Exploring Japanese University Students' Perceptions of Peer Feedback in Oral Presentations

Maki Ikoma, Ritsumeikan University, Japan

Abstract
While there are many benefits of using oral presentations in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom, learner difficulties with making an effective presentation are often addressed in the Japanese EFL context (Brooks & Wilson, 2014). In order to explore an effective way to help improve learners' oral presentations, this study implemented peer feedback in the Japanese EFL classroom. The aim of this study is to investigate how Japanese EFL learners perceive the effectiveness of this activity in improving their oral presentations and discuss how peer feedback can be used in an oral presentation task. A questionnaire, consisting of a five-point Likert scale and open-ended questions, was used to investigate Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of peer feedback in oral presentations. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to examine the data. Participants were 69 Japanese university students who were taking a project-based English class. One week before their final presentations, participants rehearsed their presentations multiple times and, after each rehearsal, they gave feedback on their performance to each other. Results revealed that nearly 90% of participants found that this peer feedback activity was beneficial in improving their final presentations. In particular, the results indicated that not only receiving comments from their peers but also giving comments to their peers plays an important role in helping students gain objectivity, discover their weaknesses, and improve their presentations. Based on these findings, this study discussed how teachers can implement peer feedback in the EFL classroom to help improve students' oral presentations.

Keywords: oral presentations, peer feedback, poster presentations, EFL

Introduction

Though past research has shown many benefits of using oral presentations in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom, learner difficulties with making an effective presentation are often addressed in many Asian countries where the teacher-centered approach has been traditionally adopted (King, 2002). With relatively few opportunities to practice public speaking in school, many university students in Japan also feel nervous and uncomfortable when asked to speak English in front of their peers; and they tend to have limited presentation skills (Brooks & Wilson, 2014; Kawachi, 2012). As some past studies claimed the importance of interaction between learners and obtaining feedback and support from peers in communicative language learning situations like oral presentations (Nguyen, 2013; Otoshi & Heffernan, 2008), implementing a classroom activity which involves learner interaction and dialogue seems crucial in helping improve Japanese EFL students' oral presentations. Since students are expected to interact with and effectively communicate their ideas to their peers in an oral presentation task, such classroom activities would have a positive influence on students' learning experience and outcome. This study therefore implemented one such activity, peer feedback, in English classes in a Japanese university in the hope that it would contribute to students' learning and improvement of their oral presentations. This study aims to examine how Japanese university students perceived the effectiveness of this activity in improving their oral presentations and discuss how peer feedback can be used in an oral presentation task. It is hoped that the findings of this study would help provide EFL teachers with an effective way to use peer feedback in an oral presentation task.

Literature Review

Oral presentations in the Japanese EFL context

Oral presentations are one of the most effective communicative activities widely used in the EFL context which can provide students with a rich experience to interact with their peers in English. As past studies showed, there are a number of benefits of using oral presentations for EFL learners: providing students with an opportunity to use the four language skills in a naturally integrated way (King, 2002); helping students gain confidence in speaking in public (Fujita, Yamagata, & Takenaka, 2009); and increasing students' motivation to study English by giving them an opportunity to teach something to their peers (Brooks & Wilson, 2014).

Despite the numerous benefits, learner difficulties with making an effective presentation have often been addressed in the Japanese educational context. One of the major difficulties Japanese students face is related to speech anxiety. As past studies showed, many Japanese students tend to feel shy and uncomfortable when they are asked to speak English in front of their classmates (Brooks & Wilson, 2014; Kawachi, 2012). As King (2002) pointed out that the lack of experience often produces student stress and nervousness, one of the primary reasons for Japanese students' speech anxiety seems strongly related to the lack of public speaking training in Japanese school education. According to Apple (2011), prior to entering university, most students in Japan have not had enough experience using spoken English or presenting on an academic topic in English. In fact, the survey by Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute (2016) revealed that in 2015, out of

2134 Japanese high school English teachers, only 22% of them answered that they often implement "speech or presentation" in their English lessons. Regarding "discussion" and "debate," only 7.4% and 4.5% of them chose "often implement" in their lessons, respectively.

The limited experience with presenting and/or sharing their ideas with others in class inevitably leads to students having limited presentation skills, which is another difficulty that Japanese university students tend to encounter in oral presentation tasks. In Japanese EFL classrooms, it is commonly observed that when making a presentation students look down on their notes or PC screen and "read" a memorized speech in a monotonous voice without any intonation, gestures, or interaction with the audience. Therefore, listening to a student "reading" a long, prepared speech, the rest of the class would find it difficult to be awake (Chiu, 2004). According to Dolan (2013), an effective presentation requires "strategic communication in the form of conversation." In other words, presenters are expected to understand what their audience want/need to know, to carefully plan how to best explain main points, and to share their ideas by connecting with their audience as if they are having a conversation with them. However, with some factors such as Japanese school education being focused on grammar and vocabulary drills for the college entrance examination as well as teachers' inexperience using the communicative language teaching method, most Japanese students have not learned how to do a presentation in English before university; in fact, many of them have never made any oral presentations in class even in their first language (Brooks & Wilson, 2014). Without enough instruction and training to make a presentation, it seems almost impossible for anyone to be successful in communicating their ideas confidently in public or making their presentation meaningful for the intended audience.

