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Korea TESOL Journal

The *Korea TESOL Journal* is a peer-reviewed journal, welcoming previously unpublished practical and scholarly articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with the teaching of English as a foreign language. The *Journal* focuses on articles that are relevant and applicable to the Korean EFL context. Two issues of the *Journal* are published annually.

As the *Journal* is committed to publishing manuscripts that contribute to the application of theory to practice in our profession, submissions reporting relevant research and addressing implications and applications of this research to teaching in the Korean context are particularly welcomed.

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About Korea TESOL

Korea TESOL (KOTESOL; Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) is a professional organization of teachers of English whose main goal is to assist its members in their professional development and to contribute to the improvement of English language teaching (ELT) in Korea. Korea TESOL also serves as a network for teachers to connect with others in the ELT community and as a source of information for ELT resource materials and events in Korea and abroad.

Korea TESOL is proud to be an affiliate of TESOL (TESOL International Association), an international education association of over 10,000 members with headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, USA, as well as an associate of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), an international education association of over 4,000 members with headquarters in Canterbury, Kent, UK.

Korea TESOL had its beginnings in October 1992, when the Association of English Teachers in Korea (AETK) and the Korea Association of Teachers of English (KATE) agreed to unite. Korea TESOL is a not-for-profit organization established to promote scholarship, disseminate information, and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among persons associated with the teaching and learning of English in Korea. In pursuing these goals, Korea TESOL seeks to cooperate with other groups having similar concerns.

Korea TESOL is an independent national affiliate of a growing international movement of teachers, closely associated with not only TESOL and IATEFL but also with PAC (the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies), consisting of JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching), ThaiTESOL (Thailand TESOL), ETA-ROC (English Teachers Association of the Republic of China/Taiwan), FEELTA (Far Eastern English Language Teachers' Association, Russia), and PALT (Philippine Association for Language Teaching, Inc.). Korea TESOL is also associated with MELTA (Malaysia), TEFLIN (Indonesia), CamTESOL (Cambodia), ELTAM/Mongolia TESOL, MAAL (Macau), HAAL (Hong Kong), ELTAI (India), BELTA (Bangladesh), NELTA (Nepal), and most recently with SPELT (Pakistan). Korea TESOL also has partnership arrangements with numerous domestic ELT associations.

The membership of Korea TESOL includes pre-school, elementary school, middle school, high school, and university-level English teachers as well as teachers-in-training, administrators, researchers, materials writers, curriculum developers, and other interested individuals.

Korea TESOL has nine active chapters throughout the nation; members of Korea TESOL are from all areas of Korea and many parts of the world, thus providing Korea TESOL members the benefits of a diverse, inclusive, and multicultural membership.

Korea TESOL holds an annual international conference, a national conference, workshops, and other professional development events, while its chapters hold monthly workshops, annual conferences, symposia, and networking events. Also organized within Korea TESOL are various SIGs (special interest groups) – e.g., Reflective Practice, Young Learners and Teens, Book Clubs, Social Justice, Christian Teachers, Research, and Well-Being – which hold their own meetings and events.

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Research Papers

Korean Undergraduates' Views on Foreign Language Anxiety: Causes and Solutions

Jack Arkell

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This study aims to identify the most anxiety-inducing situations for EFL students at a private Korean university, before allowing students the opportunity to suggest ways in which their levels of foreign language anxiety (FLA) can be mitigated by instructors. To achieve this, a sample of undergraduate students enrolled in EFL courses completed two questionnaires. Firstly, 106 students responded to an adapted version of the FLCAS, with results indicating that the most anxiety-inducing situations were as follows: speaking without preparation, perceiving classmates to have superior English abilities, feeling self-conscious when speaking in front of classmates, feeling nervous when speaking English with native speakers, lacking self-assurance when speaking English in class, and forgetting things due to nerves. In a follow-up questionnaire, 96 students shared ways in which EFL instructors can reduce students' FLA in these situations, producing valuable insights as to how teachers can meet their learners' affective needs.

Keywords: FLA, anxiety, FLCAS, undergraduate, EFL

INTRODUCTION

It is widely agreed that foreign language anxiety (FLA) is one of the most influential variables in the language performance of EFL learners (Horwitz, 2001; Kim, 2002; Liu & Huang, 2011; Park, 2002). While FLA can have a facilitative effect (Scovel, 1978) whereby students study harder to perform more effectively on tests and activities, several negative consequences of FLA have been recognized by researchers. These include reluctance to participate in class (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002), a lack of willingness to communicate with others (Jin & Dewaele, 2018), "mental block" (Liu, 2006, p. 301), impaired linguistic confidence (Marnani & Cuocci, 2022), embarrassment (Özütürk & Hürsen, 2013), and negative effects on learners' affective filter and ability to handle input (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In addition to a range of physical and psychological effects on learners, anxiety has been found to impede language performance across the four skills of speaking (Woodrow, 2006), reading (Chow et al., 2021; Zemni & Alrefaee, 2020), writing (Cheng, 2004), and listening (Bekleyen, 2009; Kim, 2002). Furthermore, the difficulties faced by language learners who experience FLA could potentially escalate their anxiety, creating a vicious cycle (Von Worde, 2003). These wide-ranging ramifications of FLA indicate the need for more research into its specific causes and how anxiety-inducing situations can be handled by instructors.

The present study aims to achieve this, using the pioneering foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al., 1986) to identify the most FLA-inducing situations as selected by undergraduate EFL students at a private university in South Korea. The resulting list of highly ranked items will be used as a framework for students to suggest ways in which instructors may reduce FLA in high-ranked situations. While language students and teachers may differ in their perceptions of effective teaching (Brown, 2009), discerning learners' preferences gives instructors the option to tailor their teaching styles to their students' needs to facilitate optimal learning. This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1. Which FLCAS items are judged to be the most FLA-inducing amongst undergraduate Korean EFL students?
- RQ2. What is the nature of the solutions that Korean EFL students suggest to reduce anxiety in FLA-inducing situations?

By focusing on these research questions, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of common FLA triggers can be gained, with students receiving an opportunity to articulate the instructor-led actions and class style that would aid their learning. Consequently, the study may guide instructors on how to meet EFL students' affective needs, attempt to create "anxiety-free social interaction" (Doughty & Long, 2005, p. 147), and foster a more comfortable learning environment, improving language acquisition both in the Korean university classroom and beyond.

LITERATURE REVIEW

FLA is defined as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Taking this definition, FLA is considered a type of situation-specific anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999), meaning that even individuals without a tendency to experience anxiety could suffer from FLA when studying in the foreign language classroom.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Almost four decades since its development by Horwitz et al. (1986), the FLCAS remains a benchmark in FLA research. The FLCAS is a 33-item self-report questionnaire designed to measure the levels of anxiety caused by a range of language learning situations, including specific classroom situations as well as general feelings related to the process of learning a second language.

The FLCAS has received criticism for the limited explanation of its phrasing and terminology, leading some researchers to misinterpret core constructs of the questionnaire (Park, 2014). Additionally, despite being translated for non-English-speaking research participants, the FLCAS lacks the ability to consider culture-specific situations and causes of FLA (Al-Saraj, 2014), with one of the developers

acknowledging that the FLCAS was designed to measure FLA in participants who spoke English as a first language, with contextual emphasis on American culture (Horwitz, 2016). Nevertheless, these shortcomings have not deterred researchers around the world from implementing the FLCAS as a data collection tool, likely owing to the FLCAS' ability to gather easily analyzable data pertaining to language learners' anxiety levels and triggers in a short amount of time.

Causes of FLA

Determining the causes of FLA has been a decades-long pursuit. The development of the FLCAS implied three factors of FLA: fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986), although its developers have since clarified that these should not be considered sole causes of FLA. Reviewing anxiety-based literature in the early nineties, Young (1991) wrote that FLA comprised the following six sources: (a) personal and interpersonal anxieties, (b) learner beliefs about language learning, (c) instructor beliefs about language teaching, (d) instructor–learner interactions, (e) classroom procedures, and (f) language testing. A later literature review by Zhang and Zhong (2012) proposed the following four kinds of anxiety that caused FLA: learner-induced, classroom-related, skill-specific, and society-related, with clear crossover between the findings of Horwitz et al. (1986), Young (1991), and Zhang and Zhong (2012).

While these contributions have focused on broad categories of anxiety-inducing factors, past studies of higher education institutions have examined causes of FLA with more specificity. Research on undergraduate EFL students in Japan (Kondo & Yang, 2003) and Saudi Arabia (Bensalem, 2019) indicated that self-perceptions of proficiency levels were a leading cause of FLA, especially when students compared their language ability with classmates' proficiency. Speaking in front of peers was found to be a main cause of FLA in universities in Turkey (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014) and Indonesia (Anggraeny et al., 2020), while being asked to speak without preparation was found to be a common cause of anxiety amongst large participant samples of 300 Libyan undergraduates in Toubot et al.'s (2018) study and Shah et al.'s (2020) study of 700 undergraduates in Pakistan. Apprehension about testing emerged as a leading cause of EFL students' FLA in Liu and Jackson's (2008) study of 547 Chinese undergraduates, while Turkish undergraduates in Aydin et al.'s (2020) qualitative study found examination-related anxiety to cause both physical and affective problems.

Solutions to FLA

Owing to FLA's negative impact on language performance, numerous researchers have sought methods in which FLA can be mitigated. Suggested coping strategies have included keeping journals (Horwitz et al., 1986), recognition and modification of irrational beliefs (Foss & Reitzel, 1988), working in groups and pairs (Koch & Terrell, 1991), and meditation (Oxford, 1990; Önem, 2015). Devising solutions to reduce FLA is difficult, as students do not share the same experiences of FLA.

Furthermore, students will find some coping strategies to be more successful than others, based on their individual needs and personalities.

Many solutions to FLA have been suggested by researchers in response to the primary causes of anxiety that emerged during studies. While the prescription of FLA solutions based on students' reported experiences is informative, research projects rarely invite EFL students to suggest the actions and attributes that language instructors could incorporate to reduce FLA. The present study aims to fill this research gap.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited through opportunity sampling at a private university in South Korea, with students from the researcher's three Basic Modern English classes and three Intermediate Modern English classes being invited to participate. Following a brief explanation of the study, students received a participant information sheet in English and Korean. The researcher assured students that participation in the study was optional and would not affect students' grades. Furthermore, students were guaranteed anonymity when responding to questionnaires to appease concerns about sharing sensitive information related to negative experiences in the classroom. A total of 106 students completed the first questionnaire after providing signed consent to participate in the research. The second questionnaire was administered two weeks later and was completed by 92 students.

Basic Modern English students' responses were not analyzed separately from their Intermediate Modern English counterparts. While separate analysis could have compared causes and solutions of FLA amongst students of different proficiency levels, the researcher did not believe that the current circumstances presented the optimal opportunity to study this comparison. Several Korean universities require students to enroll in a basic level English course during their freshman year prior to studying intermediate level English in a semester of students' choice prior to graduation. This system leads to a significant variance in English proficiency within both courses, as students are placed in classes without ability-based stratification. Therefore, the researcher believed that the presence of incorrectly categorized students would corrupt the data and present unreliable comparisons.

Data Collection

The present study took a mixed methods approach, complementing the first questionnaire's set of closed survey questions with extended, open-ended questions in the second questionnaire. This allowed for a wide range of in-depth answers to be gathered (Hyman & Sierra, 2016), with students' suggestions on how to reduce FLA emerging organically rather than being chosen from a prescribed list.

For the first questionnaire, the researcher used a version of the FLCAS that had been translated into Korean, sourced from Manley's (2015) comparative study of levels of FLA experienced by Korean and Chinese EFL students. Some alterations were made to the FLCAS for the purposes of the present study. Firstly, Items 23 (I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do) and 32 (I would probably not feel comfortable around native speakers of English) were deleted, owing to their similarity to Items 7 (I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am) and 14 (I would be nervous speaking English with native speakers). If two similar items made the final shortlist of most FLA-inducing situations, this could have impeded students' ability to give unique suggestions for each scenario.

Additionally, the phrasing of eight of the remaining items (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, and 28) were flipped. For example, Item 2 was changed from "I do not worry about making mistakes in language class" to "I worry about making mistakes in English class." Converting these nine negative statements to positive statements ensured that the direction of the Likert scale remained consistent across all FLCAS items, providing a clearer set of agreement ratings and reducing the possibility of erroneous responses. Thirty-one items remained on the FLCAS once these changes had been made.

The second questionnaire was distributed two weeks later and included the most FLA-inducing items as voted for by the participant sample. Underneath each item, students were instructed to answer the following question in English or Korean: "How can English teachers help to lessen students' anxiety in this situation?" This would allow students to provide valuable, first-hand insight as to how EFL instructors can reduce students' FLA and cultivate a comfortable and effective learning environment.

Data Analysis

Analyzing the results of the first questionnaire, the researcher calculated mean average agreement ratings by adding the Likert scale values (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree or disagree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) attributed by each participant and dividing the total value by the number of responses. The higher the mean average agreement rating, the more anxiety-inducing each item was perceived to be by the participant sample. Once average agreement ratings had been calculated, the 31 FLCAS items were ranked in order of potential for FLA.

While the researcher had initially planned to include the five most FLA-inducing situations in the second questionnaire, the decision was made to also include the sixth-ranked item. With only six FLCAS items receiving a mean average rating above 3, this represented a less arbitrary cut-off point than the previously planned top five.

The students' written answers from the second questionnaire were thematically coded into categories to allow for a quantitative breakdown of the most commonly emerging themes and suggestions. Comments written in Korean were translated and checked by a native speaker of Korean, with comments written in English left unedited. The researcher engaged in open coding, identifying themes and keywords to allow students' comments to be grouped into categories (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). This

allowed proposed solutions to be ranked quantitatively, clearly identifying the most common suggestions.

Inconclusive responses such as “I don’t know” as well as responses that indicated a lack of understanding of the questionnaire were erased prior to analysis. For example, some students responded “Yes” or “A little,” as if still answering whether the situation caused anxiety for them. Once these comments had been eliminated, 83 comments remained for the highest ranked FLCAS item, 79 comments for the second-highest, 76 comments for the third-highest, 84 comments for the fourth-highest, 78 comments for the fifth-highest, and 79 comments for the sixth-highest.

Comments that raised more than one solution were placed within multiple categories during the process of thematic coding. For example, the comment “Give students a little time to prepare or allow the use of translation apps” was categorized under “Provide time to think and prepare” as well as “Permit the use of translation apps and chatting apps.”

RESULTS

Causes of FLA

The first questionnaire investigated the most FLA-inducing situations amongst the sample of Korean undergraduate EFL students. Below are the 31 items from the adapted FLCAS, ranked in descending order in terms of the mean average of participants’ agreement ratings:

TABLE 1. Ranking of FLCAS Items by the Korean Undergraduates

Rank	FLCAS Item	Mean Average Agreement Rating	Standard Deviation
1	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English.	3.57	1.10
2	I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.	3.5	1.16
3	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	3.4	1.21
4	I would be nervous speaking English with native speakers.	3.21	1.25
5	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in my class.	3.2	1.04
6	In the English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	3.16	1.25
7	I worry about making mistakes in English class.	2.99	1.22
8	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared in advance.	2.97	1.18

9	I understand why some people get so upset over English classes.	2.75	1.05
10	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.	2.73	1.14
10	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.	2.73	1.14
12	I do not feel confident when I speak English in class.	2.71	1.07
13	Even if I am well prepared for the English class, I feel anxious about it.	2.63	1.19
14	I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.	2.62	1.16
15	It would bother me to take more foreign language classes.	2.56	1.19
16	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in the English class.	2.5	1.11
17	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in class.	2.47	1.05
18	The English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	2.46	1.15
19	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	2.37	1.10
20	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.	2.29	1.12
21	When I'm on my way to the English class, I do not feel very sure and relaxed.	2.26	1.03
22	I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.	2.21	1.13
23	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	2.16	1.22
24	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.	2.14	1.05
25	The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.	1.96	0.98
26	I am usually not at ease during English tests in my class.	1.91	1.01
27	During my English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	1.79	0.86
27	I feel pressure to prepare very well for the English class.	1.79	0.86
29	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1.78	1.12
30	I often feel like not going to my English class.	1.63	0.86
31	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake.	1.57	0.83

Solutions to FLA-inducing Situations

The second questionnaire invited students to suggest ways in which EFL instructors can reduce levels of FLA in the most anxiety-inducing situations. In the interest of brevity, the five most common categories for each of the six highest ranked FLCAS items are detailed below, with values representing the amount of student responses placed in each category.

Category 1: I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English. (Mean: 3.57)

- 1st: Provide time to think and prepare: 24
- 2nd: Give example sentences and hints: 12
- 3rd: Be patient: 8
- 4th: Guide students while answering: 6
- 5th: Use students' L1: 5
- 5th: Create a supportive/relaxed environment: 5
- 5th: Reduce the difficulty: 5

Category 2: I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am. (3.5)

- 1st: Give confidence and encouragement: 21
- 2nd: Praise students: 9
- 3rd: Design activities in which all students participate together: 7
- 4th: Reduce difficulty: 6
- 5th: Downplay the importance of proficiency: 5
- 5th: Provide extra help to weaker students: 5

Category 3: I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students. (3.4)

- 1st: Boost confidence: 9
- 2nd: Provide assistance and explanations: 7
- 2nd: Downplay the importance of proficiency: 7
- 4th: Praise and compliment students: 6
- 4th: Destigmatize mistakes: 6

Category 4: I would be nervous speaking English with native speakers. (3.21)

- 1st: Use and encourage simple language: 20
- 2nd: Facilitate frequent conversation opportunities: 18
- 3rd: Speak slowly: 11
- 4th: Downplay the importance of proficiency: 6
- 4th: Give praise and react positively: 6
- 4th: Create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere: 6

Category 5: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in my class. (3.2)

- 1st: Destigmatize mistakes: 14
- 2nd: Praise students and react positively: 8
- 3rd: Provide constructive feedback: 7
- 3rd: Emphasize the importance of trying: 7
- 5th: Emphasize the importance of confidence: 6

Category 6: In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. (3.16)

- 1st: Provide thinking/preparation time: 10
- 1st: Assist with recall: 10
- 3rd: Give hints: 9
- 3rd: Cultivate a comfortable atmosphere: 9
- 5th: Wait patiently: 8

These lists allow for an understanding of how undergraduate EFL students in South Korea would like instructors to mitigate their FLA, serving as a guide for both experienced and inexperienced instructors to manage anxiety in the EFL classroom.

DISCUSSION

Causes of FLA

Responses to the adapted FLCAS showed that the following situations serve as the biggest causes of FLA amongst the sample of Korean undergraduates: speaking English without advance preparation (3.57), comparing English proficiency levels with classmates (3.5), speaking English in front of classmates (3.4), speaking with native English speakers (3.21), feeling unsure of themselves while speaking in class (3.2), and forgetting things due to nerves during class (3.16).

The participant sample's decision to rank "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English" as the most anxiety-inducing item on the FLCAS is supported by previous research, whereby speaking without preparation time and being asked immediate questions were found to be amongst the most FLA-inducing situations possible in the EFL classroom (Ay, 2010; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Riasati, 2011). This FLCAS item received almost identical agreement ratings of 3.54 in Shah et al.'s (2020) study of undergraduates in Pakistan and 3.56 in Akbar et al.'s (2018) study of Indonesian undergraduates, emphasizing its anxiety-inducing nature in EFL settings around the world.

The second-highest ranked FLCAS item in the present study involved comparison between students' self-perceived English proficiency level and that of their classmates. This potentially reflects the fact that many schools and colleges in Korea still lack systematic placement tests, conducting general education EFL classes on a mixed-ability basis (Chung, 2022). As a result, it could be difficult for students to ignore disparities in English ability when confronted with higher-proficiency classmates. Issues of comparison with classmates' proficiency levels have also been found in studies outside of Korea (Akbar et al., 2018; Khouni et al., 2022; Shah et al., 2020), indicating that this problem is not country-specific.

Only 21.7% of Korean undergraduates in the present study disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students," with an overall agreement rating of 3.4, placing it as the third-highest cause of FLA. While students' reluctance to make mistakes in front of their classmates (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Price, 1991; Toubot et al., 2018) may contribute to this high placement, there is also a potential link between this self-consciousness and the perception that classmates have a higher English proficiency. A recent study of 117 Korean undergraduate EFL students also found that learners' FLA was mostly related to students' perceptions of their own ability (Jee & Byun, 2023), which can beget negative comparisons with classmates when students' self-perception is low.

According to the participant sample, nervousness when “speaking English with native speakers” was the fourth-highest cause of FLA, with an agreement rating of 3.21. Speaking with native speakers can cause feelings of inferiority in language learners due to native speakers’ fluency (Norton, 2000). This comparison between one’s self-perceived proficiency level and that of native speakers has also been found to be an issue amongst learners of Japanese (Kitano, 2001), while French and Spanish language students have also reported anxiety related to having a native-speaking teacher (Von Worde, 2003). This is not limited to low-proficiency learners, with only 38% of master’s degree program students specializing in EFL teaching in Marzec-Stawiarska’s (2015) research stating that they would not be nervous when speaking with native speakers. Given that communication with native speakers causes anxiety in language learners, the presence of native speaker teachers in the classroom presents a paradoxical situation. On one hand, students receive a valuable opportunity to practice their language skills with native speakers, normalizing this communication in the process. However, proximity to a native speaker may come at the cost of some students’ confidence and comfort, negatively affecting their learning.

The fifth- and sixth-highest ranked causes of FLA (“I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in my class” and “In the English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know”) refer to less specific feelings of negativity than those ranked in the top four. Despite this lack of situational specificity, these items still resonated to the degree that the participant sample combined to assign agreement ratings of 3.2 and 3.16, respectively. As the FLCAS is limited by its lack of space for respondents to explain their selections for each item, it is difficult to determine the exact reasons for students’ lack of assurance while speaking and their feelings of nervousness in the classroom. Even if the FLCAS were adapted to include comment sections for each item, this would be time-consuming and burdensome for respondents, reducing the number of participants willing to complete the questionnaire and potentially compromising the quality of responses provided.

In the absence of specific reasoning for negative feelings amongst the undergraduate EFL students, it could be speculated that these issues are connected to other anxiety-inducing situations in the classroom. For example, the perception that classmates are more proficient may exacerbate feelings of nervousness, leading to students forgetting things. The anxiety caused by communicating with a native speaker may contribute to the general lack of assurance when speaking in class. As these presumptions cannot be ascertained without follow-up communication with participants, future research featuring a deeper adaptation of the FLCAS or an extra stage for interviewing respondents about their selections would provide a more comprehensive perspective.

The six situations discussed to this point were the only FLCAS items to receive a mean average agreement rating above 3 amongst the participant sample. The overall mean average agreement rating across all 31 items of the adapted FLCAS was 2.51, indicating low to moderate levels of FLA. While it is possible that agreement ratings could have been skewed by some students underreporting their FLA despite the questionnaire being completed anonymously, numerous studies have discovered

similarly low levels of FLA in undergraduate EFL students (Akbar et al., 2018; Alsowat, 2016; Demir & Zaimoglu, 2021; Kang, 2009; Karabıyık & Özkan, 2017; Karatas et al., 2016; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014).

However, the overall average agreement rating of 2.51 in the present study is considerably lower than the figure of 2.99 in Jee and Byun's (2023) study of 117 Korean undergraduates, 2.96 discovered in Kang's (2009) study of 95 Korean undergraduates, 2.80 calculated amongst 547 Chinese undergraduates in Liu and Jackson's (2008) research, and 3.22 and 2.99, respectively, amongst male and female undergraduates at a Turkish university in Demir and Zaimoglu's (2021) work. Thus, the Korean undergraduates involved in the present study reported anxiety levels even lower than a range of studies that have previously shown EFL students to be only mildly affected by FLA. This general trend of low to moderate levels of anxiety suggests that for many EFL students, FLA may not be the chief preventative factor jeopardizing their language acquisition. Nevertheless, finding ways to further reduce students' anxiety levels is still a worthwhile endeavor, especially for highly affected students whose learning is inhibited by FLA.

The overall mean average anxiety rating of the present study was impacted by seven of the FLCAS items receiving average agreement ratings below 2. The participant sample collectively indicated that the following situations were unlikely to cause significant FLA: feeling as if the instructor is waiting to fix mistakes (1.57), not feeling like attending English class (1.63), not understanding what the instructor is correcting (1.78), feeling pressure to prepare for class (1.79), thinking about unrelated things during class (1.79), feeling uneasy during tests (1.91), and feeling more confused deeper into test preparation (1.96).

Considering the importance placed on examinations in the Korean education system, it is surprising to see two test-related items receive low ratings. This may indicate confidence amongst the participant sample that a passing grade is attainable. Alternatively, it could reflect the absence of English major students in the participant sample. It seems possible that English major students would feel more exam-related pressure as they seek the highest grades possible, while students enrolled in mandatory English courses may not share the same expectations or determination when a much lower passing grade is enough to qualify for graduation.

Furthermore, experienced EFL instructors in Korea may be surprised to see that "It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class" received an agreement rating of 2.73, ranked only 10th overall with 46.2% of the participant sample "strongly disagreeing" or "disagreeing" that volunteering answers caused embarrassment. This contradicts the general notion that Asian EFL learners are usually reserved and shy in class (Williams & Andrade, 2008; Yue & Le, 2010). While the low ranking of this FLCAS item may be a case of underreporting of anxiety levels amongst participants, reluctance to volunteer in class could be caused by factors other than FLA, such as students being accustomed to Asian classroom norms in which teachers discourage discussion during class time to maintain order (Liu, 2010).

Solutions to Reduce FLA

Some solutions proved popular across several of the highest ranked anxiety-inducing situations, suggesting that these should be highlighted as high priority actions that EFL instructors may take to reduce FLA across multiple scenarios. For example, the category “Destigmatize mistakes” appeared as a suggestion for the highest ranked FLCAS item and appeared in the top five suggestions for the third- and fifth-highest ranked situations. Some comments from the participant sample included the following:

- Teachers should create an atmosphere in which it is okay for students to make mistakes. (1st = highest ranked FLCAS item)
- Make them unafraid of making mistakes. (3rd)
- Say, “It doesn’t matter if you are wrong!” (5th)
- Maintain a calm and patient teaching approach without scolding students for errors. (5th)

These comments, combined with the popularity of the category across three highly ranked anxiety-inducing situations, suggest that EFL instructors may choose to make it as clear as possible that mistakes are a vital source of learning (Akkakoson, 2016) and will not result in punishment.

Variations of giving praise to students appeared in the top five suggestions for the second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-highest ranked FLA-inducing situations. A selection of comments has been detailed below:

- Compliment on what’s done well. (3rd)
- Compliment without pointing out mistakes. (3rd)
- Provide positive reactions to help alleviate tension. (4th)
- Give praise even if it’s not perfect. (5th)

These suggestions emphasize the role of positive reinforcement in encouraging students (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999) and show a crossover with the notion of destigmatizing and downplaying mistakes, with some students preferring that errors should be ignored or be received with the same praise as correct structures. This is perhaps problematic, as instructors should aim to teach accurate linguistic content rather than praise all responses equally. Therefore, instructors should find a balance between correcting important errors without heightening students’ FLA in the process. The success of praise in the EFL classroom relies on teachers’ timing and execution (Liu, 2021) and can cause damaging effects if not implemented well. While teachers run the risk of students becoming teacher-dependent (Saeverot, 2011), EFL instructors at Korean universities may wish to reflect on their methods of praise based on the appetite for positive teacher reactions that emerged in the second questionnaire.

It should be noted that not all students were in favor of ignoring errors in the classroom, with an interesting set of comments emerging in students’ solutions to the issue of “I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in my class.” Seven comments were placed in the category of “Provide constructive feedback,” including the responses below:

- Correct errors in a constructive manner, suggesting alternative words or expressions with a positive approach. (5th)
- Encourage and provide constructive feedback even when students make mistakes. (5th)

However, the participant sample was divided by the way error correction should be conducted. Three responses suggested that instructors should correct students' errors privately, two comments proposed delayed feedback, and one comment called for instant feedback. While a lack of consensus can make it difficult to meet students' preferences, it demonstrates that the participant sample was able to view error correction and feedback from multiple perspectives, contradicting the idea that students may prioritize short-term comfort over long-term language improvement. Ultimately, the optimal way to correct errors is perhaps entirely dependent upon the learners and the instructors' sense of how individual students will best react to feedback. As long as error correction is conducted in some manner, this will help to prevent the worst-case scenario of fossilization, whereby incorrect language usage becomes a permanent part of the learners' language output (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

"Downplay the importance of proficiency" appeared in the top five suggestions for the second-, third-, and fourth-highest ranked situations, with a similar category ("Reassure students that inability to construct full sentences is okay") appearing as a solution for the highest-ranked situation. Example responses included the following:

- Instill the perception in students that participating in class is more important than English proficiency. (2nd)
- Emphasize in class that confidence is more important than proficiency in a foreign language. (2nd)
- Remind regularly that it's okay not to speak English well, and everyone is learning together. (3rd)
- Encourage students to speak comfortably, reassuring them that even with simple words, they will be understood. (4th)

These comments suggest that many Korean undergraduate students would like to be relieved of the burden of proficiency and would experience less FLA across a series of classroom situations if this were possible. However, the accumulation of such comments continues the concerning theme that students' suggestions could be deemed to be counterproductive to orthodox attitudes of EFL instruction. Downplaying the importance of proficiency may result in some students ceasing to try to improve their English level without the encouragement of their instructor. However, that does not mean that this student suggestion can be disregarded. If EFL instructors can find a fair compromise, this might help students who would otherwise give up long before reaching their English learning potential due to the pressure placed on them by their instructor.

