we have [such training], we can be a more creative audience”, was initially coded with ‘strategy training’. It was reviewed for the broader themes of ‘training’ and ‘practice’. Upon re-listening, it appeared clear that the participant was focused on skill development with teacher input, and remained in the theme ‘training’.
Name themes	Themes were reviewed and defined.
Report	Generation of table with key themes, tags, and examples from the interviews.

**Table 8. Example from Report of Key Findings**

Theme	Codes	Examples
<i>Definition</i>		<i>Student: “Quote”</i>
Familiarity		<i>Student A:</i> “I think I can take the very detailed notes because I could take notes from guest speakers” <i>Student B:</i> “Whenever I don’t have time, which is most of the time, I have to scan quickly, [so] I’ve done that” <i>Student C:</i> “I’m just used to taking notes because in each EAP class, we get [that kind of] assignment” <i>Student D:</i> “I’ve practiced how to deal with questions [and] I know phrases I can use”
<i>Factor influencing efficacy focused on understanding of task and skills required based on past experience</i>	Skill +ME +VE	
Knowledge		
<i>Factor influencing efficacy focused on perceived knowledge towards skills required for the task</i>	Skill -ME	<i>Student B:</i> I think I don’t have enough info or knowledge <i>Student C:</i> [To] rephrase it... that’s like really hard for me... maybe that’s because of [my] language?

Time Pressure		Task Skill -ME -VE -PS	<i>Student C</i> : “I can read it several times, and understand it, but a lecture, if I miss what the speaker said”
<i>Factor influencing efficacy focused on perceived task difficulty due to time (NB: often associated with negative physiological state)</i>			<i>Student C</i> : “[f]or the presentation, I can prepare for it and I can practice, so I’m very confident, but when it comes to the questions, we don’t know what other students [are] going to ask about, so, I can kind of prepare for it, but not necessarily, so I get very nervous”
			<i>Student D</i> : “it’s hard when you get asked a question, you cannot predict what kind of question will be asked”
			<i>Student D</i> : “When speaking in front of the class - I get nervous”
			<i>Student C</i> : “what’s [my teacher] going to say if I say this, or what other students are going to say if I say, like, this question”
Social Tasks		Task - ME -VE	<i>Student C</i> : “[my teacher] gave the question about some new information... [they] did it in today’s class, to somebody, and I was like, if that was me, I would be, dying right now”
<i>Factor influencing efficacy focused on social performance – often related to anxiety about group performance</i>			<i>Student D</i> : “[my teacher] always asks really hard questions”
			<i>Student A</i> : “I remember when I was [overseas], I got a question from the [teacher], but I could not completely understand [and] answer the question”
			<i>Student C</i> : “[my teacher] gave the question about some new information... [they] did it in today’s class, to somebody, and I was like, if that was me, I would be, dying right now”
			<i>Student C</i> : “if I see [my teacher] raise their hand, I get kind of scared about that”
Teacher		Task -SP -ME -VE -PS	
<i>Pattern of responses focused on the teacher – (naturally) a key factor in the classroom where students appeared to focus on experiences involving feedback,</i>			

## Appendix B. Exploratory Factor Analysis Tables

Following Henson and Roberts (2006), this appendix is included to provide further information about the exploratory factor analysis carried out in the study, including the cumulative percentage

of variance explained (Table 9); and as the study used oblique rotation, the structure matrix (Table 10) and factor correlation matrix (Table 11) are also included.

**Table 9. Cumulative Percentage of Variance Explained in the Four-Factor Solution**

	Factor Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	8.03	61.79	61.79	7.77	59.79	59.79	6.04
2	1.03	7.94	69.73	.80	6.18	65.96	6.48
3	.78	6.01	75.74	.55	4.22	70.18	6.51
4	.70	5.42	81.16	.47	3.61	73.79	5.81
5	.45	3.44	84.60				

Note: Extraction method = Principal axis factoring

**Table 10. Structure Matrix for Dimensions of EAP Efficacy Beliefs**

Items	Factor			
	NT	AT	GD	QT
<i>How confident are you that you can...</i>				
take detailed notes while reading business texts so that they will be useful to complete assignments	<b>.944</b>	.600	.616	.570
use your notes to explain key concepts from the textbook or lectures in your own words	<b>.832</b>	.588	.608	.555
take detailed notes during a lecture, recording all major facts and opinions expressed by the speaker	<b>.857</b>	.593	.647	.647
scan quickly through a business textbook to find relevant information	.559	<b>.848</b>	.630	.576
comprehend long, complex passages in business textbooks	.561	<b>.845</b>	.665	.579
write a well-structured business report	.546	<b>.804</b>	.640	.608
use a good range of specialized vocabulary for matters connected to international business	.624	<b>.724</b>	.659	.660
give a clear, well-structured presentation on a topic related to international business	.700	<b>.740</b>	.707	.689
lead a discussion that promotes group participation and facilitates understanding	.611	.692	<b>.884</b>	.622
develop clear ideas and arguments in your discussion, and support them with persuasive evidence	.637	.721	<b>.916</b>	.681

actively participate in academic discussions on topics related to international business	.680	.694	<b>.865</b>	.640
formulate and ask relevant questions after a presentation or lecture	.567	.600	.620	<b>.880</b>
effectively deal with questions about your presentation	.596	.651	.638	<b>.881</b>

Notes: Bold font shows factor; Loadings below .3 suppressed; Extraction method = Principal axis factoring; Promax rotation with Kaiser normalization; NT = *Note Taking*; RP = *Academic Tasks*; GD = *Group Discussion*; QT = *Question Time*

**Table 11. Factor Correlation Matrix for the Four-Factor Solution**

Factor	NT	AT	GD	QT
<i>Note Taking</i>	1.000			
<i>Academic Tasks</i>	.678	1.000		
<i>Group Discussion</i>	.706	.773	1.000	
<i>Question Time</i>	.669	.714	.719	1.000

Notes: Extraction method = Principal axis factoring; Promax rotation with Kaiser normalization; NT = *Note Taking*; RP = *Academic Tasks*; GD = *Group Discussion*; QT = *Question Time*