Peer feedback in the EFL context

In order for such Japanese students to enhance their skills to do a meaningful presentation for their intended audience (i.e. their classmates), peer feedback should play an important role. Peer feedback, which in this paper means a communication process through which learners exchange comments about each other's work (Liu & Carless, 2006), has been widely adopted particularly in the field of second language (L2) writing, and many studies have demonstrated its benefits for EFL learners: encouraging collaborative learning (Tsui & Ng, 2000); creating an enhanced sense of ownership (Topping, Smith, Swanson, & Elliot, 2000); and helping students gain a sense of audience (Keh, 1990).

Considering the nature of the oral presentation in the EFL context being a student-centered, interactive activity which requires students to communicate their ideas effectively to their peers, obtaining feedback from the peers, not just from the teacher, should also be vital to students' higher level of learning in this area. According to Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), peers whose social, professional, and/or age levels are close to learners are referred to as "Near Peer Role Model (NPRM)" and it has been found that students can learn and grow up by watching those peers and analyzing and/or modeling their behaviors to improve their skills. In fact, Kawachi (2012), in her study of incorporating student presentations in a Japanese EFL listening course, found the positive impacts of NPRM on the students' learning: More than 80% of the students in her study found peer feedback useful for making a presentation and nearly

90% of them regarded watching other classmates' presentations as effective for learning about presentations. In addition, some studies showed that peer feedback may provide the presenters with more immediate feedback than instructor's and that peer feedback could give the presenters an effective insight into their performance as students tend to provide the presenters with some hypothetical comments/advice (e.g. "What if you…?"), which could help them have additional group brainstorming (Lax & Fentiman, 2016; Liu & Carless, 2006).

However, despite many possible benefits of employing peer feedback in an oral presentation task, there are still relatively few studies, as compared to L2 writing, which examined how peer feedback can be used to improve students' oral presentations in the Japanese EFL context. In order to better understand the potential benefits of peer feedback, therefore, it is crucial to employ this activity in an oral presentation task and examine whether students find doing peer feedback effective for their learning, and if they do, to further explore exactly what was helpful and beneficial for their learning and improvement. Implementing this classroom activity and examining its effects on learners would help educators have a deeper understanding of its pedagogical possibilities for EFL learners.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine Japanese EFL students' experiences doing peer feedback in oral presentations and discuss how peer feedback can be used in the EFL classrooms to help improve students' oral presentations. In particular, this study aims to explore what kinds of feedback exchange between learners can help make improvements in their oral presentations by examining their perceptions of both giving and receiving feedback.

Research Questions

The main research questions of this study are as follows:
1) What kinds of feedback can be generated in a peer feedback activity employed in an oral presentation task?
2) How do Japanese EFL learners perceive the effectiveness of "receiving" and "giving" peer feedback in improving their presentations?
3) How can teachers implement peer feedback in an oral presentation task in order to support students' learning?

Methodology

English class

This study was carried out in a sports and health science department in a private university in western Japan. Students enrolled in this department were required to take a project-based English class in which they were instructed to find their own project topic and do research on the topic throughout the semester (15 weeks). During the semester, two presentations (a mid-term and a final presentation) using PowerPoint slides were assigned as part of the assessments. Namely, they needed to present their research findings and discussions about the topic in English twice a semester in front of the class. These presentations were evaluated based on criteria

such as content, organization, English (vocabulary, grammar, expressions), oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress), physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact), and visual aids (PowerPoint slides).

Participants

A total of 69 students in the project-based English classes participated in this study in the fall semester, 2016. Though the initial total population of these classes was 80 students, 11 students either were absent or did not complete the survey. This study therefore only used the data collected from 69 students. Participants were all first-year students and were taking the project-based English class in the previous spring semester as well. Therefore, by the fall semester, all students had experienced making a presentation in English at least twice. However, on the basis of the students' reflection papers and the class observation of the mid-term presentations in the fall semester, it was found that many students were still quite hesitant to speak in front of the class and were struggling with communicating their ideas to the audience in English.

