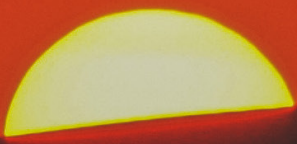


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## ***Flipped Learning: The Case of Professional English Writing Course***

Najwa Saba ‘Ayon, Rafik Hariri University, Lebanon

The IAFOR International Conference on Language Learning – Dubai 2017  
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### **Abstract**

Recently the teaching trend is to keep up-to-date with the boom in technology. Flipped Learning, which is rated as one of the “top trends in educational technology” (Watters, 2012), has gained foot in the EFL/ESL classrooms only recently (Fahim & Khalil, 2015; Bauer-Ramazani, Graney, Marshall, & Sabieh, 2016). To follow the teaching trend, the researcher implemented the Flipped Learning in Professional English Writing course at a private Lebanese university. The aim of this paper is to describe the experience of flipping in this course and to report on this experience from the perspectives of both the student participants and the researcher herself. Using a case study design, the researcher used multiple data- collection instruments, namely a questionnaire, a focus group interview, and three semi-structured interviews. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The conclusions derived from the different analyses were triangulated. The findings reveal that a lot of the participants perceived Flipped Learning as beneficial in terms of helping them become more responsible of their own learning, more engaged in class activities, and hence more motivated to learn. However, a few students openly expressed their negative attitudes towards this new strategy. Despite the time and effort required to flip and monitor students’ work, the researcher enjoyed this experience and felt it rewarding in terms of students’ engagement and learning. The researcher recommends that Flipped Learning be used in other courses to turn passive, dependent learners into active, independent learners who could meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Keywords: Flipped Learning, Flipped Classroom, Lebanon, higher education, professional English Writing, students’ perceptions, instructor’s perception

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## Introduction

Flipped Learning (FL), a form of blended learning, is defined as “a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space [classroom] to the individual learning space [home], and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter” (Flipped Learning Network, 2014:1). Some educators refer to it as Flipped Classroom or inverted classroom; however, Flipped Learning Network (FLN) argues that these terms are not the same and cannot be used interchangeably. Flipped Classroom does not necessarily lead to FL unless four pillars are incorporated in the flipped classroom (FLN, 2014). The first pillar, which is a flexible environment, is about ensuring different learning modes to meet different learners’ needs, a flexible timeline for students to learn at their own pace, and flexible spaces which allow students to choose the place and time to learn. The second pillar is fostering a learning culture which shifts away from a teacher-centered approach towards a student-centered approach and which helps students become constructors of their own learning. As to the third pillar, intentional content is about identifying the materials to be taught in class and those the students can explore by themselves at home so that classroom time is maximized and used for active learning strategies. The last pillar is the professional educator whose role is to facilitate students’ learning; this educator is expected to be a confident planner, a facilitator, a mentor, a problem solver, an assessor, and a curriculum planner. Thus, FL is “more about a mindset: redirecting attention from the teacher and putting attention on the learner and the learning” (Bergmann & Sams, 2012:11).

With the boom in technology, FL is rated as one of the “top trends in educational technology” (Watters, 2012) and has invaded math and science classrooms in the past few years (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Hamdan, Mcknight, Mcknight, & Arfstrom, 2013). However, it has gained foot in the EFL/ESL classrooms only recently (Han, 2015; Fahim & Khalil, 2015; Bauer-Ramazani, Graney, Marshall, & Sabieh, 2016). This innovative strategy has shown to have several pedagogical benefits on students’ learning (Bauer-Ramazani, et al., 2016; Fahim & Khalil, 2015). To inject innovative, up-to-date teaching strategies, the researcher implemented the FL in one course, namely Professional English Writing (PEW), at a private Lebanese university. The aim of this paper is two-folded: (1) to describe the experience of flipping PEW course and (2) to report on this experience from the perspectives of both the student participants and the researcher herself.

## Rationale for Flipping PEW Course

Several factors led the researcher to adopt FL in her course. As a social constructivist herself, the researcher believes that students should have an active role in the classroom and should be able to construct their own learning while working together with other peers. She also believes that to engage students in the classroom, lecture time should be reduced and replaced by more active learning strategies.

Learning about FL, the researcher found that this teaching strategy could help her realize her teaching conceptions in the classroom as the pedagogical benefits of FL match with those beliefs. For example, FL has shown to have several pedagogical benefits, most important of which are students’ ownership of their learning (Bauer-Ramazani, et al., 2016; Fahim & Khalil, 2015), more active learning strategies and content inquiry/analysis (Schmidt & Ralph, 2016), immediate support and guidance in

class (Bergman, 2010), real differentiation (Bergmann & Sams, 2012), students' engagement (Faculty Focus, 2015; Fahim & Khalil, 2015; Rayan, 2013; Fulton, 2012) and ongoing informal in-class assessment (Bauer-Ramazani, et al., 2016). As these benefits echoed the researcher's teaching philosophy, she adopted it in one of her courses hoping that it would yield the expected outcomes.

### **Description of the Flipped Experience**

In this section, the researcher describes the context where flipping took place, the student participants, and the procedure she followed to flip her course.

#### **Context**

This study was done in a relatively small-sized private English speaking university in Lebanon, which consists of 3 operating colleges, namely College of Engineering, College of Business Administration, and College of Communication and Science Information System, besides Languages and Humanities Department, which is a service department offering all English, Humanities, and Social Science courses. More specifically, the FL was implemented in PEW course, which is a 3-credit required course for all the students at the university. This course, which aims to prepare students to be professional communicators in the workplace, instructs students on how to write different forms of correspondence, namely e-mails, memos, and letters as well as employment communication, namely a curriculum vitae, application letter, and interview. In addition, students are taught how to write different types of proposals and reports. Usually, the researcher employs task-based projects and collaborative learning in teaching these learning outcomes in a regular 15-week semester in the fall and the spring.

As this course was scheduled to be taught in a 10-week summer semester, four weeks of which were during Ramadan- the Muslim's fasting month- the researcher decided to implement FL in her course in order to reduce lecture time, to avoid having her fasting student fall asleep in class, and most importantly to realize her teaching conceptions .

#### **Participants**

In that summer course, 25 students (18 males and 8 females) were enrolled. They were of different majors, namely engineering, business administration, and graphic design. The students' proficiency in English ranged between good to advanced, and they were between 19 and 21 years old. As this was their first experience with FL, the researcher ensured that all the students in her course consented to participate in this experience. In more detail, students registered in the course were informed about the new teaching strategy to be adopted in the course in the first session of the semester. They were shown a video about FL in the class, and they were also asked to read a handout posted on the Moodle about FL prepared by Flipped Learning Network (FLN, 2015). While reading the handout and watching the video, the students were instructed to record any concern or question about FL to be discussed the next session.

On the next day, the researcher and the students had a face-to-face discussion of the new approach. During the session, the researcher answered all students' recorded questions, shared her expectations with them, and got their consent in writing to

ensure that the student participants understood their new role and responsibilities. Students were informed that they could change sections if they preferred the traditional teacher-led class. However, none of the students did so.

### Procedure

To flip her class, the researcher revisited the content of the course to select the materials that can be flipped and that the students can prepare at home (c.f. intentional content), turned these materials into out-of-class activities for students to prepare at home in the form of videos, PowerPoint presentations, and handouts.

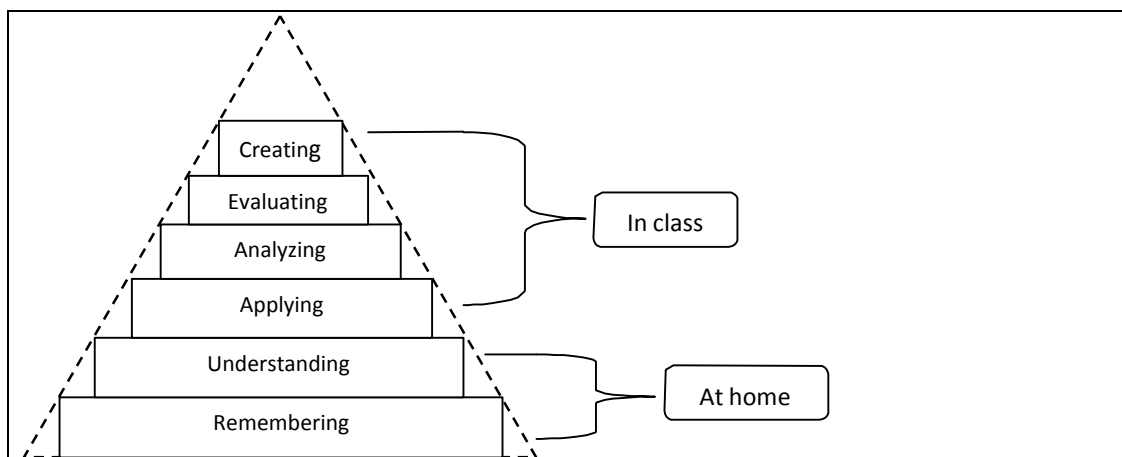


Figure 1: Adopted from Zainuddine & Halili (2016: 316)

Following Bloom's Taxonomy, the researcher ensured that the course materials that lie at the bottom of the pyramid, namely remembering and understanding, are flipped to be studied at home by the students freeing class time for higher order thinking and active learning strategies.

To ensure students' preparation for class activities, the researcher used to give them tasks to complete before class as short/answer questions, graphic organizers, and multiple choice quizzes. Students who used to fail to submit these tasks were considered absent on that day as this was agreed upon on their consent form.

Class or face-to-face contact time was dedicated for (1) group work/ discussions, student-student and student-teacher interactions to reinforce students' learning, (2) answering students' questions, (3) observing, diagnosing, and giving feedback to students.

### The Study: Students' and Instructor's Perceptions of FL Experience

As a reflective practitioner, the researcher investigated the students' perceptions of the new teaching trend used in PEW course. She also reflected on her experience to determine what went well and what needed improvement in subsequent implementation of FL.

### Methodology

Using a case study design, the researcher investigated the participants' perceptions of flipped learning and reflected on her teaching experience as well. The researcher used multiple data collection instruments, namely a self-completion questionnaire

consisting of 20 3-point rating-scale items, a focus group interview of 5 participants, three semi-structured interviews with student participants, and students' end of semester assessment of the course.

The collected quantitative data were analyzed statistically using SPSS (version .19) mainly for descriptive analysis while the qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The conclusions derived from the different analyses were triangulated.

## Findings

Major findings of students' perceptions are presented in four themes; these include perceived benefits, students' attitudes to the new teaching strategy, learning environment, and instructor.

### Perceived Benefits

The quantitative data reveal that a lot of the student participants perceived FL as beneficial to them in terms of helping them become more responsible of their own learning, more engaged in class activities, and hence more motivated to learn. It also provided them with greater opportunities to interact with their peers, and about half of them felt that FL improved their learning. Table 1 below gives more details about these findings.

| Perceived Benefits                        | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| More engaging than traditional class      | 48%        |
| Greater opportunities to peer interaction | 56%        |
| Felt more motivated to learn              | 56%        |
| Improved their learning                   | 44%        |
| More responsible for their own learning   | 72%        |

Table 1: Student Participants' Perceived Benefits of FL

The qualitative data were in line with the aforementioned findings. In more details, the students' mostly quoted benefits of FL were "feeling engaged in class activities", "studying at my own pace and whenever and wherever I want", "depending on myself", "responsible of my learning", "improving my communication as well as socialization skills", and learning from each other". These findings were also consistent with those presented in the literature (c.f. Bauer-Ramazani, et al. 2016; Fahim & Khalil, 2015).

### Students' Attitudes towards FL

A lot of the student participants had a positive attitude towards the new strategy. In fact, most of the student participants would recommend it to a friend. More than half of the students liked self-paced study that the FL provided them. Only very few

disliked self-pacing themselves throughout the course. Almost one third of the student participants preferred a teacher-led lesson to video lesson. The same percentage did not like watching the video lessons posted on Moodle. Only a few participants agreed that the FL provided them less time to practice workplace communication skills (see table 2 below).

| Students' Attitudes   | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Would recommend it to a friend                                | 64%        |
| Liked self-paced study  | 52%        |
| Preferred a teacher-led class                                 | 32%        |
| Provided less time to practice workplace communication skills | 16%        |

Table 2: Attitudes of Student Participants towards FL

The qualitative data echoed these attitudes. A lot of students expressed their enjoyment of the FL class, and they also expressed their preference to repeat the FL experience in other courses. In the focus group and in the semi-structured interviews, students described individually and specifically what they liked the most about FL. One participant said that he enjoyed group work in class and outside class as they used to divide the tasks on the basis of the group members' strengths and weaknesses. He added that this helped them achieve better learning outcomes. Another female participant stated that she liked being exposed to the learning material at home before coming to class as this helped her to study the material at her own pace, look up meaning of difficult words, and then further studying the material in class with her classmates. She added that "This strategy works best with students like me who feel shy to ask questions in class, and it gives them confidence in themselves". This is in line with Mclean (2017) who found that one advantage of FL is allowing introvert students to share ideas in group discussions. Another female participant commented that she used to enjoy the activities in class to the extent that she did not feel time in class; "Time passes very quickly in class". She then compared her experience in the FL class to that in a teacher-led class where lecturing was the mostly used activity, "I feel so sleepy and bored during the lectures".

However, a few students openly expressed their negative attitudes towards this new strategy and expressed their preference for a traditional teacher-led class. Probing why these students had such a preference, one male participant commented on the amount of work they were expected to do before class, "doing more work than I expected to do in a traditional class; it needs double the effort of a regular class especially in the summer".

### Learning Environment

As the learning environment is one of the pillars of FL, the researcher investigated student participants' perceptions of the learning environment. Most of the participants were happy with the learning environment in the FL. A lot of the student participants found the classroom arrangement conducive for class activities. The seats were



arranged in groups of four. Comfortable furnishing was used, and a smart board was also installed in the classroom.

The majority of the student participants believed that the pre-reading material, videos, and presentations in the FL were sufficient. More than half of the student participants believed that class activities increased their understanding of the pre-studied material. The same percentage of the student participants believed that they had enough time to prepare the course material before class activities. About half of the student participant agreed that doing assignments via Moodle was convenient. None of the student participants found it otherwise (see table 3).

| Learning Environment   | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Classroom arrangement was conducive for class activities             | 68%        |
| Pre-class material (videos, pp) were sufficient                      | 72%        |
| Class activities increased their understanding of pre-class material | 60%        |
| Had enough time to prepare before class                              | 56%        |
| Doing assignments on Moodle was convenient                           | 52%        |

Table 3: Students' Perceptions of the Learning Environment

What the student participants uncovered about the learning environment during the interviews was in line with the quantitative data. One male participant described the pre-class material posted on Moodle as very helpful. He illustrated his idea by referring to the progress report assignment, "If it hadn't been for the sample progress report and the video posted on the Moodle, we would not have been able to write ours". Another female participant said that studying the material before class at her own pace and when she felt like was very helpful for her as it prepared her well for class and enabled her to participate in class activities as well as to seek clarifications of unclear concepts. Another male participant commented on the enjoyable, collaborative learning environment in class, "There was no competition among us, but more of a collaboration within our groups to accomplish tasks successfully". He added, "Sometimes, we used to compete as groups, which motivated us to work more".