Multiple comments focused on the classroom atmosphere and learning environment, with the category "Create a supportive environment" containing five responses to the highest ranked situation and two responses to the fifth-highest ranked situation. Three comments belonging to the category "Create a comfortable

classroom atmosphere” were suggested as a solution to the third-highest ranked situation, and “Creative an enjoyable atmosphere” incorporated one suggested solution to the fourth-highest ranked situation and two solutions to the sixth-highest ranked situation. This trend supports the idea that a supportive learning environment and instructors’ teaching method and classroom atmosphere are amongst the most crucial factors for alleviating FLA (Toubot et al., 2018; Zia & Norrihan, 2015).

The Value of Student Perspectives

Through the written comments provided in this study, many students offered interesting insights when suggesting ways in which EFL instructors may reduce their FLA. This indicates that a lack of language teaching credentials should not minimize EFL students’ ability to share valuable first-hand suggestions that can inspire practical action from instructors.

On occasion, students’ lack of pedagogical expertise was understandably apparent, with some of the most common suggestions also being the vaguest. The most popular categories for the second- and third-highest ranked situations were “Give confidence and encouragement” (21 responses) and “Boost confidence” (9 responses), with students unable to explicitly articulate how their instructors could achieve these actions. Comments such as “Help alleviate the burden of speaking English” (3rd) and “Guide” (6th) revealed students’ expectations without outlining a specific manner in which instructors may provide assistance. This does not negate the value of students’ contributions, as it is the instructor’s role to develop these methods.

Nevertheless, ambiguity was not an issue for the majority of the responses to the second questionnaire, with students offering an array of specific solutions for situation-dependent FLA. The distinctiveness of students’ responses led to the creation of 27 categories for the third-highest ranked situation (self-consciousness when speaking in front of classmates), 30 categories for the fifth-highest ranked situation (feeling unsure of oneself), and 31 categories for the sixth-highest ranked situation (forgetting things due to nervousness). While this indicates that many of the proposed solutions failed to gain significant traction, a broad range of solutions provides EFL instructors with a lot of data upon which to potentially reassess the way that students’ FLA is managed.

The presence of contrasting solutions also provided interesting commentary on debates such as the desired nature of error correction and the most advantageous way of handling students of different proficiency levels. Suggested solutions to the anxiety-inducing issue of comparison with classmates’ proficiency levels included the categories “Design activities in which all students participate together” (7 comments), “Divide students by proficiency level” (2 comments), and “Assign different tasks for proficiency levels” (1 comment). The lack of consensus shown by students in the participant sample reflects the absence of a singular method for managing mixed-ability classes. While conflicting suggestions prevent the emergence of precise measures for EFL instructors in Korean universities and beyond, these student perspectives should prompt open dialogue between instructors and students about

the merits of grouping and dividing students by proficiency level. Gauging and accommodating students' preferences in this manner could potentially reduce one of the most common causes of FLA and facilitate optimal learning conditions.

CONCLUSION

The first research question addressed the most anxiety-inducing situations for undergraduate EFL students in South Korea. Gathering 106 completed FLCAS questionnaires from the participant sample, it emerged that having to speak without preparation ranked as the most anxiety-inducing FLCAS item, followed by comparison between students' self-perceived English proficiency and their classmates' in second place, with self-consciousness speaking in front of classmates ranked third. The remaining three situations that received average agreement ratings above 3 across the participant sample were nervousness speaking with native speakers, feeling unsure of oneself when speaking in class, and forgetting things due to nervousness.

The answer to the second research question is less conclusive, with the participant sample suggesting a variety of instructor-led ways in which FLA can be reduced. However, by coding and quantifying the participants' written comments, it emerged that a significant proportion of the sample of Korean undergraduates would like their instructors to provide thinking time prior to conversation and activities, boost confidence and give encouragement to negate negative self-perceptions, use and encourage simple language over the course of plenty of conversation opportunities, destigmatize mistakes, and assist students with recalling forgotten knowledge. Students were also able to engage in nuanced discourse over their preferred nature of error correction, as well as the best way to deal with students of different proficiency levels to avoid detrimental comparison with classmates.

While FLA remains a subjective concept in terms of its triggers and intensity, the present study provides a shortlist of situations that EFL instructors should negotiate with caution to mitigate students' anxiety. The list of the six most anxiety-inducing situations is rooted in South Korean higher education but reflects the findings of research conducted across various levels of global EFL.

Although the overall anxiety levels reported by the participant sample were lower than those discovered in similar studies of FLA, instructors must assist anxious students by demonstrating an awareness of different learners' affective states and being prepared to alleviate negative emotions (Saito & Samimy, 1996), especially given that students often feel that they are alone in their experiences of anxiety (Von Worde, 2003). Thus, continued sensitivity to FLA is needed to minimize the unfavorable effects that anxiety can have on language learning and performance.

Limitations

Despite instructing students to consider their general experiences of EFL rather than only the current semester, the nature of students' experiences with their current English instructor may have caused a recency bias or otherwise influenced their

perspectives on FLA. Considering that this may have potentially skewed the data, it is desirable that future research attempts to negate this issue, being conducted with a sample of students from multiple institutions and studying under different instructors.

Furthermore, despite reassurances of anonymity and the researcher's instructions to answer as honestly as possible, some students may have downplayed their anxiety levels in their FLCAS responses. This potential underreporting may have contributed to the low agreement ratings in the first questionnaire, although the findings of previous research corroborate the low to moderate levels of FLA uncovered in the present study. Furthermore, underreporting of anxiety levels is less likely to have impacted the ranking of the 31 FLCAS situations, and does not invalidate the solutions to reduce anxiety suggested later in the study.

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Beyond Flipped Learning: Integrating Student Choice and Agency to Elicit Spoken Communication

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This study investigates the implementation of flipped learning (FLIP), emphasizing student voice and agency, to elicit spoken communication in Korean university EFL classrooms. While FLIP has been shown to promote active learning and improve language proficiency, this study involved student agency in shaping the learning experience. This study involved designing and implementing FLIP activities that incorporated student input to support and encourage spoken communication. Pre-recorded video lectures, designed based on student feedback, served as the primary FLIP tool. Data collected through pre- and post-course surveys revealed students' needs and perceptions, highlighting desires for improved fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. While FLIP increased engagement and spoken communication, challenges such as grammar retention, self-regulation, and the need for personalized feedback were identified. The findings underscore the importance of incorporating student feedback in course design to enhance engagement and learning outcomes. Future research should explore strategies for providing personalized feedback and further developing FLIP models that prioritize student agency.

Keywords: flipped learning, student voice, student agency, EFL, pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

Flipped learning (FLIP) has gained substantial attention in educational settings, including the realm of English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching. FLIP is a pedagogical approach in which instructional content is delivered outside of the classroom, often online, and class time is used for interactive, hands-on activities to reinforce and apply the material (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Independent FLIP activities designed to improve speaking skills at the university level can take various forms, leveraging technology and interactive resources to maximize engagement and practice. For example, students can watch pre-recorded video lectures that introduce new vocabulary, grammar structures, and speaking strategies. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), video lectures allow students to learn at their own pace and revisit complex concepts as needed, which allows students to gain a base level of understanding to bring to class, where it is then developed. FLIP can significantly increase student engagement by shifting passive learning to an active, student-centered approach. Instead of passively listening to lectures, students engage with the material before class through videos, readings, or online modules. This preparatory work encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and come to class prepared to participate in interactive activities. According

to Al-Harbi and Alshumaimeri (2016), flipped classrooms foster a more engaging and dynamic learning environment, which is particularly beneficial for EFL learners who need ample opportunities for active language use.

Incorporating the Student Voice into FLIP

When students have a role in shaping their learning environments, they are more likely to engage with the material and develop self-regulation skills. For instance, studies have shown that creating a learning environment that incorporates student input leads to increased self-regulated learning (SRL) capabilities, as students feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility over their education (Frey & Terhart, 2010; Mejuh & Held, 2022). Furthermore, research highlights that students' autonomy and motivation are significantly enhanced when they are involved in the planning and implementation of their learning programs, which foster a culture of independent learning (De Smul et al., 2018; Spruce & Bol, 2015). Research by Bovill et al. (2016) showed that involving students in curriculum design fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, which enhances their motivation and engagement. Additionally, studies have shown that when students participate in shaping their learning experiences, they tend to be more invested and perform better academically (Bovill et al., 2011). This participatory approach not only benefits engagement but also helps develop collaborative skills, which are key to spoken communication.

This research involved the students in the design of the FLIP elements, to increase engagement. This in turn ensures that all the students bring the skills and knowledge developed during FLIP to class, and this will support in-class lessons by eliciting spoken communication amongst the students.

Benefits of FLIP in University EFL Classrooms

FLIP has been successfully implemented in university contexts to enhance students' speaking skills in English. In a study conducted by Chuang et al. (2018) with American university students, the flipped classroom model was found to significantly improve students' speaking proficiency through increased practice and interaction during class. Similarly, Webb and Doman (2016) explored the use of FLIP in a Canadian university and reported that students showed marked improvement in their oral communication skills due to the active and collaborative learning environment fostered by this approach. Another advantage of FLIP in EFL instruction is the increased interaction and communication between students and with the instructor. In a traditional classroom, time constraints often limit the opportunity for meaningful language practice. FLIP reallocates class time to interactive activities, such as discussions, role-plays, and collaborative projects, which are essential for language acquisition. Hung (2015) found that flipped classrooms can promote a higher level of student interaction and peer-to-peer communication, providing EFL learners with more authentic contexts to practice their language skills.

Equally, the emphasis on active learning and interaction in flipped classrooms can lead to improved language proficiency. By engaging with instructional content at

their own pace before class, students can better understand and retain new vocabulary and grammatical structures. In-class activities then reinforce this knowledge through practical application. A study by Mehring (2017) demonstrated that students in a flipped EFL classroom showed significant improvement in their language skills compared to those in a traditional classroom. The study highlighted that the flipped model allows for more personalized and immediate feedback, which is crucial for language development.

FLIP can also encourage the development of higher-order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills. Since the basic understanding of content is addressed before class, in-class time can be devoted to more complex tasks that require students to apply, analyze, and evaluate information. Kuran (2018) found that flipped classrooms help students develop these higher-order thinking skills more effectively than traditional teaching methods. This is particularly important in EFL education, where students must not only learn a new language but also use it to express complex ideas and engage in critical discussions.

Challenges of FLIP in EFL Instruction

While FLIP offers numerous benefits, it also presents certain challenges that need to be addressed for successful implementation. One common challenge is ensuring that all students complete the pre-class activities. In traditional classrooms, instructors can directly observe student participation and provide immediate feedback. In a FLIP environment, much of the student's initial learning occurs independently, making it harder for instructors to gauge understanding and engagement before class. This can lead to situations where some students come to class unprepared, thus hampering the effectiveness of in-class activities designed to deepen understanding and application of the material (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). Instructors can mitigate this issue by clearly communicating the importance of these activities and incorporating them into the overall assessment.

Eliciting speaking in the EFL classroom with Korean students can also be challenging. For example, multiple studies have examined the reticence Korean students can have to speak out in class. Kim (2004) found that the fear of negative evaluation significantly impacts Korean students' willingness to communicate in English. Equally, the hierarchical nature of Korean society may mean Korean students often hesitate to speak out in class due to deep-rooted cultural norms of respecting authority and avoiding confrontation (Lee, 2009). Arguably, this is especially true in Korean university contexts, where the professor possesses high perceived status.

The education system of Korea can also have an impact. Korean university classrooms are still mostly homogeneous. As of recent data, international students comprise approximately 6.3% of the total university student population in the country. This indicates that around 93.7% of university students in South Korea are Korean nationals (Statista, 2024). The Korean education system emphasizes grammar and standardized testing over speaking skills. Ahn (2011) discussed how the Korean

education system prioritizes test preparation, which often sidelines the development of speaking abilities, representing a significant challenge for instructors who wish to elicit spoken communication from their Korean students.

The flipped classroom model can also encounter resistance from students who are accustomed to traditional teaching methods. Students may struggle with self-regulation and time management required to complete pre-class activities independently. According to Lim and Kim (2018), Korean students often struggle with self-regulation and time management, which are critical for success in a flipped classroom setting. Students may find it challenging to self-study without the control of direct instruction, requiring them to take agency over their own learning (Marshall & DeCapua, 2013). Korean educational culture, which heavily emphasizes rote learning and teacher-centered instruction, may further hinder the acceptance and integration of FLIP, due to its emphasis on student autonomy (M. K. Kim et al., 2014). This resistance can lead to lower engagement and participation levels, reducing the overall effectiveness of the flipped classroom model.

Assessment and Feedback

Assessment and feedback are critical components of FLIP. However, assessing student engagement in FLIP in university EFL classrooms requires a multifaceted approach that considers both the preparatory activities completed outside of class and active participation during in-class sessions. Continuous assessment through quizzes, assignments, and class participation can help monitor student progress and identify areas for improvement. For example, in-class quizzes have been shown to be effective in assessing student engagement in FLIP environments. These quizzes provide immediate feedback and help ensure that students are keeping up with pre-class materials. For instance, Bishop and Verleger (2013) found that using in-class quizzes in a flipped classroom setup can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes by providing real-time assessments and promoting active participation during class sessions. Additionally, Roach (2014) reported that regular quizzes in flipped classrooms help maintain student accountability and improve their preparation for in-class activities, leading to higher engagement and better academic performance.

Equally, immediate and personalized feedback in class is essential for language learners to correct errors and refine their skills. Kuran (2018) suggested using a combination of formative and summative assessments to evaluate student performance and provide comprehensive feedback. Peer assessment and self-assessment can also be incorporated to encourage reflective learning and self-improvement. One effective method is to use digital tools that track student interactions with online materials, such as the number of video views, comments posted, and quizzes completed before class (Hung, 2017). In-class engagement can be measured through observational checklists that focus on students' contributions to discussions, their ability to ask questions, and their interactions with peers and the instructor. Additionally, self-assessment tools can be integrated, allowing students to reflect on their own engagement and learning processes (Abeysekera & Dawson,

2015). For example, incorporating educational technology that gives instant feedback, in the form of games and quizzes, can facilitate instant feedback on student responses during interactive activities (Hwang et al., 2015). This approach not only helps students correct misunderstandings promptly but also keeps them engaged and active in their learning process, fostering a supportive and responsive learning environment. A case of this is research by Greenwood (2023) highlighting several benefits of using the student response system Vevox in lectures to enhance student participation and engagement. Vevox enables real-time interaction through polls and Q&A sessions, which students can access via their mobile devices. Greenwood noted that this tool helps create a more interactive and inclusive learning environment by encouraging students to participate anonymously, reducing the fear of making mistakes in front of peers.

Providing built-in feedback in a FLIP environment involves a continuous loop where instructors and peers offer input on student performance both online and during face-to-face sessions. In the pre-class FLIP phase, automated feedback through quizzes and interactive exercises can help students gauge their understanding of the material before coming to class (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). During class, immediate feedback can be given through educational technology, such as Vevox and Kahoot, that provide instant feedback on the target material. Peer assessments and instructor-led discussions that allow for real-time corrections and clarifications are also valuable methods. These elements were incorporated into the design of this research to ensure that assessment and feedback were utilized to check student engagement and elicit spoken participation in the in-class sessions.

Research Context

This research was conducted at a large university in Gyeonggi Province, South Korea, where four EFL classes (67 students in total) participated. The course consisted of three hours of weekly study, for the 16-week semester. One hour was asynchronous FLIP, completed by the students at any time prior to the two-hour in-class session. The FLIP consisted of videos around 30 minutes in length, which was a decision taken by the university. The idea was that with embedded activities in the videos, the total learning time would be an hour. With the subsequent two-hour in-class session, this meant the students had three hours a week of this English course. FLIP videos offer a flexible, student-centered approach that allows learners to engage with content at their own pace, promoting deeper understanding and retention (Bishop & Verleger, 2013).

The course was a General English course with a focus on preparing students for formal speaking contexts, such as presentations, interviews, and debates. Assessments included two written exams (grammar, vocabulary, and skills), an individual speaking assessment (interview), and a group speaking assessment (debate). While the course aimed to prepare students for assessments, its broader goal was to improve their speaking skills and confidence in English.

Understanding the challenges Korean university EFL students face when speaking English and their preferences for FLIP video content is crucial for

enhancing their learning experience. It was expected that students would face challenges with fluency and confidence issues due to linguistic differences and limited immersive practice (Jeong, 2017; Lee, 2020). By collecting students' feedback on these challenges and their desired content for FLIP videos, this research aimed to tailor the FLIP contents to address specific needs, thereby improving engagement and effectiveness. The importance of incorporating the student voice in course design cannot be overstated, as it ensures that educational programs are responsive to student needs and preferences, leading to higher engagement and better learning outcomes (Bovill, 2020; Cook-Sather, 2014).

Guiding Questions

Data was collected from the students at two points: prior to the course starting and after the course finished. The guiding questions (GQs) below were used to develop the research and to support the design and delivery of the FLIP materials:

- GQ1. What do students hope to gain from the FLIP element of the course?
- GQ2. How can the pre-class FLIP phase be best designed to cater to the students' perceived wants and needs when it comes to speaking English?
- GQ3. How do students perceive the pre-class FLIP phase?
- GQ4. What did the students find beneficial about the pre-class FLIP phase of the course?
- GQ5. Are there any student-perceived challenges of FLIP?

METHOD

Pre-Course Survey Design

To collect data from the students about their expectations from the FLIP videos, as well as their perceived needs and wants for speaking English, a survey was used. Students were asked to scan a QR code and complete the survey in the first in-class session, which was an orientation session at the start of the semester. Microsoft Forms was an ideal tool for collecting this data due to its user-friendly interface, accessibility, and robust data management features. It allows for the creation of detailed surveys with various question types, making it easier to gather qualitative and quantitative data efficiently.

The pre-course survey contained only two survey questions (Pre-SQs):

- Pre-SQ1. What do you hope to gain from the flipped learning element of the course?
- Pre-SQ2. What do you find challenging about speaking in English?

As can be seen from Pre-SQ1 and Pre-SQ2, they are closely connected to GQ1 and GQ2, respectively.

Results of the Pre-Course Survey

Several common themes and patterns emerge from the responses to SQ1. These themes highlight the key areas in which students seek improvement and reflect their specific needs and goals in developing their English-speaking skills through the FLIP videos:

Themes

Fluency and Naturalness: Many responses indicated a desire to speak English more fluently and naturally, including increasing speaking speed without losing clarity.

Vocabulary and Expressions: There was a strong interest in expanding vocabulary, learning idiomatic expressions, slang, phrasal verbs, and cultural nuances.

Grammar and Accuracy: Students expressed a need to understand and correctly use English grammar in spoken language.

Confidence and Anxiety Reduction: Boosting confidence in speaking English and reducing anxiety during conversations was a recurring theme.

Listening Skills: Improving listening comprehension to understand various accents and dialects was highlighted.

Practical Application: There was a focus on practicing English in real-life scenarios, such as professional settings, interviews, presentations, and emergency situations.

Academic and Professional Communication: Improving skills for academic discussions, presentations, and professional interactions was a significant goal.

Engagement and Conversation Skills: Enhancing abilities to hold longer conversations, participate in group discussions, and engage in debates was frequently mentioned.

Video Design

Based on survey question responses, the FLIP videos aimed to develop the skills the students mentioned. For example, in each video, there was a word list related to the topic that week. Students were encouraged to keep a word bank and to extend their vocabulary by researching other grammatical forms of individual words as well as synonyms and antonyms. This vocabulary was then checked by employing in-class quizzes and activities, which Hwang et al.'s (2015) research argued keeps students engaged and improves their engagement with both the FLIP videos and in-class lessons, as they could see the tangible connections between the two elements. This kind of integration of the student voice is vital, as Greenwood (2022) highlighted that incorporating student feedback in course design ensures that the content is directly relevant to the students. This tailored approach not only enhances the relevance and engagement of the course but also empowers students,

making them active participants in their learning process and leading to better educational outcomes.

Post-Course Survey Design

As discussed, data were collected from the students post-course to assess and evaluate their perceptions of the pre-class FLIP phase of the course. The aim of this survey was to answer GQ3 and GQ4. Students were asked to complete the survey during the final class of the semester, using Microsoft Forms. Unlike the pre-course survey, there was a quantitative element to the post-course evaluation. As Post-Course Survey Question 1 (Post-SQ1), the students were asked:

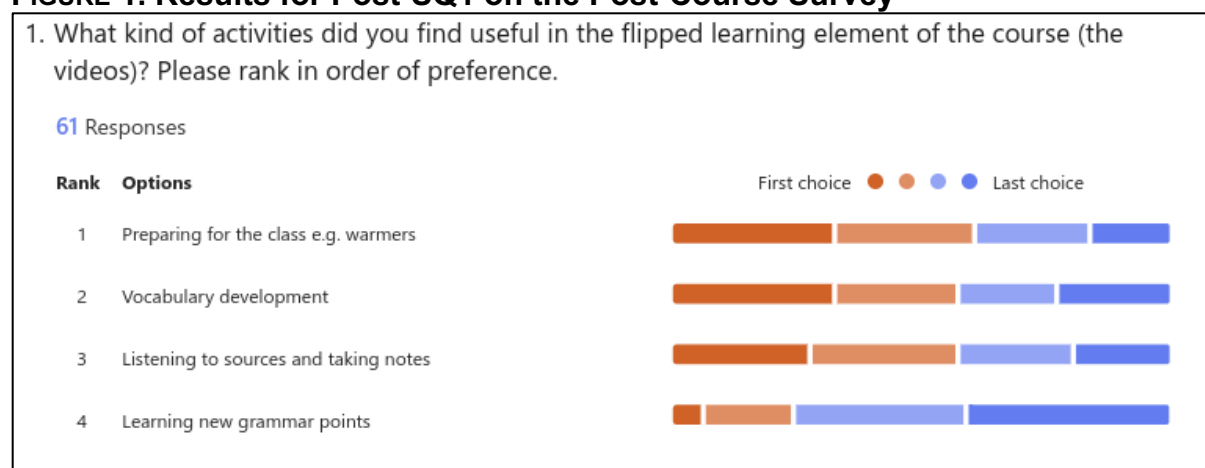
What kind of activities did you find useful in the FLIP element of the course (the videos)? Please rank in order of preference.

They were then given 4 options:

1. Preparing for the class, e.g., completing a short activity to be shared in class
2. Vocabulary development
3. Listening to sources and taking notes
4. Learning new grammar points

The students had to then rank all four options in order of preference (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Results for Post-SQ1 on the Post-Course Survey



As can be seen in Figure 1, the spread of activities students selected as most useful was relatively even across the top three options: preparing for the class (33%), vocabulary development (33%), and listening to sources and taking notes (28%). However, there was a disparity in people who selected “Learning new grammar points” (7%) as the most useful option. The significance of this is discussed in the Discussion section.

Like on the pre-course survey, there were some open questions on the post-course survey. The post-course survey contained two open questions:

- Post-SQ2. What did you find beneficial about the pre-class FLIP phase of the course?
- Post-SQ3. What did you find challenging about the pre-class FLIP phase of the course?

These questions were designed to answer GQ4 and GQ5, respectively. There were 61 responses, as 6 students had dropped out from the course. Several themes were noticeable from the responses.

Themes: Post-SQ2

- Many students enjoyed the opportunity to practice speaking English with classmates.
- Group activities and discussions were frequently mentioned as enjoyable and beneficial for improving speaking skills.
- The activities that involved using new words and phrases in context were particularly highlighted as enjoyable.
- Team activities, games, and discussions were often noted as fun and engaging. The collaborative aspect of these activities helped students feel more comfortable and confident in using English.
- Students appreciated learning new vocabulary.
- Students enjoyed speaking in different contexts and the additional practice opportunities this presented.

Themes: Post-SQ3

- Students highlighted learning new grammar forms was difficult without the ability to ask questions and clarify uncertainty.
- Many students found listening exercises and understanding spoken English, especially at native speeds or with different accents, challenging.
- Note-taking while listening was also a common difficulty.
- Despite enjoying learning new vocabulary, several students noted that using a wide range of words correctly in conversation was challenging.
- More personalized feedback from the professor, especially regarding individual weaknesses, was suggested.
- Some students wanted more one-on-one interaction with the professor to discuss their progress and areas needing improvement.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer significant insights into the implementation of FLIP to elicit spoken communication in Korean university EFL classrooms. The pre-

course survey results highlighted key areas where students hoped to see improvement through the FLIP approach, aligning with GQ1. The primary themes identified included a desire for increased fluency, expanded vocabulary, improved grammar accuracy, reduced anxiety, enhanced listening skills, practical application in real-life scenarios, and better academic and professional communication skills. These expectations underscore the necessity for a FLIP design that is responsive to students' specific needs. This aligns with previous studies that emphasized the importance of student-centered learning environments in EFL education (Bovill, 2020; Cook-Sather, 2014). By incorporating activities that directly address these areas, the FLIP videos can significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Designing the FLIP Videos

The design of the FLIP elements aimed to cater to the identified needs and preferences of the students, directly addressing GQ2: "How can the pre-class FLIP phase be best designed to cater to the students' perceived wants and needs when it comes to speaking English?" The FLIP videos included vocabulary lists, practical speaking exercises, and context-based applications to ensure relevance and engagement. This approach correlates with the findings of Hwang et al. (2015), who advocated for integrating engaging activities that connect pre-class and in-class learning.

The incorporation of student feedback into the design process also aligns with the literature suggesting that involving students in curriculum design fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility (Bovill et al., 2011). This participatory approach is crucial for enhancing motivation and ensuring that the educational content is relevant and engaging for students, thereby improving their learning experience and outcomes. Consequently, integrating tools to aid in evaluation of student engagement with the FLIP videos is a vital tool to increase motivation and student accountability. Tools such as Vevox can be used for providing real-time feedback and checking engagement (Greenwood, 2023).

Further Development

The post-course survey results highlighted several benefits of the FLIP approach, which addressed GQ3. Students reported enjoying the opportunity to practice speaking English in various contexts, which helped them improve their speaking skills and confidence. Group activities and discussions were particularly noted as engaging and beneficial, echoing the findings of Al-Harbi and Alshumaimeri (2016) and Hung (2015), who emphasized the role of interactive and collaborative activities in enhancing language learning. This was such a common student-perceived benefit of FLIP that it is worth considering how to develop this further. O'Dowd (2018) recommended that virtual exchange programs, where students interact with peers from different countries via video conferencing, can provide authentic speaking opportunities and cultural exchange experiences. This kind of activity could be set as a FLIP activity, and engagement with it could be evaluated in

class, by discussing the contents of the students' conversations with their exchange partners. The activity could significantly enhance students' conversational skills and cultural awareness, which was an element students wished to develop based on their pre- and post-course feedback. Additionally, one of the primary challenges raised by students was listening comprehension, particularly understanding spoken English at native speeds or with different accents. Integrating virtual exchange activities into FLIP could help provide practice improving student listening comprehension with partners with different accents and cultural backgrounds.

Students appreciated the focus on vocabulary development, a recurrent theme in both the pre-course and post-course surveys. This aligns with the work of Mehring (2017), who found that FLIP models that include a strong focus on vocabulary and practical language use can significantly improve language proficiency. However, a challenge that students highlighted was the correct use of a wide range of vocabulary in conversation. While students enjoyed learning new words, applying them accurately in spoken language remained a difficulty. This underscores the need for continued focus on practical applications of vocabulary learning, as highlighted by Hung (2015) and Bawaneh et al. (2011). For example, one of the course assessments could be adapted to more accurately utilize the target vocabulary from the pre-class FLIP phase. Creating digital stories or video projects could allow students to use new vocabulary in a creative and meaningful way. This activity may not only enhance their language skills but also their technical skills, fostering a more comprehensive learning experience (Niemi et al., 2018).

One assessment method could be to have students maintain a vocabulary journal where students write sentences or short paragraphs using new words to help reinforce their learning, perhaps as a collaborative activity with classmates. This task, which requires the use of specific vocabulary, can also promote deeper understanding and retention (Schmitt & Schmitt, 2020). Research by Mercer (2018) claimed that the practical application of vocabulary through interactive and collaborative activities builds students' confidence in using new words, and as highlighted by the students' post-course feedback, confidence in using new vocabulary was an area they felt needed further development.

Student-Perceived Challenges of FLIP

To answer GQ4, it is important to analyze the data from the post-course survey. Students expressed a desire for increased opportunities for one-on-one interaction with the professor. They wanted more personalized feedback and support, helping students address individual weaknesses. One method that could be utilized is incorporating flipped tutorials into the learning structure, allowing students to prepare questions and issues in advance by engaging with the flipped content. These tutorials could then focus on addressing these specific points, offering targeted feedback and support. This method leverages the flipped model to maximize the efficiency of one-on-one interactions (Kong, 2019). Alternatively, voice or video feedback can make feedback more personal and easier to understand, and it allows for more nuanced explanations and encouragement. Studies have shown

that students perceive voice feedback as more personal and engaging (Merry & Orsmond, 2018). It would also allow the students additional opportunities for listening practice and potentially speaking practice if a spoken response option were integrated.

Another area that was highlighted as challenging in the post-course evaluation was learning new grammar points from the FLIP videos. This was highlighted in both the quantitative and qualitative responses. The lack of ability to ask questions to clarify uncertainty was highlighted as an issue. Online discussion forums could be used to discuss grammar points before class. Students can post questions, share examples, and provide peer feedback. The instructor can monitor these discussions, providing guidance and clarification as needed. This promotes collaborative learning and allows students to engage with grammar points actively (Gikandi et al., 2019). This could also encourage discussion of these grammar points in class, bringing the forum into the classroom.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to engage the student voice to design and deliver a FLIP course that would elicit spoken communication in Korean university EFL classrooms. FLIP can clearly be an effective method to elicit spoken communication in this context. Feedback from 61 students' post-course delivery highlighted a plethora of benefits to FLIP, including increased confidence, the chance to utilize new vocabulary, and motivation to engage in speaking the target language. However, careful consideration must be given to areas in which students find FLIP less effective, in this case, learning new grammar structures and receiving personalized feedback. Future studies could explore several areas to further develop this study's findings: enhancing the delivery of personalized feedback, refining methods of grammar instruction, and integrating educational technology to provide more opportunities for spoken collaboration. Additionally, a longitudinal study could examine the sustained impact of FLIP on language proficiency and academic performance. Such research would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of this approach over extended periods and across different educational contexts. Ultimately, this study demonstrated multiple benefits to FLIP in this research context, with the specific goal of eliciting spoken communication amongst students. Further refinement of the course design and delivery could improve the efficacy of FLIP even further.