Procedure

In order to help improve the students' final presentations, a rehearsal day was set up one week before the final presentation in the fall semester and a peer feedback activity was implemented. For this activity, a poster presentation style was adopted. Unlike a traditional class-fronted presentation where each presenter gives one presentation to the whole class, a poster presentation allows the presenters to use posters as the main visual aids and present multiple times to different groups as the audience moves around poster to poster (Prichard & Ferreira, 2014). Bayne (2005) claimed that because of the "triangular communication" among presenter, audience, and posters, active audience participation can be facilitated in poster sessions. Some studies also found that in poster presentations presenters' anxiety could be lessened (Prichard & Ferreira, 2014) and that the repetition of a speaking task could lead to increased fluency (Nakamura, 2008). Based on these previous findings a poster presentation style was adopted in the students' rehearsals in this study in the hope that the students would be able to not only practice presenting, but to also learn from watching each other's performance and exchanging meaningful feedback on their presentations. The detailed procedure is as follows:

Two weeks before the final presentation (Week 10)
Students were assigned to complete their presentation scripts and PowerPoint slides as homework. They were then instructed to print out each PowerPoint slide in A4 size, tape them together and make one big poster, and bring it to the next class.

One week before the final presentation: A rehearsal day (Week 11)
Students were instructed to take the following seven steps to do a rehearsal.
1. Students were divided into three groups (Group A, B, and C), each consisting of approximately 8 to 9 people. Students in Group A first became the "presenters" while students in Group B and C became the "audience." Students in Group A put their PowerPoint slide posters on the wall and stood next to them. Students in Group B and C spread out and sat in front of each presenter to listen.

2. Students in Group A gave a presentation to their audience (2-3 students from Group B and C) for six minutes (i.e. the actual presentation time length), using their posters.
3. After six minutes, two to three minutes were given for a peer feedback activity. The audience gave comments and advice to the presenters on the part that they thought needed improvements (e.g. content, organization, English, oral aspects, physical aspects, visual aids). The presenters were asked to respond to the feedback, ask questions and/or ask for more advice on their presentation.
4. After two to three minutes, the audience moved to the next presenter, clockwise. Students in Group A stayed with their posters and made presentations to the new audience. They repeated this procedure three times.
5. After students in Group A made three presentations to the three different groups, the roles were changed. Students in Group B became the "presenters" and students in Group A and C became the "audience." The same procedure (1-4) was repeated.
6. After students in Group B made three presentations, the roles were changed. Students in Group C became the "presenters" and students in Group A and B became the "audience." The same procedure (1-4) was repeated.
7. After every session was over, all students were instructed to consider the feedback they received from their peers and to finalize their final presentation scripts and PowerPoint slides by their final presentation day.

On the final presentation day (Week 12 - 14)
Each student made a six-minute long final presentation in front of the class, showing their PowerPoint slideshows on a projector.

Data collection

On the last day of the fall semester (Week 15), the students participated in the online questionnaire survey regarding their experience doing the peer feedback activity. The questionnaire consisted of two sections (See Appendix). The first section (Q1-3) dealt with demographic questions. The second section (Q4-11) included eight questions regarding the students' experience of doing peer feedback and their perceptions of how this activity helped them improve their final presentations. In this section, two questions (Q4, 6) asked about what points students exchanged comments on in the peer feedback activity. Then, three questions (Q5, 8, 9) concerned the students' perceptions of "receiving" feedback from their peers while the other three questions (Q7, 10, 11) asked about their perceptions of "giving" feedback to their peers. A five-point Likert scale as well as open-ended questions were used for these questions. All questions were written in Japanese as participants' English levels varied. After the data were collected, the questions and all answers were translated into English by the author.

Results and Discussion

1) What kinds of feedback can be generated in a peer feedback activity employed in an oral presentation task?

Table 1 shows the results of Q4 and 6—what points students exchanged feedback on in the peer feedback activity. The results suggested that this activity generated more

feedback on content, oral aspects and visual aids than other aspects. As presenters, many students seemed to gain some insights into their oral aspects (43.5%) and presentation content (42%). As an audience, a number of students focused on presentation content, as nearly 50% of them provided their classmates with feedback on content such as the introduction, body, conclusion, and data and/or examples used in each body. Another aspect that most students focused on as an audience was visual aids, as more than 40% of them gave the presenters comments on how they made/used their visual materials.

Table 1. Students' feedback exchange: Results of Q4 and 6 (n=69)

Feedback on…	Received from classmates (Q4)	Gave to classmates (Q6)
Content	29 (42%)	34 (49.3%)
Organization	16 (23.2%)	13 (18.8%)
English (vocabulary, grammar, expressions)	20 (29%)	15 (21.7%)
Oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress)	30 (43.5%)	26 (37.7%)
Physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact)	17 (24.6%)	15 (21.7%)
Visual aids (PowerPoint slides)	24 (34.8%)	29 (42%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)

(Note: More than one answer was allowed.)

2) How do Japanese EFL learners perceive the effectiveness of "receiving" and "giving" peer feedback in improving their presentations?