Yet another male participant commented on the length of some of the videos they had to watch. He said, "Although the videos were very interesting and informative, some were too long especially the one on the literature review". The researcher agreed with the last participant's complaint about the length of video, which was 20 minutes long, as the literature advocates for as short videos as 10 minutes at maximum (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

### **Instructor**

One main contributor to the success of FL is the educated professor. That is why the researcher also investigated the student participant's perceptions of her role. The findings reveal that most of the students thought that their instructor was able to facilitate their own learning. The majority of the students agreed that the instructor

was able to engage them in class activities, to clarify difficult concepts during class activities, and to expand on the pre-reading material, videos, and presentations. Table 4 below provides further details.

| Instructor   | Percentages |
|--|-------------|
| Instructor was able to engage them in class activities.                    | 72%         |
| Instructor was able to clarify difficult concepts during class activities. | 72%         |
| Instructor was able to expand on the pre-class material.                   | 68%         |

Table 4: Students' Perceptions of the Instructor

During their interviews, the student participants commented on how helpful and available the instructor was to them. One male participant described the important role the instructor had played in FL class. He said, "She always made sure that everyone had prepared well for the class; she sometimes quizzed us especially at the beginning of the semester to make everyone prepare for class because without preparation, we would not have been able to complete the in-class activities". Another participant said, "The instructor was always available for us during class and beyond class, during office hours". One participant expressed her content getting immediate feedback on her group's work in class from the instructor.

### The Instructor's Perceptions

The researcher recorded her perceptions in terms of the challenges she had faced while flipping and the benefits she observed on her students and in the classroom.

### Challenges

The main challenge the researcher faced was training the student participants to be independent, responsible of their own learning. Although the student participants consented to do what their new role and responsibilities require them to do, quite a few of them did not prepare at home for the in-class activities at the beginning of the semester; these participants seemed to be used to teacher-led classes where they assumed a very passive role. Therefore, the researcher resorted to quizzing the student participants and grading them on these quizzes before they come to class to ensure that the student participants would be able to engage in the active learning strategies during class sessions. This meant more work and effort on the researcher to prepare pre-class quizzes and assessing the student participants' work.

Another challenge was finding as well as preparing suitable videos and/or online resources for student participants to explore before coming to class and designing class activities to promote higher order thinking. These challenges resonate with those reported by Bauer-Ramazani et al. (2016: 434) "increased time needed to set up the

tools ..., developing appropriate language and assessment activities, finding online resources ..., and designing tasks for critical thinking ...”.

### **Benefits**

One of the most important benefits she found was increased student engagement during class, which is in line with what Faculty Focus found when surveyed 1,089 of its readers, “nearly three-fourths did see greater student engagement (74.9%)” (Flipped Classroom Trends: A survey of college faculty, 2015: 2). During almost all the sessions, students were busily and responsibly occupied with the class activities they had to complete in groups. In order to do so, they were using their notes, laptops, and even their mobiles to complete the tasks. Although a few students depended on their group members, they did learn together or helped each other to learn. In other words, mostly the class was like a beehive, where students were constructing their learning, and the researcher was assisting and guiding their learning. Another important benefit students were able to develop was completing tasks on time. Although many of them at the beginning missed the due dates for some tasks, by the end of the course all were able to demonstrate this skill by submitting their assignments by the due date. This is in line with Schmidt and Ralph (2016), who found that FL reduced the number of incomplete assignments in addition to increasing student engagement and improving their scores.

Moreover, a lot of the student participants demonstrated enough responsibility for their own learning. These students used to come to class having read the assigned chapter and/or watched the videos posted for them on the video. Many of them have developed their skills in note-taking and summarizing. Some visual participants used to create graphic organizers of the pre-class material. Similar to student participants’ perceptions, the researcher felt that the majority of the student participants were motivated to learn the course material; this was reflected in the questions they posed in class, the collaboration among the group members, and the number of visits to her office inquiring about or requesting feedback on their projects. Another observed benefit was the friendships that had developed among group members as a result of their collaboration.

Despite the challenges, the researcher enjoyed the FL experience and felt that the benefits she perceived on her students worthwhile the effort and time spent. That is why the researcher was motivated to implement FL in other courses in subsequent semesters.

### **Conclusion**

The researcher cannot claim generalization of the findings due to two main limitations: (1) the sample size is relatively small, and (2) because the researcher is the instructor herself, this might have influenced the participants’ responses. However, the commonalities found among the different analyses contribute to the trustworthiness of these findings.

Despite these limitations, a lot of the students seemed to have enjoyed the FL class experience. They perceived FL as beneficial to them in terms of helping them become more responsible of their own learning, more engaged in class activities, and hence more motivated to learn. Although about half of the students felt that FL had improved their learning, the researcher cannot confirm such finding as it was beyond the scope of her research.

Nonetheless, a few students openly expressed their negative attitudes towards this new strategy and expressed their preference for a traditional teacher-led class. Like everything new, this strategy is expected to be faced with some resistance. Student resistance was also recorded as a key finding in the literature, “while almost half [of the faculty surveyed] (48.75%) also noted some student resistance” (Flipped Classroom Trends: A survey of college faculty, 2015:2).

### **Recommendations**

The researcher recommends that FL be used in other courses for the several benefits FL had on the student participants especially turning passive, dependent learners into active, independent learners who could meet the demands of the 21st century. This strategy, the researcher argues, can prepare the university’s culture for online learning.

The researcher suggests that flipping should not necessarily cover the whole course materials. Rather, instructors could start to identify one single lesson in their courses and try to flip it. In this way, they can experiment with this new strategy and see what works for their students and their courses as there is no single prescribed recipe to flipping.

The researcher also advises other instructors to use at first the abundant available materials online which were prepared by other educators and/ organizations. She encourages the interested instructors not to fear flipping or delay it just for the sake of lack of time to prepare their course materials or for the fear of technology. The researcher recommends the following websites among others for useful online sources:

1. Flipped Learning Network ([www.flippedlearning.org](http://www.flippedlearning.org))
2. you-tube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com))
3. TED-Ed ([education@ted.com](mailto:education@ted.com))
4. Tech Learning ([www.techlearning.com](http://www.techlearning.com))
5. Pow-Toon ([www.powtoon.com](http://www.powtoon.com))
6. Socrative ([www.socrative.com](http://www.socrative.com))
7. Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org))
8. Sophia ([www.Sophia.org](http://www.Sophia.org))

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*Using ICT for Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language in  
Nigeria: Issues and Challenges*

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**Abstract**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become indispensable tool for both teachers and learners in various fields and discipline. The aspiration of many in this age is therefore aided by Internet facilities to the extent that ICT is gradually pushing aside the traditional library from educational scene. This paper is therefore an attempt to examine the effects of Computer and E-learning on the teaching and learning of Arabic in Nigeria, in order to keep up with the modernized communities in the current digital world. The paper gives an insight into the necessity of ICT in the teaching of Arabic and highlights its challenges and positive effects. This paper employs the use of questionnaire to elicit information from teachers and learners of Arabic in tertiary Institutions on the effectiveness of ICT in teaching Arabic. The paper is concluded by stressing the fact that the use of ICT will make Arabic teaching easier for teachers, more interesting to the learners and both the teachers and learners will be able to communicate and have an insight into the culture of the native speakers.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology, Arabic, Library, Teaching, Nigeria

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## **Introduction**

There has been much debate over the use of Computer and E-learning in the teaching of language especially foreign language like Arabic over the past few years. To this end, and since the development of a policy on Information and Communication Technology in Nigeria in the year 2000, ICT has continued to be the focus of all academics in the teaching and learning of language. This is due to the role it could play in the form of e-mails, SMS, LMS, e-encyclopedia etc which can make learners to be more comfortable during the learning process.

The introduction of this new process has always been a welcome phenomenon but not without some implications and challenges. Arabic language as one of the old Semitic languages which has survived the stormy of extinction up till date, has come to be accepted as one of the internationally recognized world languages of education, due to its viability as a language of education and the richness of its literature, which made Muslims and non-Muslims to get attracted to the study of severe aspects of the culture of the native speakers of the language.

The teaching and learning of Arabic in Nigeria has, thus, undergone many developments over the years, not minding the lukewarm attitude of government and religious undercurrent associated with the language. Many Scholars and experts in the field of Arabic have been coming up with the suggestions aimed at playing down the factors responsible for the poor state of Arabic in Nigeria, with a view to improving the teaching and learning of this language. Olaniyan (2002:59) once described the method employed in teaching Arabic in most Nigeria Institutions of higher learning as grammar translation method where the teacher lays emphasis on teaching the grammar of the language instead of communication skill and competence.

However, with the introduction of E-learning, the process of learning could be structured in different ways, either in the classroom, home, with or without a teacher, thereby gradually exposing the students to native speakers. Through this means, the students will have the opportunity of interacting with a broader and international audience, and this will enable them to be more cautious, pay more attention to polishing their work and think more deeply.

## **Information and Communication Technology in Perspective**

Information and Communication Technology has been defined severally by many scholars. The Wikipedia defines the term Information and Communication Technology as a term which covers all advanced technologies in manipulating and communicating information. Olagunju (2003) opines that these electronic systems can be used for broadcasting telecommunication and all forms of computer based communication. Information and Communication Technology centered education, therefore, covers the use of computers, online self-learning packages, Satellites, Radio, Optical fibre technology i.e Tele presence system and all types of information technology, hardware and software (Lillian, Rita, Akindolu 2002, Adebayo 2002, Olagunju 2003).

The concept of information and communication technology also covers the application of modern technologies which allow various forms of information to be



processed, transmitted, manipulated and retrieved with speed and accuracy. These include Data Communication on Digital, Telecommunication by using wired or wireless telephone, Computer hardware and Software which allow computer to function according to predetermined instructions. Tinio (2002) maintains that ICT includes communication devices or applications encompassing internet access, electronic mail, CD ROMs, telephone, online database, fax machines, scanners, projectors, radio, television, cellular phones networks, software, satellites system as well as the various services and applications associated with video conferencing and distance learning.

Due to the position occupied by ICT in the World today, it is expedient to apply these technological systems in our classroom activities especially in our tertiary institution in Nigeria. Bidmos (2009:9) view is apposite here, when he states that

Information and Communication Technology ICT which is now a must for effective Teaching/Learning of any subject should be acquired by the teacher of Religious Studies....The traditional absolute reliance on textbook for gathering information has become old fashioned. Through internet a teacher now enriches his knowledge with current information uploaded by some researchers for the benefit of others in the same field.

### **ICT and the Learning Process in Nigeria**

Teaching is a process of human development through activities designed to produce educated person. Teaching therefore involves activities that include learning carried out between the learners and the teaching material. Classroom teaching can therefore be likened to communication process where someone gives and the other receives. Teaching in its generic sense is thus a system of action intended to induce learning or what occurs when teachers by virtue of their institutional activities succeed wholly or in part in enabling pupils to learn (Ayo Dada 1999). Teaching is therefore aimed at providing suitable learning experiences that will help the learner to interact appropriately with the subject matter in order to bring about desired effective learning. The actualization of this goal depends on some factors which include the quality of teachers, availability of instructional materials and books, students' attitudes and other environmental influences which include government disposition to Education.

In 2000, Nigeria adopted a policy on information Technology with the aim of making Nigeria an IT adapted country and a leading player in the use of ICT. Since then, Information and Communication Technology has been on the lips of every academic and has become a good teacher which has provided opportunity of self-dependent for researchers and learners. It also offers various technologies that can be annexed to facilitate daily interaction across the globe.\

ICT has different roles to perform on teaching and learning. It is a device to capture, store, process and produce knowledge at a speed never imagined. It also plays instructional roles by making learners feel more relaxed to learn, apart from its ability

to reduce time and distance barriers, thereby making exchange of ideas from distant and remote areas more economical.

With the Federal Executive Council approval of a national ICT policy in March 2001, and establishment of a National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) to oversee its implementation, the national ICT policy has a vision of making Nigeria an ICT capable country in Africa and a key player in the information society by the year 2007 using ICT as the engine for sustainable development and global competitiveness. The goal is to use ICT for education, creation of wealth, poverty eradication and job creation. The ICT policy gave 22 general objectives. Some of the objectives include

- i. To empower the youth with ICT skills and prepare them for global competition
- ii. To integrate ICT into the mainstream of education and training

### **The Application of ICT in the Teaching and Learning of Arabic Language**

Unlike the teaching of other Subjects, Language learning and teaching are dynamic with the introduction of new approaches and methodologies which in many cases are improvement on old methods or rediscoveries of other methods. Educational technology especially computers and e-learning have permeated virtually all areas of our lives and it will look vogue for anyone to lag behind in this new scheme of things. Teaching especially language teaching is therefore becoming a more difficult job, because teachers are expected to meet the challenges and the needs of students in order to move them towards the fulfilment of their individual potentials.

As stated earlier, the case of Arabic teaching especially in Nigeria and before the introduction of modern method of teaching started in form of rote learning whereby the teacher will repeat a portion for the students until the student learns it by heart and in most cases in group. The teaching and learning of Arabic however took a new turn in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with the introduction of ICT. According to Oloyede (2009) Internet then becomes a good teacher which provides opportunities for Arabic Teachers and Learners than we had before and serves as a good companion for modern users of Arabic. Some years back, researchers and scholars who want to break the frontier of knowledge used to resort to the use of a library as a reliable and convenient source of obtaining data, due to its roles as the repository of all published documents, such as books, newspapers, journals and magazines. The Introduction of E-library has made the management of library service more easier and made reliance on printed books obsolete to the extent that ICT is gradually pushing aside traditional library from educational scene. Although, the situation in Nigeria libraries as far as E-library is concerned is progressing, there is need for training and retraining of technical expertise to oversee this new technology.

With the above new trend, teachers and learners do not need to rely on printed books and other physical materials for their educational needs, because many of the teachers of Arabic in Nigeria in this this 21<sup>st</sup> century are now ICT compliant and the use of ICT has made language teaching and learning more effective, due to access to a variety of sources, professional publications, and associations. Some of the most important reasons for using ICT in teaching include the following;

- It affords students to work at different rates and levels without affecting other students
- It improves the quality of education by increasing the learners' motivation and engagement by facilitating the acquisition of basic skills.
- It enhances teacher's training because it provides feedback to teachers and students through error correction and at times gives appropriate answer.
- The internet facilities afford both learners and teachers the opportunity to have access to different works of International standard.
- The teacher can adapt the computer to any standard to suite the learner
- High quality audio visual may provide sufficient backup for students
- The application of ICT also gives opportunities for communication between peer learners by participating in blog discussions, exchange mails, and search for information.

### Research Questions

The following research questions are put forward to really ascertain the impact of ICT on the teachers and learners of Arabic

- Is the Library still relevant as a dependable source of information?
- Is the internet a better source of information?
- Are there difficulties endangering the use of ICT by Arabic teachers?
- Has Nigeria government done enough in the provision of ICT facilities for effective teaching in our schools?
- Are there enough encouragement for students of Arabic to use ICT in the classroom?
- Do you exploit the opportunity given by ICT to improve your students' linguistic prowess?
- Can learning of Arabic with the aid of ICT make the students less dependent?
- Can ICT aid better understanding of Arabic?
- Does the provision of ICT boost learners' engagement?
- Does ICT as a teaching aid require specific skill?