THE AUTHOR

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EFL Students' Growth Mindset, Self-Efficacy, and English Learning Motivation

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This study, part of a larger project, examines growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation among Vietnamese EFL high school students, exploring potential correlations among these variables and gender disparities. The primary data collection instrument consisted of a questionnaire adapted from the CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey and the English Language Learner Motivation Scale (ELLMS): Pre-College, developed by Ardasheva et al. (2013). Both descriptive statistics with the calculation of means, standard deviations, and bivariate Pearson Correlation coefficients and inferential statistics employing the independent samples *t* test and the Mann-Whitney U test were leveraged for data analysis. Findings indicated a moderate degree of student growth-oriented thinking and self-efficacy and a relatively high level of motivation. While weak correlations were observed between the three factors, no significant gender differences were found. This research expects to offer meaningful perspectives to relevant stakeholders, thereby guiding the development of targeted pedagogical interventions.

Keywords: social and emotional learning, growth mindset, self-efficacy, English learning motivation

INTRODUCTION

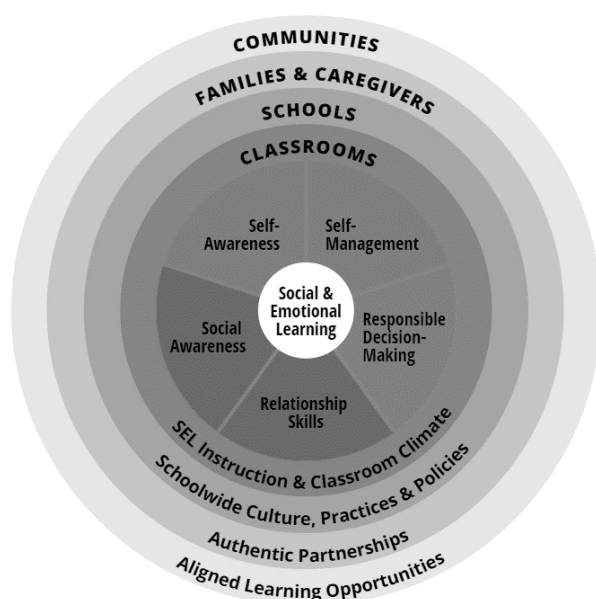
In recent years, research on social and emotional learning has garnered increasing attention (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2017), while learning motivation remains a well-established yet ever-relevant topic in education; this emphasizes the role of such psychological factors in students' progress and achievements. Social and emotional competences contribute significantly to students' mental health and academic outcomes (Bernard et al., 2017; Liem et al., 2017; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Meanwhile, motivation directs students toward their learning goals (Liu, 2014). Unfortunately, as students advance from elementary to middle to high school, many struggle with social-emotional skills and feel increasingly disengaged from school, which adversely impacts their academic performance, behavior, and well-being (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Klem & Connell, 2004, as cited in Durlak et al., 2011). This paper highlights a segment of the results from a broader study on social and emotional learning and English learning motivation in Vietnam, where English has become a critical tool for academic and professional success. It specifically focuses on students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and motivation to learn English.

Social and Emotional Learning, Growth Mindset, and Self-Efficacy

Social and emotional learning is the process through which individuals cultivate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, attain both personal and shared objectives, show empathy, establish lasting relationships, and make thoughtful, compassionate decisions (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d.). An education that emphasizes social-emotional learning leads to many positive results, such as better grades, stronger relationships, and improved mental health. Acquiring social-emotional learning competencies not only enhances academic results and social conduct, reducing behavioral concerns and emotional strain, but also fosters a shift from being externally controlled to making responsible, empathetic decisions based on internalized values (Bear & Watkins, 2006; Greenberg et al., 2003, as cited in Durlak et al., 2011).

As depicted in Figure 1, social and emotional learning encompasses five dimensions: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills, all of which can be fostered in both school and non-school settings.

FIGURE 1. CASEL Wheel: A SEL Framework (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d.)



As opposed to a fixed mindset, which holds that abilities are innate and unalterable, a *growth mindset* maintains that abilities, such as intelligence, can be enhanced through determination and persistence (Yeager & Dweck, 2020). Possessing a growth mindset is a key aspect of self-awareness, which is one of the components of the CASEL framework (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d.). For this reason, it was chosen by CORE districts

(California) as one of the four social and emotional competencies of the CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey (Buckley, 2019). As stated by Bai and Wang (2023), beliefs in the ability to grow are a strong predictor of self-regulated learning that in turn facilitates English learning results. According to Truax (2017), feedback focused on a growth mindset, particularly when paired with constructive praise, helps students advance in their growth mindset development, resulting in a boost in writing motivation. The contribution of a growth mindset to academic accomplishment was also evidenced in studies by Blackwell et al. (2007), Cho et al. (2021), Claro and Loeb (2024), Correa-Rojas et al. (2024), Derakhshan and Fathi (2024), Fathi et al. (2024), Jiang et al. (2024), Yeager and Dweck (2012), and Zhang et al. (2024).

Another concept related to social and emotional learning, *self-efficacy*, “refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). It is often characterized as task-specific self-assurance, being a central element in theories of motivation and learning across diverse domains (Artino, 2012). Similar to growth mindset, self-efficacy is a construct within the domain of self-awareness (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, n.d.). Bandura’s (1995) self-efficacy theory posits that individuals with strong self-belief are more inclined to formulate rigorous objectives, persevere through obstacles, and ultimately achieve greater success. It is associated with multiple positive effects on students’ academic performance (Bai & Wang, 2023; Chen & Sukying, 2024; Cho et al., 2021; Correa-Rojas et al., 2024; Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024). It was also designated as one of the four key social-emotional competencies investigated by the CORE Districts of California (Buckley, 2019).

English Learning Motivation

Motivation is “the process whereby goal-directed activities are instigated and sustained” (Schunk et al., 2014, p. 5). Thus, motivation is considered to be a process that can be inferred from actions and verbal expressions instead of a tangible product that can be observed directly. Motivation serves as a powerful force that drives students to engage in their English studies with enthusiasm and perseverance; therefore, students with strong learning motivation tend to adopt a positive and proactive approach to their studies, invest considerable effort to master English with clear goals and aspirations and achieve higher grades than those who lack motivation (Kong, 2009).

Motivation can be categorized into either instrumental and integrative motivation or intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Soureshjani & Naseri, 2011). *Instrumental motivation* involves acquiring a language for external rewards, such as securing a job or earning higher income. By contrast, *integrative motivation* is about learning a language for the sake of immersing oneself in its culture and community. More commonly, motivation is classified as *extrinsic motivation*, which mirrors instrumental motivation in being driven by tangible rewards, and *intrinsic motivation*, which aligns with integrative motivation in being rooted in internal desires and the

value of learning the language itself. Noels et al. (2000, as cited in Ardasheva et al., 2013) categorizes motivation into seven orientations, comprising amotivation, three forms of intrinsic motivation, and three categories of extrinsic motivation. Details of this categorization can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Classifications of Motivation

Amotivation	An absence of motivation
Intrinsic Motivation	Intrinsic Motivation Stimulation: motivation fueled by uplifting feelings, such as the enjoyment derived from hearing a second language.
	Intrinsic Motivation Accomplishment: motivation arising from the satisfaction of achieving a goal, such as comprehending a challenging concept in a second language.
	Intrinsic Motivation Knowledge: behavior driven by the urge to enhance one's understanding about aspects such as a second language's culture.
Extrinsic Motivation	Identified Regulation: actions stemming from personal values or the importance of second language learning, such as opting to be multilingual.
	Introjected Regulation: motivation resulting from a sense of internal obligation, such as the desire to alleviate guilt or make a favorable impression on others.
	External Regulation: behavior shaped by external motivators, such as the prospect of a reward, the fear of punishment, or the obligation to comply.

METHOD

Research Questions

This research paper posits the following five questions:

- RQ1. To what degree do EFL high school students possess a growth mindset?
- RQ2. How much self-efficacy do EFL high school students exhibit?
- RQ3. How motivated are EFL high school students motivated to learn English?
- RQ4. Are there any correlations between students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation?
- RQ5. Are there any significant gender-based differences in students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation?

Hypotheses

- H₀. There is no significant gender-based difference in students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation.
- H_a. There is a significant gender-based difference in students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation.

Sampling

The participants, chosen using convenience sampling methods, consisted of 110 students who enrolled in IELTS courses that I was in charge of. Of these, 60% were female, 38% were male, and 2% chose “Other” to describe their gender. More than half of them (51%) were in grade 10 (the initial year of high school in Vietnam). Grade-11 students accounted for 35% of the total, and 14% of the students were in Grade 12 (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: Participants’ Demographics

	Demographic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	38%
	Female	66	60%
	Other	2	2%
Grade	10	56	51%
	11	38	35%
	12	16	14%
Home City/Province	Hanoi	107	97%
	Hung Yen	2	2%
	Bac Ninh	1	1%

Data Collection Instruments

This study adopted a quantitative methodology to address the five research questions. Data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from the CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey and the English Language Learner Motivation Scale (ELLMS): Pre-College, designed by Ardasheva et al. (2013). The CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey was a questionnaire devised and leveraged by a group of school districts in California, USA (Buckley, 2019). The development of the questionnaire involved a group of stakeholders representing the districts and content experts, who reached an agreement on four distinct social and emotional learning competencies: growth mindset, self-efficacy, self-management, and social awareness. Then the survey scale was formulated by Transforming Education and validated by researchers across the US. The remaining part of this study’s questionnaire was modified from the English Language Learner Motivation Scale (ELLMS): Pre-College, which was systematically developed and validated by Ardasheva et al. (2013), based on a framework by Noels et al. (2000). The revised questionnaire with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .80 included four subscales (intrinsic motivation knowledge, intrinsic motivation accomplishment, introjected

regulation, and external regulation). After combining the two above questionnaires, minor modifications in terms of wording were made to fit the education context of Vietnam. At the end of the study, a calculation of Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the reliability of the whole questionnaire was conducted, yielding an acceptable result of .75.

Data Analysis Methods

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze data in this study. To address the first three questions, calculations of means and standard deviations were conducted to investigate the three constructs individually. Descriptive statistics with the calculation of bivariate Pearson correlation were subsequently used to explore the possible relationships between students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation in response to Research Question 4. To address Research Question 5, inferential statistics were used. First, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test was performed to check whether the data conformed to a normal distribution, after which the Mann-Whitney U test and independent samples *t* test were leveraged to detect potential differences in growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation between male and female students.

RESULTS

Students' Growth Mindset

TABLE 3. Students' Growth Mindset

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	SD
My intelligence is something that I can't change very much.	1	5	2.85	1.17
Challenging myself won't make me any smarter.	1	5	1.96	1.21
There are some things I am not capable of learning.	1	5	2.87	1.20
If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it.	1	5	2.34	1.11

As illustrated in Table 3, the mean scores ranging from 1.96 to 2.87 indicated that students generally disagreed with the statements indicating a fixed mindset, which suggested students' confidence in their capacity to learn and improve. Of all the statements, the statement "Challenging myself won't make me any smarter" had the lowest mean score of 1.96, whereas the statements "There are some things I am not capable of learning" and "My intelligence is something that I can't change very much" had the highest mean scores of 2.87 and 2.85, respectively. However, the significant standard deviation values (between 1.11 and 1.21) implied that individual students held varying degrees of growth mindset. This variability in responses highlighted the diverse range of views on intelligence and the capacity for growth among the student population.

Students' Self-Efficacy

TABLE 4. Students' Self-Efficacy

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	SD
I can earn a 10 in my classes.	1	5	2.73	1.30
I can do well on all my tests, even when they're difficult.	1	5	2.55	1.13
I can master the hardest topics in my classes.	1	5	2.55	1.15
I can meet all the learning goals my teachers set.	1	5	3.02	1.02

Table 4 shows students' moderate levels of self-efficacy across all items, with the highest mean score observed for the belief in meeting learning goals ($M = 3.02$), while lower mean scores were recorded for beliefs in achieving the highest grade ($M = 2.73$), performing well on difficult tests ($M = 2.55$), and mastering challenging topics ($M = 2.55$). What should be noted is that the relatively high standard deviations, which varied between 1.02 and 1.30, reflected diverse levels of self-efficacy among students.

Students' English Learning Motivation

TABLE 5. Students' English Learning Motivation

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	SD
It is fun to learn a new language.	1	5	3.72	1.13
I like learning new things.	1	5	4.18	0.84
I like to learn about Americans/British people/Australians and how they live.	1	5	3.36	1.20
I like it when I do well in English.	1	5	4.43	0.92
I like it when I can understand difficult things in English.	1	5	4.25	0.97
I like doing difficult things in English.	1	5	3.17	1.15
I'd feel bad about myself if I couldn't speak English in my school.	1	5	3.63	1.31
I'd feel bad about myself if I couldn't speak to my American friends/foreign friends in English.	1	5	3.60	1.27
I want to show my teachers that I can learn English.	1	5	3.68	1.11
I want to find a good job when I grow up.	1	5	4.75	0.70
My parents and teachers want me to learn English.	1	5	4.32	1.05
Everybody in school has to learn English.	1	5	4.03	1.15

Overall, as illustrated in Table 5, students possessed a high level of English learning motivation, since the mean scores of all items across different categories of motivation were above average, though the standard deviations of some items were relatively high, showing differences among individuals. As for intrinsic motivation indicated by the first six items, the mean scores for these items ranged from 3.17 to 4.43, with standard deviations between 0.84 and 1.20. The items with the highest

mean scores of 4.43, 4.25, and 4.18 were “I like it when I do well in English,” “I like it when I can understand difficult things in English,” and “I like learning new things,” Those were also the items with the lowest standard deviations. This suggests that students generally found learning English enjoyable and were interested in the language and culture.

Compared to the above items showing intrinsic motivation, the two items reflecting introjected regulation – “I’d feel bad about myself if I couldn’t speak English in my school” and “I’d feel bad about myself if I couldn’t speak to my American friends/foreign friends in English” – had slightly lower mean scores of 3.63 and 3.60, respectively, but the figures were still significant. The standard deviations, on the other hand, were generally higher than those of the intrinsic motivation items, revealing differences in students’ opinions. The figures suggested that students were somewhat motivated to learn English to avoid feeling bad about themselves if they could not speak the language.

Similar to the way they were driven by internal factors, students were also highly motivated by external factors including future career prospects ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.70$), expectations of parents and teachers ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.05$), social expectations ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.15$), and recognition from teachers ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.11$).

Correlations Between Students’ Growth Mindset, Self-Efficacy, and English Learning Motivation

TABLE 6. Correlations Between Different Constructs

Construct		Growth Mindset	Self-Efficacy	English Learning Motivation
Growth Mindset	Pearson correlation	1	-.212*	-.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.026	.875
	<i>N</i>	110	110	110
Self-Efficacy	Pearson correlation	-.212*	1	.144
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	—	.134
	<i>N</i>	110	110	110
English Learning Motivation	Pearson correlation	-.015	.144	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.875	.134	—
	<i>N</i>	110	110	110

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

The relationships between growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation revealed varying degrees of correlation (see Table 6). To be more specific, the relationship between growth mindset and self-efficacy showed a weak negative correlation ($r = -.212$, $p < .05$), and this correlation was statistically significant. In other words, students with a rigid mindset tended to possess more limited self-efficacy. There was also a very weak and non-significant correlation between a growth mindset and English learning motivation; the coefficient was $r = -.015$, which

indicates that students who embraced a growth mentality had the tendency to be motivated to learn English by various factors. Self-efficacy and English learning motivation exhibited a weak positive correlation, with a value of $r = .144$, indicating a slight tendency for both variables to increase together.

Differences Between Male and Female Students' Growth Mindset, Self-Efficacy, and English Learning Motivation

TABLE 7. Tests of Normality

Construct	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Growth Mindset	.976	108	.052
Self-Efficacy	.976	108	.048
English Learning Motivation	.983	108	.189

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to assess whether the data for all related factors were normally distributed. As depicted in Table 7, the data on growth mindset and English learning motivation followed a normal distribution ($p > .05$), so the independent samples t test was employed to examine possible disparity in the growth mindset and English learning motivation between male and female students. On the contrary, the data on self-efficacy were not consistent with a normal distribution ($p < .05$); as a result, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to measure the potential differences between the two genders' self-efficacy.

TABLE 8. Gender-Based Growth Mindset Difference

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	t Test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	F	Sig.				Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
	Growth Mindset	Equal variances assumed	.162	.688	.283	106	.778	.07359	.26002	-.44193
	Equal variances not assumed			.282	86.354	.779	.07359	.26101	-.44524	.59243

TABLE 9. Independent Samples Effect Size (Growth Mindset)

Construct	Standardizer*	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower	Upper	
Growth Mindset	Cohen's d	1.31733	.056	-.331	.443

* The dominator used in estimating the effect size. Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.

As reported in Table 8, the independent samples *t* test was conducted to examine potential variations in the growth mindset of male ($n = 42$) and female ($n = 66$) students. The null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There was no statistically significant difference in having a growth mindset between male and female students.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There was a statistically significant difference in having a growth mindset between male and female students.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances arrived at the result of $p > .05$, which indicated that the assumption of equal variances between the two groups was maintained. The analysis indicated no statistically significant difference between male and female students' growth mindset ($t_{106} = .283, p > .05$), resulting in the retention of the null hypothesis. In addition, as shown in Table 9, Cohen's *d* exhibited a small positive effect size ($d = .056$). In other words, the female students (Group 1) had marginally higher ranks in growth mindset than the male students (Group 2); nevertheless, the difference between the two genders was negligible in practical terms.

TABLE 10. Self-Efficacy Across Genders: Hypothesis Test Summary

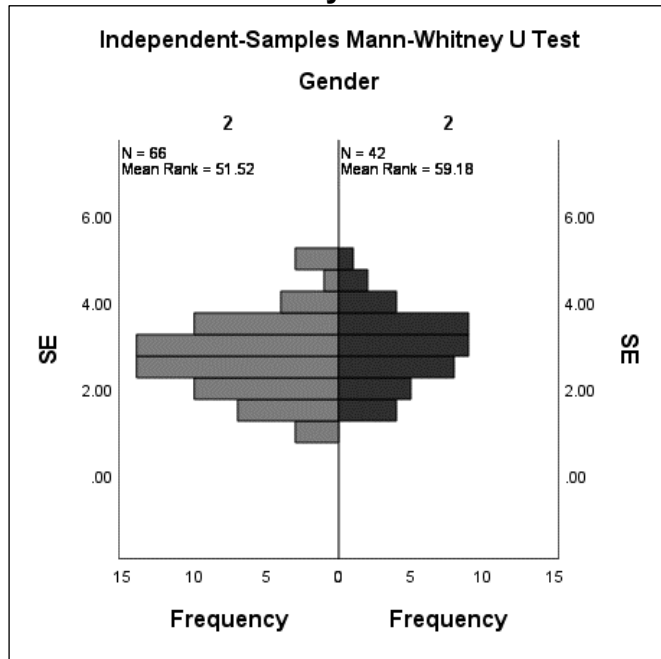
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
The distribution of self-efficacy is the same across categories of gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.214	Retain the null hypothesis

^aThe significance level is .050. ^bAsymptotic significance is displayed.

TABLE 11. Self-Efficacy Across Genders: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary

Total <i>N</i>	108
Mann-Whitney U	1582.500
Wilcoxon W	2485.500
Test Statistic	1582.500
Standard Error	158.105
Standardized Test Statistic	1.243
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.214

FIGURE 2. Self-Efficacy Across Genders: Sample Sizes and Mean Ranks



In accordance with the findings presented in Table 10, Table 11, and Figure 2, the Mann-Whitney U test was carried out to compare the self-efficacy of male ($n = 42$) and female ($n = 66$) students. The null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There was no difference in self-efficacy between male and female students.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There was a difference in self-efficacy between male and female students.

The outcomes demonstrated no statistically significant disparity between the genders ($U = 1582.500$, $p = .214$); therefore, the null hypothesis was upheld. Furthermore, since the standardized test statistic was $Z = 1.243$, the effect size was $r = 0.120$. What was suggested by the minimal positive size effect was that the male students (Group 2) tended to score higher in self-efficacy than the female students (Group 1), but the difference between the genders had a small practical significance.

TABLE 12. Gender-Based Motivation Difference

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	<i>t</i> Test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	<i>F</i>	Sig.				Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
English Learning Motivation	Equal variances assumed	5.683	.019	-1.014	106	.313	-.11539	.11382	-.34105	.11027
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.101	105.502	.273	-.11539	.10477	-.32312	.09234

TABLE 13. Independent Samples Effect Size (English Learning Motivation)

Construct	Standardizer*	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
English Learning Motivation	Cohen's <i>d</i>	.57663	-.200	-.587 .188

* The dominator used in estimating the effect size. Cohen's *d* uses the pooled standard deviation.

Table 12 presents the result of the independent samples *t* test that was utilized to determine whether there was a difference in English learning motivation between the two genders. The null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

Null hypothesis (H₀): There was no statistically significant difference in English learning motivation between male and female students.

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): There was a statistically significant difference in English learning motivation between male and female students.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances had a result of $p < .05$, which indicated that the assumption of equal variances between the two groups was violated. As illustrated, no statistically notable divergence in English learning motivation between male and female students was recorded ($t_{105.502} = -1.101, p > .05$).

Despite there being no statistically significant difference between male and female students, as illustrated in Table 13, Cohen's *d* demonstrated a small negative effect size ($d = -.200$). To be specific, the female students (Group 1) showed a slight tendency for lower motivation in English learning compared to the male students (Group 2); however, the effect was minimal, meaning the difference was not substantial or practically meaningful.

DISCUSSION

As part of a broader research initiative, this investigation delved into growth mindset, self-efficacy, and motivational factors among Vietnamese high schoolers learning English as a foreign language. The study aimed to uncover the potential interplay between these variables and analyze any gender-based disparities. The findings revealed that the surveyed Vietnamese high school students generally held a growth mindset, although there was significant variability in their individual growth mindset beliefs. Students also demonstrated moderate levels of self-efficacy; however, individual students exhibited diverse levels of confidence. Furthermore, students exhibited high levels of English learning motivation, and intrinsic motivation, introjected regulation, and external factors were all significant drivers. Particularly strong was intrinsic motivation, with students expressing enjoyment in learning English, a sense of reward in understanding challenging concepts, and a genuine interest in the language and culture. External factors proved to be just as strong a motivator, with students reporting significant influence from factors such as

aspirations for future career prospects, the expectations of parents and teachers, and social pressures. While introjected regulation's impact was slightly lower than that of intrinsic motivation and external regulation, students were also motivated to avoid the negative self-perception associated with limited English proficiency. The variability when it came to individual students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and some aspects of English learning motivation can be attributed to individual differences in prior learning experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, or exposure to growth mindset principles in education.

Regarding correlations between the constructs, students with a fixed mindset tended to have lower self-efficacy, and the correlation was statistically significant. While a very weak and insignificant relationship emerged between growth mindset and English learning motivation, a weak positive correlation was observed between self-efficacy and English learning motivation, suggesting that students with higher self-efficacy were slightly more motivated to learn English. The correlations between students' growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation still warrant further investigation, and there was not enough evidence to claim causal relationships. However, the existing correlations suggest interventions targeting one factor may promote the development of the others. This seems to agree with Bandura (1997), who argued that perceived self-efficacy shapes cognitive processes and determines both the strength and persistence of motivation. A quasi-experimental study conducted by Rhew et al. (2017) concluded that a growth mindset intervention significantly enhances motivation; however, the same research found no influence of growth mindset intervention on self-efficacy. By contrast, Djatmika et al. (2022) supported the finding of this study, claiming that there is a positive and significant relationship between academic writing growth mindsets and self-efficacy. The presence of both similarities and differences between the findings of the current study and those of other studies highlights the need for more research on the same topic.

Finally, no statistically or practically significant differences in terms of growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation between male and female students were found. However, data analysis did reveal minor discrepancies, which leaves room for future investigations.

Overall, the results of this study contribute to the related literature and lay the groundwork for future research. Since the sample size was limited, the sample might not be fully representative of all Vietnamese high school students. Thus, future research may increase the sample size to help ensure that the results are more representative of the broader population. Additionally, including participants from different cities or provinces would allow for a more comprehensive analysis and enable comparisons across diverse regions, offering deeper insights into the research questions. Lastly, as this is a cross-sectional study, there exists a limitation in establishing causal relationships, so future research could use longitudinal designs to assess how changes in growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English learning motivation influence each other and English learning in general over time. Given that the English teaching and learning landscape in Vietnam shares a number of similarities with that of other Asian settings including Korea (Nguyen, 2017), the

relevance of this study may extend to these contexts. Kindred studies could be conducted in other Asian contexts to facilitate result comparisons, or cross-national research could be undertaken to provide broader insights.

CONCLUSION

In response to the five research questions, this study explored growth mindset, self-efficacy, and English language motivation among Vietnamese high school students learning English as a foreign language, their interrelationships, and possible gender-based differences. The findings highlight that students generally possessed moderate levels of growth mindset and self-efficacy, with considerable individual variability. Students also demonstrated high levels of motivation, driven by intrinsic enjoyment, external aspirations, and introjected regulation, with intrinsic and external motivators being particularly influential. The study identified correlations between the constructs, among which the correlation between growth mindset and self-efficacy was statistically significant. Gender-based analysis revealed no significant differences, suggesting that these constructs may operate similarly across male and female students.

These results align with previous research while also presenting unique insights into the Vietnamese educational context. The findings reinforce the need for fostering a growth mindset, self-efficacy, and motivation in language learning, as interventions targeting these areas may yield positive outcomes in other related constructs. However, limitations related to the sample size, geographical diversity, and cross-sectional quantitative design restricted the generalizability and causal interpretations of the results. Prospective research should address these limitations by expanding the sample size, incorporating participants from diverse regions, and employing longitudinal designs to better understand the dynamic interactions among growth mindset, self-efficacy, motivation, and language learning outcomes over time. Such efforts will not only provide deeper insights but also inform targeted interventions to enhance English learning experiences for students. This study contributes groundwork for my ongoing efforts and those of other researchers.

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Engaging Non-Native Korean Speakers in Korean Universities Through Social Networking Services

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This article reports the outcome of a doctoral study on the use by international students of social networking services (SNS) on a university campus in the U.S. The data results are compared with research on international students' use of SNS on Korean university campuses. With the continual internationalization of Korean universities, this article aims to summarize existing data and propose recommendations for advancing ELT.

Keywords: social networking services, international students, Korean university internationalization, Korean ELT

INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms have become essential tools for communication and information gathering. We have seen the role of social media in major political events, such as the revolutions in Egypt, through live TV coverage (Brown et al., 2012), as well as more recently in the United States political context (Fujiwara et al., 2024). Academia and the university environment are also significantly impacted by social networking services (SNS). Institutions have leveraged SNS to improve their marketing and communication with students and other stakeholders, as well as students' ubiquitous use of SNS to communicate for both academic and social purposes (Lin et al., 2014).

This work offers a brief assessment of how SNS are currently being used to help integrate international students in South Korea (hereinafter Korea). It is based on my research on SNS usage among international students on U.S. campuses. This study contributes to the existing literature by examining the implications of similar themes in a different environment – in this case, Korean universities. The focus of this work is on international students in Korea and their use of SNS to adjust and integrate into their new community as they pursue their studies in Korean universities.

The article first provides the background of the author's research on SNS use among international students on university campuses in the United States based on the outcomes of her research. Then, an overview of the use of SNS among international students at Korean universities is described, highlighting existing infrastructure as well as absent services (i.e., challenges). Drawing on the understanding acquired, suggestions on how SNS can help international students in Korea overcome identified challenges are shared. Lastly, considerations of the language of communication on SNS is considered, understanding that among same-

country nationals, as international students they would use their native language, but as international student connections with other local international students outside of the country of origin, the use of English may be a more common choice of communication, as their proficiency in Korean is increased. As international students arrive with varying but basic functional command of English, it is assumed for undergraduate work that they have CEFR B2 Vantage (CERF, 2025) and that their English is appropriate for functional routine interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

How Can SNS Help International Students in Korea Overcome These Challenges?

In 2016 as an international doctoral student in the U.S., I embarked on an in-depth research study focusing on the utilization of SNS by international students on U.S. university campuses (Almaowashi, 2016). This comprehensive investigation aimed to gain an understanding of the ways in which these students leveraged social media to facilitate their integration into a new cultural milieu and cultivate interpersonal relationships extending beyond the confines of virtual platforms. Employing a blend of interviews and analysis techniques, the research sought to meticulously probe into the multifaceted role that social media played in the day-to-day lives of international students enrolled at a host university. The study set out to tackle overarching inquiries encompassing the mechanisms through which international students navigated and expanded their social circles within the host country, as well as the specific social media applications they favored while immersed in their academic pursuits in the U.S. The research questions were as follows:

- RQ1. Does participating in existing social media networks impact international students' adjustment? How?
- RQ2. What are the links between online activities and students' personal networks? Do online activities affect social interactions in real life with the host community?
- RQ3. What kinds of online activities engage international students with their home and host community? What social media programs do they use? What are their favorite social media apps or websites?
- RQ4. How can this knowledge impact practitioners as they look at future possibilities for online services?