Students' perceptions of "receiving" feedback

Tables 2 to 4 and Figure 1 below show the results of students' perceptions of "receiving" feedback from their classmates (Q5, 8, 9). Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the students' perceptions of receiving feedback (Q5). Table 3 shows the number of students who chose each answer on the five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), as a percentage. The total percentages of the respondents who disagreed (1 and 2) and agreed (4 and 5) are also shown in the columns Disagree and Agree. Figure 1 shows the results of Q8—whether students found receiving feedback in this way helped them improve the overall quality of their final presentations. Lastly, the reasons for students' answers for Q8 are shown in Table 4 (Q9).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics (Q5):
Students' perceptions of *receiving feedback* from classmates

No.	Question	n	M	SD
1)	It helped me improve my presentation content.	69	3.72	0.95
2)	It helped me improve the organization of my presentation.	69	3.59	0.88
3)	It helped me improve my presentation script (i.e. English vocabulary, grammar, expressions).	69	3.68	1.01
4)	It helped me improve my oral aspects (i.e. volume, speed, intonation, stress).	69	3.93	0.96
5)	It helped me improve my physical aspects (i.e. attitude, gestures, eye contact).	69	3.71	0.97
6)	It helped me improve my visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint slides).	69	3.90	0.93

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Table 3. Frequency of Response (%) (Q5):
Students' perceptions of *receiving feedback* from classmates (*n*=69)

Question	1	2	3	4	5	Disagree	Agree
1) Content	4.3	5.8	18.8	55.1	15.9	10.1	71
2) Organization	2.9	7.2	27.5	52.2	10.1	10.1	62.3
3) Presentation script (English vocabulary, grammar, expressions)	2.9	8.7	27.5	39.1	21.7	11.6	60.8
4) Oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress)	4.3	2.9	14.5	52.2	26.1	7.2	78.3
5) Physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact)	4.3	5.8	21.7	50.7	17.4	10.1	68.1
6) Visual aids (PowerPoint slides)	2.9	2.9	21.7	46.4	26.1	5.8	72.5

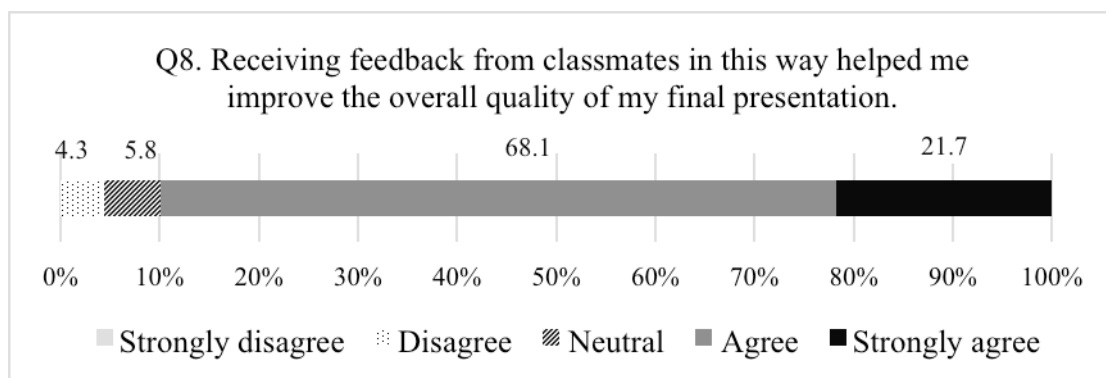Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Figure 1. Results of Q8 (*n*=69)

Table 4. Results of Q9: Reasons for Q8 - Receiving feedback (*n*=69)

Positive comments	%
I could notice/learn my weakness.	39.1%
I could make my presentation better.	23.2%
Getting objective opinions from classmates was important.	13.0%
It was useful to have an audience at a rehearsal and receive immediate feedback from them.	11.6%
Getting feedback from friends was useful.	2.9%
I gained confidence by asking for advice on my presentation.	1.4%
Other	7.2%
Negative comments	%
The quality of my final presentation did not change.	1.4%
I did not care about the feedback much.	1.4%
The feedback I received was not very convincing.	1.4%
I think the teacher's opinion matters more.	1.4%
I could not make use of my friends' opinions.	1.4%
Other	2.9%

As Figure 1 revealed, we can see that nearly 90% of the students showed positive perceptions of receiving feedback in improving their final presentations. As Table 1 above showed, the aspect that students received the most feedback on was oral aspects (43.5%) followed by content (42%) and visual aids (34.8%). These were also the aspects that students felt improved in their own presentations through receiving feedback as shown in Table 3 (oral aspects: 78.3%, visual aids: 72.5%, content: 71%). These results indicate that students in this study tended to make use of the feedback they received from classmates, which suggests that many of them valued opinions from their peers. In fact, as those who felt benefitted from receiving feedback wrote (Table 4), students found getting feedback from classmates meaningful because they could learn their weakness, the part that required further improvements, and receive objective opinions that they could not have gained had they not had this opportunity. Some also valued having an audience in front of them and getting immediate feedback.