### Data Analysis

| ITEMS          | YES | PERCENTAGE<br>% | NO  | PERCENTAGE<br>% |
|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|-----------------|
| Question One   | 20  | 50              | 20  | 50              |
| Question Two   | 36  | 90              | 4   | 10              |
| Question Three | 40  | 100             | NIL | 0               |
| Question Four  | 20  | 50              | 20  | 50              |
| Question Five  | 30  | 75              | 10  | 25              |
| Question Six   | 32  | 80              | 08  | 20              |
| Question Seven | 38  | 95              | 02  | 5               |
| Question Eight | 36  | 90              | 04  | 10              |
| Question Nine  | 38  | 95              | 02  | 5               |
| Question Ten   | 40  | 100             | NIL | 0               |

From the responses to the questions above, 50% of the respondents agreed that traditional library is still relevant as a source of information while 50% disagreed.

On the use of ICT as a better source of information 90% of the respondents answered “Yes” while 10% answered “No”

As to whether there are difficulties which can prevent Arabic teachers from making effective use of ICT, all the respondents answered “Yes”

50% of the respondents believed the government has done enough in the provision of ICT facilities in our higher Institutions while 50% answered “No”

Whether students are encouraged to use ICT facilities 75% answered “Yes” while 25% answered “No”

On the teachers’ ability to exploit the opportunity given to raise students’ awareness, 80% answered “Yes” while 20% answered “No”

Also 95% of the respondents believed the assistance given by ICT can make students to be less dependent while 5% answered “No”

On whether ICT can speed up the understanding of Arabic, 90% of the respondents agreed while 10% disagreed.

On whether ICT can boost learners’ engagement, 95% of the respondents agreed that ICT can boost learners’ engagement while 5% disagreed.

All the respondents however agreed on the need for a special skill in using ICT for teaching and learning.

From the above analysis, it was discovered that, the use of ICT in contemporary society has impacted upon almost all human interactions and its presence is felt in all human endeavour especially in the area of teaching and learning. This new technology is breaking all barriers at a faster rate with new choices and opportunities which are made available to teachers and learners.

### **Challenges of ICT**

In spite of the numerous benefits of ICT based-learning, some problems have been identified during the course of this research which could hinder the effective use of ICT in teaching and learning, especially in Nigeria. These include the following;

- a. Lack of efficient Infrastructure and trained manpower to use ICT facilities. It was discovered during the course of this research that most of the lecturers and students who are to use these ICT facilities are ignorant of how to put these facilities into effective use. In most cases, language laboratory technologists who are to assist course lecturers are not on ground, and where available, they often find it difficult to operate systems that are Arabic enabled.
- b. Nigeria educational policy especially the language content does not suit the incorporation of ICT or E-learning at early stage. However, one needs to

- commend some state governments in Nigeria, such as State of Osun in South Western Nigeria for the introduction of “Tablet of knowledge” produced for students at Senior Secondary School level which is a way of preparing them to be ICT compliant in future. Also TetFund which is an agency of the federal government of Nigeria has been of enormous help in the provision of infrastructure and ICT facilities in Nigeria tertiary institutions, with the aim of making students of Higher Learning ICT compliant
- c. Erratic power supply is another identified problem endangering the use of ICT. It was discovered that most of the tertiary institutions with language laboratory and E-library, find it difficult to put them into effective use due to unstable power supply and paucity of fund to buy fuel to power the generating plant.
  - d. Another hurdle still at large, is about those living in remote areas where access to ICT remains largely out of reach, with many of them dearth of any type of Internet, including the availability of Telephone lines, Cellular coverage, and any form of electronic transmission data.

Above all, students disposition to the use of computer and internet facilities are not encouraging. Many of the students who are ICT compliant in most cases fail to use the knowledge in developing their academic performance and learning skill.

### **Recommendation**

In the last section of this paper, the challenges facing ICT in the teaching and learning of Arabic were examined. In this sub section, however, attempt shall be made to offer some suggestions which could serve as remedy to the identified obstacles and challenges.

The Nigerian educational policy should be reviewed and restructured with the aim of developing ICT curricula for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, with a view to responding effectively to the emerging challenges in teaching and learning via the use of ICT.

There is need for collaborative efforts between the government at the Centre and State in making basic infrastructural facilities available. Teaching equipment such as Computer (Laptop and desktop), power point equipment and Internet facilities should be made available and be properly monitored.

Because of the role of the ICT in tertiary education especially in the area of online conference, virtual discussion with teachers online and the opportunities which are opened to learners and teachers to learn at their own pace. The government and private organizations should contribute to the training and retraining of teachers and other personnel by conducting intensive computer training for teachers who are not competent enough to handle computerized teaching.

The ICT policy should be properly and thoroughly implemented since the government is aware of its importance. If this is done, it can be harnessed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of language learning.

Teachers and students of Arabic should explore the World of ICT in order to widen their academic horizon and be exposed to the modern day technological challenges especially on technical aspects of ICT and the development of content.

The government should encourage further deregulation of telecom industry, in order to make it more affordable and available especially for those in the remote areas of the country.

### **Conclusion**

An attempt has been made albeit briefly in this paper to set a new agenda for teachers of Arabic, in order to be aware of the new trend and recognize the enviable position occupied by ICT as a vital tool in Information and in the classroom activities.

Based on the findings from the review of literature on ICT and language teaching, it was observed that language teaching is becoming a more interesting and difficult job everyday due to some factors and challenges which teachers are expected to meet in order to prepare the students for the task ahead of them.

It was also discovered through this research work that 90% among teachers and learners have interest and the ambition to be ICT compliant due to enormous benefit that could be gained from it. It is therefore important that teachers should be made aware of the challenges in the utilization of ICT in teaching Foreign Languages. This awareness will enable such teachers to design programs that will help students to have more understanding of the subjects, promote learners involvement and participation with sustained attention in learning Arabic language. Educators must therefore prepare themselves for a technology rich future and enjoy the improvement brought about by ICT in the teaching and learning, because extrapolating such current activities in teaching and the use of computerized teaching will surely have great impact on Language teaching and learning.

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*Learner Perceptions of Good Teacher Attributes: Japan and Other Asian Contexts*

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**Abstract**

Teacher quality is an integral component of a learner's educational experience and development. Positive teacher influences can contribute to learner knowledge, skill acquisition, and a positive learning environment (Jahangiri & Mucciolo, 2016). An absence of contemporary research into Japanese learner perceptions of positive teacher attributes was the catalyst of the present study. An initial pilot study conducted by the researchers revealed that in education levels ranging from elementary school to university, high school teachers and private instructors/tutors were the most selected categories, with English being the most common subject. Learners most notably perceived good teachers to be friendly, knowledgeable, empathetic, and humorous. Learner perceptions also revealed that respect for the teacher/student relationship dynamic and a teacher's sternness were important underlying themes. The current study provides a year-long cross-sectional analysis of over 157 Japanese undergraduate students' perceptions of good teacher attributes using a mixed methods design. The researchers will discuss the attributes selected by the learners and the contexts in which these individuals formed favorable perceptions as evidenced through their reflective written narratives. Additionally, the variable of gender is introduced and examined in the current research. The findings are then compared against other contemporary Asian-based studies (Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, Al-Siyabi, & Al-Maamari, 2015; Nghia, 2015; Wichadee, 2010) relevant to this field.

Keywords: Asian learners, Japanese learners, Positive teacher attributes

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## Introduction

This study explored the perceptions of good teacher attributes. Many students will have undergone an ‘apprenticeship of observation’ (Lortie, 1975) by the time they complete high school due to their large amount of direct contact with teachers, placing them in a position to identify good and bad teacher qualities. In a traditional classroom, there is often an emphasis on the transmission of factual knowledge and students are offered few opportunities to identify their own learning needs or reflect collectively on their learning experience (Azer, 2005). Barnes and Lock (2013) advocated for the implementation of in-depth and focused investigations into learner perceptions of effective teachers to be carried out in various settings so that teachers can develop greater understandings that will help them to deal with the challenges of instructing students of different attitudes. Support for recognition of the value of student beliefs on good teaching characteristics was posited by Bullock (2015) who noted that students see teachers daily and are able to comment on teaching in both good (and adverse) situations. Coppedge and Shreck (1988) noted the importance of personality characteristics and their relation to teaching effectiveness and suggested that knowledge of subject matter, teaching methods or materials are all givens in the students’ minds and what really matters to students are the teacher’s human qualities. This paper reported on the implementation of influential variables that can influence learner perceptions of good teaching (Zhang & Watkins, 2007) in the current study. Findings on teacher attributes from several other Asian-based studies (Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, Al-Siyabi, & Al-Maamari, 2015; Nghia, 2015, Wichadee, 2010). were compared with findings from the current research due to a lack of recent Japan-based studies in this field.

## Literature Review

Several previous Japan-based studies that have been conducted on the issue of ‘good teacher’ attributes, albeit in the distant past. Two of these Japan-based studies provided positive teacher attributes that were added to the current study’s teacher attributes checklist, (see Appendix A), that is, *kind, friendly, enthusiastic, and humorous* (Hadley & Hadley, 1996); and *good at communication* (Makarova & Ryan, 1997). Hadley and Hadley found that several good teacher attributes selected by students, i.e., *knowledgeable, experienced, humble, can be admired, trusted and depended on* - formed a depiction of the culturally specific relationship in Japan of *sempai* (senior) - *kohai* (junior) commonly found in companies, organizations, and institutions. References to the sempai-kohai relationship by participants in the current research were explored in the findings and discussion sections of this paper. The particular variables included in these Japan-based studies were more limited than those included in the current research. For example, a specific focus on; participant-gender (Shimizu, 1995), school subject. i.e., English (Shimizu, 1995) and teacher type, i.e., foreign language teacher (Makarova & Ryan, 1997). The current study explored positive teacher attributes through the eyes of the learner and with the inclusion of several variables that can influence the practice of good teachers (Zhang & Watkins, 2007); namely, learner and teacher gender, subject, and education level in order to broaden the breadth of possibilities from which students could select their ‘good teacher’.

The current study was Japan-based and involved a comparative exploration of three Asian-based studies conducted on learner perceptions of personal characteristics of a ‘good teacher’ for the purpose of broadening the researchers’ understanding of teacher attribute-based research in the Asia. Three studies were selected for their recent publication and relatively large number of students as participants.

Firstly, an Omani quantitative study (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015) of the characteristics of good English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers which involved 171 high school students (and 233 English teachers). Al-Mahrooqi et al. found that Omani students value the nature of the relationship with their teachers equally to actual classroom practice and the teacher’s ability to build good rapport and a strong relationship with their students while also making their English lessons interesting. The affective variables rated most highly students in this study were (for teachers to be): fair and just, enthusiastic, friendly, loving, and creative. This study differed from the current study in that no qualitative approach was employed, the students were in high school rather than being undergraduates, and participants’ gender was not included.

Secondly, a Vietnamese mixed methods study (Nghia, 2015) of the qualities of English teachers for enhanced learning which included 339 adults studying at Commercial English Language Centers (CLCs). In the qualitative stage, the most highly rated professional attributes were (for teachers) to be punctual, prepared for lessons, and behave professionally. The most favorable personal attributes identified by students were for teachers to be dedicated, friendly, helpful, and understanding (in the sense of being compassionate). In the quantitative stage, there were no statistically significant differences found among the perceptions of the importance of teacher qualities for enhancing their learning between male and female students. Data suggested that students wanted to study with teachers of agreeable personalities, not only in the classroom but also after class.

Thirdly, a Thai quantitative study (Wichadee, 2010) of the characteristics of effective English teachers which included 400 undergraduates enrolled in English courses (and 53 English teachers). Participants stressed the importance of teachers preparing lessons well and being good communicators, being interested in students, helping to alleviate students’ anxiety in class, good listeners, approachable and friendly, patient, humorous, and fair. Wichadee found that between the two gender-based groups, i.e., the 139 males and the 261 female students there were no statistically significant differences in their selection of socio-affective skills that students perceived as being important for effective English teachers.

Inclusion of these studies helped to broaden the scope of the current researchers’ understanding of learner perceptions in the absence of contemporary Japan-based studies on this research issue. A comparative analysis of the current study and these three other studies is presented in the discussion section.

## **Methodology**

The current study considered learner perceptions by developing an understanding of meanings from learners’ actions, the experiences and histories that they have had, and

how they are understood in the context of these interactions (Wray, 2007). With this interpretive paradigm in mind, a mixed methods approach was implemented, i.e., a student questionnaire, a teacher attributes checklist, and a reflective blog activity. titled *Student Consent Form*, includes the student questionnaire and blog activity, see Appendix B, and the teacher attributes checklist, see Appendix A. These documents were translated into written Japanese for the participants' comprehension. The employment of a mixed methods-based approach in the current study aimed to strengthen the persuasive and rigorous collection and analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) of both qualitative and quantitative data. The current study included two stages: *Stage One*, a small scale cross-sectional study; and *Stage Two*, a larger scale cross-sectional study which included the addition of teacher gender as a variable and 'sternness' as a teacher attribute on the teacher attribute checklist, see Appendix A.

### Research Aims

In this second stage of the study, the researchers addressed the following questions:

What are the teacher attributes most commonly selected by the learners? (Stages 1 & 2)

What are the education levels and subjects taught by the teachers? (Stages 1 & 2)

What potential relationships exist between:

- a) learner gender and teacher attributes selected? (Stages 1 & 2)
- b) the education level taught by teachers and their gender? (Stage 2 only)
- c) possible themes derived from learners' written reflections? (Stages 1 & 2)
- d) outcomes of the current study and other Asian-based research? (Stages 1 & 2)

### Student Questionnaire & Teacher Attributes Checklist

Learner perceptions were initially identified by a questionnaire requiring participants to identify the profile of their good teacher by including the education level, subject, and teacher's gender (*added for Stage Two only*); and complete a consent agreement to participate in this research, see Appendix B. Neither participation nor nonparticipation in the research had any bearing on the grading of participants in this course. Participants were informed orally by the researchers that they could withdraw from the research at any stage. Also, participants were requested to select their top five teacher attributes that a good teacher from a list of attributes (*24 attributes for Stage One & 25 attributes for Stage Two, with 'sternness' added*) which included spaces and could add different attributes if they wanted to do so in the boxes titled *other*, see Appendix A. Many of the teacher attributes used for the checklist were adopted from several studies (Azer, 2005; Barnes & Lock, 2013; Bullock, 2015; Coombe, 2013) and those noted in italics in Appendix A were developed by the current researchers. The checklist was translated into Japanese and authenticated by several Japanese first language users (non-participants) to minimize the possibility that participants would understand the attributes through multiple meanings.

### Reflective Blog Activity

Upon their completion of the student questionnaire and the teacher attributes checklist participants were requested by the researchers to write a blog reflection explaining why that teacher was good and include a description of their experiences with that teacher through their individual interpretations. Students could not see each other's

blogs online. Each participant was given several weeks to complete their writing, see Appendix B. The blogs were to be written in English because the participants were studying in an English course. During the process of completing the blog activity each researcher was able to monitor the participants' blogs in his class group to ensure that the writing was comprehensible. One-on-one interactions took place sometimes between the researchers and participants to clarify written meanings. Upon completion of the blogs participants were given an opportunity to engage in small class group discussions by summarizing any or all of the details of their blog writings in spoken English primarily. These discussions provided the experience of communicating perceptions with others and for the researchers to observe these interpretive experiences that learners shared.

