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Applied Language Learning
Bldg. 614, Room 243
Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944-5006

Readers and Authors

Contact Editor, Dr. Howard
(ATFL-ASD-AJ), *Applied Language Learning*
jjaying.howard@dliflc.edu

Printing Coordinators
Webmasters

Tom Colin & Ricky Harris
Natela Cutter & Dusan Tatomirovic

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The Development of Conceptual Fluency in Second Language Acquisition

Zhiqi Gong

Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center

Learning a second language (L2) is not merely mastering an additional linguistic system, but rather learning a new way of conceptualizing the world. Grammatical development does not always align simultaneously with conceptual development in L2. That explains why L2 learners may produce sentences that are grammatically correct, but pragmatically inappropriate. Research needs to address conceptual fluency which consists of, but not exclusively, formulaic competence and metaphorical competence. There should be a shift from a focus on isolated grammar and formal knowledge to the changes that first-language-governed conceptual base undergoes in the process of second language acquisition. A competent second-language learner is expected to use the target language in ways that native speakers use it. Conceptual fluency has substantial pedagogical implications in L2 acquisition.

Keywords: *conceptual fluency; conceptual socialization; formulaic competence; metaphorical competence; second language acquisition*

1. INTRODUCTION

After years of exposure to the target language and culture, second language (L2) learners may have a good command of the grammatical knowledge of the language, but lack pragmatic knowledge and skills that are responsible for native-like language use. In fact, knowledge of the L2 lexical, phonetic, syntactic, and semantic patterns is only partly responsible for the native-like use of a second language, and the rest lies in language users' conceptual fluency. They may produce grammatically correct texts/utterances, but these freely created language strings may be different from those

conventionally used by native speakers. This is demonstrated in the following example of a sign in a Chinese restaurant: *Beware of missing foot* (Correct: *Wet floor*).

This “Chinglish” sentence is grammatically acceptable, but conceptually inappropriate; it does not reflect native English speakers’ preferred word choices. As Kecskes (2016) argued, lexicalizing thoughts in ways preferred by the native speakers of a language is more important than syntax. The fundamental differences between first language (L1) and L2 are not linguistic in nature, but conceptual. Successful language learning is the mastery of a set of linguistic codes coupled with the conceptual structures in which that language is anchored.

The knowledge of how a language is used to conceptualize the world is effortlessly acquired by its native speakers, but requires conscious learning by non-native users. L2 learners, especially those at an intermediate level, may achieve a relatively high level of language proficiency without much conceptual fluency because some aspects of language learning are non-conceptual—i.e., literal, perceptual, or indexical (Kecskes & Papp, 2000a). In order to achieve higher or native-like proficiency, L2 learners must use a variety of cognitive resources, a large part of which is conceptual fluency. Conceptual fluency, in brief, is the competence in using the target language in ways that native speakers use it conceptually. Second-language learners need to learn the social, cultural, and discourse knowledge that native speakers conventionally assign to linguistic signs.

However, relatively little research attention (Danesi, 1992, 1995; Erman, 2009; Gong & Jiang 2017; Kecskes, 2000, 2003, 2016; Kövecses & Szabo, 1996) has been paid to the conceptual aspects of L2 acquisition. The purpose of this paper is to draw language educators’ attention to the neglected conceptual fluency in second language acquisition and its pedagogical implications. The author argues that conceptual fluency consists of, but is not exclusively, formulaic competence and metaphorical competence. The following sections will discuss 1) formulaic competence, 2) metaphorical competence, 3) conceptual fluency and conceptual socialization in L2, and 4) pedagogical implications.

2. DEFINING FORMULAIC COMPETENCE

There is a need to distinguish between FL (foreign language) and L2. FL and L2 differ mainly in the sociocultural environment of the acquisition process: FL learning occurs mostly in instructional settings with limited exposure to the target language and culture, whereas L2 learners have full exposure to the target language and culture. This paper uses the two terms interchangeably in general discussion, but distinguishes them in the discussion of the development of conceptual fluency for FL and L2 learners.

To master a new language, learners need to be sensitive to the native speakers’ preferred ways of speaking (cf. Wray, 2002, 2018) and preferred ways

of organizing thoughts (Kecskes, 2007, 2013). For example, most speakers of American English have similar replies to the greeting *How are you today?* A non-native English speaker who just arrived in the U.S. may have a different response, like *Oh, I am tired. My jet lag is killing me.* Native English speakers may find this response unexpected, as it is not the normal greeting in an American English speech community. The preferred ways of saying things as shown in the above example include formulaic sequences.