However, it is also important to note some of the issues expressed in the students' responses. As Table 4 showed, some students did not think that they had meaningful feedback and that some felt the teacher's views were more important. Some also showed their lack of confidence in making use of the feedback they received from classmates.

Students' perceptions of "giving" feedback

Below are the results of students' perceptions of "giving" feedback to their classmates (Q7, 10, 11). Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the students' perceptions of giving feedback (Q7). In Table 6, the number of students who chose each answer on the five-point Likert scale as a percentage is shown. Figure 2 shows students' perceptions of the effectiveness of giving feedback in improving the overall quality of their final presentations (Q10). Their reasons for Q10 are shown in Table 7 (Q11).

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics (Q7):
Students' perceptions of *giving feedback* to classmates

No.	Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1)	It helped me improve my presentation content.	69	3.57	0.85
2)	It helped me improve the organization of my presentation.	69	3.51	0.90
3)	It helped me improve my presentation script (i.e. English vocabulary, grammar, expressions).	69	3.49	0.95
4)	It helped me improve my oral aspects (i.e. volume, speed, intonation, stress).	69	3.84	0.88
5)	It helped me improve my physical aspects (i.e. attitude, gestures, eye contact).	69	3.74	0.89
6)	It helped me improve my visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint slides).	69	3.86	0.79

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Table 6. Frequency of Response (%) (Q7):
Students' perceptions of *giving feedback* to classmates (*n*=69)

Question	1	2	3	4	5	Disagree	Agree
1) Content	1.4	11.6	23.2	56.5	7.2	13	63.7
2) Organization	1.4	15.9	20.3	55.1	7.2	17.3	62.3
3) Presentation script (English vocabulary, grammar, expressions)	1.4	14.5	30.4	40.6	13	15.9	53.6
4) Oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress)	2.9	4.3	17.4	56.5	18.8	7.2	75.3
5) Physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact)	2.9	5.8	20.3	56.5	14.5	8.7	71
6) Visual aids (PowerPoint slides)	1.4	2.9	21.7	56.5	17.4	4.3	73.9

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree
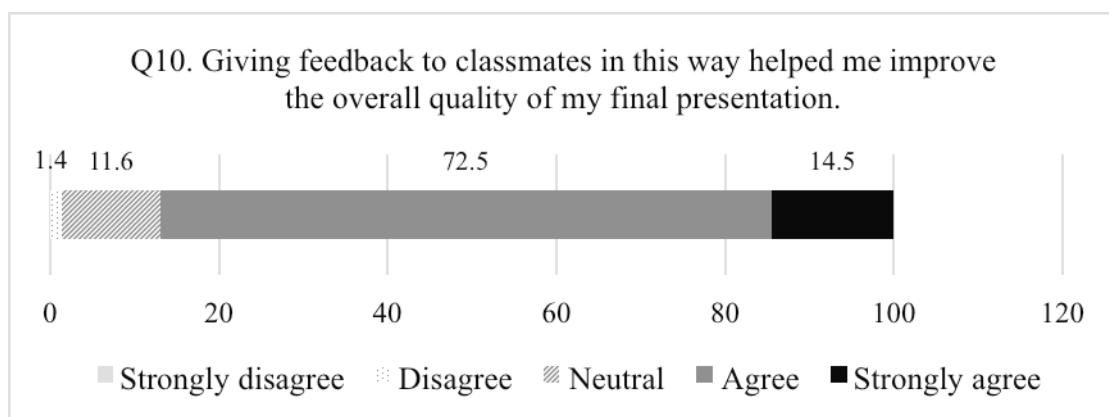
Figure 2. Results of Q10 (*n*=69)

Table 7. Results of Q11: Reasons for Q10 - Giving feedback (*n*=69)

Positive comments	%
I could also make my presentation better.	34.8%
I could also notice/learn my weakness.	29.0%
I learned to see things objectively.	11.6%
Giving feedback raised my motivation to present better.	2.9%
Other	13.0%

Negative comments	%
I did not think of relating my feedback to my own presentation.	2.9%
I could not give many comments or much advice.	1.4%
Giving feedback did not influence my presentation much.	1.4%
I was not sure if my feedback was correct.	1.4%
I mainly asked questions instead of giving feedback.	1.4%
I am not sure if my presentation improved.	1.4%
Other	2.9%