The findings of the study were categorized into four themes based on the major patterns that emerged from the research questions. These themes were arrival experiences, online support, expanding personal networks, and social media usage and popular platforms. The results indicated that international students often do not depend on social media to address academic issues. Instead, they show a strong

preference for in-person interaction with their classmates and lab mates, and faculty, as a reassuring sign of their academic engagement. However, they heavily rely on social media to aid in their social and cultural adjustment to the new environment. Their use of social media to maintain and develop connections within the host community is a testament to their efforts to integrate and adapt. This fosters friendships and creates bonds, demonstrating the students' proactive approach to their social life. The study also revealed that WhatsApp is their preferred app, followed by Facebook. Interestingly, international students did not rely on applications that are perceived as popular in the U.S. among domestic students (i.e., Signal, Instagram).

Additional research on international students' experience with SNS in the U.S. shows that it positively impacts their satisfaction with their new environment. For instance, Lin et al. (2012) surveyed international students at an American university. They discovered that interactions with American and home country friends on Facebook, extroversion, and horizontal collectivism were linked to the student's social adjustment and online bridging capital. Furthermore, Facebook usage mediated the relationship between extroversion and online social capital. The study also concluded that spending more time interacting with American friends on Facebook led to better social adjustment for international students. This emphasizes the significance of being present on SNS and actively engaging with members of the host country.

An important aspect of integration is when students identify with others who share similar experiences in the new environment. Therefore, it is not solely about using SNS but also about which groups new international students join on these platforms. In a recent study, Gaitán-Aguilar et al. (2022) examined international students' use of SNS and found that identifying with groups that share similar experiences is crucial for international students to adapt. The benefits of social media during the acculturation process may vary depending on the different groups targeted through these channels.

Two research studies have explored the use of social media to develop intercultural competence among international students. Ngai et al. (2020) studied Japanese students attending a U.S. university and found that those with higher intercultural competence tended to use social media more proactively to interact with potential sources of support. Baines et al. (2021) investigated the challenges faced by international students and how they use social networking sites (SNS) to overcome them. They identified loneliness, stress, feeling overwhelmed with graduate school, and difficulties adjusting to a new culture as common challenges. The researchers found that international students cope with these challenges by sharing their experiences with trusted individuals and joining online communities via SNS. They also noted that the choice of public or private SNS for seeking social support depends on the functionalities offered.

International Students in Korea

Using the data on international student enrollment in Korean universities reveals a marked upsurge in interest in Korean higher education institutions among

students worldwide. This surge reflects a broader trend of increasing internationalization in Korean higher education. Korean universities have been actively engaging in global competition within the region to strengthen their standing in international education and entice more international students to consider Asia as their preferred study destination (Alemu & Cordier, 2017). Over the years, Korea has successfully attracted a substantial influx of students who opt to pursue their undergraduate and graduate studies there, reflecting the attractiveness and growing reputation of Korea's higher education sector on the international stage.

Statistical data shows that as of April 2015, a total of 91,332 students from other countries were being educated in Korean universities (Korean Ministry of Education, 2015). Among these international students, Park and Noh (2018) found that those from China composed the lion's share (54,214; 59.4%), followed by those from Vietnam (4,451; 4.9%), Japan (3,492; 3.8%), Mongolia (3,138; 3.4%), the United States (2,968; 3.2%), and Taiwan (1,994; 2.2%).

Korea is actively working to increase its international student population to address declining domestic college-age students and to enhance trade ties building on a former Three-Year Economic Innovation Plan by the government (Alemu & Cordier, 2017), which is proactively planning for a surplus of 160,000 university seats by 2023 (Tai, 2014). It aims to elevate the proportion of international students in Korean higher education to around 5% by the same year. Therefore, a range of initiatives has continually been introduced to improve and assess international students' satisfaction levels amidst competition from other regional institutions, emphasizing a continuous commitment to excellence (Alemu & Cordier, 2017; Hunter et al., 2023).

Existing Support for International Students in Korea

The government has been actively involved in encouraging international students to study in Korea by taking the initiative to relax certain restrictive measures on traveling to the country, such as easing visa restrictions for foreign graduates, increasing employment support, and expanding the country's base of English-taught programs (Alemu & Cordier, 2017). This initiative aims to make it easier for international students to access educational opportunities in Korea and to contribute to the internationalization of Korean education. Other forms of support are readily accessible through the international student services offices and language centers on campuses. Despite the difference in the level of detailed services, some universities cater to the logistical needs of international students, providing guidance and assistance with various aspects such as accommodation, transportation, visa regulations, and cultural integration. Additionally, language centers offer comprehensive language support, including language courses, conversation practice, and tutoring services to help students improve their language skills and communication abilities. These resources are valuable for international students navigating life on campus and in a new country.

Different forms of financial assistance are available for international students. The Korean Government Scholarship (GKS) Program, for instance, is one of the most prestigious financial aid programs available to international students. This program offers exceptional educational opportunities for individuals who wish to pursue their studies in Korea. The scholarship is designed to support international students in various fields of study, providing them with the resources they need to excel in their academic pursuits while experiencing the rich cultural heritage of Korea. According to a study conducted by Vanchinkhuu and Shin (2023), this scholarship provides funding and language support that contributes to the students' success. The authors state that GKS students intend to achieve academic success in Korea, given that they are fully funded by the Korean government. On the other hand, the one-year intensive Korean language program has been identified as a vital component in facilitating the successful academic adjustment of international students (Vanchinkhuu & Shin, 2023).

Some universities offer support to internationals through the residential university program in Korea. It is an educational initiative designed to assist international students in acclimating to their new environment. According to Lee et al. (2016), the program has shown promise in fostering a sense of community among international students. This finding suggests that residential universities serve as a potential avenue for providing support and promoting a sense of belonging for international students in Korea.

Regarding providing support through SNS, limited platforms are specifically designed to offer online support and connections for international students. Nonetheless, these platforms serve as a bridge for international students to connect, share experiences, and seek guidance. Additionally, some social media services cater to the needs of international students looking to integrate them into Korean society. These services provide various resources, including information on cultural events, language exchange programs, and tips for adjusting to life in Korea. According to KoreaAgain (n.d.), which defines its blogs as an information hub for all foreigners in Korea,

[Online forums and social media groups] are great places to meet other international students, share knowledge, and get help. There are frequently designated venues on websites like Facebook groups, online student communities, and university forums for overseas students in South Korea. ... [These] are excellent tools to use if you require academic advice, cultural immersion, language support, or general assistance. (paras. 8–9)

However, in the current scene, there is a clear need for more literature that explores the support systems available on SNS to help international students integrate into their local communities in Korea. This literature should also investigate how these platforms can help international students expand their social connections on Korean campuses.

Existing Challenges for International Students in Korea

Korean culture is characterized by various distinct features, and the academic environment in Korea is renowned for its intense competitiveness. Sasha Smirnova (2023) states that those who come from a relatively relaxed educational setting, might find the academic pressure in Korea to be a little shocking. This presents a significant challenge for international students who may require support in navigating the cultural nuances while simultaneously meeting the demands of an academically rigorous environment. This underscores the need for support and initiatives to facilitate better integration and interaction.

Another noteworthy aspect of Korean culture is the interaction between nationals and foreign individuals. It has been observed that Korean students may not actively seek opportunities to engage with international students, resulting in a lack of meaningful interaction and integration between the two groups. This cultural dynamic can create barriers to forming meaningful connections and sharing diverse perspectives. Lee and Bailey (2020) reported that a dominant qualitative theme that emerged is that most students reported feeling neutral or indifferent about international students; for example, one participant reported that his feelings weren't good or bad and just talked to international students in English communication classes. The result of the study highlights the need for embracing programs that foster interaction among Korean students and international students. The research confirmed that Korean students indicated overall that they were inclined to engage in activities with international students. Also, if more meaningful activities and opportunities were to arise, they would be more likely to interact with international peers.

Features related to gender equality in Korean society have been depicted in literature focusing on female internationals in Korea. In a study conducted by An et al. (2018), it was discovered that female international students from Vietnam studying at Korean universities were increasingly affected by a pervasive sense of discrimination. This feeling of marginalization prompted them to form stronger connections with individuals from their home country while reducing their interactions with the local community on various social media platforms. As a result, these discriminatory experiences discouraged female students from actively seeking meaningful interactions with their Korean peers, ultimately influencing their integration and overall academic and social experiences at the university.

The language barrier is a significant challenge for international students studying in Korean universities. Many Korean universities use Korean as the primary language of instruction, which poses a challenge for non-Korean-speaking students. Effective communication with Korean classmates heavily relies on proficiency in the Korean language. This language barrier is exemplified by the difficulties Korean students face when communicating with Chinese students, as many international students struggle with Korean proficiency (Lee & Bailey, 2020). While some universities offer English courses to cater to international students, the demand for Korean language proficiency remains high, especially during collaborative group projects and assignments. This highlights the international students' need to overcome

the language barrier to fully engage in their academic pursuits at Korean universities. For example, Korean students indicated that during oral group tasks, lack of communication in either English or Korean frustrated and angered some students who were penalized by low scores in group work because of their international classmates' performance (Lee & Bailey, 2020).

How Can SNS Help International Students in Korea Overcome These Challenges

In my research, I have delved into the potential of leveraging social networking services (SNS) to help international students expand their social networks and assimilate into their new environment. The focus of this article has been specifically on international students enrolled in universities in Korea. As the author, I was excited to initially explore the emerging use of SNS among international students on a U.S. university campus in my doctoral dissertation as an international student myself, believing that the use of SNS among international students on U.S. campuses could enhance students' acculturation process. The opportunity to conduct a literature review on the same topic within the Korean context was inviting to me, knowing that, unlike the U.S., Korean universities and the social milieu in which international students exist are relatively new to meeting the needs and interests of international students from varying cultural and religious contexts.

Drawing on my understanding of accounts of international students in the U.S. and research on international students in Korea, I argue that a more effective integration into Korean society can be achieved through strategies that address both cultural adaptation and community building. Acculturation, which is defined as "the degree to which immigrants maintain their ethnic culture and accept or reject the new dominant culture" (Snell & Zhou, 2015, p. 179), can be achieved and enhanced through integration of a variety of online platforms if we replicate its success among internationals in the United States. SNS can be one way to overcome some of international students' challenges in Korea.

For a comprehensive exploration of this possibility and to deeply evaluate the impact of SNS on Korean campuses, we plan to address the following interconnected areas:

- Gaining insight into the underlying reasons and motivations driving international students to use SNS.
- Identifying and analyzing Korea's most widely used and popular SNS platforms.
- Exploring ways to leverage these platforms to help international students overcome their diverse challenges and strengthen their integration into Korean society.

Student Use of SNS

To address relevant SNS platforms for integration, we must distinguish between online platforms used purely for entertainment and those that facilitate constructive communication. This research focuses on identifying beneficial SNS for international students' acculturation rather than random entertainment.

A study that examined the types of SNS used by Chinese students in Korea found a negative correlation between the use of gaming apps and entertainment-focused social media and the integration of international students into their new environment (Moon et al., 2021). The study revealed that the use of Chinese SNS for entertainment had a detrimental impact on acculturation, while the use of Korean SNS had an overall positive effect. Consequently, the study suggests that practitioners in Korea should provide more specific guidelines to promote appropriate SNS usage (Moon et al., 2021). Therefore, the section on overcoming challenges will focus on identifying valuable SNS that can aid integration and acculturation.

In today's digital age, students frequently rely on various online platforms to access information. In a comprehensive study conducted by Oh and Kim (2014), the researchers undertook a comparative analysis of students from the United States and Korea to investigate the underlying reasons for their use of social media. The study aimed to ascertain students' perceptions of utilizing social media to obtain health-related information. The researchers stated that "although social media are used more widely among the Korean students, ... they frequently want to view health information without necessarily interacting with other people. On the other hand, the American students tended to have social connections with experts or formal resources, such as health care professionals and health institutes, for the purpose of obtaining official information" (Oh & Kim, 2014, Discussion, para. 2). One conclusion that can be made from these results is that sociocultural aspects impacted the nature of interaction for using social media and obtaining information online.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in students' motivation for using social networking sites. However, various sociocultural factors have influenced the diverse approaches to SNS usage. For example, Korean students tend to exhibit more caution in their SNS usage and prefer establishing active offline networks with their fellow Korean students. Consequently, these differences have resulted in varied interactions between local and international students.

One illustrative study compared the usage of SNS by American and Korean students. The study suggested that Korean university students put more weight on obtaining social support from existing social relationships. American university students' networks in online social venues were far larger than those of their Korean counterparts, which may reflect the cultural difference between the two countries regarding developing and managing social relationships (Kim et al., 2011). The study provides insight into how cultural factors impact university students' motivations when using social networking sites and how these motivations, in turn, shape their usage patterns and the development of their relationships on these platforms.

Popular Apps in Korea

This section aims to identify Korea's leading SNS as a host country for international students. The reason for focusing on popular local apps in Korea is that they can play a part in integrating internationals into the new environment. Otherwise, the situation will be like the findings of my previous research, when I found that WhatsApp was popular among internationals only. On the contrary, it was relatively new to the locals in the host country back then. Korean and international students will swim in different oceans if they use SNS exclusive to each country.

The difference between relying on the host apps versus home apps was depicted in a study by Li and Chen (2014). They surveyed Chinese students studying in the U.S. to explore the difference between using Renren, a Chinese app popular among Chinese students only, and Facebook, which has a large base of users equally among Americans and internationals. Their research revealed that both Facebook and Renren use were positively associated with bridging social capital but not with bonding social capital. Facebook use had a stronger relationship with bridging social capital than did Renren use (Li & Chen, 2014). Their work confirmed that Renren was essential for maintaining relationships with others from their home country (i.e., Chinese individuals). As a result, international students may develop different types of social capital through different social media platforms (Li & Chen, 2014).

Acculturative stress may be contained and could be impacted by factors related to the use of social media within the host country. Li and Peng (2019) found a connection between the level of acculturative stress and students' use of SNS. Their work reported that SNS use with host nationals was associated with less acculturative stress through an increased level of social support from the host country. Those international students who used host apps actively to write blogs received higher social support. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between social support on SNS and reduced acculturative stress among international students (Li & Peng, 2019).

Now that we understand the importance of host country apps let us look at the most popular apps in Korea. Early research showed that an app called Cyworld was more prevalent when Facebook first appeared. While this name may be familiar to the older generation, it does not resonate with younger SNS users in Korea. In recent years, KakaoTalk has emerged as the most popular messaging app in Korea. Studies exploring the relationship between students' acculturative stress and SNS use in Korea have revealed interesting connections that could be valuable for international users if used appropriately.

One research study that investigated the link between international students' use of Korean SNS and the acculturation process found that the use of KakaoTalk helped to reduce foreign students' acculturative stress and to enhance their satisfaction with Korean life. Besides, KakaoTalk can be used to forge new relationships among international students in Korea thanks to its simple layout and straightforward functions (Park & Noh, 2018). International students' engagement in the society can be enhanced and improved using Korean local social networking apps.

Overcoming International Students' Challenges Using SNS

One of the most significant challenges that international students encounter is the language barrier, which can often impede their active participation in collaborative projects with Korean peers. It restricts their ability to communicate effectively and engage fully in academic and social activities. However, the utilization of SNS presents a valuable opportunity to address this issue. Specifically, messaging apps and other SNS platforms serve as dynamic communication channels, providing a medium for meaningful interaction and collaboration between international students and their Korean counterparts. Through these platforms, international students can actively engage with their Korean peers, fostering language skill development and cultural exchange while facilitating smoother integration into the academic environment of Korean universities.

In a study by Pooley et al. (2019), the focus was on exploring the dynamics of communication between native and non-native speakers of Korean. The particular emphasis was on the collaboration facilitated through messaging apps, where participants were observed to demonstrate a remarkable ability to develop creative communication and language learning solutions. Notably, these solutions stemmed from the amalgamation of sociolinguistic and linguistic skills within the context of mobile instant messaging chat rooms.

The implications of the study are significant, as they underscore the potential for SNS messaging apps to function as a platform for interaction between non-native and native Korean speakers. These implications are in harmony with another study that examined international students use of SNS but conducted in Turkey (Çömlekçi, 2020). Çömlekçi confirmed that daily social media use is especially helpful for learning everyday language and some culture-specific expressions. The researcher additionally stated that continually texting and reading in the Turkish language via social media can facilitate the adoption of idioms and cultural expressions, which provides various hints about the local culture (Çömlekçi, 2020). By engaging in such interactions, international students can establish a communication channel that not only facilitates meaningful exchanges but also contributes to the enhancement of their linguistic abilities in the Korean language. This, in turn, may lead to substantial improvements in their overall language proficiency.

A pre-arrival communication can help improve satisfaction levels among international students. While many programs offer online pamphlets with information for incoming students, a more advanced integration of SNS could provide an interactive platform for new students to connect with experienced seniors who are familiar with the country and its culture. Offering interactive informational channels to prospective students can help them better prepare for their academic journey in Korea. A study on the importance of pre-arrival communication highlighted the need to expand these interactive channels for incoming students (Alemu & Cordier, 2017). Their research implied that considerations should be given to establishing a system to provide and share important educational information to prospective students and their parents in selected countries before they come to Korea.

Upon arrival, students must participate in activities promoting collaboration with local individuals and facilitating intercultural communication. Korean university students who share classes with internationals in Korea have emphasized communication challenges stemming from the need for shared activities beyond the classroom. While students engage in some classroom interactions, Korean students still need help looking for stimulating opportunities that would motivate them to engage with international students. This can help reduce acculturation stress. *Acculturation* refers to the extent to which individuals can learn from other cultures and be influenced by them. A more concise definition is that acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. At the group level, it involves changes in social structures and institutions and in cultural practices. At the individual level, it involves changes in a person's behavioral repertoire (Berry, 2005).

The Korean university students in Lee and Bailey's (2020) study discussed the importance of taking intercultural communication classes, which their university offered. They also highlight the importance of more classes on intercultural communication. In response to that, Lee and Bailey considered that Korean university students were inclined to engage in activities with international students. Perhaps if more meaningful activities and opportunities arise, they may be more likely to interact with international peers.

Given that today's generation heavily relies on social networking sites for daily communication, it is paramount to devise innovative ways to create collaborative platforms that facilitate interaction between international students and their counterparts from the host country. This is essential for expediting their adaptation to the new culture and language. A notable instance showcasing the effective use of social media for achieving such acculturation goals is found in a study focused on international students in Turkey (Çömlekçi, 2020). The study states that while in a foreign country, international students should plan for social activities to make the most of their cultural interaction. This study on international students in Turkey represents an excellent example of documenting the successful use of social media by international students studying in Turkey. According to Çömlekçi (2020), students have instrumentalized social media in the context of language learning, expanding their social environment, improving cultural interactions, and maintaining cultural and social ties with their homeland.

CONCLUSION

The literature on the use of SNS in Korea to facilitate the adjustment of international students was thoroughly examined. The study found that actively engaging international students in interactions on SNS can have positive effects on their adaptation process. This research expanded on previous studies conducted in the U.S., which established a correlation between international students' use of SNS and their overall adjustment. Furthermore, it critically analyzed the current body of

literature on the utilization of SNS within the specific context of Korean universities. Despite the notable cultural disparities between Korea and the U.S., this study identified commonalities in the significance of incorporating SNS to aid international students in acclimating to their new academic and social environment. The research also shed light on the potential cultural and linguistic benefits that can be augmented using SNS to support international students in their acculturation process.

This study builds on previous research that identified a link between international students' use of SNS and their adjustment in the U.S. It adds to the literature by evaluating current literature about using SNS within the context of Korean universities. Despite Korea's cultural differences from the U.S., this study found similarities in the significance of integrating SNS to help international students adapt to their new environment. The study also highlighted potential cultural and linguistic benefits of using SNS for acculturation. Consequently, a rigorous approach to using popular SNS in Korea for acculturation purposes must be considered by international student offices on Korean campuses. Integrating SNS actively into Korean universities will assist in easing acculturation stress and possibly speed up integration.

After reviewing the existing forms of assistance to international students in Korea, this work reviewed some of the challenges and explored through the existing literature how these challenges can be resolved through the integration of SNS. A brief overview of popular social networking sites in Korea helped to identify the most used apps that international students should become familiar with and use. We also considered the perspectives of Korean students towards international students to suggest more opportunities for interaction between global and local students on Korean campuses. Given the new generation of technology users, interactive online platforms, especially social networking sites, may provide an excellent opportunity for international students to have a satisfying experience in Korea. This will also help achieve the goals of the Korean government in attracting more international students to study in Korea.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE KOREAN CONTEXT

One key implication of the current investigation in the Korean context is the use of SNS platforms for pre-arrival communication, enabling prospective students to connect with current students and familiarize themselves with the academic, social, and cultural landscape of Korea. This early engagement can help alleviate anxiety, increase preparedness, and improve overall satisfaction. Additionally, SNS can foster ongoing language development by creating informal spaces for peer-to-peer interaction, allowing international students to gain exposure to authentic language (e.g., idiomatic expressions) and cultural nuances that are very often missed in formal language instruction.

Korean universities can enhance this by organizing cross-cultural workshops or collaborative projects through SNS platforms where students from different backgrounds share their cultural experiences and engage in academic activities,

which can lead to the creation of a supportive community to bridge cultural gaps and foster mutual understanding. Additionally, the use of SNS for academic collaboration can ease the challenges faced by international students when working with local peers, particularly in overcoming language barriers and navigating unfamiliar academic practices.

Looking ahead, the integration of AI technologies with SNS offers new opportunities for language learning and student integration. Such tools could support real-time translation, provide language corrections, and personalize learning experiences, making communication and cultural understanding more accessible. To enhance the student experience, universities could promote and maintain active SNS groups to offer continuous updates, emotional support, and guidance throughout the students' academic journeys. By utilizing SNS as a tool for social networking, universities can also help international students maintain connections with their Korean peers and the institution, fostering lasting global networks that extend beyond their time in Korea. These strategies would significantly contribute to the academic success of international students while enhancing the international reputation of Korean universities.

FUTURE RESEARCH

In the last four years, two significant factors have led to a remarkable increase in the usage of online platforms. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 prompted a significant shift toward the extensive use of online services, thereby substituting face-to-face interactions with virtual communication. Secondly, the emergence of ChatGPT and other AI applications has not just opened possibilities, but unprecedented ones, in online communication and interaction, sparking excitement and intrigue. These two events are thought-provoking and have sparked interest among researchers in delving into social networking sites and online interactive communication post-pandemic as well as in the era of AI. It presents an intriguing opportunity to examine the evolution of SNS and online communication in the wake of advanced AI technologies and their constant updates.

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Pedagogical Insights into Language Learning Autonomy

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This study aims to offer insights into how language learning autonomy is viewed and fostered in some state universities. It is motivated by the unexpected turn of events in Philippine higher education in recent years. Using structured and unstructured questionnaires, the study unveiled the teachers' dominant beliefs in their role in developing independent language learning and described how they favored the involvement of learners in making decisions about learning. In addition, the teachers' practices pointed out the conditions that they set to build a learning environment that they believed promoted language learning autonomy (LLA). These beliefs and practices contributed significant insights into what constituted LLA at state universities in the country. From these insights, the study formulated an English language teaching (ELT) model that would potentially support LLA.

Keywords: language learning autonomy, higher education, English language teaching

INTRODUCTION

The long-standing tradition of English language teaching (ELT) in Philippine classrooms was challenged by the prevailing circumstances in the country's education landscape. The global health crisis demanded universities across the country to urgently shift to more flexible teaching modalities. The new paradigm encouraged them to initiate innovative efforts so that quality education could remain inclusive and accessible while ensuring the safety of students and teachers. In order to adapt to the situation and adopt the new learning scheme, teachers had to undergo various training in the span of two months on writing modules for asynchronous English classes and on using online learning management systems (LMSs) for more flexible content delivery. In the second quarter of the year 2020, teachers and students faced a tremendous task to continue teaching and learning within the new spatial and temporal framework, a scenario that opened a lot of windows for the exploration of teacher and learner roles in the realm of online, offline, and blended ELT in the Philippines.

The underlying contexts of language teachers and learners implicate, now more than ever, the necessity to recognize that "learners and teachers are co-creators of knowledge and have control of the customization of the learning experiences for enhancement of learning grounded on the realities of our learning and teaching environment" (CHED Memorandum Order No. 04, 2020). This statement gravitates toward learning autonomy, a three-decade-old language education approach (Holec, 1981) whose role in the process of language learning has been at the heart of

numerous publications (Borg, 2016). The current scenario of language education in the Philippines calls for the two dominant views about learner autonomy, one strand favors learning outside the classroom independently of the teacher and recognizes the situational conditions where learners direct their own learning (Dickinson, 1987) and the other promotes learners' control over the learning process and emphasizes on the importance of choices and decision-making in language learning within and beyond the classroom (Little, 1991). Needless to say, the turn of events in Philippine education puts learner autonomy at the center of language teaching and learning.

However, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) boldly stated that "the extent to and manner in which learner autonomy is promoted in language learning classrooms will be influenced by teachers' beliefs about what autonomy actually is, its desirability and feasibility" (p. 283). In other words, not just because learner autonomy has a well-established niche in ELT is it promoted and practiced in the teaching-learning process. A number of studies demonstrated the complex relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices (Buehl & Beck, 2015; McCarthy et al., 2010; Zheng, 2013). They provided varying results on the compatibility of beliefs with what teachers would actually do in the classroom and on the certainty of teachers about their pedagogical principles. A landmark study on language teachers' beliefs and practices in the Philippines conducted by Madrunio et al. (2015) echoed the skepticism of teachers about learner autonomy. According to the study, there was skepticism because such a learning concept was always challenged by factors that were beyond the teachers' control, such as the educational infrastructure and cultural norms. Thus, this study explored language learning autonomy (LLA) in some state universities and capitalized on it in formulating an ELT training model. Particularly, it aimed at answering the questions (a) What beliefs do teachers have about learner autonomy? (b) How likely are teachers to foster learner autonomy for language learning? (c) What teachers' practices are associated with the promotion of learner autonomy for language learning? and (d) What ELT training model will complement the teachers' learner autonomy beliefs at state universities in the Philippines?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Learning Autonomy

Studies on teachers' beliefs offer new insights into understanding the decisions teachers make to help their students learn. Borg (2003) sees teachers as the ones who make instructional choices, such as planning their lessons and selecting their strategies based on their personal knowledge, orientation, and context. Teachers' decisions about what input and strategies to use shape the students' learning environment where language acquisition takes place. In effect, teachers' beliefs can potentially mediate the activation of language learning autonomy (LLA) in online, offline, or blended English classes.

Silver and Steele's (2005) study reported that language teachers were aware of the policies related to language education and the long-term language learning needs of the students, but they prioritized the immediate needs of their students. In the Philippines, LLA has since been unpopular and vaguely articulated for reasons that can be traced back to institutional culture. Madrunio et al. (2015) have noted in their study that learner autonomy is usually construed according to who should be in control of the learning process. It is in a sense a type of power-sharing between the students and the teachers, which may face resistance for some apparent reasons. On the one hand, teachers in the Philippines are seen as the authority figure in the classroom and, therefore, have the power to decide over their students. It entails that LLA conflicts with the very notion of authority ascribed to the teachers. On the other hand, the idea of allowing students to direct their own learning can be perceived as teachers' negligence of their duty, which is very unacceptable at the learners' end. As a result, there has been very little interest in fostering LLA in Philippine classrooms. The same was the case in a study conducted by Al Asmari (2013) in Saudi Arabia. The findings of a survey of 60 university teachers of English showed that teachers were not very positive about autonomous learners.

On the contrary, the majority of the existing studies reported that teachers saw the value of LLA, but some factors hindered the opportunities for learner autonomy to prosper. Shreds of evidence from surveys and interviews with teachers in some parts of the world show the gap between teachers' beliefs and practices. For example, Nakata's (2011) study that involved 78 secondary school teachers who were surveyed, four of which were also interviewed, revealed that, although the teachers in Japan had positive views about learner autonomy, it did not reflect on their classroom practices. In addition, the results of Duong's (2014) survey among 30 university teachers of English in Thailand illustrated the same incongruence between teachers' beliefs and practices that promote learner autonomy. In Vietnam, Nguyen (2016) found that the reason for the discrepancy between teachers' belief about learner autonomy and their practices was that teachers were uncertain about their confidence in their students' ability to learn independently. Another study that yielded the same findings was that of Lengkanawati (2016). However, according to the teachers of English who were interviewed, although they wanted to promote learner autonomy, their secondary school students in Indonesia would always need teacher guidance in making decisions about learning.

For language education in the Philippines, however, Madruno et al. (2015) have predicted that learner autonomy may emerge as a potent teaching approach as the learner-centered education landscape takes shape. Furthermore, the necessity for new teaching platforms is seeing learner autonomy unfolding. A study by Nardo (2017) conducted at an agricultural college in the Philippines underscored that the use of modules in language teaching promoted learner autonomy and reported that the participants of the study who used the modules were on a par with students who did not, which suggested that using modules promoted independence as the students did not need teacher intervention. This notion of learner autonomy is widely acknowledged by teachers as one of the desirable characteristics of a language learner across the

globe. However, some were less positive about the feasibility of promoting learner autonomy due to curricular, societal, and learner limitations (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019). In addition, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) argued that a lot of teachers lack a proper understanding of what learner autonomy actually is. These accounts affirm the importance of understanding what learner autonomy means to the teachers, as it will influence the kinds of learning opportunities that they will provide to enable their students to be autonomous.