Data were collected via non-random sampling to allow for all blog posts to be analyzed with the aim of delving deeply into the details of experience related to the five highest rated attributes identified in aggregate from the sample pool. The five highest rated attributes provided the themes for analysis. The education levels and subjects were totaled to find which levels of education and which subjects specifically were important in the participants' selection of a good teacher. The blogs were analyzed by the researchers for contextualized interpretations of the reasons behind the learners selecting the variables of education level, subject, and positive teacher attributes.

## **Participants**

In Stage One there were 35 participants, i.e. 22 females and 13 males, who were second year undergraduate students derived from two class groups. In Stage Two there were 122 participants, i.e., 67 males and 55 females, who were a mix of first and second year undergraduates derived from seven class groups. The participants were identified by the researchers as having a comprehensive learning experiences in Japanese educational settings.

## **Results & Findings**

### **Teacher Attributes Checklist and Student Questionnaire**

The student questionnaire provided data for the education level, the subject taught, the gender of the teacher (Stage Two only), and the teacher attributes. The results of the data collected appear below.

**Teacher Attributes Across All Education Levels.** As “Sternness” was added to the teacher attribute checklist in Stage Two, its presence could have influenced the participants' choices regarding the other attributes. Hence, the authors have refrained from combining the totals from Stage One and Stage Two.

In Stage One, the five most common teacher attributes were Friendly (23), Knowledgeable (18), Empathetic (15), Enthusiastic about teaching (15), and Humorous (14) (see Table 1). For a full description of all the attributes, see Appendix C.

Table 1  
*Top 5 teacher attributes by participant gender in Stage One*

| Attribute                   | Male<br>(n=13) | Male<br>% | Female<br>(n=22) | Female<br>% | Total<br>(n=35) | Total<br>% |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| Friendly                    | 11             | 85%       | 12               | 55%         | 23              | 66%        |
| Knowledgeable               | 6              | 46%       | 12               | 55%         | 18              | 51%        |
| Empathetic                  | 4              | 31%       | 11               | 50%         | 15              | 43%        |
| Enthusiastic about teaching | 7              | 53%       | 8                | 36%         | 15              | 43%        |
| Humorous                    | 5              | 38%       | 9                | 41%         | 14              | 40%        |

Taking the gender of participants into consideration, there was agreement, despite differences in rankings, with the five most popularly selected attributes across both genders (see Appendix C).

In Stage Two of the study, the top five attributes were Friendly (63), Enthusiastic about teaching (61), Empathetic (59), Kind (43), and Knowledgeable (40) (see Table 2). For a full description of all the attributes, see Appendix D.

Table 2  
*Top 5 teacher attributes by participant gender in Stage Two*

| Attribute                   | Male<br>(n=67) | Male<br>% | Female<br>(n=55) | Female<br>% | Total<br>(n=122) | Total<br>% |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Friendly                    | 31             | 46%       | 32               | 58%         | 63               | 52%        |
| Enthusiastic about teaching | 33             | 49%       | 28               | 51%         | 61               | 50%        |
| Empathetic                  | 27             | 40%       | 32               | 58%         | 59               | 48%        |
| Kind                        | 27             | 40%       | 16               | 29%         | 43               | 35%        |
| Knowledgeable               | 28             | 42%       | 12               | 22%         | 40               | 33%        |

An analysis by gender revealed general agreement in the top five teacher attributes across both genders, despite some variance in their rankings. The attributes “Compassionate” (22) and “Caring” (18), which appeared in the top five attributes selected by female participants but were absent in the top five selected by male participants, were the only exceptions (see Appendix D).

**Teacher Attributes Based on Education Level.** As mentioned, several education levels were identified. Based on Stage Two data, Table 3 provides an analysis of the most common teacher attributes in the context of the three main education levels observed: Other (17), Junior high school (28), and High school (63).

Table 3

*Stage Two results of the top five teacher attributes according to education level*

| <b>Other (n=17)</b>         | <b>Junior High School (n=28)</b> | <b>High School (n=63)</b>   |    |                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|
| <b>Attribute Total</b>      | <b>Attribute Total</b>           | <b>Attribute Total</b>      |    |                             |    |
| Friendly                    | 10                               | Enthusiastic about teaching | 16 | Friendly                    | 36 |
| Enthusiastic about teaching | 9                                | Compassionate               | 9  | Empathetic                  | 35 |
| Empathetic                  | 8                                | Empathetic                  | 9  | Enthusiastic about teaching | 28 |
| Kind                        | 7                                | Friendly                    | 9  | Knowledgeable               | 28 |
| Humorous                    | 7                                | Kind                        | 9  | Kind                        | 24 |

Although appearing in different frequency, the results revealed that the majority of the most common teacher attributes were present across the three education levels. The attributes “Humorous”, “Compassionate”, and “Knowledgeable” were the only exceptions, each appearing in only one education level respectively.

**Other teacher attributes.** Participants could contribute attributes in the “Other” section of the checklist. Table 4 lists the attributes that were provided by participants in Stage One and Stage Two.

Table 4

*“Other” teacher attributes provided by participants in Stage One & Stage Two*

| <b>Stage</b> | <b>Other Teacher Attributes</b> |                   |                      |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Stage 1      | Consideration                   | Easy to talk with | A good speaker       |
|              | Respect                         | Severe            | Sing English songs   |
| Stage 2      | Always smile                    | Decent            | Expressive           |
|              | Fashionable                     | Funny             | Good speaker         |
|              | Passed                          | Serious           | Teaching right thing |
|              | Teaching well                   | Thoughtfulness    |                      |

**Education Level and Subject.** Combining the data for education levels and subjects from Stage One and Stage Two of the study revealed that High school (77) appeared most frequently, followed by Junior high school (35), Other (29), Elementary school (11), and University (5). Although there was a much variance in subjects identified, the top three subjects across all the education levels were English (36), Math (36), and Physical education (P.E.) (16). For a full description of all education levels and subjects, see Appendix E.

**Teacher Gender.** Strong agreement among participants of both genders was found regarding teacher gender in Stage Two. The results indicated that 76% of the teachers were male while 24% were female (see Table 5).

Table 5  
*Relationship between participant gender and teacher gender in Stage Two*

| Teacher Gender | Participant Gender |     |               |     |               |     |
|----------------|--------------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|
|                | Male (n=67)        |     | Female (n=55) |     | Total (n=122) |     |
|                | N                  | %   | N             | %   | N             | %   |
| Male           | 57                 | 85% | 36            | 65% | 93            | 76% |
| Female         | 10                 | 15% | 19            | 35% | 29            | 24% |

A predominance of male teachers in the data was also evidenced across the three most common education levels identified (see Table 6). Specifically, the highest proportion of male teacher occurred in Junior High School (84%), High School (79%), and Other (72%). Conversely, female teachers appeared most frequently in “Other” (28%) education levels, followed by “High School” (21%) and “Junior High School” (16%).

Table 6  
*Relationship between teacher gender and most commonly selected education levels in Stage Two*

| Teacher Gender | Education Level |     |                           |     |                    |     |
|----------------|-----------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
|                | Other (n=18)    |     | Junior High School (n=25) |     | High School (n=62) |     |
|                | N               | %   | N                         | %   | N                  | %   |
| Male           | 13              | 72% | 21                        | 84% | 49                 | 79% |
| Female         | 5               | 28% | 4                         | 16% | 13                 | 21% |

### Written Blog Reflections

The written reflections provided context to the attributes that were selected. In this section, a non-random sampling of excerpts from students’ reflections is provided to gain a better understanding of their intended meaning.

**Friendly.** Typically, “Friendly” referred to instances where teachers made time to converse on various topics with their students, and often, outside of class. Reflection 1 demonstrates this theme:

#### Reflection 1

He was friendly. He might come to play to us in break time and talked. He has a detailed talk about a movie and an entertainer and news as well as knowledge of the math. (*Stage 2: Participant No. 51, Female*)

**Enthusiastic About Teaching.** A teacher’s enthusiasm for teaching was perceived in various ways. Despite the positive nature of the word “Enthusiastic” in general, in some reflections, it appeared to convey negative behavior by the teacher (see Reflection 2). In many cases, however, participants linked such behavior to positive outcomes.

#### Reflection 2

I think she is very enthusiastic about teaching too. Her class time is very dark time. Especially when the Choir Festival because she teach me piano accompaniment very hard. So came the piano accompaniment prize. (*Stage 2:*



*Participant No. 27, Male)*

**Empathetic.** Teachers in this category were often described by participants as being good listeners and providing advice to students. Reflection 3 demonstrates this tendency.

Reflection 3

I sometimes could not speak but he is empathetic good listener, I was able to think calmly. *(Stage 1: Participant No. 16, Female)*

**Kind.** In numerous instances, teachers who (in the eyes of the participants) took extra steps to help or advise students were perceived as kind (see Reflection 4).

Reflection 4

She was a so kind woman. She gave some test for me. It's her original test. *(Stage 2: Participant: No. 13, Female)*

**Knowledgeable.** Teachers who were credited as being knowledgeable were acknowledged, not only for their knowledge of the subjects taught, but also for their general knowledge. Reflection 5 is such an example.

Reflection 5

[...] he is the person who has the most knowledgeable. He has to not only English knowledge but life knowledge. So he taught me many things. For example love, study, life style, family, school life [...]. *(Stage 1: Participant No. 6, Female)*

### **Emergent Attribute**

In Stage One of this study, one of the participants added “severe” as an attribute in the “Other” section of the teacher attributes checklist. Reflection 6 is an excerpt from this participant's reflection.

Reflection 6

He was so severe in class. So many students didn't like him. *(Stage 1: Participant No. 14, Female)*

However, a total of ten other participants made references to teacher “sternness” (in varying degrees) in their written reflections. Some examples included: “tell off me”, “serious [...] too strict”, “he is very severe”, “strict [...] sharp tongue [...] so strict [...] frightening”, “say often severe words”, and so on.

To explore this further, “sternness” was incorporated in the teacher attributes checklist for Stage Two. Interestingly, 15 male and 10 female (i.e., 20% of) participants selected “sternness” on the checklist. Reflection 7 typifies the dichotomic nature of this attribute.

Reflection 7

Her P.E. class is interesting. But she is sternness in my club. She was always mad at me. I didn't like her first. I had known her kind when I continued for a long

time. (*Stage 2: Participant No. 89, Female*)

In addition to the above participants, 11 (9%) other participants (i.e. who had not selected “Sternness”) contained elements of sternness in their reflections in Stage Two. Some examples include the following references to it: “he looked so afraid [...] I was scared [...] I was afraid”; “very strict and afraid teacher is angry”; “I was quite afraid”; “I was quite afraid [...] He said sorry soon”; “too strict”; and so on.

### **Emergent Sub-themes**

In Stage One, three emergent sub-themes were identified from the written reflections, 1) Recognition: Gratitude/Respect (10); 2) Life-Changing Impact (10); and 3) Bonds & Ties (5). The presence of these sub-themes was further supported by the data collected in Stage Two of the study.

**Recognition: Gratitude/Respect.** In Stage Two, 27 of the reflections contained evidence of learners expressing gratitude or respect for the teacher. Reflection 8 is one example of this.

#### Reflection 8

Especially I respect Japanese language teacher in the high school. I am thankful to the teacher who made the chance to make my study hard. Thanks to my teacher, I become a good thinker. (*Stage Two: Participant No. 101, Male*)

**Life-Changing Impact.** An additional 14 examples of teachers having a life-changing impact on learners were observed in Stage Two. In many examples, a desire to emulate their teachers was expressed by participants. Reflection 9 is an indication of this.

#### Reflection 9

The teacher is the trigger by which then thought I would like to be become a teacher. I would like to become a teacher like him in the future. (*Stage Two: Participant No. 38, Male*)

**Bonds & Ties.** In addition to five reflections that suggested bonds and ties between good teachers and their students, for example, “She is like my mom. I have taken the contact with her even now. I like her very much.” (Participant No. 21, Female) in Stage One, another five reflections described the same phenomenon in Stage Two (see Reflection 10).

#### Reflection 10

But sometimes I talked him with LINE. He is traveling a trip around the world. Now he stays Brazil. I like to talk him and eat his meal. (*Stage One: Participant No. 4, Female*)

The researchers can only infer that participants who chose to express these sub-themes felt it was important to do so. In this respect, the authors regard their emergence as significant.

## Discussion

### Teacher Attributes

In relation to the first research aim, the most popularly selected attributes in Stage One and Stage Two showed consistency across the two stages. Despite some variance in frequency, by and large, many of the same attributes were present in the top five lists, regardless of participant gender and or education level.

### Education Levels and Subjects

Regarding the second aim of this research, by combining the results from Stages One and Two, the most common education level by far was “High School” (77). Somewhat less frequent were “Junior High School” (35) and “Other” (29). The education levels that appeared least frequently were “Elementary School” (11) and “University” (5). To account for these findings would require further investigation, and thus, is beyond the scope of the current study. The range of subjects taught was very widespread. It was noted previously that the combining of all the education levels in Stage One and Stage Two identified English (36) and Math (36) as the most commonly taught subjects in the study.

### Relationships

The following discussion relates to the four relationships which the current research aimed to explore.

**Teacher Attributes and Learner Gender.** It was observed that the five most commonly selected teacher attributes by male and female participants in Stage One were the same. The authors, however, are reluctant to assign significance to this alignment considering the small sample-size. With a much larger sample-size in Stage Two, greater variance was observed in the results. It is perhaps not surprising, then that, in contrast to Stage One results, there was partial rather than complete alignment of the most popularly selected teacher attributes.

**Teacher Gender, Learner Gender, and Education Level.** For reasons which cannot be determined from the data, participants referred to male teachers (76%) substantially more often than female teachers (24%), regardless of the participants' gender. Even when taking participant gender into account, the same was true. As was evidenced, female participants identified female teachers slightly (20%) more than male teachers when compared with the male participants. In contrast, slightly (20%) more male teachers were selected by the male participants than the female participants. Moreover, male teachers were also substantially more prevalent across the three most common education levels.

**Emergent Attribute.** The fact that 25 participants selected “Sternness” in the checklist in Stage Two, and that a further 11 references were made to it in the written reflections of 11 other participants, leads the authors to conclude that its presence in Stage One was not a random anomaly, but rather, an independent variable that may warrant further investigation. One plausible account for its presence in the data may be related to the success of the sempai-kohai relationship between teacher and learner in Japan (Hadley & Hadley, 1996). However, whether or to what extent the

participants considered “sternness” as a desirable teacher attribute is unclear.

**Emergent Sub-Themes.** The emergence of the three sub-themes from the written reflections in Stage One was collaborated by their presence in Stage Two. The authors regard these emergent sub-themes as a testament to the profound and long impact that good teachers can have on their learners.

**Other Asian-based Studies: Similar and Contrasting Teacher Attributes.** Several teacher attributes were popularly selected by participants in both the current study and by the three other Asian-based studies (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015; Nghia, 2015; Wichadee, 2010), these being ‘compassionate’, ‘good communicator’, ‘humorous’. Although ‘compassionate’ was referred to as being understanding of student anxiety in the classroom in Nghia, 2015), Other attributes that were popularly selected by participants in both the current study and in one or two of the other studies, such as, ‘caring’, ‘enthusiastic about teaching’ and ‘kind’ (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015 only) and ‘friendly’ (both Nghia, 2015; Wichadee, 2010), ‘honest’ (Nghia, 2015 only), ‘good listener’ and ‘knowledgeable’ (Wichadee, 2010 only).