2.1 Formulaic Sequences

Formulaic sequences include metaphors (*Time is money*), idioms (*beat about the bush*), speech formulas (*go shopping*), grammatical units (*be going to*), sentence builders (*I'd love to...*, *but ...*, and *I think that ...*), prayers, and other types of multi-word units. Many linguists and second language acquisition experts (Ellis, 1996; Erman, 2009; Kecskes, 2000, 2003, 2013, 2015; Wray, 2000, 2002, 2018; Wray & Perkins, 2000) have applied different terminologies to define these prefabricated linguistic expressions, such as *formulaic language*, *formulaic sequence*, *chunks*, *formulas*, *formulaic utterances*, *prefabricated chunks*, *speech formulas*, etc. This paper uses the term *formulaic sequence*. Wray (2000) defined formulaic sequence as “a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements, which is prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar” (p. 465). In other words, a formulaic sequence is a multi-word unit that consists of a sequence of two or more words conventionally *glued together*. Formulaic sequences are usually stored and retrieved by language users as a whole and contribute crucially to the ease, fluency, and appropriateness of language use. Many metaphors are formulaic, such as *to light up one's life* and *life is a journey*. The creative use of metaphors by language users, however, is not formulaic but generated *ad hoc*. The metaphorical use of language elements reflects users' metaphorical competence, which will be discussed in Section 3.

Pawley and Syder (1983) first noted the contribution of formulaic sequences to language fluency, arguing that language production only partly relies on rule-governance, and more so on prefabricated constructions. This argument was supported by Sinclair's (1991) claim that “a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analyzable into segments” (p. 110). Formulaic sequences constitute an essential part of L2 acquisition. In real-time communication, formulaic sequences give L2 learners ready-made chunks so that they do not start from scratch or plan utterances through word selection and grammar sequencing. This reduces L2 users' cognitive processing load and speech-planning time; the short-cut process allows them to attend to larger units of discourse in interactions.

In addition, formulaic sequences benefit listening comprehension. With formulaic knowledge, the listener can predict what the speaker may say next.

For example, hearing the expression “as far as I am concerned,” the listener can predict that what will follow is the speaker’s opinion of what has been discussed. This predictability makes it easier for the listener to recognize the speaker’s intention and increases the likelihood of achieving the interactional purpose. The listener may skip the normal decoding steps and retrieve from memory the most salient and frequent meanings of these expressions. This knowledge, while minimizing the amount of decoding, gives the listener more time and cognitive capacities for other challenging communication tasks. The best way to know the importance of formulaic sequence in a social situation is to see what happens when it is missing. Wray’s (2000) study confirmed the facilitative role of formulaic sequences by arguing that the listener lessens his/her own cognitive processing burden by “bypassing the generative system” (p. 43). Given their cognitive utility, it is not surprising that formulaic sequences are used extensively in language. Erman & Warren (2000) found that 58 percent of the spoken English and 52 percent of the written English were formulaic. Similar results were reported by other researchers (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Foster, 2001; Wray & Perkins, 2000).

2.2 Formulaic Competence

Formulaic competence is the knowledge of the conventional ways of expressing a particular idea from among all the grammatically acceptable forms. Formulaic competence encodes a wealth of information about the use of a language, both linguistically and conceptually; it is largely manifested in the use of formulaic sequences, which are also mappings of the rules of language use. Along with grammar, gestures, interactional rules, cultural practices, and social conventions, formulaic sequences are a crucial component of the rules, conventions, and practices used to maintain the unimpeded flow of messages in social interactions. A means of guiding an individual’s participation in social interaction, formulaic sequences accelerate second language acquisition by constantly adding L2 socio-cultural and conceptual information to the L1-governed conceptual base—a container of mental representations in which conceptual knowledge and information of L2 are stored.

What is particularly important about the formulaic sequences for L2 acquisition is that they contribute to the conceptual fluency and naturalness in a text/utterance along with grammar and discourse devices. They are the core of what is called native-like idiomaticity (Ellis, Simpson-Vlach & Maynard, 2008). Pawley and Syder (1983) proposed *native-like selection* as a marker of native-likeness. Native-like selection is “the ability of the native speaker routinely to convey his meaning by an expression that is not only grammatical but also native-like” (p. 191). The native-like idiomaticity discussed here does what formulaic competence does for a second language learner. A competent L2 learner has access to a store of formulaic sequences in his/her mental lexicon and retrieves them as complete units (Ellis, 1996; Wray, 2002).