Teachers' Beliefs

The term “teacher beliefs” refers to the views underlying what teachers do (Ezzi, 2012). According to Hampton (2004), they are generally stable and they reflect the nature of instruction the teacher provides to students, while Ertmer (2005) described them as theories that “over time, become deeply personal, highly ingrained and extremely resistant to change” (p. 30). Nespor (1987) highlighted that teachers’ beliefs result from the interplay of context-based problems and the overall environment within which they work, thus becoming well entrenched within the teachers’ cognitive processes. However, Johnson (1992) asserted that “teacher beliefs are neither easy to define nor study because they are not directly observable” (p. 394), but instead must only be inferred from what individuals say (Barnard & Scampton, 2008).

Much of the research on teachers’ cognition has been conducted on a wide array of constructs, not only on various categorizations of thinking, knowledge, and beliefs, but also on diverse operational definitions of conceptions, assumptions, values, principles, decision-making, attitudes, and so on. Only in the past two decades have second language teacher education researchers (Borg, 2003; Borg & Burns, 2008; Freeman, 1989; Johnson, 1992; Richards & Nunan, 1990; Woods, 1996) drawn attention to ways in which second language teachers’ cognitive processes influence their classroom instruction.

Hence, of particular relevance to this study is Borg’s (2003) teacher cognition theory, which demonstrates that teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning continue to exert an influence throughout their career. It also suggests that although professional preparation and training do shape teachers’ cognition, programs that ignore or contradict their beliefs may become less effective in directing or leading teachers about what they need to do, such as the implementation practices that promote learner autonomy. Thus, teacher cognition and practices are mutually informing, with contextual factors playing an important role in determining the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their beliefs.

METHOD

The study used a cross-sectional survey (Lavrakas, 2008) to examine the beliefs of teachers of English at state universities in the Philippines about LLA. An adapted version of the questionnaire on English Language Teachers’ Beliefs About Learner Autonomy designed by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) was administered using

Google Forms. Along with the survey instrument that collected quantitative data, a set of open-ended, follow-up questions that required written responses was sent to the participants. The questions were based on the responses to the survey and were intended to elicit more context-specific insights into the teachers' beliefs about LLA. The quantitative data was statistically analyzed (weighted mean) using IBM-SPSS Statistics version 23, while the textual data was manually coded and categorized into themes.

In social research, the use of questionnaires allows economical collection of a wide range of information from a large group of respondents who may also be geographically separated. The email questionnaire method was used to reach the teachers of English across the country, who were serving any of the 70 state universities' main campuses. Together with the questionnaire, a participant consent form was sent. The response rate for the questionnaire method was expected to be lower than 20%. However, Kelley et al. (2003) have stated that to ensure that the demographic profile of survey respondents reflects that of the survey population and to provide sufficiently large data for analysis, a 65% response rate should be attained. Hence, while this study originally targeted 20%, it eventually achieved a 30% response rate. Although it fell short of Kelley et al.'s ideal rate, the analysis of textual responses revealed that the study had reached "data saturation" (Hennik & Kaiser, 2019). Once the rich data collected was able to sufficiently answer the research questions from which necessary conclusions were drawn, it was determined that the study did not need to gather additional data.

The results were discussed with English language teachers who were not involved in the research process to examine the findings and provide a different viewpoint on the interpretation of the data. The "external audit" (Miller, 1997) was done to assess the trustworthiness of the study and determine whether the research findings were accurately presented. Moreover, the interpretation of data and findings were sent to the participants for "member checking" (Birt et al., 2016).

Population and Study Locale

Seventy-one (71) teachers (assigned the codes T1 to T71) across 21 state universities replied affirmatively to the participant consent form, fit the selection criteria, and participated in the survey. The respondents were licensed teachers of English who had at least a bachelor's degree with specialization in English or other related disciplines such as linguistics, literature, secondary education major in English, English studies, bilingual education, reading, TEFL, TESL, TESOL, etc. They had been serving full-time in an undergraduate program and had at least one semester of experience teaching English face-to-face, online, or blended to undergraduate state university students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To unveil the status of LLA at state universities, the study outlines the beliefs of teachers about learner autonomy, the likelihood of teachers to foster learner autonomy for language learning, and the steps teachers take to promote learner independence.

Teachers' Beliefs About Learner Autonomy

ESL teachers at state universities were presented with statements that expressed specific notions about learner autonomy. Their response to each statement reflects what teachers believe to be an articulation of learner autonomy.

TABLE 1. Teachers' Beliefs About Learner Autonomy

Statement	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	4.10	.860	Agree
2. Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	4.20	.558	Agree
3. Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	4.39	.623	Strongly Agree
4. Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	4.48	.559	Strongly Agree
5. Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	3.43	1.13	Agree
6. Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	4.09	.762	Agree
7. Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	4.48	.503	Strongly Agree
8. Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	3.30	1.17	Unsure
9. It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	3.14	1.08	Unsure
10. It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults.	4.16	.760	Agree
11. Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	4.48	.609	Strongly Agree
12. Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	4.09	.800	Agree
13. Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds.	4.45	.654	Strongly Agree
14. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	4.43	.653	Strongly Agree
15. Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	3.94	1.04	Agree
16. Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	4.49	.609	Strongly Agree
17. Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	3.57	1.23	Agree
18. Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	3.88	1.13	Agree
19. Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.	4.39	.599	Strongly Agree
20. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	3.97	.970	Agree
21. Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.	2.88	1.26	Unsure

22. Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	3.14	1.25	Unsure
23. Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	4.38	.571	Strongly Agree
24. Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	3.52	1.07	Agree
25. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	4.04	.848	Agree
26. Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	4.43	.606	Strongly Agree
27. Learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy.	4.58	.526	Strongly Agree
28. Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	4.17	.857	Agree
29. Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	4.22	.704	Strongly Agree
30. The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	4.43	.528	Strongly Agree
31. Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	4.55	.501	Strongly Agree
32. The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	3.67	1.04	Agree
33. The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	4.65	.480	Strongly Agree
34. Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	4.57	.528	Strongly Agree
35. To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	4.57	.499	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.09	.425	Strongly Agree

Note. Scale of means: 5.00–4.21 strongly agree, 4.20–3.41 agree, 3.40–2.61 unsure, 2.60–1.81 disagree, 1.80–1.00 strongly disagree. *SD* = standard deviation.

The results in Table 1 suggest that the majority of the teachers “strongly agree” with the ideas that “the teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy” (mean = 4.65, *SD* = .480), that “learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy” (mean = 4.58, *SD* = .526), that “learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner” (mean = 4.57, *SD* = .528), that “to become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning” (mean = 4.57, *SD* = .499), and that “motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated” (mean = 4.55, *SD* = .501). Overall, the teachers’ responses indicate that they did not strongly disagree or even disagree with any of the statements in Table 1. This means that they have strong beliefs about the ideas on language learning autonomy expressed in the majority of the statements above (composite mean = 4.09, *SD* = .425).

The same findings were reflected in the teachers’ textual responses that emphasized the importance of the assistance teachers give to their students to develop language learning autonomy, which is in the forms of instructions (T11, T12, & T19), learning materials (T15, T35, T40, & T42), class discussions (T21, T24, & T32), responses to students’ questions (T13, T38, & T47), a mechanism for grade monitoring (T17, T27, T34, & T36) and motivation (T16, T18, T21, & T57). According to T26, T43, T60, and T62, the support they give to their learners improves learner autonomy and enhances the outcomes of learning. They have iterated as well that

leading the learners in the right direction and letting them explore and discover things on their own is one of the teachers' responsibilities. These responses can further be construed as the teachers' belief that learners can demonstrate autonomy as long as the teachers provide necessary support to them. As T24 put it,

[Learner autonomy] is possible after class discussion when [students] will apply what they learned through a performance or an activity. But it is not possible to just let the students study on their own because the students need to learn from their teacher. It is our role as teachers to teach them. After doing our job, that's when we can expect them to be autonomous learners.

However, equally important to understanding the beliefs of teachers about language learner autonomy is the response that they are "unsure" whether "learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners" (mean = 2.88, *SD* = 1.26), whether "it is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners" (mean = 3.14, *SD* = 1.08), whether "learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher" (mean = 3.14, *SD* = 1.25), and whether "learner autonomy means learning without a teacher" (mean = 3.30, *SD* = 1.25) as shown in Table 1. These findings reveal the gray areas in teachers' beliefs about language learning autonomy, which may be addressed by professional training on fostering language learning autonomy.

Finally, from a general perspective, teachers "agree" that, in their setting, the students to whom they teach English have a fair degree of learner autonomy (mean = 3.46, *SD* = 1.19) and that, at their end, they give their students opportunities to develop language learning autonomy (mean = 3.49, *SD* = 1.54).

TABLE 2. Learner Autonomy in Teachers' Context

Statement	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Descriptive Equivalent
1. In general, the students to whom I teach English have a fair degree of learner autonomy.	3.46	1.19	Agree
2. In general, I give my students opportunities to develop language learning autonomy.	3.49	1.54	Agree

Note. Scale of means: 5.00–4.21 strongly agree, 4.20–3.41 agree, 3.40–2.61 unsure, 2.60–1.81 disagree, 1.80–1.00 strongly disagree. *SD* = standard deviation.

Fostering Learner Autonomy

Several dimensions of learner autonomy are more likely to be fostered by the teachers either through their desire to adopt them or through recognizing their viability in the setting that they are in. In this study, the students' engagement in decision-making and their ability to demonstrate autonomy are the dimensions of language learner autonomy explored.

TABLE 3. Desirability of Students' Involvement in Decision-Making

<i>Learners are involved in decisions about...</i>	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
the objectives of a course.	3.42	.715	Very Desirable
the materials used.	3.52	.584	Very Desirable
the kinds of tasks and activities they do.	3.58	.526	Very Desirable
the topics discussed.	3.49	.656	Very Desirable
how learning is assessed.	3.33	.700	Very Desirable
the teaching methods used.	3.38	.644	Very Desirable
classroom management.	3.45	.738	Very Desirable
Composite	3.45	.542	Very Desirable

Note. Scale of means: 4.00–3.26 very desirable, 3.25–2.51 desirable, 2.50–1.76 undesirable, 1.75–1.00 very undesirable. *SD* = standard deviation.

Teachers find it “very desirable” when students are involved in decisions about “the kinds of tasks and activities they do” (mean = 3.58, *SD* = .526) and about “the materials used” (mean = 3.52, *SD* = .584). According to the teachers’ textual responses, they allow their students to select modes of activities (T14, T22, T30, & T55), and they give their students the freedom to choose from online resources (T3, T40, & T49) and from teacher-provided materials (T5 & T11) based on their interests or what they find cognitively accessible. T49 responded by saying that the sense of accountability, awareness, and self-reflection the students gain from making decisions was empowering them as language learners and was making them more productive on their own.

Involvement of the students in making decisions about learning is a manifestation of language learner autonomy. The teachers in general favored students’ engagement in the teaching–learning process. The results in Table 3 (composite mean = 3.45, *SD* = .542) imply that the teachers find all other decision-making activities that involve students “very desirable.”

TABLE 4. Desirability of Students' Demonstration of Autonomy

<i>Learners have the ability to...</i>	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
identify their own needs.	3.70	.523	Very Desirable
identify their own strengths.	3.77	.425	Very Desirable
identify their own weaknesses.	3.78	.415	Very Desirable
monitor their progress.	3.74	.442	Very Desirable
evaluate their own learning.	3.65	.510	Very Desirable
learn co-operatively.	3.81	.394	Very Desirable
learn independently.	3.74	.442	Very Desirable
Composite	3.74	.369	Very Desirable

Note. Scale of means: 4.00–3.26 very desirable, 3.25–2.51 desirable, 2.50–1.76 undesirable, 1.75–1.00 very undesirable. *SD* = standard deviation.

Aside from the involvement of students in decision-making, students’ abilities to demonstrate autonomy were “very desirable” (composite mean = 3.74, *SD* = .369) for the teachers. Among these, the ability to “learn cooperatively” (mean = 3.81, *SD* = .394) had the highest mean followed by the ability to “identify their own weaknesses”

(mean = 3.78, $SD = .415$) and “identify their own strengths” (mean = 3.77, $SD = .425$). In the teachers’ textual responses, pair and group activities were mentioned by T4, T14, and T46 as types of tasks that they give their students to foster language learning autonomy.

When teachers find learner autonomy to be very desirable, the propensity to foster independence in language learning can be expected. Likewise, the feasibility of students’ involvement in making decisions and the viability of students’ demonstration of independent learning in the teachers’ institutional contexts can also help promote learner autonomy.

TABLE 5. Feasibility of Students’ Involvement in Decision-Making

<i>Learners are involved in decisions about...</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Descriptive Equivalent
the objectives of a course.	2.70	.928	Quite Feasible
the materials used.	2.88	.814	Quite Feasible
the kinds of tasks and activities they do.	3.09	.853	Quite Feasible
the topics discussed.	2.91	.919	Quite Feasible
how learning is assessed.	2.91	.903	Quite Feasible
the teaching methods used.	2.86	.862	Quite Feasible
classroom management.	2.91	.903	Quite Feasible
Composite	2.89	.753	Quite Feasible

Note. Scale of means: 4.00–3.26 very feasible, 3.25–2.51 quite feasible, 2.50–1.76 slightly feasible, 1.75–1.00 unfeasible. *SD* = standard deviation.

However, results take an interesting turn when it comes to the feasibility of engaging students in making decisions. While teachers find it “very desirable” to have students who are always involved in the teaching–learning process and who can demonstrate autonomy in different ways, it is not very feasible in their institutional contexts. The results in Table 5 (composite mean = 2.89, $SD = .753$) imply that collaboration between teachers and students in decision-making is only “quite feasible.” The involvement of learners in decisions about “the kinds of tasks and activities they do” (mean = 3.09, $SD = .853$) has the highest mean. The lowest mean, however, is on students’ involvement in decisions about “the objectives of a course” (mean = 2.70, $SD = .928$). These findings may imply that some aspects of the teachers’ institutional contexts restrict the likelihood of fostering learner autonomy.

TABLE 6. Feasibility of Students' Demonstration of Autonomy

<i>Learners have the ability to...</i>	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
identify their own needs.	3.33	.918	Very Feasible
identify their own strengths.	3.33	.965	Very Feasible
identify their own weaknesses.	3.32	.931	Very Feasible
monitor their progress.	3.25	.898	Quite Feasible
evaluate their own learning.	3.12	.963	Quite Feasible
learn co-operatively.	3.23	.957	Quite Feasible
learn independently.	3.26	.918	Very Feasible
Composite	3.26	.875	Very Feasible

Note. Scale of means: 4.00–3.26 very feasible, 3.25–2.51 quite feasible, 2.50–1.76 slightly feasible, 1.75–1.00 unfeasible. *SD* = standard deviation.

On the other hand, the teachers find that student ability to demonstrate autonomy is very feasible as shown in Table 6 (composite mean = 3.26, *SD* = .875). Among these, the ability to “identify their own needs” (mean = 3.33, *SD* = .918) and to “identify their own strengths” (mean = 3.33, *SD* = .965) have the highest mean. T17, T27, T34, T36, and T47 explicitly said that they provided means for their learners to monitor their own progress, hence enabling them to identify their needs, strengths, and weaknesses. However, the ability “to evaluate their own learning” (mean = 3.12, *SD* = .963) has the lowest mean and is found to be quite feasible in their institutional contexts.

Teachers' Practices That Promote Language Learner Autonomy

Based on the teachers' textual responses about their teaching practices, some of the things they do are meant to enable language learner autonomy. These are evident in the choices they allow their students to make, the freedom they give their students to discover and explore, the types of activities they assign their students, the extent of creativity they allow their students to apply, the amount of assistance they provide their students, and their strategies that let students monitor their own progress.

Allowing Students to Make Decisions

As put forward in a number of studies, learner independence is enabled when teachers allow their students to make decisions and direct their own learning. This can mean that learners are allowed to identify and apply means that help them achieve their learning objectives, which in turn facilitates more efficient and effective learning when they study independently (Najeeb, 2013).

At the teachers' end, their students are allowed to make decisions or choices in terms of the learning resources they use (T3, T5, T11, T40, T43, & T49), the type of texts they consume (T29, T44, T46, T49, & T55), and the modality of their course outputs (T14, T22, T30, & T49). Students are given opportunities to exercise their preference and to make choices, as it is believed by the teachers that the learners themselves can identify materials that are cognitively accessible and interesting, that doing so makes them more motivated to learn, that it can improve the quality of

learners' outputs, and that it can lead to successful language learning. These teachers' practices and beliefs are in line with the views of Trebbi (2006) and Benson and Voller (1997) that learner autonomy is the capacity to make informed decisions about one's own learning and that the ability to decide for one's own learning is an indicator of academic success.

Provision for Exploration and Discoveries

Another long-standing notion of learner autonomy entails that language learners can freely apply their knowledge and skills outside the immediate context of the classroom and that learning autonomy is exercised when students extend their explorations and attempts to discover things beyond the parameters of the school context (Holec, 1981).

In practice, teachers give students space to discuss their ideas and experiences beyond the classroom (T1, T8, & T51), to explore course activities (T14, T19, & T28), and search and discover other learning resources (T33 & T54) because, as T1 put it, "it is in exploring things that they can learn more and improve their English." Wright (2005) has been firm as well in saying that independent learners benefit from an environment where they can freely use a target language that is not directly mediated by their teachers. It follows that LLA involves the capability to function independently with the target language and use it to communicate personal meanings in uncontrolled situations (Dickinson, 1994) and to engage in genuine inquiry and expand their understanding of ideas through exploration (Cotterall, 2017).

Minimal Teacher Support

In the context in which the state university teachers are in, minimal assistance is necessary prior to letting their students learn independently. The assistance teachers provide (i.e., instructions, class discussions, and course materials) are believed to support learner autonomy in the sense that it makes learners more prepared (T11, T12, T15, T18, T24, & T47) and motivated (T13, T16, T19, T23, T47, & T57) to do tasks by themselves. Cotterall (2015) agreed that part of developing learner autonomy is the teachers' anticipation of the kind of support their learners might need.

On the one hand, this belief entails the notion that learner autonomy is not impossible at state universities. Students can reach a point of being fully equipped and empowered as learners to enable them to exercise independence. On the other hand, it also suggests that the teachers need to remain, as they are indispensable. Fundamental to developing learner autonomy is the recognition of the teachers' contribution to the learning process, which for Benson (2001) is their classroom practices that activate the cognitive abilities and practical skills of the learners.

Post-Class Task Accomplishment

While it has been established that the teachers support learner autonomy, it is equally interesting to identify at which point of the teaching process they allow the learners to be completely independent. The body of literature has repeatedly

presented learner involvement in the initial stages and learner reflection by the end of the teaching process as indicators of learner autonomy.

In the state universities, the teachers' practices highlight post-class tasks as the best time for their students to demonstrate language learning autonomy. T4, T11, T13, T16, T24, and T34 believe that it is the part of the process where, after providing minimal assistance, the teacher can let go of the students to apply what they learned by creating an output of their own.

In other words, the teachers believe that learner autonomy requires learners' performance of their cognitive abilities and skills after receiving instruction from their teachers. In line with the belief about learner autonomy with minimal teacher support, post-class tasks are one of the teachers' means of building and maintaining a learning environment in which learners can be independent. As Menezes (2011) opined, different learning environments provide opportunities to engage in activities that students act on or don't act on. However, Cotterall (2015) strongly believed that learner autonomy cannot flourish without the students being engaged in their learning environment.

Provision for Creativity

Sullivan (2015) described creative work as a venue where learners can break free from the rules of language either consciously or unconsciously. It is where students can develop a deeper knowledge of the language and learn skills they have never encountered before. This experience is what teachers believe to be an opportunity to generate learner autonomy.

T1, T5, T6, T9, T14, T15, T19, T22, and T36 allowed their students to use their own style, use their creativity, and try different techniques in learning and applying their language skills to their outputs because T5, T22, and T36 believed that learner creativity was fundamental to their becoming independent learners. This practice is in line with the findings of Henriksen et al.'s (2018) study that demonstrated that students develop a perception of learner autonomy through their outputs. They argue that developing learner autonomy requires an approach rooted in creativity and reflective practice.

Encouraging Self-Monitoring

In terms of self-monitoring, the respondents in this study were explicit about their practices that allowed students to systematically keep an eye on their own progress. For them, learner autonomy is demonstrated by students when they keep a record of their activity scores. They believe that by doing so, they no longer need to remind their students about the submission of outputs or about the activities that they missed (T17); they are encouraging them to accomplish the tasks assigned to them immediately without depending so much on the teacher and their classmates (T27); they are letting students observe if they are keeping up with the class requirements or if they need to work harder (T34).

These teacher practices reflect the belief that autonomous learners assume responsibility for monitoring their progress to possibly evaluate how far they have gone

in learning the target language. The ability to monitor one's progress is an essential attribute of an autonomous language learner. As Bjork et al. (2013) categorically asserted, effective learners should not only be able to assess the status of their own learning but also be able to monitor and manage their own activities.

Implications for an English Language Teaching Model

It was emphasized by the respondents in this study that they would take a proactive role in supporting independent language learning by guiding learners in the teaching–learning process. The beliefs of the teachers and their practices constitute the baseline of an ELT training model that supports LLA. Considering the learning environment at present, the teachers' responses give insights into the design of an ELT training that highlights conditions in language teaching that can potentially enhance learner autonomy.

Language learning autonomy emerges from the conditions in the learning environment, which give learners opportunities to make decisions, to explore and discover, to accomplish tasks with minimal teacher support, to produce creative outputs, and to monitor one's progress in a language learning environment. Thus, the proposed ELT training model is one that explicates the significance of activating such conditions in the students' learning contexts (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. ELT Model for Supporting LLA



Note. This model illustrates a language learning environment that supports learner autonomy. It is built upon learning choices, exploration and discovery, instructional support, task completion, creativity, and self-monitoring, which are the conditions that must be present in the process of language teaching.

Learning Choices

In a language teaching environment that allows learners to make choices for their learning, autonomy is activated. Learners should be given the opportunity to be involved in decision-making about their modes of learning and the learning materials and resources they use according to their interests and cognitive capacity. Making

learning choices empowers learners and develops in themselves a sense of accountability for the actions they take.

Exploration and Discovery

Learners who are given space to engage in activities beyond the boundaries of the classroom and find new knowledge and skills can exercise independent learning. Thus, language teaching should provide activities that lead to the exploration and discovery of learners' abilities in using the target language, whether it involves materials or situations that are new to them. A teaching style that allows exploration and discovery offers learners the experience to freely use the language they are learning and consequently improve upon their use of it.

Instructional Support

As learners make choices about how they want to learn and explore and discover new skills, teachers' assistance to the students not only enables but also maximizes learning autonomy. Instruction, supplemental learning materials, teachers' feedback, and motivation are examples of support that teachers can provide. Giving support to students in the course of learning a language ensures that, whatever track they choose to follow, they will be able to reach their goals.

Task Completion

Learners demonstrate their autonomy as they use their knowledge and skills to accomplish tasks. They can be more independent at the point of the learning process where they have been equipped by their teachers to engage in activities with a group or individually. Thus, this learning condition can be created in learning activities that are designed to allow students to utilize the target language by themselves as the primary tool for completing a task.

Creativity

In a learning environment that allows for creative use of a target language, students exercise learning autonomy through the employment of their own style and techniques in using language. Teachers can set this condition by designing activities and tasks that encourage creative presentation, strategic communication, and innovative outputs. In this condition, students can deepen their personal experiences in using the language in ways that they themselves prefer and appreciate.

Self-Monitoring

A learning condition that favors learners' self-monitoring builds students' sense of responsibility for their own progress. When students are aware of their standing in terms of compliance with course requirements and in learning the target language, they can be more focused on their priorities and learning goals. This condition can be achieved by devising a system that encourages students to observe their performance in their courses, manage their activities, and identify their language skills that need improvement and their strengths.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has articulated the beliefs of teachers about LLA. However, the results have revealed some gray areas, specifically on the notions that learner autonomy is a concept that is not suited to non-Western learners and that learner autonomy means learning without a teacher. The responses of the teachers may have been rooted in some geo-cultural factors that may be identified by further research that focuses on the cultural factors that either challenge or support LLA in Philippine classrooms.

Moreover, the present study has focused on beliefs and practices in identifying the status of LLA at state universities. However, it did not particularly investigate institutional factors that allow or limit the activation and maintenance of learner autonomy in teaching English at state universities. Factors like teaching platforms, online learning policies, and teaching standards may be investigated in a future study.

This study, in addition, focused on teachers' beliefs and covered, to an extent, the practices that they believe support LLA. To add depth to the understanding of LLA at state universities, research on learners' beliefs may offer a different lens for looking at learning autonomy.

Finally, the ELT training model proposed in this study is based on the teachers' responses and has not been tried out for actual use. Thus, the model may be subjected to evaluation by experts, teachers, and researchers to determine its effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This paper presented the beliefs that teachers of English have about LLA and the propensity to promote learner autonomy in their classrooms. It was also able to identify teaching practices that were intended to support LLA. The findings of the study imply that the beliefs of teachers can be positioned within two dominant views about learner autonomy. From one standpoint, LLA emerges from the learners' engagement in the process of learning, that is, their involvement in the decision-making about what and how they learn and in monitoring their own progress. From the other perspective, LLA is activated by certain conditions in their learning environment that can go beyond the four walls of the classroom, whether face-to-face, online, or blended. These conditions were identified from the teachers' practices, which involved allowing students to make choices, opening doors for explorations and discoveries, providing instructional support, giving post-class tasks, provision for creativity, and encouraging self-monitoring. The presence of these conditions in the teaching practices of the teachers suggested that LLA was supported at state universities. Therefore, LLA in Philippine classrooms is not unpopular and not as vaguely articulated as some scholars have claimed. However, the teachers' beliefs reflected the observation that teachers, at some point in the learning process, always feel the need to intervene. Teachers believe that providing assistance to learners is an indispensable part of

teaching a target language and is one of the required conditions that promote independent language learning. These insights were taken into account in designing an ELT training model that aims to develop in teachers the ability to set up the learning conditions that can potentially enhance LLA.

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Asynchronous Skill Development: A Strategy to Boost Motivation in Traditional Foreign Language Classes

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As a result of significant developments in educational technology, most institutions of higher education have incorporated blended or completely online courses into their educational programs (Allen & Seaman, 2018). Numerous methodologies and strategies have been developed to address the various needs of learners involved in online, blended, and face-to-face (F2F) environments to assist them in the acquisition of knowledge. According to Darabi et al. (2011), knowledge acquisition is the result of interaction among four essential instructional components: students, instructor, content, and environment. Blended learning integrates a flexible online element into an F2F environment, which can be instrumental in enhancing the learners' intrinsic motivation (Alotebi, 2016). Utilization of the asynchronous capability of an online discussion extends the learning process outside the F2F classroom and removes the restrictions of time and location imposed in a traditional learning environment (Alotebi, 2016). In the context of language learning, asynchronous communications technologies offer several advantages to learners. This study was situated in a higher education institute located in California, USA. Classes were taught in an F2F setting, with an established curriculum and numerous applications hosted in the content management system (CMS). All students had access to online resources, both in and out of the classroom.

Keywords: motivation, asynchronous online discussion, online interaction, engagement, foreign language, writing skill, F2F-setting theoretical framework

INTRODUCTION

This research study is grounded in self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which suggests that particular motivation underpins all motivated actions. SDT is a broad framework that supports the study of human motivation through explicating the dynamics of three basic human needs: autonomy (i.e., sense of control), competency (i.e., competent in task or activity), and relatedness (i.e., inclusion or affiliation with others). Ryan and Deci (2008) postulated that motivation is not a unitary phenomenon. Instead, individuals experience differing levels of motivation – low, medium, or high – as well as different orientations, or types: intrinsic, extrinsic, or amotivation.

The formal theory of SDT is comprised of five mini-theories, two of which are particularly appropriate for language education in blended learning settings: Organismic integration theory (OIT) is associated primarily with extrinsic motivation,

while cognitive evaluation theory (CET) is associated primarily with intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-determination researchers distinctly differentiate between the two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, as being qualitatively different. However, Deci and Ryan (2008) postulated that an individual can be both autonomously (intrinsically) and externally (extrinsically) motivated in performing an action.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term *motivation* is commonly used to apply meaning to a highly abstract, hypothetical concept that explains why people act, think, and behave as they do (Alshenqeeti, 2018). Within the SDT continuum, motivation ranges from *amotivation* (least self-determined) at one end, through *extrinsic* (progressively varying degrees of self-determination) to *intrinsic*, which represents the most self-determined type of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2008). Chen and Jang (2010) noted that supporting the basic needs of learners leads to high-quality forms of motivation and engagement, while failure to support any of the basic needs results in a corresponding detrimental effect to motivation. In the context of language learning, numerous factors affect learners' motivations. A nearly universal assumption in foreign language research is that motivation is considered one of the primary factors that determines the learners' success or failure (Rahman & Sahayu, 2020).

In a paper on enhancing the motivation of foreign language learners, Alotebi (2016) studied the factors influencing foreign language learners and whether blended learning increased the learners' intrinsic motivation. He stated that motivation should be viewed not as a single factor but as a multi-factorial construct that addresses a learner's needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Through blended learning, the foreign language learners' intrinsic motivation can be effectively enhanced when four conditions are met: high-quality input, sufficient practice, high-quality feedback, and personalized context. Alotebi found that while blended learning can positively impact the foreign language learners' intrinsic motivation, the process requires the teachers' effective facilitation, guidance, and support.

Zhang, Fan, and Du (2013) studied the factor of enjoyment and found that instrumental and integrative motivation positively affected second language proficiency, and that foreign language enjoyment had a mediating role. Among their findings, they found that teachers should try to stimulate the learners' motivation levels by improving the curriculum experience and providing an entertaining, engaging classroom atmosphere. They found that these factors contributed to sustaining learning after graduation. In another research study, Alshenqeeti (2018) explored the rise of motivation strategies in English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching. He expounded on the continuum of motivation, from extrinsic to intrinsic, the relationship of learning styles and motivation, and the effect of technology on language teaching practices.