Additionally, there were several teacher attributes not popularly selected in the current study but considered favorably by participants in at least two of the other studies, such as, ‘fair’ and ‘patient’ (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015; Wichadee, 2010), and ‘organized’ and ‘prepared’ (Nghia, 2015; Wichadee, 2010). There were also teacher attributes which were popularly selected by learners in the current study but were selected in only of each of the other studies, and those were ‘creative’, ‘patient’, self-confident’, ‘self-control’, and ‘unbiased’ (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015 only), and ‘motivational’ (Nghia, 2015 only).

**Other Asian-based Studies: Similar and Contrasting Findings.** There are several significantly similar findings between the current study and the other Asian-based studies. There were no significant gender differences for positive teacher attributes in the current study and the studies by Nghia (2015) and Wichadee (2010). While in relation to teacher attributes, either in the studies’ research design or by selection from participants, 15 of out the 25 attributes used in the current study were found in the study by Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2015 and 13 out of 25 in the study by Wichadee (2010).

In contrast with the current study, Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2015) did not have any findings on gender differences of participants’ perceptions on positive teacher attributes. While Nghia (2015) found that participants strongly favored teachers who behaved professionally, an attribute which was absent from the current study. Lastly, Wichadee (2010) noted that the top two positive teacher attributes were for teachers to treat students ‘interested in students’ and to be ‘helpful’. Yet these two attributes were neither listed by the researchers nor added by participants as optional extra attribute selections in the teacher attribute checklist of the current study.

## Limitations

The authors recognize certain limitations of the current study. In relation to the qualitative data (i.e., written reflections), it is important to note that, in an interpretive paradigm, individual meanings can become lost within broader generalizations

(Samdahl, 1999). Moreover, the findings discussed are highly contextualized and, ultimately, such qualitative data requires a level of subjective interpretation by the researchers. Hence, the outcomes observed in the current study may be limited in their applicability to other researchers and in other contexts (Scotland, 2012). Turning to the quantitative data, although the attributes listed in the checklist were each accompanied by a Japanese translation (and checked by multiple native Japanese speakers for accuracy) for greater reliability, it is plausible, however, that individuals may have interpreted them differently. Lastly, English (and Math) teachers were among the most commonly selected teachers in this study. Whether the situational-settings of the current research – namely, 1) English language learners (i.e., the participants) and 2) English language teachers (i.e., the researchers) – had any bearing on the (relatively) high prevalence of English teachers in the data remains unknown. The authors acknowledge, however, that it may have.

### **Conclusions & Recommendations**

In this study, and as found in previous research, learner perceptions of good teacher attributes can be influenced by a variety of factors, including gender and school level (Zhang & Watkins, 2007). The current study also found parallels with other studies, most notably Nghia (2015) and Wichadee (2010), in that no major differences were found in the attributes used to describe good teachers based on participants' gender. This was observed in both Stage One and Stage Two outcomes. Additionally, in the minds of the researchers at least, the reemergence of “Sternness” (25) in Stage Two in both the questionnaire data and in the written reflections, justified their decision to incorporate it in the checklist in the second stage. The reemergence of the sub-themes in Stage Two may help to dispel any notions that they were merely anomalous artifacts specific to the participants in the first stage. In the coming phases of this continuing research, the researchers hope to uncover evidence to account for 1) the dominating presence of male teachers in the current study, and 2) the strong presence of “sternness” in the data. Ultimately, the ramifications of outcomes discussed in this study should be considered in the context of teacher training and teacher evaluation. Finally, considering the broad scope of the current research, it is hoped this paper has provided teachers in a range of education levels with insights into learner perceptions of good teacher attributes and the various relationships that exist between them.

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## Appendix A

### Teacher Attributes Checklist

|  |                             |  |                          |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|
|  | Flexible                    |  | Friendly                 |  | <i>Compassionate</i>  |
|  | <i>Honest</i>               |  | Fair                     |  | <i>Plays games</i>    |
|  | Humorous                    |  | Caring                   |  | Polite                |
|  | Prepared                    |  | <i>Good communicator</i> |  | Motivational          |
|  | Enthusiastic about teaching |  | Knowledgeable            |  | <i>Self-confident</i> |
|  | Kind                        |  | <i>Leader</i>            |  | <i>Inspired</i>       |
|  | Creative                    |  | Organized                |  | Empathetic            |
|  | Patient                     |  | Good listener            |  | Unbiased              |
|  | <i>*Sternness</i>           |  | Other                    |  | Other                 |

*Note:* Attributes developed by the researchers are italicized. \*Sternness was added for Stage Two use.



## Appendix B

### Student Consent form (including Student Questionnaire & Blog instructions)

#### Student Consent Form

Dear Student,

Blagoja Dimoski and Andrew Leichsenring invite you to participate in a research project for the purpose of:

Collecting data on student perceptions of teachers; and improving teachers' understanding of Japanese university student perceptions of teachers.

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  Male /  Female understand the purpose of the above research project, and I agree to participate in it voluntarily. Today's date is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

Thank you for your participation.

Blagoja Dimoski and Andrew Leichsenring

#### Student Questionnaire

| Choose one – mark X      | Education Level   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Elementary school   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Junior high school  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | High School   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | University  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Juku / Eikaiwa / Tutor (etc.) Please specify<br>(            ) |

My teacher was  Male /  Female

My teacher taught \_\_\_\_\_ (write the subject here).

#### Blog Activity

“Write an experience you had with one teacher (from elementary school to university) who you think was a good teacher for you. What happened? Why do you think that teacher was a good teacher?” *Use all of the five check-listed items in your blog posting. Minimum 100 words - Maximum 150 words in English.*

## Appendix C

Ranking of Stage One teacher attributes by gender of participants and the totals.

| Attributes                     | Male<br>(n=13) | Male<br>% | Female<br>(n=22) | Female<br>% | Total<br>(n=35) | Total<br>% |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| Friendly                       | 11             | 85%       | 12               | 55%         | 23              | 66%        |
| Knowledgeable                  | 6              | 46%       | 12               | 55%         | 18              | 51%        |
| Empathetic                     | 4              | 31%       | 11               | 50%         | 15              | 43%        |
| Enthusiastic about<br>teaching | 7              | 53%       | 8                | 36%         | 15              | 43%        |
| Humorous                       | 5              | 38%       | 9                | 41%         | 14              | 40%        |
| Caring                         | 5              | 38%       | 8                | 36%         | 13              | 37%        |
| Compassionate                  | 4              | 31%       | 8                | 36%         | 12              | 34%        |
| Good listener                  | 4              | 31%       | 4                | 18%         | 8               | 23%        |
| Inspiring                      | 4              | 31%       | 4                | 18%         | 8               | 23%        |
| Motivational                   | 1              | 8%        | 6                | 27%         | 7               | 20%        |
| Honest                         | 2              | 15%       | 4                | 18%         | 6               | 17%        |
| Flexible                       | 3              | 23%       | 1                | 5%          | 4               | 11%        |
| Plays games                    | 1              | 8%        | 3                | 14%         | 4               | 11%        |
| Polite                         | -              | -         | 4                | 18%         | 4               | 11%        |
| Self-confident                 | 1              | 8%        | 2                | 9%          | 3               | 9%         |
| Creative                       | -              | -         | 2                | 9%          | 2               | 6%         |
| Fair                           | 1              | 8%        | 1                | 5%          | 2               | 6%         |
| Good communicator              | 1              | 8%        | 1                | 5%          | 2               | 6%         |
| Kind                           | 1              | 8%        | 1                | 5%          | 2               | 6%         |
| Leader                         | 2              | 15%       | -                | -           | 2               | 6%         |
| Organized                      | -              | -         | 1                | 5%          | 1               | 3%         |
| Patient                        | 1              | 8%        | -                | -           | 1               | 3%         |
| Prepared                       | -              | -         | 1                | 5%          | 1               | 3%         |
| Unbiased                       | 1              | 8%        | -                | -           | 1               | 3%         |

## Appendix D

Ranking of Stage Two teacher attributes by gender of participants and the totals.

| Attributes                     | Male<br>(n=67) | Male<br>% | Female<br>(n=55) | Female<br>% | Total<br>(n=122) | Total<br>% |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Friendly                       | 31             | 46%       | 32               | 58%         | 63               | 52%        |
| Enthusiastic about<br>teaching | 33             | 49%       | 28               | 51%         | 61               | 50%        |
| Empathetic                     | 27             | 40%       | 32               | 58%         | 59               | 48%        |
| Kind                           | 27             | 40%       | 16               | 29%         | 43               | 35%        |
| Knowledgeable                  | 28             | 42%       | 12               | 22%         | 40               | 33%        |
| Compassionate                  | 17             | 25%       | 22               | 40%         | 39               | 32%        |
| Polite                         | 25             | 37%       | 11               | 20%         | 36               | 30%        |
| Humorous                       | 23             | 34%       | 12               | 22%         | 35               | 29%        |
| Caring                         | 16             | 24%       | 18               | 33%         | 34               | 28%        |
| *Sternness                     | 15             | 22%       | 10               | 18%         | 25               | 20%        |
| Motivational                   | 13             | 19%       | 9                | 16%         | 22               | 18%        |
| Inspiring                      | 9              | 13%       | 10               | 18%         | 19               | 16%        |
| Good listener                  | 7              | 10%       | 11               | 20%         | 18               | 15%        |
| Honest                         | 7              | 10%       | 9                | 16%         | 16               | 13%        |
| Good communicator              | 9              | 13%       | 6                | 11%         | 15               | 12%        |
| Fair                           | 7              | 10%       | 5                | 9%          | 12               | 10%        |
| Plays games                    | 6              | 9%        | 5                | 9%          | 11               | 9%         |
| Flexible                       | 7              | 10%       | 2                | 4%          | 9                | 7%         |
| Unbiased                       | 5              | 7%        | 4                | 7%          | 9                | 7%         |
| Patient                        | 4              | 6%        | 2                | 4%          | 6                | 5%         |
| Creative                       | 4              | 6%        | 1                | 2%          | 5                | 4%         |
| Self-confident                 | 1              | 1%        | 4                | 7%          | 5                | 4%         |
| Leader                         | 3              | 4%        | -                | -           | 3                | 2%         |
| Prepared                       | -              | -         | 1                | 2%          | 1                | 1%         |
| Organized                      | -              | -         | -                | -           | -                | -          |

Note: \*Sternness was not an item on the teacher attribute checklist in Stage 1.

## Appendix E

Combined results of Stage One & Stage Two for education level and subject.

| Education Level                | Sub-Totals<br>(n=157) | Subject   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| High school                    | 77                    | Art (1), Bible (1), Biology (1), Bookkeeping (1), Chemistry (2), Contemporary writings (1), English (14), English grammar (1), Environment (1), Japanese (7), Japanese history (4), Karate (1), Kyudo club (1), Math (21), Music (4), P.E. (3), P.E. & Club (1), Physics (2), School counsellor (1), Science (2), Social studies (3), Track & field (2), Unknown (1), World history (1) |
| Junior high school             | 35                    | Baseball (1), English (7), Geography (1), History (1), Japanese (2), Math (6), Music (2), P.E. (9), Science (2), Social Studies (2), Table tennis (1), Track and field club (1)   |
| Other                          | 29                    |   |
| <i>Cram school (18)</i>        |                       | Abacus (1), English (7), English & Math (1), Contemporary writings (1), Japanese (1), Math (4), Math/English/Japanese (1), Society (1), Unknown (1)   |
| <i>Tutor (5)</i>               |                       | Math (2), Math/English/Japanese (1), Music (2)  |
| <i>Conversation school (4)</i> |                       | English (4)   |
| <i>Coach (2)</i>               |                       | Gymnastics (1), Tennis (1)  |
| Elementary school              | 11                    | Homeroom teacher (1), Japanese (1), Many subjects (6), P.E. (3)   |
| University                     | 5                     | Biology (1), English (1), Logic (1), Science (2)  |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>157</b>            |   |

\*Note. Student responses that do not conform to the notion of a formal academic subject

## *The Benefactive Applicative in Temne<sup>1</sup>*

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### **Abstract**

The benefactive applicative, which is realized in Temne as the verb suffix *-a*, is typologically unusual for an applicative in that it has a variable, but regular syntactic effect on the valence of the verb. In this paper, I examine the syntactic and semantic effects of combining the benefactive applicative with a verb in Temne. Building upon Kanu (2016, 2012, 2009a), I show that the benefactive applicative combines with intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs, and has the syntactic effect of adding up to two applied objects to the argument structure of the verb. Semantically, I demonstrate, using Langacker's (1978) "network model of polysemy", that the benefactive applicative is a polysemous suffix combining with various schemas that are closely related to each other.

Keywords: benefactive applicative, Temne, Atlantic languages

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<sup>1</sup> Temne (ISO 639-3:tem) belongs to the Southern Atlantic Group of the Niger Congo language family (Blench, (2006); Childs, (2010)). It is predominantly spoken in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone, and has a population of about 1.5 million native speakers. It is a Subject-Verb-Object language, and has a rich verbal morphology. It is a tonal language and has both high and low tones (Kanu, S.M. & Tucker, B.V., (2010)). It also has a noun class system.

## Introduction

The benefactive applicative, which is realized as the verb suffix *-a* in Temne, is typologically unusual for an applicative in that it has a variable, but regular syntactic effect on the valence of the verb. It can add one event-participant, a beneficiary or an instrument, to the argument structure of the verb. Also, it can add two event-participants, a beneficiary and a substitutive or a beneficiary and an instrument, to the clause. The term beneficiary is defined here as an event-participant that benefits from the action described by the verb in the clause. Thus, the term beneficiary is synonymous to the “plain beneficiary” in the sense of Van Valin & LaPolla (1997). A substitutive, on the other hand, is the event-participant on whose behalf or instead of whom the event described by the verb is performed.

In this paper, I examine in detail the syntactic and semantic effects of the benefactive applicative in Temne. Building upon Kanu (2016, 2012, 2009a), I show that the benefactive applicative combines with intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs, and has the syntactic effect of adding up to two applied objects to the argument structure of the verb. Semantically, I demonstrate, using Langacker’s (1978) “network model of polysemy”, that the benefactive applicative is a polysemous suffix combining with various schemas that are closely related to each other.

### Syntactic effects of the benefactive applicative

The benefactive applicative is compatible with intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs in Temne. Cross-linguistically, the benefactive applicative generally adds one applied object to the argument structure of the verb. However, in Temne, when the benefactive applicative is combined with an intransitive or transitive verb, it adds up to two applied objects to the clause. In this section, I examine the syntactic effects of the benefactive applicative in the clause.

### Intransitive verbs

When the benefactive applicative is combined with an intransitive verb, it adds an applied object that is assigned the participant role of a beneficiary or an instrument, as examples (2) and (3) illustrate.

1. I                    thom<sup>2</sup>  
    1SG.SUBJ dance  
    ‘I am dancing/dance/danced.’

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<sup>2</sup> 1. first person; 2. second person; 3. third person; A. causer argument; AGT. agent; ANIM. animate; BEN. benefactive suffix; CAUS. causative suffix; COM. comitative; DEF. definite article; GR. grammatical relations; EMPH. emphatic pronoun; I. applied object of the instrumental suffix; INANIM. inanimate; INDEF. indefinite article; INST. instrumental suffix; L. applied object of the locative suffix; LOC. locative suffix; NC. noun class; PO. primary object; QO. quaternary object; R. object of a ditransitive verb; REF. reflexive suffix; REL. relative pronoun; SG. singular; SO. secondary object; SUBJ. subject; TO. tertiary object; W. applied object of the benefactive suffix; Y. object of a transitive verb; X. subject of a basic sentence.