As Figure 2 showed, the majority of the students (87%) found giving feedback was beneficial to improving their final presentations. According to Table 6, oral aspects (75.3%), visual aids (73.9%) and physical aspects (71%) were the areas where a number of students felt they improved in their own presentations through giving feedback. Among them, oral aspects and visual aids were also the aspects that students often discussed in peer feedback processes as an audience. These results therefore suggest that students in this study tended to not only give feedback but also make use of those comments/advice they provided to make further improvements in their own performance. In fact, we can see from Tables 4 and 7 that more students found that their final presentations improved by giving feedback to their classmates (34.8%) than receiving feedback (23.2%). This finding can be partly explained by the fact that some students (11.6%) in fact learned to see things objectively through giving feedback (Table 7) while none mentioned it when asked about receiving feedback (Table 4). In addition, by giving feedback to others some found that they could also discover their own weakness. As Tsui and Ng (2000) argued, awareness raising can also be achieved through giving feedback to peers. These results therefore suggest that being an audience and trying to point out the parts that need improvements in classmates' presentations may have helped students see their own projects objectively, which possibly led them to find their own weak points and make meaningful changes afterwards.

However, some students also expressed their concerns about giving feedback to others. For example, some students showed their lack of confidence in giving meaningful feedback and some did not know how to make use of this experience to improve their own presentations.

3) How can teachers implement peer feedback in an oral presentation task in order to support students' learning?

The findings of this study above revealed some potential benefits as well as difficulties associated with employing peer feedback in oral presentations in L2 contexts. In order to ensure that students benefit from this activity, there are mainly four implications for teachers.

Firstly, it is beneficial for teachers to provide students with specific feedback points prior to peer feedback processes. In this study, students tended to make use of the comments and advice they exchanged in improving their final presentations. In other words, both as a feedback giver and receiver, they valued what they discussed with their classmates during the peer feedback activity. According to Tsui and Ng (2000), there are certain roles that peer feedback has (e.g. enhancing a sense of audience, raising students' awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of their own work, encouraging collaborative learning, and fostering the ownership of text), which may not be fulfilled by teacher feedback. Students may not be able to gain important insights into their own work and improve their skills if they do not have peer critiques. Thus, it is important for teachers to help facilitate students' active participation in providing feedback and to ensure that they provide high quality feedback. One way to do so is to give students specific feedback points. As previous studies pointed out (Lax & Fentiman, 2016), some students may end up giving nonspecific comments such as "good" or "bad" if they do not know specifically where to look at and what to address in classmates' presentations. Thus, it is important that teachers prepare some feedback points that students need to address in feedback processes and encourage them to discuss those specific items in a peer feedback activity.

Secondly, teachers should consider adopting a poster presentation style when implementing peer feedback in oral presentations. One benefit of using this type of presentation is that as compared to class-fronted presentations they help create an intimate learning environment where students can feel less pressured to present and more relaxed to interact with each other (Prichard & Ferreira, 2014; Tanner & Chapman, 2012). Since students can have a small audience, practice presenting multiple times, and interact with more classmates, the use of poster presentations could particularly benefit the learners with insufficient experience presenting in public or critiquing other's work. In fact, though most students in this study had difficulty speaking in public prior to this rehearsal, many of them seemed to enjoy presenting and exchanging comments in this way as the classroom was filled with a lot of conversations. The majority of them also felt that their performance improved through exchanging comments in this activity (Figures 1 and 2). Poster presentations can be an effective learning tool, which could encourage students to practice presenting and foster their collaborative learning.

Another benefit of using poster presentations is that they could facilitate students' group discussion on content, visual aids, and oral or physical aspects—the areas that play important roles in oral presentations. In fact, students in this study talked about these areas during peer feedback processes, and it benefitted many of them (Tables 1, 3, 6). Though getting feedback on language use (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) is important, students also need to receive feedback on content as well as other nonverbal aspects in oral presentation tasks because an effective presentation requires presenters to effectively share their ideas with an audience (Dolan, 2013). If teachers have students just sit and check each other's presentation script or slides on a PC, it could be difficult to draw students' attentions to these areas. The use of poster presentations should be beneficial in this sense, and furthermore, it could also benefit other students in the same group.

Thirdly, when implementing peer feedback, providing students with alternative forms of feedback should also be considered. In this study, some students showed some

distrust in their classmates' feedback and valued teacher's comments. Previous studies confirmed this finding. Particularly in teacher-centered cultures, students tend to feel less willing to accept peer feedback and prefer to have feedback from teachers who have more experience, knowledge, and skills (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhang, 1995). In addition, some studies highlighted that in some cultures such as the ones which value group harmony, it could be difficult for students to give honest criticisms to their classmates directly (Carson & Nelson, 1996; Károly, 2015; Wang & Wu, 2008). Considering such different cultural traits, the combination of peer feedback and other types of feedback (e.g. teacher feedback, written peer feedback, anonymous feedback) might benefit more students. In fact, students in Hong Kong and Taiwan valued peer feedback when they were also given teacher's feedback (Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, & Huang, 1998). Other studies also found that while oral peer feedback was generally preferred, written peer feedback was more preferred by some students particularly when it included negative criticisms (Károly, 2015).