Zhang, Dai, and Wang (2020) conducted a study on teaching foreign language using a blended learning mode. They found that a structured process resulted in improving the students' autonomous learning and increased effective active learning. Additionally, learning through a blended environment was helpful in promoting the students' learning engagement and interaction, and provided students a personalized learning experience.

Various motives, based on any number of incentives, influence the actions of an individual. Dornyei (2001) noted that human behavior is generally two-dimensional – direction and magnitude – and accounts for an individual's choice of action, the amount of effort that will be expended to accomplish the action, and the persistence an individual will exhibit towards task completion. Consequently, no single theory can explain such a complex idea as to why that person chooses the course of action taken (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The framework of SDT applies to a wide range of life activities and is particularly relevant in the context of the current study, which was situated in an educational institution. The abstract concept of motivation was examined through the precepts of SDT to provide insights as to whether the learners' engagement in language learning results in a movement across the motivation continuum from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through an examination of relevant literature, the following question emerged as a focus to explore the potential usefulness of incorporating asynchronous online discussion (AOD) into an F2F foreign language learning environment. The process involved the gathering of quantitative data to examine the relationship of the effects of AOD + F2F on the motivation of the treatment group (i.e., learners engaged in the AOD), compared to the control group (i.e., learners who received instruction only through a classroom-oriented teaching approach to writing).

- RQ1. What difference, if any, is there in the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for writing between students taught a foreign language in a face-to-face environment who do or do not engage in asynchronous online discussion?

Hypotheses

- H1₀. There will be no difference in the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for writing between students taught a foreign language in a face-to-face environment who do or do not engage in asynchronous online discussions.
- H1_a. There will be a difference in the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for writing between students taught a foreign language in a face-to-face environment who do or do not engage in asynchronous online discussions.

RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology for this research utilized a pre-post experimental design employing a control group to assess whether students' engagement in AOD plus F2F (treatment condition) resulted in changes in motivation, relative to students who were taught in a F2F setting only (control condition). The quantitative study utilized a 2×2 factorial design, which provided a means to establish a treatment and control group, as well as to analyze independent and dependent variables using inferential statistics (Black, 1999). The independent variables were time (pre-study/post-study) and group (treatment/control). A questionnaire, administered pre-study and post-study, gathered data used to measure the students' levels of motivation, respectively represented as the variables, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation, using a modified version of the Learning Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-L; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Two-way mixed factorial ANOVAs were used to analyze data from the student motivation questionnaires in order to determine whether participating in the AOD resulted in changes to the students' motivation for writing.

Sample

The participant sample for the quantitative study was selected from concurrent classes that met the criteria established in the research method through modified probability sampling using a cluster sampling procedure (Black, 1999). The sample was selected from groups of classes meeting the class selection criteria; the participants from those classes were randomly selected and assigned to either the treatment or control group. This process approximated random sampling procedures to the greatest extent possible under the circumstances (Fowler, 2009; Vogt, 2007). The students participating in the study constituted a representative sample of the student population of their higher education institute.

A priori power analysis for ANOVA established the minimum sample sizes in each group required to effectively reject a false null hypothesis. Minimum sample sizes were calculated at 41 participants in each group for a medium effect size ($f = 0.25$); for a larger effect size ($f = 0.4$), the minimum number was determined to be 17 participants in each group. Due to the nature of the educational setting and the restrictions on the available groups, the sample was established at 40 participants, with 20 in each group. According to Mayr et al. (2007), establishing a representative sample by manipulating the effect size and statistical power is an acceptable method of balancing the potential risk of obtaining either Type I or Type II errors.

Prior to beginning the AOD academic intervention, approval was obtained from the institute's institutional review board (IRB) to conduct the study. The participants in the study were volunteers and received an in-person presentation on the intent of the study and the relevant IRB documentation, including the Human Subject Consent Form for behavioral study.

Materials/Instruments

This research study employed one instrument for data collection: a student motivation questionnaire (SMQ), which was adapted from the Learning Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-L; Black & Deci, 2000). Quantitative data were collected in two stages (pre-test and post-test) in order to measure the students' motivation related to writing over the course of the experiment.

For this study, the SMQ incorporated the two sub-scales of the SRQ-L: controlled regulation (CR) and autonomous regulation (AR). Two constructs operationalized and labeled as extrinsic motivation (i.e., controlled regulation) and intrinsic motivation (i.e., autonomous regulation) represented the outcome factors associated with the defined regulatory styles aligned with extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Answers to the items in the SMQ assessed the students' subjective experiences related to learning behaviors through participating in a writing assessment process in their respective language programs.

The CR sub-scale, assessed as extrinsic motivation, consisted of the regulatory styles of external and introjected regulation, delineated by Deci and Ryan (1985) as the most extrinsic types of motivation. The sub-scale included seven items designed to elicit responses associated with extrinsic motivation.

The AR sub-scale, assessed as intrinsic motivation, consisted of the regulatory styles of identified regulation or intrinsic motivation, designated by Deci and Ryan (1985) as the most intrinsic types of motivation. The AR sub-scale included five items designed to elicit responses associated with intrinsic motivation.

The questionnaire collected data concerning the students' perceptions of the influence of factors affecting their extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in relation to the writing instruction they received. The sub-scales were scored on a seven-point Likert-type scale of 1 (*not at all true*) to 7 (*very true*). Composite scores were calculated as an average score of the items in the sub-scale and used in the analyses with inferential statistics.

DATA COLLECTION

This research study was conducted over a four-week period nearing the end of the second academic semester of the language program. At that point, the students had attained sufficient language proficiency to write at the requisite level and could adequately utilize the AOD homework process. The researcher-moderated AOD delivered authentic materials and activities in four weekly homework assignments aligned with the current curriculum topics that were intended to augment the daily instruction received in the F2F classroom.

In the first session, the participants were asked to complete a timed writing assessment in the target language on a previously undisclosed topic. A short briefing on the criteria, as designated by the writing rubric categories, explained the expected standard for the submission. At the completion of Writing Assessment 1, the pre-study

SMQ was administered to the group. The Human Subject Consent Form, writing assessment, and SMQ for each participant were collected and stored for processing and analysis.

Following the administration of the first writing assessment and the questionnaire, the participants were randomly selected and assigned to either the treatment or control group; the students were then notified as to their group status. Those students assigned to the treatment group met at an established time to go over the AOD process and what was expected of them in terms of participation. Also, access to the content management system-hosted class was verified and any potential technical issues were addressed.

For the AOD intervention, a special course was created in the institute's content management system (CMS) that was accessible only by the participants assigned to the treatment group and the course moderator. No faculty members from the students' teaching teams had access to, or interacted with, students in any capacity in the conduct of the AOD intervention. While other students from the control group were given the same homework assignments and materials as the treatment group, they had no exposure to the content or conduct of the AOD. This process decreased one of the most common threats to validity, that is, the communication among participants (Vogt, 2007). The first assignment was opened in the CMS course on the first Friday following the briefing to the treatment group and remained open for the duration of the treatment. The second, third, and fourth assignments were opened on the Friday of the respective week. Incremental exposure to the content kept the students focused on the current topic and reduced the potential for learner information overload, a common effect students new to online courses face.

Students in the treatment group accessed and completed the weekly assignment in accordance with the AOD assignment standard. Nandi et al. (2012) claimed that interaction with course content among learners produces a deeper level of knowledge acquisition than rote memorization. The focus of the researcher-moderated AOD was to reinforce content acquisition, with the intent of improving the participants' writing through task-based activities and facilitating interaction and collaboration.

Following the conclusion of the treatment period, students in both the treatment and control groups completed Writing Assessment 2 under the same conditions as the previous writing assessment. Following that, the same SMQ was administered again to all students in both groups; the writing assessments and SMQ were collected and stored for processing and analysis.

Two important ethical considerations related to data collection and processing were ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants' data (McAreevey & Muir, 2011). Student data were coded to provide confidentiality during the research and analysis process (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Patton, 2002). Pre-authorized pseudonyms were employed as a means to facilitate anonymity in electronic communications.

The collected data consisted of writing assessments, the SMQs, and materials related to the interviews. Writing assessments were graded and correlated between

the raters and then scanned and stored securely in electronic format. An encrypted backup of the data was stored on a secured external storage device to protect against accidental data loss.

DATA ANALYSIS

The author employed Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 22 (SPSS 22) to develop inferential statistics of the data collected related to measuring motivation. Motivation was analyzed with three different measures – the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI), intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. The RAI, composed of the individual composite scores of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation scales, was subjected to a two-way factorial mixed ANOVA to discover whether the treatment resulted in any changes in how students perceived overall motivation for writing as either an intrinsically or extrinsically motivated process. Additionally, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were measured using two-way factorial mixed ANOVAs to assess the scores from the pre- and post-assessment questionnaires. All students received the motivation questionnaire, as previously explained. The results of both questionnaires were analyzed to examine how the students' extrinsic and intrinsic motivations were affected during the period of the intervention process. Equal-sized groups and relative equivalency among groups ensured that the ANOVA assumptions were met.

ASSUMPTIONS

Methodological assumptions about the research included two basic assumptions. The first assumption was the active engagement of the students in the AOD process, as the AOD homework assignments replaced one of the regular graded homework requirements already in place. A second assumption was that all participants would provide honest and relevant responses to the questionnaire.

RESULTS

The research question examined the outcome of motivation as measured by the students' scores on the motivation survey. As the SMQ assessed the students' perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in relation to writing in the foreign language, the expectations for the motivation scores in terms of main effects and interactions were that intervention success would be reflected by significant interaction, and that the second SMQ scores would be higher for the treatment group relative to the control group.

To answer the research question, the null hypothesis was tested using two-way mixed factorial ANOVA to assess the dependent variable RAI. The detailed analysis is described below in the sub-section on RAI. Based on the results of the ANOVA, there

was a significant difference ($p < .05$) in levels of motivation between the students who engaged in the AOD intervention and those who did not. Consequently, a determination was made to reject the H_{10} , as the evidence provided support for H_{1a} . As the levels of intrinsic motivation for writing for students in the treatment group increased significantly more in the post-study phase compared to students in the control group, the result indicated that the students' levels of motivation for writing were significantly impacted by the AOD intervention process.

Reliability Analyses

The SMQ used to measure students' motivation for writing consisted of two subscales: autonomous (defined as intrinsic) motivation and controlled (defined as extrinsic) motivation. The autonomous subscale consisted of five items, yielding a composite score for intrinsic motivation as the sum of the five items. For the controlled subscale, a composite score for extrinsic motivation was derived from the seven items in the subscale. Before using these composite scores as single variables, a reliability analysis was conducted on the subscale variables (Cronbach's α). An average was calculated from the scores on the pre-study and post-study questionnaires for each subscale. The analysis revealed a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .80$ for the intrinsic subscale, and $\alpha = .847$ for the extrinsic subscale, indicating a good level of internal consistency for the instrument and establishing the reliability of the single composite variables as a measure.

Detailed Analyses

Having established that there was good reliability for the key dependent variables related to motivation, the next stage of the analysis examined if the intervention had been successful or not. The research question focused on assessing the impact of the AOD treatment on students' motivation for writing. A two-way mixed factorial ANOVA was used to assess the effect of the independent variables time (pre-study vs. post-study) and group (control vs. treatment) on each of the dependent variables (see Table 1). The dependent variable Relative Autonomy Index (RAI) represented the students' scores on the motivation questionnaires as a single composite score and is described in the analysis section for RAI. Intrinsic motivation is a single composite score representing the students' scores for the autonomous subscale and is described in the analysis section for intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is a single composite score representing the students' scores for the controlled subscale and is described in the analysis section for extrinsic motivation.

As described previously, in addition to the RAI, the overall motivation scores were further delineated by the two subscale variables, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Scores in each category ranged from zero to seven points, in one-point increments, for a total of 35 possible points for intrinsic motivation, and 49 possible points for extrinsic motivation.

TABLE 1. Summary of ANOVA Significant Main Effects and Interactions: Motivation

Dependent Measure	Main Effect		
	Time	Group	Interaction
RAI	**	No	*
Intrinsic Motivation	***	**	***
Extrinsic Motivation	No	No	No

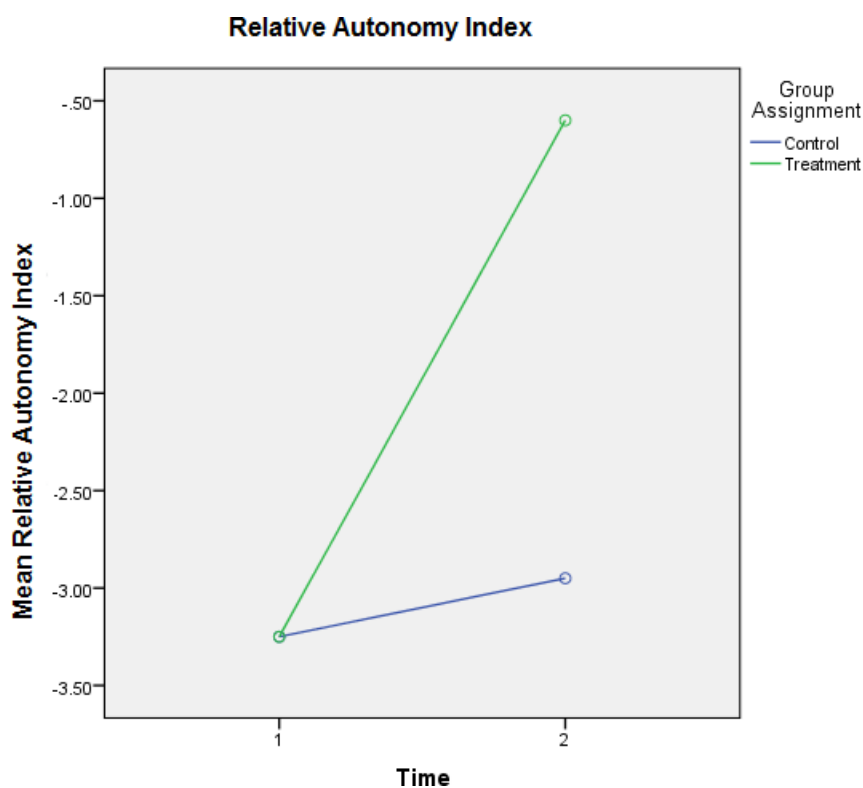
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Relative Autonomy Index

It was important to understand whether students considered completing writing tasks in their foreign language course as a more extrinsically or intrinsically motivated process. As proposed by Black and Deci (2000), the continuum of motivation is delineated into only two categories of regulation: Controlled (extrinsic) and autonomous (intrinsic). Items from the controlled regulation subscale (Questions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, and 12) were weighted -1 , while items from the autonomous regulation sub-scale (Questions 1, 4, 8, 9, and 10) were weighted $+1$. The RAI was a single, composite score calculated by summing the two sub-scale scores, representing the overall type of motivation the participants felt regarding writing. A positive result indicated that the student considered the activity to be autonomously, or intrinsically motivated, while a negative result indicated the student considered the activity as more controlled, or extrinsically motivated.

For the RAI, Levene's test was not significant, establishing a homogeneity of variance among levels of the repeated-measures variable time. The mean RAI for the control group decreased slightly, only .30 points, from the pre-study ($M = -3.25$ ($SD = 3.14$)) to the post-study ($M = -2.95$, $SD = 4.04$) questionnaires. This contrasted sharply compared to the treatment group, whose reported RAI decreased 2.65 points, from a mean of -3.25 ($SD = 3.14$) on the pre-study questionnaire to $-.60$ ($SD = 3.27$) on the post-study.

Based on the means of the RAI, students indicated that overall they considered writing activities to be extrinsically motivated, both before and after the AOD treatment. Of interest here is that while the RAI for the control group changed only slightly from the pre-study to the post-study, the RAI for the treatment group increased markedly (see Figure 1).

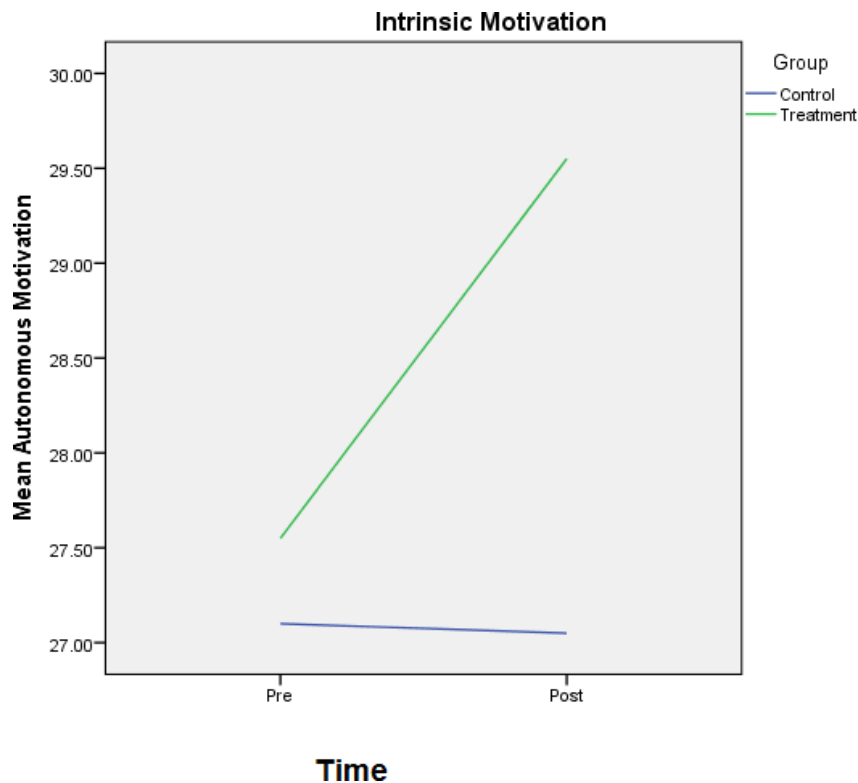
FIGURE 1. Relative Autonomy Index

While there was a significant main effect of time, $F(1,38) = 8.09, p < .01, \eta^2 = .176$, no significant main effect was found for group, $F(1,38) = 1.53, p = .223, \eta^2 = .039$, on the dependent variable RAI. The main effects were qualified by a significant interaction effect between time and group, $F(1,38) = 5.13, p < .05, \eta^2 = .119$. A simple main effects analysis revealed a significant effect of time on the mean score for the post-study questionnaire, $F(1,38) = 4.09, p < .05, \eta^2 = .097$, though not for the pre-study score, $F(1,38) = .000, p = 1.00, \eta^2 < .001$.

The significant interaction effect showed that the levels of intrinsic motivation for writing for students in the treatment group increased significantly more in the post-study phase compared to students in the control group. This indicated that the students' levels of motivation for writing were significantly impacted by the AOD process.

Intrinsic Motivation

For intrinsic motivation, Levene's test was not significant, establishing a homogeneity of variance among levels of the repeated-measures variable time. The mean score for the intrinsic motivation of the control group decreased .05 points, from 27.1 ($SD = 1.83$) on the pre-study questionnaire to 27.1 ($SD = 1.73$) on the post-study questionnaire. For students in the treatment group, the mean scores increased 2.0 points, from 27.6 ($SD = 1.64$) on the pre-study questionnaire to 29.6 ($SD = 1.61$) on the post-study questionnaire (see Figure 2).

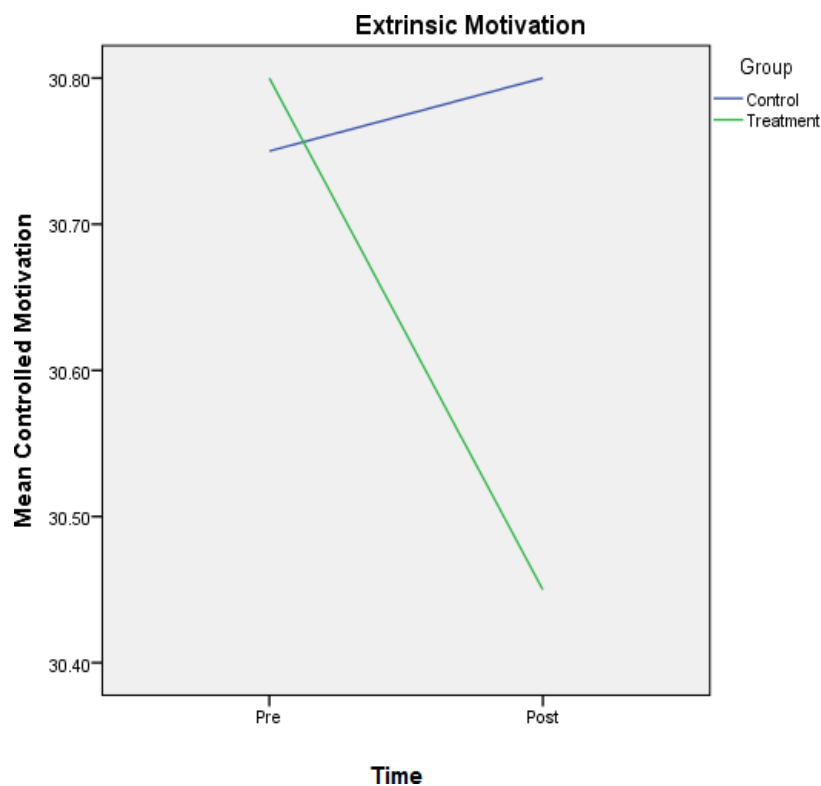
FIGURE 2. Intrinsic Motivation

There were significant main effects of time, $F(1,38) = 19.1, p < .001, \eta^2 = .343$, and group, $F(1,38) = 8.98, p < .01, \eta^2 = .191$. A significant interaction effect was also found for time and group, $F(1,38) = 21.9, p < .001, \eta^2 = .366$. A follow-up simple main effects analysis showed a significant effect on the post-study scores, $F(1,38) = 22.4, p < .001, \eta^2 = .371$, of the treatment group.

Results of the ANOVA indicated that the levels of intrinsic motivation for writing for students in the treatment group were significantly higher in the post-study phase compared to the students in the control group. This finding was in line with the expectation that students in the treatment group should show an increased intrinsic motivation for writing over the period of the intervention.

Extrinsic Motivation

For extrinsic motivation, Levene's test was not significant, establishing a homogeneity of variance among levels of the repeated-measures variable time. The mean score for the extrinsic motivation of the control group increased .05 points, from 30.8 ($SD = 2.20$) on the pre-study questionnaire to 30.8 ($SD = 2.38$) on the post-study questionnaire. For students in the treatment group, the mean scores decreased .35 points, from 30.8 ($SD = 2.28$) on the pre-study questionnaire to 30.5 ($SD = 2.46$) on the post-study questionnaire (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. Extrinsic Motivation

There were no significant main effects of time, $F(1,38) = 1.16$, $p = .288$, $\eta^2 = .030$, or of group, $F(1,38) = .043$, $p = .837$, $\eta^2 = .001$, on the dependent variable extrinsic motivation. Additionally, no significant interaction effect was found, $F(1,38) = 2.06$, $p = .159$, $\eta^2 = .021$.

The ANOVA results revealed that while the control group's mean score increased very slightly from the pre-study to the post-study questionnaire, the treatment group's mean score decreased markedly in comparison to the control group, though not at a significant level. This finding is in keeping with the expectation that there should be a difference in the levels of extrinsic motivation between the treatment and control groups as a result of the intervention. The direction of the decrease is what would be expected if the AOD intervention was successful.

DISCUSSION

The research question investigated whether there was a difference in the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation between students taught a foreign language in a F2F environment who do or do not engage in asynchronous online discussion. The results of the statistical analyses supported the alternative hypothesis, evidenced by the difference in levels of motivation reflected in the scores on the pre- and post-study motivation questionnaires. An underlying assumption of the current investigation was that students receiving the treatment would actively engage in the AOD process, thereby assuming a share of responsibility for their own learning processes (Meskill &

Anthony, 2010). As advocated by Neuville et al. (2007), the use of contextual strategies encouraged active participation in the AOD process. Through linking learning activities to authentic and relevant real-world tasks, the AOD process promoted the students' conscious perception of the value of course materials, resulting in a corresponding effect on their motivation for the task.

Based on the post-study means for the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI), all students considered writing to be an extrinsically motivated process. The analysis revealed a statistically significant difference for the RAI, with a notable change in motivation levels. While the control group's RAI remained relatively unchanged over the course of the treatment period, the treatment group's RAI decreased 2.35 points, from a mean of -2.95 ($SD = 4.05$) on the pre-study questionnaire to $-.60$ ($SD = 3.27$) on the post-study. This result indicated that over the course of the treatment phase, the perceived motivation of students in the treatment group became more intrinsic regarding the writing process. Ascertaining the students' overall perspective pertaining to motivation for writing was an important consideration, as it reflected the amount of effort that an individual will expend to accomplish an action, as well as the persistence exhibited towards task completion (Alshenqeeti, 2018; Dornyei, 2001).

Analyses of the scores for the intrinsic motivation sub-scale revealed a significant effect of the AOD process on intrinsic motivation. Out of a possible 35 points on the post-study assessment, the treatment group ($M = 29.6$, $SD = 1.61$) scored a mean increase of 2.0 points, compared to the control group ($M = 27.1$, $SD = 1.73$), which only increased .05 points. With a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .371$), the significantly higher mean score indicated that, for participants in the treatment group, the four-week AOD process was instrumental in effecting a change in their perceptions regarding intrinsic motivation in relation to writing. The group assignment had a large effect ($\eta^2 = .191$) on the students' intrinsic motivation, with a corresponding large effect size ($\eta^2 = .343$) for time. The result indicated that students who received the AOD treatment perceived writing tasks to be more autonomous in nature than did students who did not participate in the AOD, and consequently reported higher levels of an increased intrinsic motivation for writing.

Analysis of the scores for the extrinsic sub-scale revealed no significant effects of the AOD process on extrinsic motivation. An interesting result emerged from the analysis in a comparison of the mean scores of the two groups. The control group's mean ($M = 30.8$, $SD = 2.38$) increased .05 points, while the mean of the treatment group ($M = 30.5$, $SD = 2.46$) decreased .35 points. This result indicated that over the course of the treatment period, the scores of those students participating in the AOD treatment became slightly less extrinsic but did not differ significantly from those who did not participate in AOD. With the significant increase in intrinsic motivation reported by students in the treatment group, it could be expected there would be a corresponding decrease in extrinsic motivation; however, that did not occur

IMPLICATIONS

Motivation influences the amount of effort students are willing to invest in learning (Alshenqeeti, 2018). Today's language learners at the post-secondary level are technology-oriented; consequently, in order to successfully engage in blended or online language learning, students need to be challenged in a manner that improves competence. Incorporating technology-based instructional strategies that support autonomy and competency positively affects the students' needs satisfaction, which in turn, positively affects their self-determination (Chen & Jang, 2010).

As presented herein, the results of the analysis for the motivation questionnaire were generally in line with the alternative hypothesis. Based on the evidence of this research, two major implications emerged for instructors involved in blended learning environments. A primary consideration is that foreign language faculty need to truly understand the learning motivations of their students in order to customize facilitation strategies that will assist them to become more self-determined learners. With the advent of social media and nearly universal availability of communications technologies, learners should be encouraged to engage in online activities that promote authentic interaction with peers, instructors, or even native speakers of the language.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE KOREAN EFL CONTEXT

Based on the findings, a recommendation for faculty engaged in F2F EFL instruction is to utilize asynchronous processes, such as AOD, to extend the learning environment outside the F2F classroom as a means to augment classroom teaching practices. An asynchronous process with a directed focus can address several of the issues identified in the study, specifically those of insufficient time, a lack of emphasis placed on writing instruction, and the use of ineffective engagement strategies. Additionally, homework assignments that incorporate authentic online resources can be used to increase learner autonomy and encourage self-directed learning. Online content must be relevant and applicable to the topic, avoiding content that learners may perceive as a major detractor to interest and productivity (Lombardi, 2007).

A final recommendation is to conduct similar research in Korean EFL institutions by replicating the research design, as the motivational factors around higher education foreign-language English learners are directly impacted by local phenomena. Using a factorial design (pre-post, treatment-control groups) most effectively establishes the efficacy of an intervention treatment in terms of causal claims. One major modification would be to ensure that the researcher does not participate in the facilitation of the AOD process. This reduces the potential for a perception of bias or conflict of interest in the conduct of the research. Another suggestion for research would be to extend the AOD intervention process to a minimum of eight weeks, or a suitable time frame as established by the course instructor. Further research could address the issue of small sample size by extending the research time frame over several classes, if that

were a feasible option and the researcher were not limited on time. Finally, it would be interesting to see to what extent the results of this study could be replicated if this research design were implemented in a traditional university setting, over the course of a semester, for intermediate- or advanced-level language learners.

LIMITATIONS

Three major limitations in the current study were identified related to considerations of interpretation and generalizability of the results of the research. Mitigation measures controlled or eliminated the identified limitations and included the following:

- Sample composition: Representative sample through modified probability sampling process with random selection and group assignment.
- Sample size: Power analysis and use of parametric tests.
- Limited time frame duration for the treatment: Structured approach of the AOD homework assignments, which specifically targeted the concurrent curriculum content and the process through which students approached a writing assessment.

CONCLUSION

The RAI established that overall, although participants found writing to be an extrinsically motivated process, during the course of the intervention, students in the treatment group reported a significant change in intrinsic motivation. The AOD process produced a large effect on levels of intrinsic motivation for students in the treatment group, whose scores increased significantly from the pre-study to the post-study survey but not for students in the control group. While levels of extrinsic motivation were not significantly affected by the AOD process, the trends and directions of findings were very much in line with expectations. Overall, it would be reasonable to conclude that in terms of student motivation, the AOD + F2F intervention was successful.