2. I            thəmɔ-ʌ        kɔ  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC1.OBJ  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced for (the benefit of) him/her.’
3. I            thəmɔ-ʌ        t-ə-gbərəkə  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC6-INDEF-stilt  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced with stilts.’

In example (1), which has a bare verb, there is no applied object. However, in (2), where the benefactive applicative is combined with the basic verb *thəmɔ* ‘dance’, the applied object, which is marked by the third person object marker *kɔ* ‘him/her’ is added to the argument structure of the verb. Similarly, in (3), the applied object *təgbərəkə* ‘stilts’ is added to the clause when the verb is combined with the benefactive applicative.

Combining the benefactive applicative with a verb also has the syntactic effect of adding two applied objects to the valence of the intransitive verb. These applied objects may be realized as the beneficiary and the substitutive or the beneficiary and the instrument, as illustrated in (5) and (6) respectively.

4. I            thəmɔ  
 1SG.SUBJ dance  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced.’
5. I            thəmɔ-ʌ        mu            kɔ  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    2SG.OBJ        NC1.OBJ  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced for (the benefit of) him/her on your behalf.’
6. I            thəmɔ-ʌ        kɔ            t-ə-gbərəkə  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC1.OBJ        NC6-INDEF-stilt  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced for (the benefit of) him/her with stilts.’

In example (5), the added objects are marked by the second person object marker *mu* ‘you’ and the third person object marker, *kɔ* ‘him/her’. In this example, the primary object *mu* ‘you’ (i.e. the argument immediately after the verb) is identified as the substitutive (i.e. the participant on whose behalf the event is carried out), while the secondary object, *kɔ* ‘him/her’ is identified as the beneficiary. In (6) the applied objects are the third person object marker *kɔ* ‘him/her’ and the instrument, *təgbərəkə* ‘stilts’. In this example, the beneficiary is the primary object and the instrument *təgbərəkə* ‘stilts’ is the secondary object.

The instrument occupies the rightmost argument position in the clause even when all the post-verbal arguments are realized as object markers or nouns, as examples (7) and (8) indicate.

7. I            thəmɔ-ʌ        kɔ            chi  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC1.OBJ        NC6:OBJ  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced for (the benefit of) him/her with them (stilts).’

8. I            thəmɔ-ʌ            ɔ-bɔkɔ            t-ə-gbərəka  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC1-woman    NC6-INDEF-stilt  
 ‘I am dancing/dance/danced with stilts for (the benefit of) the woman.’

The sentence is ungrammatical if the order of the beneficiary and instrument is reversed, as (9) and (10) indicates.

9. \*I            thəmɔ-ʌ            chi            kɔ  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC6:OBJ            NC1.OBJ  
 Intended meaning: ‘I am dancing/dance/danced for him/her with them (stilts).’

10. \*I            thəmɔ-ʌ            t-ə-gbərəka            ɔ-bɔkɔ  
 1SG.SUBJ dance-BEN    NC6-INDEF-stilt            NC1-woman  
 Intended meaning: ‘I am dancing/dance/danced with stilts for (the benefit of) the woman.’

As discussed in Kanu (2016, 2012), the order of post-verbal arguments in Temne is determined by three interacting hierarchies: the precedence hierarchy, participant hierarchy, and prominence hierarchy. The precedence hierarchy, OM » NOM, ranks objects expressed by object markers (OM) over those expressed by nominals (NOM), requiring that the former precedes the latter. Example (9) violates the prominence hierarchy, which requires post-verbal arguments that are expressed by object markers (OM) to occur in the order of precedence: 1/2 » 3ANIM » 3INANIM. In (9), the third person inanimate object marker *chi* ‘them (stilts)’ precede the animate object marker *kɔ* ‘him/her’, hence the ungrammaticality of the sentence.

Example (10), on the other hand, violates the participant hierarchy: A » X » S » W » {L, C} » R » Y » I, which provides a ranked ordering of event participants based on their participant roles. The participant hierarchy applies only to homogeneous object constructions, defined as constructions where two or more post-verbal arguments are expressed as nouns or nominal. Thus, in (10), where all the post-verbal objects are expressed as nominal, the instrument, *təgbərəka* ‘stilts’ which is represented by the variable I in the participant hierarchy, precedes the beneficiary, *ɔbɔkɔ* ‘the woman’ that is marked as W in the participant hierarchy. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (10) follows directly.



## Transitive verbs

The benefactive applicative also combines with transitive verbs in Temne. As with intransitive verbs, it can add a beneficiary or an instrument to the clause. This is illustrated in examples (12) and (13).

11. I            gbal    λη-reka  
 1SG.SUBJ write NC3:DEF-letter  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote the letter.’
12. I            gbal-λ            kɔ            λη-reka  
 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN NC1.OBJ NC3:DEF-letter  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote the letter for (the benefit of) him/her’.
13. I            gbal-λ            λη-reka            k-ə-thanke    k-ə-yim  
 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN NC3:DEF-letter NC2-INDEF-pen NC2-INDEF-red  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote the letter with a red pen.’

There is no applied object in (11) which has a bare verb. However, in (12) where the benefactive applicative is combined with the transitive verb *gbal* ‘write’, the applied object, which is marked by the third person object marker *kɔ* ‘him/her’, is added to the argument structure of the verb. Also, the applied object occupies the primary object position (i.e. the position immediately after the verb), while the object of the basic verb, *ληreka* ‘the letter’ is demoted to the secondary object position. In (13), it is the instrument, *kəthanke kəyim* ‘red pen’ that is added to the clause, and is realized as the secondary object, while the object of the basic verb is the primary object.

As with intransitive verbs, the benefactive applicative can also add two applied objects to the argument structure of the transitive verb, as examples (15) and (16) illustrate.

14. I            gbal    λη-reka  
 1SG.SUBJ write NC3:DEF-letter  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote the letter.’
15. I            gbal-λ            mu            kɔ            λη-reka  
 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN 2SG.OBJ NC1.OBJ NC3:DEF-letter  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote a letter for him/her on your behalf.’
16. I            gbal-λ            kɔ            λη-reka            k-ə-thanke  
 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN NC1.OBJ NC3:DEF-letter NC2-INDEF-pen  
  
                   k-ə-yim  
                   NC2-INDEF-red  
 ‘I am writing/write/wrote the letter for him/her with a red pen.’

In (15), the applied objects are marked by the second person object marker *mu* ‘you’ and the third person object marker *kɔ* ‘him/her’. As in (5), when the substitutive and the beneficiary co-occur, the substitutive is always closer to the verb. Thus, in (15) the substitutive *mu* ‘you’, is the primary object, while the beneficiary, *kɔ* ‘him/her’ is the

secondary object. In (16), there are two applied objects, *kə* ‘him/her’, which is the primary object, and *kəθanke kəyim* ‘red pen’, which is the tertiary object. The object of the basic verb *ayreka* ‘the letter’ is the secondary object. Example (16) also provides evidence for the participant hierarchy since the participant role of theme (represented as R in the participant hierarchy) that is assigned to the object of the basic verb, *ayreka* ‘the letter’, precedes the instrument, *kəθanke kəyim*.

### Ditransitive verbs

The benefactive applicative combines with ditransitive verbs in Temne. As with intransitive and transitive verbs, it can add a beneficiary or an instrument to the argument structure of the verb. The following examples illustrate this.

17.  $\text{ɔ}$             *nut*         $\text{ɔ-wath}$          $\Lambda\text{-nak}$   
 NC1.SUBJ feed NC1-child NC3:INDEF-rice  
 ‘He/She is feeding/feeds/fed the child some rice.’

18.  $\text{ɔ}$             *nut- $\Lambda$*         *mu*             $\text{ɔ-wath}$          $\Lambda\text{-nak}$   
 NC1.SUBJ feed-BEN 2SG.OBJ NC1-child NC3:INDEF-rice  
 ‘He/She is feeding/feeds/fed the child some rice for you.’

19.  $\text{ɔ}$             *nut- $\Lambda$*          $\text{ɔ-wath}$          $\Lambda\text{-nak}$         *k-ə-bep*  
 NC1.SUBJ feed-BEN NC1-child NC3:INDEF-rice NC2-INDEF-  
 spoon  
 ‘He/She is feeding/feeds/fed the child some rice with a spoon.’

In (17), which has a bare verb, only the objects of the ditransitive verb appear in the clause. In (18), where the benefactive applicative is combined with the ditransitive verb *nut* ‘feed’, a new object, marked by the second person object marker *mu* ‘you’, is added to the clause. This applied object is the primary object, while the objects of the basic verb, *ɔwath* ‘the child’ and *anaka* ‘rice’ are demoted to the secondary and tertiary object position respectively. In (19), the applied object is *kəbep* ‘a spoon’, and it is the oblique object, while the objects of the basic verb are the primary and secondary object.

Unlike intransitive and transitive verbs, the benefactive applicative cannot add a beneficiary and an instrument to the argument structure of the ditransitive verb, as the ungrammaticality of (20) indicates.

20. \* $\text{ɔ}$             *nut- $\Lambda$*         *mu*             $\text{ɔ-wath}$          $\Lambda\text{-nak}$   
 NC1.SUBJ feed-BEN 2SG.OBJ NC1-child NC3:DEF-rice  
  
*k-ə-bep*  
 NC2-INDEF-spoon  
 Intended meaning: ‘He/She is feeding/feeds/fed the child some rice for you with a spoon.’

It is also impossible for the benefactive applicative to add both a substitutive and beneficiary to the valence of the ditransitive verb, as the ungrammaticality of (21) indicates.

21. \* $\text{ɔ}$              $\text{nut-}\Lambda$              $\text{mu}$              $\text{k}\text{ɔ}$              $\text{ɔ-wath}$   
           NC1.SUBJ    feed-BEN        2SG.OBJ        NC1.OBJ        NC1-child

$\Lambda$ -nak  
 NC3:INDEF-rice

Intended meaning: ‘He/She is feeding/feeds/fed the child some rice for you on behalf of him/her.’

Examples like (20) and (21) indicate that the benefactive applicative cannot add two applied objects to the argument structure of the ditransitive verb.

Thus, syntactically the benefactive applicative combines with intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs. When it is combined with an intransitive or transitive verb, it increases the valence of the verb by either one (a beneficiary or an instrument) or two applied objects (substitutive, beneficiary or beneficiary, instrument). However, it cannot add two applied objects to the argument structure of a ditransitive verb.

In addition, I showed that the order of the applied objects in a benefactive construction is not random. Rather, it is determined by the participant hierarchy, precedence hierarchy and the prominence hierarchy. Accordingly, since arguments assigned the participant role of beneficiary or substitutive are generally animates, they occupy a less oblique argument slot in the clause. On the other hand, since participants that are assigned the participant role of instrument are mostly inanimate, they occupy more oblique argument slots in the clause.

### **The semantics of the benefactive applicative**

Cross-linguistically, benefactive constructions are prone to a range of different semantic readings. As reported in Marten & Kula (2014:8), Peterson (2007) identified five of these readings as: “(a) contributing to X’s well-being (plain, benefactive), (b) detracting from X’s well-being (plain, benefactive), (c) involving something which ends up in the possession of X (recipient), (d) involving something which is directed towards X (direction/goal), and (e) doing something instead of/on behalf of/in place of X (substitutive)”. Three of these readings (a, b & e) are attested in Temne. In addition, Temne benefactive applicative has the instrumental reading, which is in fact the basic semantic reading of the instrumental applicative *-ane*.

In Kanu (2012), I divided the various readings of the benefactive applicative into five schemas: Schema B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5. Schema B1, which states: ‘[X performs E], involving Z’ is the super-schema. It is adapted from Mel’cuk (1993) who formulated the generalized applicative schema, ‘involving Z’. The variable Z does not represent any specific event participant. However, it is associated with the beneficiary/maleficiary, substitutive and instrumental participant roles. In what follows, I describe each of these schemas in detail.

### **Schema B2 of the benefactive applicative**

Schema B2 denotes the event schematized as ‘[X performs E], affecting the interests of W’, where W represents the beneficiary/maleficiary, and ‘affecting the interests of

W' represents the meaning of the benefactive applicative. Thus, the interests of W may be affected positively, as in a beneficiary reading or negatively as in a maleficiary reading. Examples (22) and (23) illustrate this schema.

22. I            way- $\Lambda$             mu             $\Lambda\eta$ -thaba  
 1SG.SUBJ buy-BEN            2SG.OBJ            NC5-tobacco  
 'I am buying/buy/bought tobacco for (the benefit of) you.'
23. I            dim- $\Lambda$             mu             $\Lambda\eta$ -thaba  
 1SG.SUBJ lost-BEN            2SG.OBJ            NC5-tobacco  
 'I lost (to your disadvantage) your tobacco.'

In both (22) and (23), the interests of W, represented by the second person singular object marker *mu* 'you', is affected by the event described by the verb in each sentence. The basic difference between (22) and (23) is that in (22) the interests of W are affected positively, hence the beneficiary reading. On the other hand, in (23), the interests of W are affected negatively, hence the maleficiary reading. Thus, the context determines whether the sentence has a beneficiary or a maleficiary reading. This schema (B2), which is the most frequent in Temne spoken discourse, patterns with Peterson (2007)'s "plain benefactive" readings: "contributing to X's well-being" and "detracting from X's well-being".

### Schema B3 of the benefactive applicative

Unlike schema B2, schema B3 involves two new participants, the beneficiary (W) and the substitutive (S), defined here as the event-participant 'on whose behalf' or 'instead of whom' the event described by the verb is carried out. Other terms used in the literature for the substitutive are the "deputative benefactive" (Marteen 2015) and "surrogation" (Zuñiga, 2010). Schema B3 denotes the event schematized as [X performs E] on behalf of S, affecting the interests of W. As with schema A, [X performs E] represents the meaning of the basic verb. Example (24) illustrates schema B3 of the benefactive applicative.

24. I            way- $\Lambda$             mu             $k\sigma$              $\Lambda$ -thaba  
 1SG.SUBJ buy-BEN            2SG.OBJ            NC1.OBJ            NC3:INDEF-tobacco  
 'I am buying/buy/bought tobacco for him/her on your behalf.'

In (24) where both the substitutive, marked by the object marker *mu* 'you' and the beneficiary, marked by the object marker *k $\sigma$*  'him/her' are added to the clause, the sentence has the meaning whereby an agent (X) performs an event (E), that would otherwise be performed by another participant (S). This event affects either positively or negatively the interests of a third participant (W). A substitutive reading of the benefactive applicative has recently been reported of the language, Bemba (Marten & Kula 2014). However, unlike Bemba, the substitutive reading in Temne is not marked on the verb by any morpheme different from the benefactive suffix - $\Lambda$ .