Lastly, adequate training should be given to students prior to a peer feedback activity to increase the quality of feedback. Confirming the findings of previous studies on Japanese students' peer feedback experiences (Coomber & Silver, 2010; Morgan, Fuisting, & White, 2014), some students in this study also expressed their lack of confidence in giving feedback and some could not provide much advice. However, considering the results that more students could improve their presentations by giving rather than just receiving feedback, teachers should encourage students to give feedback. As some studies on peer feedback in L2 writing claimed, sufficient training prior to peer feedback processes can be beneficial as it could help students value peer feedback (Morra & Romano, 2008) and lead to a higher quality of their work (Berg, 1999).

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of peer feedback and discuss how peer feedback can be used to improve their oral presentations. The results showed that as this activity helped students discover their weakness and gain objectivity, many students generally perceived both receiving and giving feedback as beneficial to improving the overall quality of their presentations. In particular, most students felt that through this activity they could improve their oral aspects and visual aids—the areas which play important roles in making an effective presentation. However, some critical issues were also found: students' distrust in classmates' feedback, preference for teacher feedback, and lack of confidence in providing feedback. Based on these findings, this study made the following four suggestions in the hope that they would help teachers effectively implement peer feedback in oral presentations in L2 contexts: providing students with specific feedback points prior to peer feedback processes; employing poster presentations; considering the combination of peer feedback and alternative forms of feedback; and giving students sufficient training in doing peer feedback.

Though this study aimed to explore students' perceptions of peer feedback, there are several limitations. One of them is the instrument used in this study. In order to have a deeper understanding of students' perceptions, not only a questionnaire but also other types of instruments, such as a focus group interview, should be included.

Another limitation is that this study examined only one type of feedback (i.e. oral feedback). As each type of feedback has different advantages (Keh, 1990), exploring different types of feedback (e.g. written feedback, teacher feedback) should enable us to further investigate the effective feedback processes in oral presentations. The last one is the setting. This study discussed the use of peer feedback only in project-based English classes where students mainly studied how to make their own projects in English. Thus, the implications of this study may not be applicable to other types of English classes which have different learning focuses.

References

Apple, M. (2011). The Big Five personality traits and foreign language speaking confidence among Japanese EFL students (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Database. (UMI No. 3457819)

Bayne, K. (2005). Using the 'poster session' format in L2 contexts. *Lifelong Learning: Proceedings of the 4th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference* (pp. 87-97). Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo Keizai University.

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute. (2016). *Chuko no eigo shidou ni kansuru jittai chousa 2015* [Report on English instruction in secondary education 2015]. Retrieved from http://berd.benesse.jp/global/

Berg, E. C. (1999). The effects of trained peer response ESL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*(3), 215-241.

Brooks, G., & Wilson, J. (2014). Using oral presentations to improve students' English language skills. *Kwansei Gakuin University Humanities Review, 19,* 199-212.

Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1996). Chinese students' perceptions of ESL peer response group interaction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 5*(1), 1-19.

Chiu, A. S. (2004). The festival presentation: Making classroom presentations interactive and fun. *The Language Teacher, 28*(8), 32.

Coomber, M., & Silver, R. (2010). The effect of anonymity in peer review. In A. M. Stoke (Ed.), *JALT2009 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo, Japan: Japan Association of Language Teachers.

Dolan, D. (2013, October 28). Powerful presentations for Japan. *Yomiuri Newspaper*. Retrieved from http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/adv/wol/dy/opinion/culture_131028.html

Dörnyei, Z., & Murphey, T. (2003). *Group dynamics in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press.

Fujita, R., Yamagata, A., & Takenaka, K. (2009). Gakusei no ishikihenka ni miru eigo presentation jugyo no yuyosei [Effectiveness of an English presentation course, as seen in changing student attitudes]. *Tokyo Keizai Daigaku Jinbun Shizenkagakuronshu, 128*. 35-53.

Jacobs, G. M., Curtis, A., Braine, G., & Huang, S.-Y. (1998). Feedback on student writing: Taking the middle path. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 7*(3), 307-317.

Károly, A. (2015). Feedback on individual academic presentations: Exploring Finnish university students' experiences and preferences. In J. Jalkanen, E. Jokinen, & P. Taalas (Eds), *Voices of pedagogical development - Expanding, enhancing and exploring higher education language learning* (pp. 105-130). Dublin: Research-publishing.net. doi:10.14705/rpnet.2015.000289

Kawachi, T. (2012). Gakusei ni yoru presentation wo listening no jugyo ni donyu suru igi [The importance of incorporating student presentations in EFL listening courses]. *Bulletin of Seikei University, 46,* 1-19.

Keh, C. (1990). Feedback in the writing process: A model and methods for implementation. *ELT Journal, 44*(4), 294-304.