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APPENDIX

Student Motivation Questionnaire

The following questions relate to your reasons for actively participating in the asynchronous discussion board activity for this course. Different people have different reasons for participating in such an activity, and I want to know how true each of these reasons is for you. There are three groups of items, and those items in each group pertain to the sentence that begins that group.

Please indicate how true each reason is for you using the following scale:

The Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all True			Somewhat True			Very True

A. I will actively participate in the assigned writing activities in the course:

Questions		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Because I feel like it is a good way to improve my understanding of the material.							
2	Because others might think badly of me if I didn't.							
3	Because I would feel proud of myself if I did well in the writing assessment.							
4	Because a solid understanding of writing concepts is important to improving my language learning.							

B. I am likely to follow my instructor's suggestions for studying writing:

Questions		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Because I would get a bad grade if I didn't do what he/she suggests.							
6	Because I am worried that I am not going to perform well in the writing assessment.							
7	Because it is easier to follow his/her suggestions than come up with my own study strategies.							
8	Because he/she seems to have insight about how best to learn the material.							

C. The reason that I will work to expand my knowledge of writing is:

Questions		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Because it is interesting to learn more about the nature of writing concepts.							
10	Because it is a challenge to really understand the best way to correctly phrase what I want to say.							
11	Because a good grade in writing will positively affect my GPA.							
12	Because I want others to see I am intelligent.							

L2 Learners' Beliefs Regarding Their Acquisition of English Prepositions

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While there has been extensive research on L2 learners' beliefs, few studies have examined these beliefs as they pertain to specific features of language. The current study used survey data to examine the beliefs of advanced L2 learners from Korean, Chinese, and Spanish L1 backgrounds with a focus on their acquisition of prepositions. The results showed that these three groups of learners, for the most part, did not attribute their acquisition of this word class to pedagogical materials in textbooks and dictionaries. Instead, they attributed their learning primarily to unconscious processes and to the memorization of prepositions within collocations. However, the Spanish L1 learners reported more intentional learning of collocations, whereas the Korean learners believed that their learning was based more on their implicit acquisition of collocational patterns. The pedagogical implications of the study are discussed along with some concrete examples of questionable pedagogical exercises targeting prepositions in popular English textbooks.

Keywords: prepositions, learner beliefs, collocations, incidental, intentional

INTRODUCTION

Second language instructors and material developers have specific ideas regarding how languages are learned and the optimal strategies for acquiring a second language. Yet these ideas, which form the basis for classroom instruction and curriculum development, do not exist in a vacuum. Students also come to the task of learning with their own presumptions gleaned from a wide assortment of sources, including pedagogical practices in their home country, their prior exposure to learning materials (both inside and outside of the classroom), and their own personal learning experiences. These beliefs are important to understand, since they may be associated with the students' motivation to engage in certain learning tasks, their development of realistic expectations, and their ability to acquire a second language most effectively.

Interest in this topic began in earnest with the research of Horwitz (1987), who developed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) based on the teachers', students', and laypersons' typical beliefs about L2A (second language acquisition). The survey has been used to study the beliefs of a wide range of L2 learners and instructors, including junior high school students (Pan & He, 2024), high school students (Aziz & Quraishi, 2017), college undergraduates (Mohebi & Khodadady, 2011), graduate students (Mueller, 2018), older learners (Johari et al., 2017), and pre-service teachers (Liu & Rutledge, 2020). The BALLI surveys a wide

range of beliefs that range across five general areas: foreign language aptitude, learning difficulty, characteristics of L2A, strategies, and motivation. Unfortunately, few studies have examined the learners' attitudes regarding the acquisition of specific linguistic features or aspects of language, whether these be lexical, semantic, syntactic, morphological, phonological, or pragmatic. This study aims to fill this lacuna by focusing narrowly on the learners' beliefs regarding their acquisition of prepositional senses.

POSSIBLE ROUTES TO THE ACQUISITION OF PREPOSITIONS

As a word class, prepositions occur frequently in English. In fact, 11 prepositions (*of, in, to, for, with, on, at, by, from, into, and about*) each occur over 1,000 times per million words in the Brown Corpus of American English, and the most frequent six prepositions account for three-quarters (74.4%) of all prepositional use (Mindt & Weber, 1989). In spite of this frequency, prepositions are notoriously challenging for L2 learners (Mueller, 2022; Munnich, 2002). This difficulty is likely to stem from a number of factors, including the prepositions' low phonological salience (cf. Collins et al., 2009), the highly polysemous nature (and hence low form–meaning contingency) of core prepositions (Ellis, 2006; Tyler, 2012b; Zhao & MacWhinney, 2018), and mismatches in how different languages extend core prepositional senses (Brenda & Mazurkiewicz-Sokołowska, 2022; Tyler, 2012b). This last point can be viewed from the perspective of crosslinguistic influence. When first acquiring a target L2 form, the learners' default strategy is to learn its meaning based on its rough equivalence with a similar L1 form (Andersen, 1984; MacWhinney, 2005). As Kroll and Stewart (1994) argued, this results in an L2 interlanguage lexicon that initially has strong associations with paired L1 lexical items. As the learners use the target language within rich contexts, direct links between L2 forms and their associated meanings gradually develop and strengthen.

Prepositions can be acquired in a number of ways. For the purpose of this paper, five general routes to the acquisition of prepositions will be considered. These will set the stage for the empirical study, reported in the body of the paper, that examined the learners' intuitions regarding their acquisition of prepositions.

The first and perhaps most obvious source of the learners' knowledge is the presentation of prepositional meaning within dictionaries and textbooks. In practice, most textbooks do not systematically address prepositional meaning, and they often fail to teach the patterns of extension of meaning from more central senses. Moreover, the semantics of some prepositional senses can be quite abstract and subtle. In some cases, various functional features combine to sanction the appropriate use of a prepositional sense, in which case, the relevant features may be weighted in terms of their relevance. Complicating matters further, these weightings may be slightly different for L2 prepositional senses that appear to learners to be synonymous with approximately equivalent senses in their L1 (Ijaz, 1986).

Learners can acquire some abstract meaning through implicit learning mechanisms. From a cognitive vantage point, this could involve repeated instances in which an L2 form is processed within the same cognitive window (i.e., within the episodic buffer of working memory) while its associated meaning is also being processed. It is important to note that the learner may not notice the actual pairing of form and meaning. For example, the learner, if asked, may say that the understood meaning of a particular preposition encountered within the input is derived from extralinguistic inferences (and in terms of the learner's actual cognitive processes, this may, in fact, be the case). Yet even in the absence of noticing, the form–meaning mapping may eventually be consolidated through unconscious processes (cf. Williams, 2005, 2009).

In other cases, learners may explicitly notice form–meaning connections within the input. Indeed, Schmidt (1990, 2001) has argued that such conscious noticing is the linchpin of successful L2A. In the case of prepositions, learners may notice an unknown sense of a preposition within input, and as a result of this noticing, the form–meaning mapping may be stored as a fledgling long-term memory representation that is then further consolidated through subsequent encounters of the target sense. In actual practice, explicit learning takes place against a background of constant implicit learning. Each time a target form and associated meaning are processed, a learner's interlanguage system will shift somewhat, often gravitating toward slightly more nativelike representations.

The implicit or explicit learning of prepositions may also involve collocational knowledge. At an unconscious level, certain verb-preposition (e.g., *look at*) or preposition-noun (e.g., *on time*) collocations may occur frequently in the input leading to the storage of the collocations as phonological chunks. In such cases, the individual words (i.e., the preposition and its collocate) may not be processed individually. It should be noted that the development of this sort of collocational knowledge does not rely on conscious noticing. As evidence for this, Vogel Sosa and MacFarlane's (2002) empirical research strongly suggests that even native speakers will predictably process certain noun-preposition collocations (e.g., *kind of*) as unparsed chunks based on specific frequency thresholds.

It is also important to note that collocation-based learning does not equate to acquisition of the particular sense that occurs within a collocation (Mueller, 2011). For example, a student may learn to recognize the collocation *on time* and may even be able to produce this collocation accurately in speech or writing. Even so, the same learner may fail to understand or produce the collocation *on schedule*. Such acquisition patterns are possible in spite of the fact that both collocations in this example include the preposition *on* used with the same sense.

In other cases, collocation learning may be adopted as an intentional strategy. One justification for such a strategy is the observation that about one quarter (Biber et al., 1999) to three quarters (Altenberg, 1990) of native speaker production relies on highly frequent lexical bundles that are likely stored in the mind as formulas (see also Wray, 2002). In a summary of research on the role of formulaic sequences (i.e., collocational learning) in L1 and L2 language acquisition, Mueller (2017) concludes

the following regarding adult L2 learners' acquisition of collocations in immersion contexts:

Late L2 learners in an immersion context seem to retain associative learning mechanisms and are thus able to make contiguous form–form mappings based on massive amounts of input. ... Adults, however, seem to suffer from imprecise interlanguage phonology and syntax, and thus lack L1 speakers' ability to verify congruence of a FS [formulaic sequence] with the target linguistic system. The explicit mechanisms available to adults are also inappropriate for learning some FSs, particularly those that are semantically bleached. When reading, adults also find it more difficult to notice FSs, which lack orthographic salience. (pp. 39–40)

Mueller (2017) summarizes the research on late L2 learners in non-immersion contexts as suggesting that they are “limited by the same problems, which are exacerbated through poverty of input; hence, their acquisition is primarily focused on forms that are phonologically distinguishable and noticeable in the input (often due to the transparency of meaning)” (p. 40). In the quoted passage above, there is a discussion of the L1 speakers' ability to verify congruence of a formulaic sequence with the L1 system. As an example of this, consider the collocation *piece of* as it occurs in the idiom *It's a piece of cake*. In rapid speech, the voiced fricative sound in *of* may be elided, or even when present, may not be heard by a nonnative speaker, who may thereby assume that the collocation is *piece a cake*. A native speaker is likely to recover from such an error (or probably avoid it altogether), especially when writing, due to the difficulty in finding a parsing of the misheard *piece a cake* that fits with English syntax. A nonnative speaker is more likely to accept the misheard collocation as an unparsed chunk.

The five acquisitional routes are not unique to prepositions. Moreover, learners are likely to use all five routes. It should be noted that some of these routes are essentially learning strategies, which can be deliberately employed. Two of the routes, unconscious learning from input and unconscious acquisition of collocations from input, are not part of a deliberate strategy. Even so, learners can engage in certain deliberate language-related tasks that are designed to engage these processes. For example, they may take part in an extensive reading program, which provides massive amounts of input (Nakanishi, 2015; Song & Sardegna, 2014), making the unconscious acquisition of L2 semantics more likely.

METHOD

A questionnaire study was designed to determine adult L2 learners' intuitions regarding their acquisition of prepositions. It should be noted from the outset that learners' reported intuitions regarding their learning strategies do not necessarily coincide with the actual strategies and processes that underlie their learning. Even so, it is important to understand learners' assumptions regarding their learning, as these are likely to affect which approaches they tend to adopt and are also likely to affect their evaluation of the approaches employed by their teachers and textbooks.

For this study, survey data were collected from 90 respondents, who had all learned English as a second language. The questionnaire instrument (see Appendix) was distributed to university students at a large state university in the U.S. and to workers at the Spanish embassy in Washington, D.C. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first of which contained questions related to the basic biographical information and the second of which contained questions regarding the respondents' intuitions regarding their learning of English prepositions. Since the target population of the research was adult L2 learners, data from respondents who had lived in an English-speaking country for more than three months prior to the age of 18 were excluded, as were data from respondents whose parents spoke English at home. In total, the data from 11 respondents were excluded from the analysis due to these inclusion criteria or due to the respondent's failure to complete all items on the questionnaire. The data collection was continued until 90 fully completed surveys were obtained from the targeted population, with 30 surveys from Chinese L1 learners, 30 from Korean L1 learners, and 30 from Spanish L1 learners. The respondents' biographical data is shown in Table 1. As can be seen, they were mostly in their late 20s or early 30s and had lived in an English-speaking country for two to seven years on average. There were more women (54) than men (36) who completed the survey.

TABLE 1. Biographical Data from the 90 Respondents

	Chinese L1	Korean L1	Spanish L1
Age (<i>M</i>)	25.5	27.0	35.4
LOR* (<i>M</i>)	29.8	36.5	83.6
Gender**	F = 18, M = 12	F = 14, M = 16	F = 22, M = 8

* Length of residence in an English-speaking society in months ** Gender: F = female, M = male

Table 2 shows the education level of the respondents, with the numbers in the three columns on the right showing whether they were currently enrolled in or had completed a college program at a specific level. As can be seen, the respondents were more highly educated than the general population of their home countries or the U.S. They had all been required to pass English proficiency tests to study in the U.S. or to work in an American-based embassy, so their English level was fairly high and may be estimated to be around B2 or C1 of the CEFR levels (Council of Europe, n.d.).

TABLE 2. Level of Education

L1	High School Diploma	BA	MA	PhD
Chinese	0	8	13	9
Korean	0	13	4	13
Spanish	6	14	7	3

The second section of the questionnaire asked respondents how they thought they learned English prepositions. They were asked to respond on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *never* to *always*. The items asked about the following five strategies:

1. Use of dictionaries or textbooks
2. Unconscious acquisition from input
3. Conscious noticing of new prepositional senses in the input
4. Deliberate learning of prepositions by memorizing collocations presented in learning materials
5. Unconscious learning of prepositions by memorizing collocations

RESULTS

The responses to the second section of the questionnaire are summarized in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Responses to Strategy Use for Learning Prepositional Senses

Strategy	Chinese <i>M (SD)</i>	Korean <i>M (SD)</i>	Spanish <i>M (SD)</i>	Total <i>M (SD)</i>
Dictionary or textbook	3.0 (1.1)	3.2 (1.0)	3.7 (1.1)	3.3 (1.1)
Unconsciously from input	3.5 (1.0)	3.7 (0.8)	3.6 (1.4)	3.6 (1.1)
Noticing within input	3.9 (0.6)	3.9 (0.8)	4.2 (0.9)	4.0 (0.8)
Deliberate from collocations	3.6 (0.9)	3.3 (0.9)	4.1 (0.8)	3.7 (1.1)
Unconscious from collocations	3.3 (1.0)	4.2 (0.7)	3.5 (1.3)	3.7 (0.8)

As can be seen from Table 3, the most commonly avowed strategy was noticing the semantics of a new prepositional sense when it appeared in the input. This response was especially common among the Spanish L1 respondents. The strategy is likely to be useful when language learners come across prepositional use that is new yet comprehensible based on the situation and sentence context. The Spanish L1 learners also reported relatively frequent use of a strategy in which they deliberately learned prepositional senses based on collocations. As Mueller (2011) notes, this strategy is unlikely to lead to full mastery of prepositional senses, since many verbs and nouns collocate with multiple prepositions, often with a noticeable difference in meaning. Furthermore, many verbs and nouns occur with low frequency, so the strategy of rote memorization for collocation patterns for all the verbs and nouns in a learner's interlanguage is too time-consuming to be practical once learners reach more advanced levels (e.g., beyond the most frequent 5,000 word families), at which point newly learned words occur at low frequencies. The Korean group used the strategy of explicit learning from collocations much less than the Spanish group, as

shown by an independent *t* test comparing the two groups (with a Bonferroni correction applied to correct for the family-wise error rate), $t(58) = 3.3, p = .002$.

Collocational knowledge in both L1A and L2A undoubtedly relies on a great deal of implicit learning. The Korean L1 respondents, in particular, thought that prepositions were acquired through unconscious learning of collocations, whereas the Chinese learners thought that this happened less often. Many learners and much of the public at large are probably unaware of the extent to which patterned associations are acquired unconsciously (as they are in much nonlinguistic category learning), so it comes as little surprise that the Chinese learners did not favor this response.

The low reported use of dictionaries and textbooks for learning prepositional senses is understandable. The participants presumably learned the core meanings of prepositions at an early phase of their English study (e.g., middle school). At more advanced stages of acquisition, learners may find it very time-consuming to find reference materials that provide accurate accounts of noncentral senses of a preposition.

DISCUSSION

The results suggest that learners from different L1 backgrounds may vary in their intuitions regarding the L2 acquisition of prepositions. Most of the respondents indicated relatively little reliance on textbooks and dictionaries to learn the semantics of this word class. This is understandable. After all, many textbooks fail to present the precise semantics of prepositional senses systematically. In fact, many merely provide fill-in-the-blank exercises without any accompanying explanations. Textbook writers apparently presume that learners will learn to associate the target sense with the appropriate preposition through negative feedback when the correct answers are revealed by the instructor. In many textbooks, instruction is based on the assumption that prepositions are best learned through collocations. As one typical example, the *Headway* pre-intermediary student's book (Soars et al., 2019b) provides a fill-in-the-blank exercise for preposition-noun collocations related to time (p. 37), and the intermediate book (Soars et al., 2019a) provides an exercise in which students fill in the blank for a series of unrelated verb-preposition collocations (e.g., *reputation for*, *fluent in*, *laugh at*) and then verify their answer by finding the collocation in an accompanying reading text (p. 25). The textbook thus reinforces some of the learners' mistaken assumption that preposition use is largely unmotivated and can consequently only be learned through rote memorization of collocations. As is often the case with commercial textbooks, the task appears to be unmotivated by any pedagogical principles. For example, it is unclear why students would benefit from scanning a text to check their answers. Another exercise in the pre-intermediate book (Soars et al., 2019b) is more justifiable, perhaps, as it sets up a contrast between the uses of *for* and *since* when used in time expressions (p. 61). Yet even this exercise can only be justified if the learners using the textbook regularly exhibit difficulty with this particular contrast.

With a few exceptions (e.g., Mueller & Tsushima, 2019), research has generally shown that cognitive linguistic (CL) approaches to the teaching of the semantics of abstract constructions and functional words are more effective than conventional approaches (Liu & Qin, 2024), and numerous studies have shown that CL-based instruction is particularly useful for teaching prepositions (Tyler et al., 2011; Wong, 2022; Wong et al., 2018). CL approaches have a number of advantages over conventional treatments. Most importantly, they describe prepositional use as motivated, and thus move learners away from an over-reliance on the rote memorization of collocations. The more fine-grained explanation of prepositional semantics provided in CL-based instruction also helps learners understand the motivation behind certain metaphorical extensions of meaning (Falck & Okonski, 2024). For example, an understanding of the attachment sense of *to* (the sense that appears in the collocations *attached to*, *connected to*, *taped to*, *stapled to*, etc.) makes it easier to acquire metaphorical uses such as *addicted to*, which imply an agent's continued psychological "attachment" to either a concrete or abstract entity (e.g., caffeine or drugs).

To develop effective materials based on a CL approach, more detailed semantic analyses of prepositions need to be conducted. Fortunately, much work has already been done in this area. In addition to Tyler and Evans' (2003) groundbreaking work, there are now semantic analyses of the polysemy network of most frequently occurring prepositions, including *at* (Navarro i Ferrando, 2002), *for* (Mueller, 2016), *into* (Kawaguchi & Kadota, 2022), *on* (Beitel et al., 2001), *to* (Brenda & Mazurkiewicz-Sokołowska, 2022), and *towards* (Le, 2024). Additional studies are needed to model the native speakers' embodied representation of prepositional meaning (Navarro i Ferrando, 2024), to determine the frequency of different senses based on corpus data, and to determine the optimal way to present CL-based analyses to learners (see Tyler, 2012a).

As attempted in this study, future research should provide more detailed examinations of learners' beliefs regarding particular aspects of language and specific target forms. Studies like this one could be expanded upon in various ways. For example, comparative studies could examine differences between learners of varied L1 backgrounds. These differences are likely to be particularly informative in studies that compare countries with markedly different approaches to second language education. Studies could also examine how learners' attitudes change as they progress in their studies and how their attitudes are affected by different learning experiences (e.g., how they change after entering university or after studying abroad). Researchers may also examine how attitudes are affected by learner differences. For example, it would be useful to know if certain learner beliefs are associated with higher motivation or with greater willingness to communicate (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

1. What is your first or native language? _____

2. How old are you? _____

3. What sex are you? (Circle the answer.) Female Male

4. What country/countries did you live in before the age of 18? _____

5. Did you live in the U.S. or another English-speaking country for more than three months before you turned 18? (Circle the answer.) Yes No

6. When you were growing up, what language(s) did your parents or other people who lived with you speak when they spoke with you or with each other? _____

7. Do you speak any other languages (besides English and your native language) well enough to hold a conversation in that language? (Circle the answer.) Yes No

If so, which language(s)? _____

8. How long have you lived in the U.S. or another English-speaking country (include previous visits)?
_____ years _____ months

9. What's your educational background? (Circle the answers.)

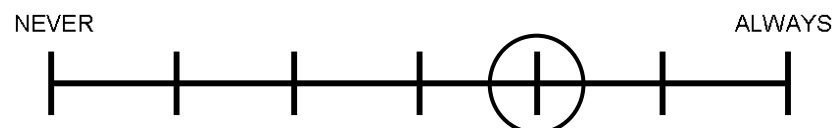
High school graduate: Yes No

Undergraduate in college: Freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduated

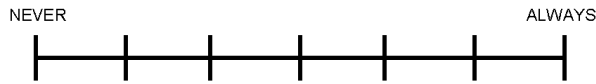
Master's degree: Currently enrolled Completed

PhD degree: Currently enrolled Completed

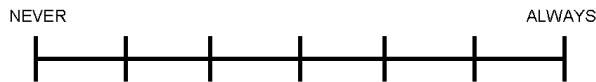
10. There are many ways to learn English prepositions (for example, words like *in*, *on*, or *at*). Which of the following describe how you learn these words? Circle the place on the line that shows how often you use the strategy. For example, if you circled the fifth mark on the line as shown below, it would mean that you use the strategy fairly often when you learn English prepositions.



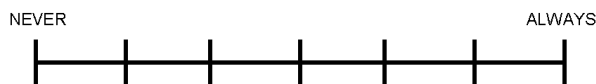
When I don't understand a preposition, I look it up in a dictionary to see what it means in my language.



I have learned prepositions rather unconsciously as I read English and listen to people talk. I don't remember how I learn them. It just seems to happen over time.



When I read or listen to someone talk, I notice a preposition being used in a meaning that I wasn't familiar with. In some cases, this makes me think about the meaning of the preposition as it is being used in the sentence.



When I learn a preposition, I learn from a dictionary or a language book how it is used in combination with other words. For example, when I learn the phrase *in time*, I memorize the meaning of the whole phrase based on the definition or explanation I see in a book or hear from a teacher.



I learn prepositions used in phrases by hearing and seeing them many times. Even though I may not understand why the word *in* is used with *time* in the phrase *in time*, I have heard or seen this combination so many times that it just sounds or looks right to me.



Brief Report

Using Dialogic Pedagogy to Develop Fluency for IELTS and TOEIC

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In this brief article, I will summarize theories of dialogic pedagogy in order to outline how an approach that emphasizes meaningful and cumulative dialogue in the classroom may facilitate the improvement of outcomes on the speaking test of the International English Language Testing System and/or the Test of English for International Communication in terms of improved fluency and coherence. In the latter half of this article, we will consider dialogic techniques that can be applied to IELTS- and TOEIC-preparation courses every day and in every spoken interaction to help foster an atmosphere that can promote cohesive, coherent, and meaningful talk in the classroom.

Keywords: Assessment, IELTS, TOEIC, dialogue, speaking

INTRODUCTION

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is the most widely used English-language assessment (Bozorgian, 2012; Tabrizi, 2017) and is notable for featuring a live, 14-minute interview as its speaking test component. This speaking test requires candidates to both deliver a “long turn” monologue and participate in a more general and abstract discussion that delves into the topic of the monologue in greater depth. The candidate’s performance on this speaking test is assessed according to four criteria, the first of which is “fluency and coherence” (i.e., how well the candidate is able to speak “without too much hesitation” and in a logical way that is not “difficult to follow”; British Council, 2023). Similarly, the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) also requires learners to respond quickly and clearly to potentially unfamiliar questions as well as to develop an extended and clear opinion on a given topic after a short period of preparation (ETS, 2024a).

Compared to the other three criteria of both speaking tests – lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation in IELTS (British Council, 2023) and vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in TOEIC (ETS, 2024b) – fluency is often considered by teachers and learners to be the aspect that requires the least targeted instruction, often because of a belief that fluency and coherence will naturally emerge as learners improve their overall language proficiency (Bozorgian, 2012; Abdul Rahim et al., 2017) and that therefore classroom time spent on improving fluency should instead be spent on improving proficiency in other aspects and skills.

Research suggests, however, that the ability to speak at length, without hesitation, in a coherent and cohesive manner is a skill that has to be learned, even

in a first language. Recent research in the field of K–12 education has suggested that potentially the most important marker in any classroom is neither the professionalism of the teacher nor the ability of the learner, but the quality of the talk that arises between them in the classroom (Alexander, 2008b; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Theories centering on the importance of dialogue have come to be known as *dialogic pedagogy*.

Drawing in particular on the dialogic pedagogy of Robin Alexander, I will attempt to (a) explain briefly what dialogic pedagogy is, (b) demonstrate how a dialogic approach to an exams-preparation classroom might facilitate the development of fluency and coherence, and (c) illustrate several classroom applications of this pedagogy that the exams-prep teacher may attempt to adapt into their own practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dialogic Pedagogy

The genesis of the term “dialogic pedagogy” as it is currently used in education research literature can be traced to the independent publication of two nearly contemporaneous research monographs: *Dialogue and the Development of Children’s Thinking* (Mercer & Littleton, 2007) and *Towards Dialogic Teaching* (Alexander, 2008b). Mercer and Littleton’s theory is quite deliberately modeled on Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory of child development (Mercer & Howe, 2012). Alexander’s theory, by contrast, was derived as a result of an extensive case study on how learners and teachers talk in various educational institutions in five countries.

To begin with, what both theories have in common is the suggestion that meaningful dialogue in the classroom needs to be contrasted against simple “conversation,” or those sequences of “unchained, two-part exchanges as participants talk at or past each other” (Alexander, 2008a, p. 98). Instead, dialogue should be considered a variety of classroom talk “in which the ideas of the various participants are heard, taken up, and jointly considered” (Mercer & Howe, 2012, p. 14). In other words, both theories suggest that what matters is not so much the quantity as the quality of talk in the classroom, and that therefore simply, for instance, insisting that teachers talk less and learners talk more may not necessarily lead to more meaningful and educational dialogue (Alexander, 2008c, p. 93). Instead, they suggest that dialogue can be characterized by its requirement of sustained engagement and attention from those participating in it as well as its natural progression of “chaining” exchanges “into a meaningful sequence” (Alexander, 2008a, p. 98).

Alexander’s research is particularly useful in considering how to apply dialogic pedagogy to actual classroom practice insofar as he provides a robust analysis of five key attributes of effective classroom dialogue. The first three of these attributes are that dialogue should be collective, reciprocal, and supportive, or in other words, that dialogue should invite participation from all speakers and listeners in the room, in a manner that requires genuine listening and interaction, and in a positive and

non-judgmental atmosphere (Alexander, 2008c, p. 112). These attributes are familiar to and often recommended by TESOL researchers in publications on the effective teaching of speaking and listening skills (Bozorgian, 2012; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013).

The last two qualities of dialogue identified by Alexander – that dialogue is cumulative and purposeful – however, are the most significant when considering how dialogic pedagogy might be differentiated from a focus on the spoken form (Alexander, 2008c, p. 113). *Cumulativeness* is defined as the capability of teachers and learners to build on their ideas and “chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry,” while *purposefulness* is defined as the ability of participants in the dialogue to plan and “steer” their talk towards particular aims. In both attributes, Alexander’s analysis largely agrees with the research of Mercer and Howe, in that dialogue can be contrasted against other forms of speech due to its linking, or cumulation, of different statements from multiple speakers into an ongoing chain of inquiry (Mercer & Howe, 2012, p. 17). Moreover, Alexander and his colleagues themselves suggest that the quality of cumulativeness in particular is “perhaps the most important one of all” as it is through this ability to link and chain discourse into a meaningful sequence that teachers are able to scaffold the learner’s and the culture’s ways of making sense (Alexander, 2008a, p. 111).

Dialogue, IELTS, and TOEIC

When considering how a pedagogical theory of dialogue might be useful in teaching IELTS- or TOEIC-preparation classes, one can consider the close similarity between the dialogic attribute of cumulation and the band descriptors for fluency and coherence in IELTS (British Council, 2023) as well as the higher-level band descriptors for speaking proficiency in TOEIC (ETS, 2024b). Many learners who enroll in exams preparation classes are aiming for higher proficiency scores, as these are frequently a requirement for matriculation into graduate or undergraduate study at many institutions of higher education. In order to achieve such scores in their speaking test, candidates in IELTS will need to demonstrate their ability to “keep going” (Band 6), use “discourse markers, connectives, and cohesive features” flexibly (Band 7), and develop their ideas on a topic in a way that is “coherent, appropriate, and relevant” to what has been said before (Band 8, British Council, 2023). Likewise, in TOEIC, candidates at higher proficiency scales are expected to convey their opinions clearly, in a “connected, sustained discourse” (Scales 7–8, ETS, 2024b).

It is sometimes taken for granted by teachers that learners in exams-preparation classes are already familiar with this sort of cumulative and purposeful discourse in L1, and that therefore all that is required in the exam-preparation classroom is for the teacher to help learners translate their existing capacity for dialogue by improving their grammatical, lexical, and phonological capabilities in L2 (Tavakoli & Wright, 2020). However, the style of in-depth discussion required of learners on the IELTS and TOEIC speaking tests – particularly in Part 3 of IELTS (IELTS.org, 2023) as well as Questions 5–7 (responding to questions), 8–10 (using

information), and Question 11 (expressing an opinion) on the TOEIC (ETS, 2024a), all of which require candidates to respond to questions on unfamiliar topics and give extended and cohesive opinions – may not necessarily be a familiar mode of discourse. This is especially true for younger candidates who might struggle to construct a coherent and cohesive response about, say, urbanization or the climate crisis, even in L1.