### Schema B4 of the benefactive applicative

In schema B4, only one event-participant is involved. It states: [X performs E], using I. Here the variable I represents the instrument. This reading of the benefactive

applicative is more productively realized when a verb is combined with the instrumental suffix *-ane*. Example (25) illustrates schema B4 of the benefactive applicative.

|       |   |   |                                  |
|-------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 25. I | gbal- $\Lambda$                           | k- $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ -th $\Lambda$ nk $\text{\textcircled{e}}$ | k- $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ -yim |
|       | 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN                        | NC6-INDEF-pen   | NC2-INDEF-red                    |
|       | ‘I am writing/write/wrote with a red pen’ |   |                                  |

In example (25), the benefactive applicative adds the event participant, *k $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ th $\Lambda$ nk $\text{\textcircled{e}}$  k $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ yim* ‘red pen’ to the clause, and has the meaning which may be roughly expressed as an agent (X) performs an event (E), using an instrument (I). Note that [X performs E] represents the meaning of the basic verb, whereas ‘using I’ represents the meaning of the benefactive applicative.

### Schema B5 of the benefactive applicative

Schema B5 states [X performs E], using I, affecting the interests of W. With this schema, the benefactive applicative adds two event-participants to the clause. They are the beneficiary (W) and the instrument (I). This reading of the benefactive applicative is exemplified in (26) below.

|       |   |         |                  |   |
|-------|---|---------|------------------|---|
| 26. I | gbal- $\Lambda$   | mu      | $\Lambda$ -reka  | k- $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ -th $\Lambda$ nk $\text{\textcircled{e}}$ |
|       | 1SG.SUBJ write-BEN  | 2SG.OBJ | NC3:INDEF-letter | NC1-INDEF-pen   |
|       | k- $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ -yim                            |         |                  |   |
|       | NC1-INDEF-red   |         |                  |   |
|       | ‘I am writing/write/wrote a letter for you with a red pen.’ |         |                  |   |

In example (26), both a beneficiary, marked by the object marker *mu* ‘you’ and an instrument *k $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ th $\Lambda$ nk $\text{\textcircled{e}}$  k $\text{\textcircled{a}}$ yim* ‘red pen’ are added to the event participants in the clause. Thus, (26) has the meaning which may be roughly stated as an agent (X) performs an event (E), using an instrument (I). This event affects either positively or negatively the interests of another participant, (W).

### Schematic network of the benefactive applicative

As shown in the previous section, the benefactive applicative in Temne has various shades of related meanings that are defined by the event participant(s) involved in each event. Following Langacker (1987), I represent these meanings in a polysemous schematic network. However, I depart from Langacker’s pictorial diagrams conventions by representing each meaning as a lexical paraphrase in the light of Mel’cuk (1988). Event-participants are marked by the variables: X, W, S, I. In Langacker’s (1987) “network model of polysemy”, each meaning of a unit occupies a node and is connected on the horizontal axis to the meanings that are most similar to it. Also, I represent the relation of similarity with broken arrows. The vertical axis corresponds to abstractness or schematicity.

The meanings that are higher in the network are more schematic or less specific and are compatible with all of the meanings linked to it from below in the network. The meanings lower in the network are more specific, or elaborations of higher schemas.

The relation of schematicity is represented with solid arrows. Each of the schemata for the applicative also includes in brackets an abstract meaning for the verbal base, schematized as [X performs E]. The variable X represents the participant directing the action that is expressed by the predicate E, while W, S, I, represent the participant associated with the benefactive applicative. Figure 1 illustrates the schematic network of the benefactive applicative.

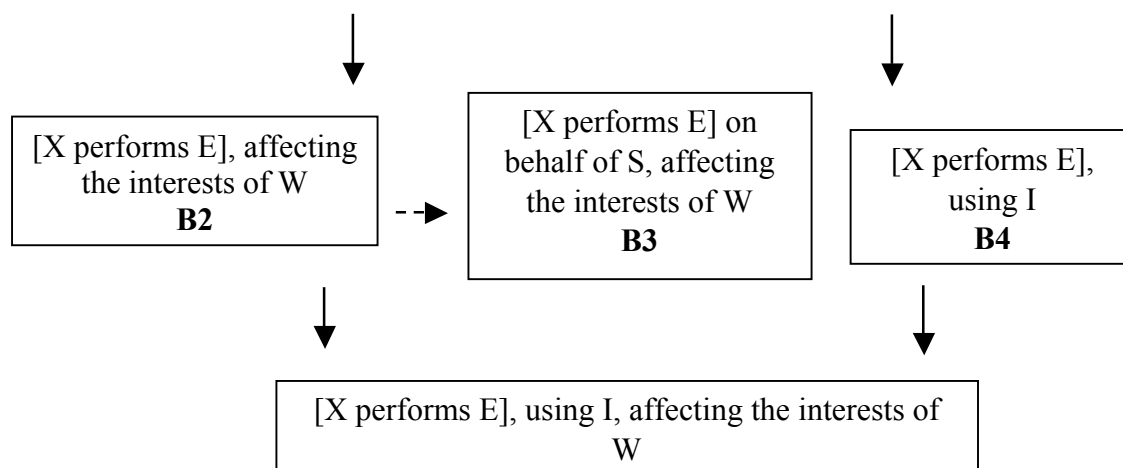


Figure 1. Schemas of the benefactive applicative (Adapted from Kanu 2012)

As mentioned earlier, schema B1 is the super-schema. The variable Z does not represent any specific event participant. However, it is associated with the beneficiary, substitutive and instrumental participant role. Schemas B2, B3, B4 and B5 are sub-schemas, and are expressed in the meaning of the derived verbs. Schemas B2 and B4 are elaborations of schema B1, as indicated by the boldface arrows. Schema B3 is an extension of schema B2, as indicated by the broken arrow. Schema B5 is a subgroup of schemas B2 and B4.

The difference between the events that each schema denotes defines the participant that is involved in each schema. In the case of schema B2, the new participant W is either a beneficiary or maleficiary, whereas with schema B4 the new participant is I, an instrument. In schema B5, both an instrument I and a beneficiary/maleficiary W are involved in the event, hence the difference between this schema and schema B2 or B4. Schema B3 also includes two new participants, the beneficiary W and the substitutive S. A corpus-based study of Temne spoken discourse in Kanu (2012) reveals that Schema B2 is the most productive schema of the benefactive applicative. This reading is also the most frequent across languages.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I discussed the syntactic and semantic effects of the benefactive applicative in Temne. I showed that the benefactive applicative combines with all syntactic verb types: intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs in Temne. When it is combined with an intransitive and a transitive verb, it can add either one (a benefactive or instrument) or two (benefactive and substitutive or benefactive and instrument) applied objects to the argument structure of the verb. However, with

ditransitive verbs, it can only add one applied object (the beneficiary/maleficiary or instrument) to the clause. Regarding the order of the applied objects in the clause, I showed that the order of post-verbal arguments in Temne is determined by three interacting hierarchies: the participant hierarchy, precedence hierarchy and prominence hierarchy. Thus, the substitutive and the beneficiary arguments which are generally realized as animate are less oblique than the instrument, which is mostly inanimate.

This paper also describes the various readings of the benefactive applicative. I showed that the benefactive applicative is a polysemous applicative combining with various schemas that are closely related to each other by a system of semantic network. I represented the various meanings of the benefactive applicative in five schemas. Schema B1, which is the most abstract meaning of the benefactive is schematized as: [X performs E] involving Z. Scheme B2, which is the most basic and frequent in Temne spoken discourse, is schematized as: [X performs E] affecting the interests of W. Schema B3 is an elaboration of schema B2 and it states: [X performs E] on behalf of S, affecting the interests of W. Schema B4, which is a basic reading of the instrumental applicative *-ane* in Temne states: [X performs E] using I. Finally, schema B5 states: [X performs E] using I, affecting the interests of W. In all these readings, [X performs E] represents the meaning of the basic verb.

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*How Should We Approach Issues in a Plurilingual EFL Class  
in an EFL Environment Country?*

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to propose solutions for issues in class of reading and writing English at Japanese college. The college English classes in Japan include many students from South Korean, China, Thai and other Asian countries, which is a typical plurilingual EFL composition class. In Japan, a college class of reading and writing English is requisite to students from other Asian countries as well as Japanese students. In the class teacher needs to improve students' academic abilities for correctly reading and writing English. Many of the other Asian students cannot understand Japanese well and some of them and many Japanese students also cannot understand English well. Teacher is, hence, at a loss for a choice of language for explanation. This is not so easy for teacher of native speaker of English as well as Japanese teacher of English in Japan. Recently, research books and articles about a plurilingual EFL class have been published, but they usually propose pedagogy in English-speaking countries and hence they cannot work well in Japan without modification. As for the typical issues in Japan, first of all, many students in the class score lower than average on the scales of motivation and academic abilities of English. There are also other various issues to resolve, but in this paper, we will focus on teachers' communication ways and how to improve students' motivation in a plurilingual EFL class in Japan.

Keywords: a plurilingual EFL class, Asia, motivation, ICTs

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## Introduction

The purpose of this study is to develop pedagogical tools to address challenges in plurilingual English reading and writing classes in an EFL environment country, Japan. Currently, many foreign students, especially from China, Taiwan, and South Korea, study in Japanese universities as part of the rapid progression of their internationalization. Japanese universities usually require foreign students from non-English-speaking countries, as well as Japanese students, to take an English reading and writing course. Thus, it is not uncommon for Japanese students to study English with students from other parts of Asia. These classes present pressing issues in pedagogy that need to be resolved. Recently, useful research about EFL plurilingual classes has emerged (e.g., Ferris 2009, Herrera & Murry 2010, Zamel & Spack 2014, Herrera & Murry 2015, and Ortmeier-Hooper & Ruecker 2016). However, these works address classes in English-speaking countries for foreign students and immigrants, and hence may not work effectively in Japan. English education in Japan takes place in an EFL environment region, and plurilingual EFL reading and writing classes in Japan present their own unique issues.

The issues are as follows:

(a) The choice of language for presentation and communication. Foreign students are required to pass the Japanese Language Aptitude Test (the Japanese equivalent of the TOFEL or IELTS) at least at level 2, for university study in Japan. Logically speaking, it thus follows that these students should have sufficient Japanese skills to understand Japanese-speaking teachers. Practically speaking, however, apart from students at national universities and a small number of private universities, most students lack these skills. While at least some of the foreign students will certainly be able to communicate well in English with their teachers, some of the foreign students do not even have sufficient oral communication skills in English. This is also true of many Japanese students. Thus, teachers are at a loss for choice of language for teaching.

(b) A lack of teacher knowledge about English errors stemming from students' first languages. This is a common issue in plurilingual EFL classes in other countries.

(c) Pedagogy. Many Japanese teachers teach English in Japanese and naturally use Japanese grammatical terms, such as *kankei daimeishi* (relative pronoun), *ippan doushi* (general verb), and so on. This could be solved easily. Even foreign students who understand Japanese may be unfamiliar with these technical terms. Additionally, in English reading and writing classes, Japanese teachers tend to have students translate from English to Japanese and vice versa. This is difficult for foreign students who lack sufficient skills in either Japanese or English.

(d) Lack of teacher's familiarity with various educational cultures. This issue is again common in plurilingual EFL classes in other countries. A plurilingual class will have students from various educational backgrounds with different local educational cultures. If Japanese teacher teaches English assuming Japanese educational norms, foreign students may become disoriented or confused. The teacher, hence, needs to have a concrete understanding of the educational cultures of students in each class. Such an understanding includes not only a knowledge of the curriculum and system of English education in each area, but also of students' potential emotional responses based on their educational cultures.

Solutions to these issues could contribute to improving students' English reading and writing while addressing another issue (e) students' low motivation to learn English. Student with low academic abilities in English tend to have low motivation to learn English, regardless of nationality. These students tend to belong to Groups 1 and 2 of Kata Csizér & Zoltán Dörnyei's (2006) categorization of four groups of language learners by L2 learning motivation.<sup>1</sup>

Issue (a), the choice of language for teaching, presents special challenges. For this reason, we set issue (a) aside for now. And, because of the time of our presentation, we focus on (e) and roughly (d).

## **1. Affinities and Differences Beyond and from Educational Cultures in Students' Motivation to Learning English**

Motivation depends not only on academic abilities but also on other factors. The factors vary somewhat among students from different countries and areas. Logically speaking, however, there are no differences without affinities or no affinities without differences. So, we think of motivation from the viewpoints of the similarities and differences among students in the different areas along with their educational cultures.

### **1-1. Affinities and the Basic Requirements for Education**

The most important factor in the classroom in any country is interaction between the teacher and students and among students. This is especially important in English classes because acquisition of language takes place through interpersonal interactions. Thus, a good class environment is crucial. Teachers must cultivate a good environment in which students can talk to each other and ask their teacher questions without anxiety about errors or anxiety. This raises the question of what teachers should do to create such an environment in the classroom.

Zhang & Watkins (2007) investigated the qualities of good teachers for Chinese EFL teachers and Chinese college students (both English majors and non-majors) and analyzed the gaps between the concepts in their minds. They found that "Chinese teachers placed much greater importance on their personal knowledge base and subject knowledge as EFL teachers. The students, however, were also concerned about their teachers' appearance, manners, personality, and attitudes toward students in addition to teachers' knowledge base and instructional competence" (787). Thus, Chinese students believed that a good teacher "should be good at many aspects of life" (787). This is true of students in Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese students, as well, as Zhang & Watkins and Bahous & Nabhani (2011) reported.

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<sup>1</sup> Following Tatsuya Taguchi et al.'s (2009: 85-86) summary of Csizér & Dörnyei's categorization, the four groups can be described as follows: Group 1 students score lower than average on all of the motivational scales and are therefore the least-motivated students, Group 2 students have a more positive attitude toward the L2 community and culture, but do not understand the relevance of English to their future lives, Group 3 students score high on instrumentality and are motivated by their ought-to L2 selves without strong support from attitudes toward the L2 community and culture, and Group 4 students score higher than average in every motivational area and are labeled the most motivated students. The students addressed in this study fall mainly into Groups 1 and 2.

In another example, based on research in Brazil, Hirano (2009) noted the importance of a teacher's empathy toward students and their learning in improving students' motivation to learn and improve their English. She emphasized learner identity, noting that "people tend to maintain their identities, day after day, throughout their lives, to create stability and coherence in their lives, even when circumstances changes" (37). She focused on a male student with learning difficulties and realized that "his difficulty learning the language seems to have triggered the construction of a poor learner identity" and his "learning difficulty and his learner identity were indeed tightly related and strongly affected each other" (37). Hirano, hence, changed the pedagogical strategy for the student. She made a point to understand how he felt about his learning, was patient with his slow progress, and let him realize his progress. Hirano was ultimately able to improve his poor learning identity and improve his academic skills in English. This supports Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert's (1999) statement that "regardless of whether low self-confidence is subsumed under the construct of language anxiety or vice versa, the evidence of a consistent association between low self-confidence and anxiety encourages a serious consideration of the role low self-confidence might play in students' expectations about second language anxiety" (437).

Zhang & Watkins' and Hirano's discussions remind us of educational principles of student-centered education established by Carl Rogers, who influenced Dörnyei and whose work formed the basis of his motivation theory. Rogers stressed the importance of showing unconditional positive regard through warmth, enjoyment, respect, sympathy, recognition, caring, and praise. At the same time, even when learner's self-fulfillment is not ideal, such as positive concern should be continued to make the learner feel respected and understood and to facilitate self-development (Rogers 1959: 104). According to Kuwamura (2013), Rogers' "student-centered" basic concepts are based on the assumption that human nature is positive and learning is an inherent skill for self-realization. Therefore, focusing on the learning process is part of the process for self-realization. Emphasizing student-centered education would stimulate learner enthusiasm. Requiring teaching and learning to be student-centered would be respectful to the students, demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the students, and cultivate students' emotional well-being, needs, and aspirations. It creates a free, relaxed, harmonious, and happy learning environment. Such a nurturing and understanding environment would improve students' initiative and enthusiasm.