King, J. (2002). Preparing EFL learners for oral presentations. *The Internet TESOL Journal, 8*(3). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Lessons/King-PublicSpeaking.html

Lax, J., & Fentiman, A. W. (2016, June 26-29). *Improving graduate student oral presentations through peer review*. Paper presented at 2016 American Society for Engineering Education Annual Conference & Exposition, New Orleans, Louisiana. Retrieved from https://www.asee.org/public/conferences/64/papers/14691/view

Liu, N.-F., & Carless, D. (2006). Peer feedback: The learning element of peer assessment. *Teaching in Higher Education, 11*(3), 279-290.

Morgan, B., Fuisting, B., & White, J. (2014). University student attitudes towards peer review in EFL writing: A quantitative study 1. *Language Education in Asia, 5*(1), 93-116.

Morra, A. M., & Romano, M. E. (2008). University students' reactions to guided peer feedback of EAP compositions. *Journal of College Literacy and Learning, 35,* 19-30.

Nakamura, E. (2008). Effects of task repetition in "poster carousel." In K. Bradford Watts, T. Muller, & M. Sanson (Eds.), *JALT2007 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 188-199). Tokyo, Japan: Japan Association of Language Teachers.

Nelson, G. L., & Carson, J. G. (1998). ESL students' perceptions of effectiveness in peer response groups. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 7*(2), 113-131.

Nguyen, M. H. (2013). EFL students' reflections on peer scaffolding in making a collaborative oral presentation. *English Language Teaching, 6*(4), 64-73.

Otoshi, J., & Heffernan, N. (2008). Factors predicting effective oral presentations in EFL classrooms. *Asian EFL Journal Quarterly, 10*(1), 65-78.

Prichard, C., & Ferreira, D. (2014). The effects of poster presentations and class presentations on low-proficiency learners. *TESOL Journal, 5*(1), 172-185.

Tanner, P., & Chapman, J. (2012). Poster presentations speak for themselves. *Language Teacher, 36*(4), 15–20.

Topping, K.J., Smith, E. F., Swanson, I., Elliot, A. (2000). Formative peer assessment of academic writing between postgraduate students. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 25*(2), 149-169.

Tsui, A. B. M., & Ng, M. (2000). Do secondary L2 writers benefit from peer comments? *Journal of Second Language Writing, 9*(2), 147-170.

Wang, S.-L., & Wu, P.-Y. (2008). The role of feedback and self-efficacy on web-based learning: The social cognitive perspective. *Computers & Education, 51*, 1589-1598.

Zhang, S. (1995). Reexamining the affective advantage of peer feedback in the ESL writing class. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 4*(3). 209-222.

Appendix

Questionnaire (English version)

Q1. What is your gender?
1. Male, 2. Female

Q2. Do you like English?
1. Not at all, 2. Not really, 3. So-so, 4. Quite a lot, 5. Very much

Q3. Please tell us your TOEIC score.

Q4. In the peer feedback activity, on what aspects did you <u>receive</u> feedback from your classmates? (You can choose more than one answer.)
1. Content, 2. Organization, 3. English (vocabulary, grammar, expressions), 4. Oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress), 5. Physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact), 6. Visual aids (PowerPoint slides)

Q5. Do you think that receiving feedback from your classmates helped you improve the following aspects of your final presentation? Please select the answer that best represents your feelings about the usefulness of <u>"receiving" feedback</u> from your classmates.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
It helped me improve my presentation content.	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve the organization of my presentation.	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my presentation script (i.e. English vocabulary, grammar, expressions).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my oral aspects (i.e. volume, speed, intonation, stress).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my physical aspects (i.e. attitude, gestures, eye contact).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint slides).	○	○	○	○	○

Q6. In the peer feedback activity, on what aspects did you <u>give</u> feedback to your classmates? (You can choose more than one answer.)
1. Content, 2. Organization, 3. English (vocabulary, grammar, expressions), 4. Oral aspects (volume, speed, intonation, stress), 5. Physical aspects (attitude, gestures, eye contact), 6. Visual aids (PowerPoint slides)

Q7. Do you think that giving feedback to your classmates helped you improve the following aspects of your final presentation? Please select the answer that best represents your feelings about the usefulness of "giving" feedback to your classmates.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
It helped me improve my presentation content.	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve the organization of my presentation.	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my presentation script (i.e. English vocabulary, grammar, expressions).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my oral aspects (i.e. volume, speed, intonation, stress).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my physical aspects (i.e. attitude, gestures, eye contact).	○	○	○	○	○
It helped me improve my visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint slides).	○	○	○	○	○

Q8. Do you think that "receiving" feedback from your classmates in this way helped you improve the overall quality of your final presentation?
1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Q9. Please tell us your reason for Q8.

Q10. Do you think that "giving" feedback to your classmates in this way helped you improve the overall quality of your final presentation?
1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree

Q11. Please tell us your reason for Q10.