Learners may, therefore, receive considerable benefits from a pedagogical approach that foregrounds and attempts to consciously model and scaffold precisely this style of cohesive and coherent dialogue as frequently as possible in all classroom interactions. Such practice and rehearsal may not only help learners to improve their fluency and coherence but may also alleviate, at least to some degree, the considerably high degree of testing pressure that many exam candidates and learners have reported in research into the affective dimensions of these language tests (Tabrizi, 2017).

A final reason for considering the application of dialogic pedagogy to an IELTS or TOEIC classroom related to this is that participating in genuine, reciprocal, cumulative, and purposeful dialogue can be highly motivating. As Alexander suggests, such engagement “is a prerequisite for learning” (Alexander, 2018, p. 572). Promoting engagement and maintaining motivation are frequently challenging in the context of exams-preparation courses due to the obvious and considerable pressures faced by learners in these sorts of classes. For that reason, however, I would suggest that adopting an approach to classroom talk that promotes and requires engagement with what everyone hears and says in the classroom is particularly apposite in these sorts of classes, because without such engagement, learners may instead experience their exams-preparation – and indeed, their entire English-language learning journey – as an arduous slog to be survived rather than as an opportunity for learning, growth, and curiosity.

CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

Translating theories of pedagogy into actual pedagogical practice is never easy. In the remainder of this article, I will attempt to describe and explain three varieties of dialogical practices that may be applied to the exams-preparation classroom. These three varieties are activities the teacher can apply to every lesson, to every talk, and every-so-often.

Every Lesson

Impromptu talks and *speed writing* are activity types that are not unique to this paper, and which moreover are almost certainly familiar to almost every EFL teacher. In the case of impromptu talks, teachers simply choose a topic (e.g., “computers”) or a more specific prompt (e.g., “a time you used a computer and it didn’t work”), allow the learners a minute or two to prepare, and then another minute or two to talk to their partners. Speed writing is the written form of this activity, with learners given a few minutes to write as much as possible in response to a given prompt.

While both of these activities are very simple and widely familiar, a teacher who uses these activities with an eye towards creating an effective dialogic atmosphere in the classroom may make certain adaptations. Before mentioning these adaptations, however, some might ask how speed writing – or any other activity that focuses on the written form of the language – might facilitate the development of spoken fluency and coherence. Although a more detailed consideration of this concern is well outside the scope of this paper, there exists research into second-language acquisition suggesting that the development of written fluency is often important in the development of spoken fluency, particularly when learning in adulthood a language that is not closely related to one’s native language (Williams, 2008).

Highlighting this concern with speed writing can lead to our first dialogic adaptation to this widely used type of activity: When learners are given a topic and a short period of time to write, the dialogic teacher can emphasize the importance of writing as quickly and fluently as possible. When setting up this activity myself, I have sometimes instructed learners to try to never stop moving their pens or pencils, even if that means sometimes writing the same sentence over and over, or freely associating words, or even writing nonsense. An element of competition can be introduced by encouraging learners to count how many words they were able to write in the 3–5 minutes, and keeping a journal of their speed writing word counts. By incorporating this short activity into every lesson – either in class or, once learners become familiar with it, as a regular homework exercise – learners may not only develop greater fluency in the written form but may acquire greater confidence in their ability to produce increasingly long passages of coherent (or at least, mostly coherent) English under time pressure.

The same benefits and same pedagogical emphasis on speed and fluency can also be carried over to the spoken form of these activities, which here I refer to as impromptu talks. Again, by making it a routine every lesson – perhaps towards the beginning of every lesson, as a warm-up – learners may also become more confident and comfortable in speaking at length on familiar and unfamiliar topics, much as they will be expected to do on IELTS and TOEIC. This focus on fluency in both of these activities can be taken a step further by applying the techniques mentioned in the following section that can be applied to every talk.

Every Talk

In this section, I will suggest two schema, or techniques of dialogue, that can be of particular use in the exams-preparation classroom. These two, closely related schema are referred to in the literature as *recasting* and *recapping* (de Olivera & Jones, 2021). Recasting refers to any turn in a dialogue where a listener checks understanding by rephrasing what they’ve heard back to their interlocutor, i.e., “So what you’re saying is your favorite book is *Doremon*?” Recapping is essentially a lengthier and more dynamically complex form of this, where a listener will attempt to summarize something they’ve heard to a third party (i.e., “So, my partner was talking about this. One time she lost all her homework on her laptop...”)

Both recasting and recapping are techniques that can be of use in almost any speaking activity. In this paper, I will suggest that both techniques can be useful when applied to the everyday activities of speed writing and impromptu talks described above. Learners can be encouraged to recast what they've heard at the end of every impromptu talk or after every question when practicing IELTS Part 3 of the speaking test.

Recapping, moreover, can be an especially effective method of requiring engagement in a way that promotes attentive listening and meaningful dialogue. Instead of closing a round of impromptu talks or speed writing by inviting one learner to share what they have said or written with the class, the teacher can significantly raise the linguistic stakes by asking a recapping question: "Can you tell me what your partner said/wrote?" This slight adjustment requires that the learners genuinely pay attention to what their partners share with them. Furthermore, as one learner recaps what they think they heard or read from their partner, sometimes that partner sitting next to them may not agree with the summary. Such disagreements and misunderstandings can often be excellent and memorable opportunities for noticing gaps between how learners understand and use the target language (Schmidt, 1990). By making recapping a routine follow-up to speaking activities, learners can adopt a habit of routinely listening attentively to what they hear in anticipation of being called on to recap later.

Every-So-Often

Finally, I will offer one example of a specific activity that a dialogic teacher might use in order to facilitate noticing and listening attentively to how language is used to create cohesive and coherent meanings. This specific activity is known as *dictogloss* (Rinvoluceri, 1984). In this dictation activity, the teacher selects a very short text of around 50 to 70 words. Texts drawn from IELTS Part 2s given by candidates who are at or slightly above the target level of the learners are often ideal for this.

The instructions for dictogloss are rather complex and need to be carefully introduced the first time the activity is used in class: First, the teacher will read the text out loud to the class, three times only. The teacher will be reading out loud at a natural pace, with no unnatural pauses or slow speech. The learners will have to listen, take notes, and try, by the end of the activity, to reconstruct the original text as exactly as possible. It is important to stress here that if the teacher reads aloud at a natural pace, it would be impossible even for native listeners to write down a fifty- to seventy-word text verbatim as it is being read out. Instead, the learners will have to note down only the key words, and then try to fill in the gaps in-between after each listening. The learners should be encouraged to compare their notes and discuss what they think they have heard between each round of listening, but the teacher will answer no questions about the text (i.e., "What was the word after inflation?") to help the learners reconstruct the text.

The aim of this activity, much like with recapping, is to help draw learners' attention to the gaps between what they are able to hear and what they are able to say. Particularly when the text is just beyond the learners' current language level, in

doing this activity they may have the tantalizingly frustrating feeling of understanding everything but not knowing exactly how to communicate what they've understood in their own words. In other words, dictogloss is an excellent activity to use, every so often, to provide learners with practice in linking and chaining words and ideas into a meaningful and cohesive sequence (Alexander, 2008a).

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we have considered how the theory of dialogic theory, and particularly the dialogic pedagogy of Robin Alexander, can be used to identify the aspects of classroom talk that may best facilitate the development of fluency and coherence as specified in the IELTS band descriptors. Drawing on this theory, we have seen how simple activities and conversational strategies practiced every day and in every spoken exchange can be utilized to foster these dialogic aspects of classroom talk and have considered how one specific dictation activity might also be used to help learners become more confident and coherent participants in meaningful dialogue. I hope that you may find some of these ideas and suggestions useful in developing your own dialogic approach to teaching learners preparing for language proficiency exams.

THE AUTHOR

Nathan Cohen has been working in TESOL for nearly twenty years in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, primarily focusing on EAP, ESP, and exams preparation. He is presently employed by the British Council Vietnam. His research interests include assessment, language policy, and creativity in language education. Email: naverycohen@gmail.com

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Book Reviews

Review of *Lesson Planning* (2nd ed.)



By Nikki Ashcraft
TESOL Press (2024)
Pages: 52. (ISBN: 978-1-953745-39-2)

Reviewed by Jake Kimball

INTRODUCTION

Lesson planning is not unlike a map. The map serves as a guide to help travelers navigate from Point A to Point B. The traveler need not follow a specified route precisely – there may be multiple ways to arrive at a destination, with allowances for shortcuts or adventures off the beaten path. However, a lesson plan is much more than a sequence of activity procedures along with a list of objectives and required materials. Baked into a lesson plan is also the notion of lesson design, and this reflects the teacher’s professional expertise and experience.

Anecdotally speaking, the unfortunate reality is that, by and large, after a few years of classroom experience, many teachers often dismiss lesson planning as a time-consuming chore – one that can just as easily be completed in the mind’s eye. Think autopilot. Nikki Ashcraft’s *Lesson Planning* (2nd ed.) reacquaints teachers with the significance of planning lessons, reassuring readers that “Lesson planning is at the heart of being an effective teacher” (p. 8).

SUMMARY

Lesson Planning (2nd ed.) is a pocket-sized resource book for language teachers published by the TESOL International Association’s TESOL Press. This series, the English Language Teacher Development (ELTD) line, is a set of theory-to-practice overviews edited by Thomas Farrell.

In total, there are six chapters in this brief resource book. It closes with a substantial list of references and appendices. The Appendix includes sample lesson plans for individuals and team teaching, as well as links to some lesson planning templates. Sprinkled liberally throughout are Reflective Breaks, which include thoughtful questions to help assimilate the content.

CONTENTS

The Importance of Planning, Chapter 1, persuades readers to plan lessons by outlining their benefits. In addition to the usual list of items that prepare teachers for a lesson, the author also highlights how activities relate to each other, whether that be sequencing within that class period or how that one class is connected to past and future lessons.

Once readers are sold on the importance of lesson planning, Ashcraft tackles Approaches to Planning in Chapter 2. Here, more technical aspects of lesson design are outlined. The chapter begins with a discussion about the planning process, more specifically, whether to begin with *forward*, *central*, or *backward* design. Following this, suggestions are made for incorporating differentiation into lesson plans. Chapter 2 closes with a vital discussion about *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL). This approach or framework encompasses three principles to support learner agency: engagement, representation, and action and expression. This review is insufficient to detail the complexities of UDL in-depth, so readers should follow up on their own. Nonetheless, it is an essential aspect of lesson planning.

The Practice of Planning, Chapter 3, is where, as the saying goes, the rubber meets the road, where we bridge theory and practice. I would consider this chapter to be the nuts and bolts of the book. When crafting a lesson plan, we need to consider a range of factors, including objectives, procedures (such as sequencing, timing, and grouping), materials and technology, assessment, and out-of-class work. The chapter concludes with sage advice for implementing a plan, providing a checklist of sorts.

Chapter 4's Planning for Online Instruction is a new addition to the second edition. It briefly addresses issues related to conducting online lessons. Of course, the same points regarding teaching face-to-face classes, as outlined in Chapter 3, also apply to online courses. However, other technical issues need to be noted. An LMS platform for delivery needs to be secured, and both teachers and learners must become somewhat proficient in using it. Technology, such as polls, chats, and breakout rooms increase engagement. How do we incorporate these features as part of lesson planning?

Team teaching is the focus of Chapter 5's Collaborative Planning. In addition to the issues considered in previous chapters, lesson planning in a team-teaching situation involves determining or negotiating the roles and responsibilities of each teacher throughout each phase of the lesson-planning process.

The book closes with Chapter 6, Reflecting in Your Plan. This is a new chapter in the second edition. Here, up to about 30 prompts are generated for teachers to reflect on. These revolve around different aspects of a lesson: objectives, materials and technology, procedure, assessment, homework, and concluding general reflections.

EVALUATION

There is a lot to like about this second edition of *Lesson Planning*. The fact that it is only 52 pages, well, that can be a blessing or curse. It depends on your perspective. Nevertheless, while it is a short overview of lesson planning, it contains the seeds of professional growth. The reference section is helpful for following up on lesson planning concepts and for turning a weakness into a strength, should readers be so inclined.

Next, reflection. Thomas Farrell is the series editor. It should come as no surprise that reflection is a common thread woven throughout the text. There are multiple references to reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action. Furthermore, Chapter 6's reflection prompts supply grist for the mill. If you are a reflective practitioner, then there is no shortage of thoughtful questions to consider.

Chapter 2 is six pages of substance. I was impressed by how many concepts were introduced in such a short space, yet the content remained easy to read and digest. Three approaches to curriculum design were borrowed to scaffold lesson planning: forward, central, and backward designs. And then, Universal Design of Learning (UDL) added one more approach. This is a complex concept that requires additional background knowledge. While not TESOL-specific jargon, it is an educational framework based on learning theories and advances in cognitive science. Perhaps it is one that will be referred to more often in TESOL literature moving forward.

Finally, the focus on theory-to-practice stands out. Chapter 3 provides practical examples of commonly phrased objectives. How do you rephrase a poorly constructed objective? Find out here. There are also tables showing different types of language focuses, along with examples from lesson topics. Throughout, it is evident that the advice and caveats came from an experienced, practicing classroom teacher.

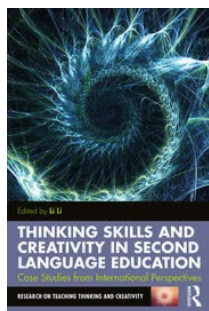
CONCLUSION

The updated second edition is a welcome addition to the series. It is concise, easy to digest, and encourages readers to explore a multitude of concepts via an accessible reference list. At the heart of the book is reflection. And that is the gift that keeps giving. There is no better way to conclude than with the author's own words: "Establishing a vision for our lesson enables us to reflect-in-action and make better decisions as we teach" (p. 42).

THE REVIEWER

Jake Kimball holds an MSc in educational management in TESOL from Aston University, and his research interests include classroom dynamics and willingness to communicate. He is the facilitator of the Classroom Management Special Interest Group. Taking part in teacher development activities has been a long-time interest, and he enjoys journaling to maintain a reflective mindset. He is an assistant professor of English in the Liberal Arts Department of Semyung University. Email: ilejake@gmail.com

Review of *Thinking Skills and Creativity in Second Language Education: Case Studies from International Perspectives*



Edited by Li Li
Routledge (2020)
Pages: xii + 218. (ISBN: 978-1-138-29794-4)

Reviewed by Christopher Miller

INTRODUCTION

It is commonplace to argue that a transmission-based form of education is obsolete. In the 21st century, most societies want learners who can use and manipulate information to solve problems and reach goals. Yet, exam-oriented education models restrict the development of educational systems that truly prioritize cognitive skills over the acquisition of declarative knowledge. These laments are nothing new, as readers of John Dewey, Benjamin Bloom, and Paulo Freire can easily attest. However, there seems to be a renewed urgency to cultivate a generation of critical and creative thinkers internationally through our educational systems. In the last several decades, these calls have been expressed through influential works in the Western world, such as Hattie's *Visible Thinking* and Wiggins and McTighe's *Understanding by Design*.

SUMMARY

As Li points out in the first pages of this volume, thinking skills are becoming “a central element of the curriculum” in many countries. How are these skills being implemented in ELT? *Thinking Skills and Creativity in Second Language Education* helps illuminate aspects of that question. Focused primarily on China, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, this volume incorporates a range of perspectives from elementary to postgraduate educational contexts, providing frameworks beneficial to classroom educators for cultivating both critical thinking (CT) and creativity. It sheds light on the actual practice of teachers in several contexts. Containing ten chapters in total, this work is largely, but not exclusively, a collection of research on classroom practice and teacher perspectives. Most researchers employ mixed methods. Overall, however, there is a tendency for more qualitative forms of data collection.

Three of the ten contributions can be classified as action research reports. Only two of the articles in this work deal predominantly with creativity.

CONTENT

In Chapter 1, “Thinking’ Move in Second Language Education,” Li establishes the importance of this topic and provides multiple definitions of CT, a taxonomy of creativity, and perhaps most usefully identifies ten “conditions to enhance creativity” (p. 7). Additionally, the volume as a whole is surveyed.

In Chapter 2, “How Does Bilingualism Affect Creativity?” Kim and Lee provide a novel framework for cultivating creativity in younger learners. The authors discuss the proper attitudes and climate for the flourishing of creativity, which the authors express through the acronym “4S”: sun (good environment and diverse viewpoints), soil (playful orientation and encouragement), storm (coping skills and high expectations), and space (freedom to daydream and grow). The authors distinguish between *inbox*, *newbox*, and *outbox* forms of thinking. “Inbox” refers to the basic application of skills, “newbox” exhibits a degree of expertise and CT, and “outbox” is characterized by genuinely novel interpretations and applications.

Chapter 3, “Pedagogies for Scaffolding Thinking in ESL: Integrating First Principles of Learning,” by Gunawardena, draws on Merrill’s (2002) principles of learning. The author provides a framework, primarily for reading instruction, called KADEI (identify a knowledge gap, activate knowledge about the topic, demonstrate comprehension, expand knowledge beyond the text, and integrate new knowledge with existing knowledge). This chapter provides multiple illustrations of the framework in use and reports Sri Lankan teachers’ attitudes toward the framework.

Chapter 4, Al-Nofaie’s “Teaching Theoretical Linguistics Through Thinking Skills Pedagogies,” is primarily an action research report on her attempt to implement and assess thinking skills in a theoretical linguistics class. She reports on the utility of visual tools, such as Venn diagrams, to scaffold student thinking. She emphasized the need for varied instructional methods, learner interaction, suitability of materials, and teacher reflection.

Chapter 5, “Fostering Critical Thinking Through Questioning in EFL,” by Defianty and Wilson, explores questioning practices by EFL teachers in Indonesian secondary education. The authors report missed opportunities to engage learners in more CT through teacher questions. They call for greater attention to CT skills in teacher development programs.

Chapter 6, M. Lin and Xiang’s “Integrating Critical Thinking into an EFL Writing Curriculum,” adapts Paul and Elder’s (2006) framework for Elements of Thought. Many details of the authors’ curriculum are shared, including the topic and purpose of each writing task. The authors report learners’ positive subjective survey responses and significant gains on nine critical-thinking standards derived from the aforementioned Paul and Elder framework (clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance, fairness) using a pre-test and post-test method.

Chapter 7, “Effects of Multimedia Presentations on the Development of Foreign Language Listening Comprehension: A Comparative Study of Cognitive and Metacognitive Listening Instructions,” by Rahimi et al., gives the reader a historical overview of listening instruction in second language instruction and presents multiple frameworks taken from the literature for employing metacognitive listening strategies and using multimedia in listening instruction. Their results indicate that younger learners in their context (Iran) perform better with comprehension-based approaches supported with multimedia rather than metacognitive strategies.

Chapter 8, S. Lin et al., in “Designing a Meta-Learning Programme,” report on the primary author’s use of a service-learning project in which secondary students in Taiwan instruct primary grade students from rural areas in English during a week-long summer project. The authors report favorable results for what Biggs (1985) termed *meta-learning*. This can be defined as the “subprocess of metacognition that refers specifically to learning and study processes in institutional settings” (p. 192). As this project entailed making “authentic decision making (i.e., making adjustments while delivering instruction to the primary grade students they were assigned to teach)” (p. 161), the learners engaged in “executive processes for controlling their learning” (p. 161).

Chapter 9, Soodmand Afsahr’s “TEFL Postgraduate Students’ Perception of Critical Thinking,” takes a dour view of the state of CT among graduate students in TEFL programs in Iran. The author utilizes the California Critical Thinking Skills Test and concludes that “Iranian postgraduate students of TEFL were not high critical thinkers” (p. 179). Graduate student participants blamed the outcome primarily on an exam-oriented education system and sociopolitical factors, as well as a lack of time and motivation.

Chapter 10, Fan and Li’s “Teacher Cognition of Creativity in Primary EFL Classrooms,” discusses Chinese primary classroom instructors’ understanding of creativity. The authors mention factors that limit the implementation of instruction suitable for fostering learner creativity. These include an educational system that prioritizes the assessment of linguistic knowledge over cognitive ability and the lack of a clear concept of what exactly creativity is among the teacher-participants in their study.

EVALUATION

The reader will encounter multiple frameworks and templates that can be explored in their teaching practice. These include Paul and Elder’s Elements of Thought discussed in Chapter 6; Kim and Lee’s inbox-outbox-newbox framework for cultivating creativity; and the principles for integrating multimedia in instruction mentioned in Chapter 8. Instructional units or lesson plans are provided in Chapters 3, 4, 6, and 8. While adaptations may be necessary, they are excellent food for thought for the interested practitioner.

The issues inhibiting greater flourishing of thinking skills in the classroom are clearly identified. They include teacher knowledge and skill deficits, an exam-

oriented curriculum, and the lack of teacher-friendly frameworks for instruction, especially related to creativity, time, and sociopolitical factors. The last two items drive home the challenge of effectively integrating thinking skills into national curricula effectively: Influential stakeholders want too much. This book contains worthwhile frameworks for both creativity and CT; however, they take time and cognitive energy to put into practice, both as a teacher-designer and as a student. As one of S. Lin et al.'s informants says regarding writing critically (in line with Paul and Elder's framework), "It is very demanding and my brain cells are almost dead" (p. 112).

The quality of the evidence for various claims is somewhat limited. Often, the evidence for claims is generated via qualitative methods like with M. Lin and Fan. Kim and Lee's inbox-newbox-outbox framework is exciting, but there is no evidence to support its effectiveness, nor are there illustrations of the model being used in actual practice. More sophisticated use of quantitative evidence is displayed by Rahimi and Soodmand Afshar. Additionally, quantitative claims with positive implications for moving the prospects of a "thinking skills" curriculum forward are made by S. Lin et al.

Several recent influential developments in cognitively focused instruction were absent from this volume. While Bloom's taxonomy was mentioned in three articles, there was no discussion of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (2002), which has become more influential in Western education in the past several decades. CLIL and its potential role in fostering CT or creative thinking were not addressed in any of these contributions. Finally, though metacognition was brought up to the point of redundancy, the value of incorporating principles from social emotional learning (SEL), especially self-monitoring and self-regulation, were never considered in this text. Future work in this domain could seek to bridge the gap between CT and SEL, as Chi-Chuan Yang (2025) has recently attempted to do.

CONCLUSION

Second language classes are not exclusively for acquiring an additional language. They are increasingly being viewed as sites for acquiring cognitive dispositions essential for flourishing in the 21st century. *Thinking Skills and Creativity in Second Language Education* can assist language educators looking to cultivate more critical and creative thinkers.

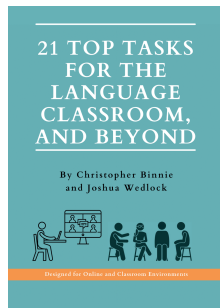
THE REVIEWER

Christopher Miller has been involved in Korea TESOL at the chapter and local level since 2011. Christopher currently works at Daeil Foreign Language High School and serves as the Seoul Chapter president in Korea TESOL. Email: chriskotesol@gmail.com

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Review of *21 Top Tasks for the Language Classroom, and Beyond*



By Christopher Binnie and Joshua Wedlock
CJ Binlock Education (2023)
Pages: xxi + 116. (ISBN: 978-0-6456599-0-0)

Reviewed by James Noland

INTRODUCTION

I first came across *21 Top Tasks for the Language Classroom, and Beyond* at a teaching conference in 2024. Since then, it has become one of the most frequently used resources on my desk. It has not only saved me considerable time in lesson preparation but also helped refine my understanding of how to implement effective, purposeful tasks in the language classroom.

Written by two experienced educators, Joshua Wedlock and Christopher Binnie, this textbook presents a practical and research-informed approach to task-based language teaching (TBLT). Both authors have over two decades of experience working with language learners of all ages. Their ideas are further enriched by contributions from a range of international educators teaching in various contexts and countries, including Australia, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. What sets this book apart is its accessibility. It is grounded in research but avoids excessive academic language, making it useful for both new and experienced teachers.

SUMMARY

The book begins with a short but thoughtful introduction to task-based learning, explaining what it is and how it can help accelerate language acquisition when used with purpose. The authors present an evidence-based approach to teaching with tasks, explaining how well-designed activities support learning outcomes. This section is written clearly and persuasively, making a strong case for why tasks should play a central role in language instruction.

Following this, the authors outline how to use the book effectively. This section is one of the book's key strengths. It provides a four-step framework that encourages teachers to go beyond simply selecting a task and using it once. The

steps are (1) preplanning, (2) planning and doing, (3) experimenting, and (4) developing signature tasks. Teachers are encouraged to preview the tasks in the book, select a few that match their students' needs, try them in different classes, and then adapt and refine those that work best. This process promotes reflective practice and professional growth. As someone who teaches regularly, I have found this approach both helpful and refreshing.

CONTENTS

The main section of the book contains twenty-one tasks, plus an additional icebreaker (an exceptionally enjoyable one, at that). Each task is presented clearly, with guidance on what language structures and vocabulary might be introduced beforehand. The tasks range from adaptations of well-known activities to original ideas created by the authors.

One example of an adapted task is "Let's Go Camping," where students negotiate and select items for a camping trip. This task, while familiar in concept, has been refined for greater classroom effectiveness. Another is "Planning a Trip," which similarly draws on a popular classroom theme but offers a more structured and engaging framework.

On the other end, there are novel tasks such as "Money Heist," in which students attempt to "steal" items from a house and calculate the total value. This task is both engaging and educational, requiring learners to use numbers, logical thinking, and strategic language. In my experience, tasks like these help students use language meaningfully while staying actively engaged.

Another notable feature is the attention to teaching in online environments. Each task includes a section explaining how it can be delivered online. This is a rare and welcome addition. To my knowledge, this is the only task-based book currently on the market that includes online teaching adaptations for every task. Given how many classes now take place online or in hybrid formats, this is an essential feature.

EVALUATION

The book succeeds in what it sets out to do: provide teachers with practical, tested, and effective tasks they can use immediately in class. The layout is clean, and the instructions are easy to follow. Most importantly, the tasks work. I have used many of them in my own classrooms and have seen how engaging these tasks can be. This is no accident. The authors ground their task design in principles of how people learn a language most effectively, emphasizing interaction, purpose, goal-directed action, and an appropriate level of cognitive challenge, as outlined in the book's introductory section.

Each task also includes recommended structures and vocabulary, which helps reduce preparation time and ensures students are properly scaffolded. The reflective approach promoted by the authors encourages teachers to experiment, adapt, and personalize. It's a model I believe more materials should adopt.

One small drawback is that some of the task pages, such as in “Let’s Go Camping,” use font sizes that may be a little too small to project clearly in class. This is a minor issue, and the authors have addressed it by offering digital materials upon request (21toptaskslanguageclassroom@gmail.com). The contact information for this is included in the book, and I was able to obtain digital files without issue.

CONCLUSION

This book, *21 Top Tasks for the Language Classroom, and Beyond*, is an excellent addition to the professional library of any language teacher. It is grounded in sound theory, informed by years of classroom experience, and designed with the real needs of teachers in mind. The book’s clarity, practical structure, and range of tasks make it useful across different levels and age groups. Whether you are new to teaching or a seasoned educator, this book offers valuable tools to support your work and enhance your students’ learning. I highly recommend it.

THE REVIEWER

James Noland is an assistant professor of English and TESOL at the Cyber Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, with over 15 years of experience teaching in South Korea. His work focuses on communicative competence, task-based language teaching, and curriculum development for university-level ESL learners. Email: brandennoland@gmail.com

Appendix

Korea TESOL Journal

General Information for Contributors

As an academic journal in the field of English language teaching (ELT), the *Korea TESOL Journal* welcomes the submission of manuscripts that meet the general criteria of significance and scientific excellence. Submissions should be of practical import, dealing with aspects of the Korean ELT context or directly applicable to it. As a journal that is dedicated to the nurturing of research among ELT practitioners, the Journal also welcomes quality submissions from the early-career researcher.

The *Korea TESOL Journal* invites submissions in three categories:

1. Full-Length Articles. Contributors are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts of 5,000 to 8,000 words in length, including references, tables, etc.

2. Brief Reports. The Journal also invites short reports (approximately 2,500 words). These manuscripts may present preliminary findings, focus on some aspect of a larger study, or summarize research done in the pursuit of advanced studies.

3. Reviews. The Journal invites succinct, evaluative reviews of scholarly or professional books, or instructional-support resources (such as computer software, video or audio material, and tests). Reviews should provide a descriptive and evaluative summary and a brief discussion of the significance of the work in the context of current theory and practice. Submissions should generally be 800–12,000 words in length.

Manuscripts are accepted for peer review with the understanding that the same work has not been submitted elsewhere (i.e., not pending review or currently under review) and has not been previously published, online or in print. A statement confirming this should accompany submissions.

Manuscripts should follow APA Style guidelines (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.), especially for in-text citations, reference items, tables, and figures. Submissions should be made with tables, figures, and other graphics included in the manuscript text (and upon request, as separate files). Graphic text must also follow APA style. All figures should be created in black and white, and graphs (pie graphs, bar graphs, etc.) must display distinctive shades or patterning for readability. Manuscripts should be submitted as MS Word (DOC or DOCx) files.

The *Korea TESOL Journal* accepts submissions for two issues annually and publishes in a digital format.

Inquiries/manuscripts to: journal@koreatesol.org

For more information on submissions to the *Korea TESOL Journal*, including paper submission deadlines, evaluation criteria, and manuscript formatting requirements, visit:

<https://koreatesol.org/content/call-papers-korea-tesol-journal>



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