This is very important especially for the Asian students because they tend to be face-conscious (cf. Taguchi et al. 2009: 90-96). The more face-conscious one is, the more tightly learning difficulty and learner identity are related, and the more strongly they affect each other. Thus, when working with the Asian students with low motivation and academic abilities of English, teachers should be mindful to help them save face. Rogers' student-centered education is relevant in this area because, as mentioned earlier, teachers treat students with unconditional positive regard and use such positive treatment to make learners feel respected and understood.

Kuwamura (2013) confessed her surprise when starting to teach English in Japan. She taught two senior English classes at a private university whose level was near the bottom in Japan. In her class, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean students learned English. Following Rogers' suggestion to be mindful of student needs when teaching English, Kuwamura (2013) carefully examined his notion of "student-centered education" and

put it into practice. Kuwamura conducted an anonymous survey of seniors in her classes in 2011 and got 72 valid responses. When she asked them in the second class whether they wanted to make a presentation in English, only five students wanted to. However, when she asked them again in one of the last three classes 67 students of them wanted to.

## **1-2. Affinities in Differences**

Motivation stemming from cultures and societies are diverse. As for Chinese students, Taguchi et al.'s survey is suggestive; as for Korean students, Yuto's (2013, 2015) and Iwabuchi's (2013) surveys, and as for Taiwanese students Chen's (2012) survey are suggestive. However, they share an opinion about the factors of students' low motivation and learning difficulty in English. It is imbalance between the ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self. In particular, the future when they use English is vague for them because the Asian students study English for preparation of exam for universities.

Hence, Chen suggests that teachers should show students their possible L2 selves to allow them visualize their ideal L2 selves concretely. But how? Chen's findings could also be applicable to Chinese, Korean, and Japanese students with low motivation. Chen's article, however, does not propose concrete methods for doing so. However, Chen's proposal is exactly same as ours. We realized a way to solve the problems of low motivation with E-Job 100.

## **2. E-Job 100 as a Solution for Improving Motivation**

E-Job 100 is a website we made about 10 years ago in order to enhance motivation of Japanese students, and E-Job 100 has proven effective in improving Japanese students' motivation to learn English. Our description will slightly focus on the pedagogy of oral communication, because practice in communication could be incorporated into an English reading and writing class, but E-Job 100 has various educational materials for reading and writing.

### **2-1. The Features of E-Job 100<sup>2</sup>**

The E-Job 100 website contains videos showing people of various occupations reading, writing, listening to, and speaking English in their workplaces. In addition, students can access English documents used in real work environments. Students are able to practice their English in different situations by playing different roles after choosing their favorite occupations. By doing this and developing an understanding of why they need to study English, students improve their motivation and are driven to improve their English abilities. Because society offers students a variety of possible occupations, students learn English in the classroom by practicing communication skills, such as negotiation and cooperation, in English. Through this practice, they improve not only their English skills but also their consideration for and understanding of others as well as appropriate vocabulary for different situations.

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<sup>2</sup> With regard to the material about the E-Job 100 in the succeeding sections to from 2-2 to 2-5, see Suzuki (2010a) and Suzuki & Kuwamura (2011).

## **2-2. The Origins of E-Job 100**

### **2-2-1. Problems in English Education in Japan**

E-Job 100 (Suzuki & Kuwamura 2003: <http://www.e-job-100.sakura.ne.jp/modx/>) was initially designed as a solution to a specific, major problem that Japan faces in English education for college students: a combination of low motivation to learn English and low skill level.

Motivation to learn English in Japan has traditionally been driven mainly by college entrance examinations. However, Japan faces the problem of low birthrate, and to survive, many colleges in Japan admit less academically qualified high school students. Moreover, many colleges in Japan now admit these students without an achievement test, requiring only a short essay in Japanese. Hence, high school students who are not good at English do not learn English, and even those who are better at English, tend not to learn English well (Suzuki 2010b: 30-33). Many Japanese college students enter college with low motivation to learn English and low skill levels.

However, even these students recognize the importance of English. This belief is highly influenced by the mass media. TV, magazines, and the Internet, which often tell them English is required of the Japanese because of globalization. In short, many Japanese students recognize the importance of English in a general way but do not see its importance for themselves personally.

This situation is rooted in the Japanese social condition. Most Japanese do not need English in their daily lives. However, the Japanese media report that employees of many large Japanese companies need English language skills. However, not all Japanese college students aspire to jobs at large companies where English is required. In addition, college students in Japan cannot accurately comprehend the real work environment due to a lack of information. Moreover, no research has been done in Japan to determine whether English is needed in various occupations. Therefore, even when teachers tell their students that they need English after entering the job market, many students fail to take this warning seriously (Suzuki & Kuwamura 2011).

### **2-2-2. The Use of E-Job 100 for Problem Solving**

The first goal of the E-Job 100 project is to answer students' question, "Do Japanese people who live in Japan really need English?" Although many Japanese do not need English in their everyday lives, those working in some fields, such as flight attendants or business employees in international companies, do. Other professionals whose need for English is less well known include beauty salon staff, pharmacists, musicians, medical processors, and sports store staff.

What is the true degree of English knowledge required by Japanese employees? To answer this question, first Suzuki, one of the authors, researched approximately 180 kinds of jobs to determine whether or not they required a knowledge of English. Suzuki asked people in different occupations if they needed English, and when, how, at what level, how often, and for what purpose they used it. All occupations except



tax accountant now require the use of English. In fact, most Japanese now need to use some English in their work.

At first, to increase students’ motivation, Suzuki informed them of this fact and showed them a variety of actual documents used in real work environments. However, this did not have the expected impact on students, who failed to connect the documents with their potential future lives and approached them as if they were simply a part of English textbook. Because the students lacked an understanding of the full scope of each job, they failed to appreciate how important the English documents were for these jobs and thus for their future lives. In short, they failed to understand how important English is in the Japanese workplace. Therefore, we went to each job site and made videos of English being used as well as videos of interviews with the staff. We edited the videos to approximately two minutes in duration.

Since we started to use these videos in our English classes, the attitudes and motivation of Japanese college students toward learning English have dramatically improved.



Figure 1: Home page



Figure 2: Top page job (Japanese pharmacy)

### 2-3. The Contents of E-Job 100

Figures 3-1 to 3-8 show scenes of the videos. One of the features of the videos is their range of employment sectors. Many occupations are familiar to students and popular with them, but have not been regarded as jobs in which English is needed. Also featured are scenes of English conversations with people of various races and nationalities. When Japanese hear that they need English, they tend to think only of conversations with native English speakers. However, given the current global context, such a limited view should be dispelled to make Japanese students realize more clearly the necessity of English in Japan.

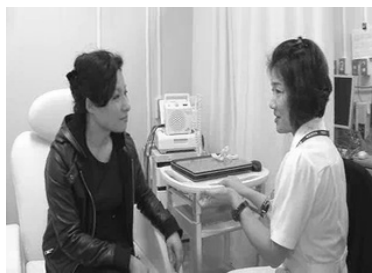


Figure 3-1: Nurse with a Chinese patient

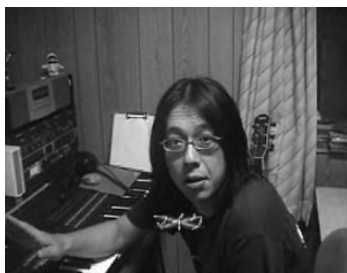


Figure 3-2: Musician



Figure 3-3: Printing CO staff with a Finnish colleague

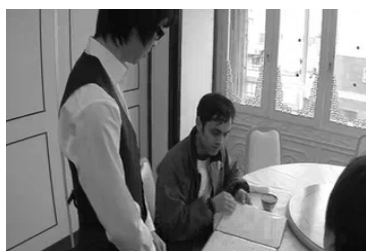


Figure 3-4: Waiter with a Nepalese customer



Figure 3-5: Beautician with a Chinese customer



Figure 3-6: Pharmacist



Figure 3-7: Medical processor with a Saudi Arabian patient



Figure 3-8: Doctor with a Chinese patient

Some pages include English documents actually used by companies in their everyday work, such as materials for meetings, invoices, e-mails, and also includes information on job interviews, CVs, cover letters, requirements, average salaries, and average ages of their intended jobs. The site has about 120 videos in total currently, and we are continuing to the number of videos. Regarding examples of pedagogies in the classroom, we are so sorry for skipping it because of the issue of our presentation time.

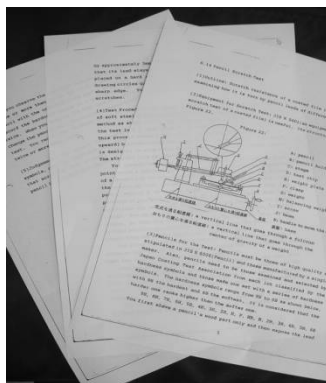


Figure 4: Materials for meeting

## 2-4. For Humanistic Communicative Language Teaching

Communication means sharing information with others and helping others understand; however, without attention to the needs of others, there is no communication, only mere monologue. Therefore, teaching English as a communication tool should focus on more than improving language competence. It should also focus on developing students' interpersonal skills. English education should thus be education of the whole person.

This view comes not only from academic logic but also from our experience shooting the workplace videos and related interviews (which were in Japanese and also available on the E-Job 100) website. The interviews made us keenly aware of the need to focus on interpersonal skills.

Consideration, empathy, and understanding of others are important not only in the workplace but in the world at large. We can learn about, empathize, and understand others through the use of language. Hence, an important role of language teaching is to educate students about how to learn about, empathize with, and understand others. Therefore, English teachers should facilitate the development of students' interpersonal skills through practice in English communication.

## 2-5. A Model of Humanistic Communicative Language Teaching Incorporating E-Job 100

In this model, students are required to play roles by mainly speaking and listening to the types of English needed in their intended future job. Students access the E-Job 100 website and research their favorite jobs and the use of English in the corresponding workplace to personally discover the significance of learning English.

Based on their motivation for learning English, students first establish basic skills for communication in English. For this purpose, they make a presentation about goods or services to introduce them to selling. They write sentences for the introduction, following patterns of paragraph writing from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) given to them by the teacher. After the teacher reviews what they have written, they memorize it and each gives a presentation. The teacher then gives each speaker feedback and asks several questions about the goods or services they presented. This is to give students practice speaking English by broadly building from the English sentences they had memorized. Using the teacher's feedback and questions, the

students conduct more online research, revise and memorize their presentations, and present them again.

During the second presentation, the rest of the students play the roles of clients and customers. The listeners ask a couple of questions to the speaker after their presentation, just as their teacher had. This enables students to become accustomed to communicating in English and to practicing it with other students.

The second step is for each of the students to memorize short, simple conversations essential for his or her intended future job. Students learn these in the first page and the video on the site for each occupation. The students then pair up, memorize the conversations together, and practice them. This practice requires them to introduce goods or services for sale and to raise questions. The students then switch roles and repeat the exercise to give themselves more practice with English conversation and with expressing what they want to say and ask.

The third step is task-based learning. The teacher gives each student a set of directions (for instance, “First, go to the post office to pick up your package. Second, talk about at least five kinds of medicine with a visitor in the post office. Finally go to a computer shop, ask about some computers and get an invoice from the clerk”).

The teacher gives each student a different set of directions every week. Of course, the teacher must create the directions based on the range of occupations chosen by the students, what they learned, and what they can learn independently on the E-Job 100 website and the Internet.

The teacher walks around in the classroom, facilitating the students’ communication in English, correcting errors, and sometimes even joining their conversations. The teacher also reminds them of the need for empathy for others and teaches them appropriate English expressions to express it.

After the students become accustomed to oral communication, the teacher should teach them about cultural differences and etiquette to improve their English and develop their interpersonal skills. As mentioned earlier, communication is to share information with others and help other people to understand. It is true to communication in jobs: nobody wants to talk with or contract with a person whose personality is not good. Teaching English, hence, should not be just focused on improving competence of language. It also should seriously think of the development of the students’ personality. English education should be education of a whole person. By making the classroom a place where students with varied interests communicate, thus a microcosm of society, the teacher could facilitate their skill development in English as well as in etiquette, empathy, and other interpersonal skills, and hence develop their personalities. For this, student-centered education is essential: The teacher models how to treat others with a positive attitude. This can help students help each other study and develop their interpersonal skills. Rogers calls such a class an encounter group, in which students empower each other. This is Rogers’ ideal for effective education.

### 3. Application for a Plurilingual EFL Class in Japan

E-Job 100 was created to increase the motivation of Japanese college students learning English by showing them real-life examples of how English is used in various occupations in Japan. The classroom is treated as a microcosm of society comprising people of various occupations, and students learn English and develop interpersonal skills through communication in English. E-Job 100 can make the need to learn English more real and personal for college students in Japan, and similar tools and programs might be effective for learners of EFL in other countries as well.

As previously noted, E-Job 100 will help students imagine themselves using English in their future lives. It is true that the videos in E-Job 100 were shot only in Japanese companies. However, the videos and interviews show examples of the relevance of English for businesses not only in Japan but also in other countries. In a globalized society, small and mid-sized as well as large companies must transcend national borders and communicate with others in English. E-Job 100 teaches students this.

One of the videos in E-Job 100 that was especially relevant for the plurilingual group examined in this study was an interview with a Chinese woman working in a company that produces and sells gifts and materials for gift-wrapping products such as ribbons, tags, etc. This woman had studied Japanese language and culture at Japanese college because she enjoyed them. Her dream was to obtain a job in a Japanese company and work with Japanese “kawaii” goods. She learned Japanese and its culture well, and her dream has since come true. After she started working at the company, however, she found she also needed English because the employees often traded with companies in other countries and traveled to other countries to attend international exhibitions and negotiate with others there. She thus started learning English. Her sharing of her experience was effective in convincing Chinese, Taiwanese, and Korean students studying in Japan think about the significance of English in their own future lives.



Figure 5-1: Cover page of the company producing and selling gifts and materials for gift-wrapping paper.



Figure 5-2: Interview with a female Chinese employee who had studied Japanese language and culture at a Japanese college.

### Conclusion

Each job section in E-Job 100 contains Japanese texts about the contents of the videos, and the interviewers respond to these questions in Japanese. The Japanese used is fairly simple, and thus foreign students could mostly understand the texts and the videos. In a trial, we asked students in Tokyo (14 students) and Kyoto (14 students) who had responded to the survey to watch the video. After doing so, their attitudes

toward learning English changed dramatically, just as those of the Japanese students had. The students could visualize their possible L2 selves and understood the need to learn English even in Japanese colleges.

In the business world, negotiation starts after communication: people start negotiation once they trust the other party and thus their company. For this reason, interpersonal skills are essential. In plurilingual EFL classes in Japan, E-Job 100 could be expected to improve students' motivation in this area as well.

While the Japanese used in the videos and texts in E-Job 100 is fairly basic, some students from other countries might still find it challenging; hence, we plan to include captions in the videos in basic Japanese or English, or add the texts in basic English, Chinese, or Korean.

We have discussed a potential way to enhance English-learning motivation in a plurilingual EFL class, focusing on cultural differences in students' educational backgrounds and theories of motivation relating to identity. E-Job 100 contains English texts from which students can learn reading and writing as well as oral communication.

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