2.3 Idiom Principle vs. Open-choice Principle in L2 Acquisition

Sinclair (1991) argued that language structure, for native speakers, is governed by the idiom principle rather than open-choice principle. The principle of idiom means that many semi-preconstructed phrases constitute single choices in a native speaker's mental lexicon, even though they may appear to be analyzable into segments. In contrast, the open-choice principle represents a completely newly assembled word-by-word utterance. Native speakers, following the idiom principle, always have multiple expressions at their disposal to express an idea rather than generate new linguistic structures based on grammatical rules. Second language learners, lacking the linguistic, cultural, and conceptual information of the target language, tend to rely heavily on the open-choice principle. As L2 proficiency level progresses, the learner gradually breaks away from the open-choice principle and shifts to the idiom principle, especially when a certain hypothetical threshold has been reached and qualitative changes in the L1-governed conceptual base have taken place. This hypothetical threshold is conceptual by nature. If a proficiency threshold has not been reached, the learning of an additional language is merely an educational enhancement (Kecskes & Papp, 2000b), rather than a conceptual enhancement.

3. DEFINING METAPHORICAL COMPETENCE

Metaphors play an extremely important part in human cognition, as claimed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that "our ordinary conceptual systems, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). Metaphors, grounded in culture and social-cultural contexts, show how we reason about and perceive the world. Some metaphors may be universal across languages and cultures in that our thinking and reasoning are largely shaped by bodily experiences (Gibbs, 2006; Kövecses, 2005; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). However, how people conceptualize and lexicalize histories and experiences, to a large extent, is cultural- and language-specific. The diverse concerns and interest in life affect individuals' choices of metaphors. Therefore, metaphors serve as an important indicator of native-likeness in a learner's L2 production.

Socio-cultural motivation is a characteristic feature of metaphors, because a speech community needs a specific way to represent its moral and socio-cultural values. This is also apparent in other types of formulaic sequences, such as semantic idioms, proverbs, and collocations. These socio-cultural clusters in languages, as Erman (2009) noted, "have not come about by chance, but constitute recurrent topical issues in everyday discourse" (p. 337). The clusters are associated with recurrent routines in daily life. For example, when describing something that is easily done or accomplished, American English speakers may use the expression *(a) piece of cake*, and Chinese speakers may use *xiao cai yi die* (小菜一碟, *a small dish*). Metaphors, relatively fixed in form, are culturally recognizable and situationally bound. What is noteworthy for the

present discussion is that a metaphor's socio-cultural motivation may lose its force when the culture changes or shifts.

Metaphors vary across and within cultures. When a metaphor has a similar structure in L1 and L2, L2 learner's texts coincide culturally and metaphorically with that by the native-speakers. For example, metaphorically, time is money which you can *spend*, *waste*, *save*, or *squander* in the English language. The Chinese language has similar expressions of how to manage money, such as *hua fei* (花费, *spend*), *lang fei* (浪费, *waste*), *jie sheng* (节省, *save*), and *hui huo* (挥霍 *squander*). Thus, English speakers studying Chinese may easily understand and use the Chinese metaphors. The concepts shared in metaphors across languages can be easily projected from L1 to L2. Many metaphors, however, do not share patterns or concepts. For example, English speakers *spend time*, whereas Hungarians *fill time*. When the same matter is conceptualized differently in two languages, L2 texts may lack conceptual appropriateness. Besides transferring a L1-based metaphorical structure to L2 production, another problem for L2 learners is overly-literal usage in discourse. Without adequate knowledge of the L2 internal metaphorical structures, learners may use the L2 metaphors literally, causing misunderstanding in intercultural communication.

It should be noted that conceptual fluency, overlapping with metaphorical competence, has a broader scope. Conceptual fluency includes formulaic competence, metaphorical competence, and other cognitive mechanisms in language processing and production. Danesi (2016) defined conceptual fluency as the competence of "putting together the words and phrases of the target language into sentences whose meanings reflect target language's conceptual-figurative structure" (p. 145). L2 learners with conceptual fluency know how to lexicalize a concept through the right choice and organization of words and collocations. In comparison, metaphorical competence is the knowledge of a speech community's preferred ways of metaphorically conceptualizing the world and the ability to use such knowledge. Danesi (2016) defined it as the ability to "glean figurative meaning from words in utterances" (p. 146). In other words, it is the competence to metaphorically use the target language the way that native speakers use it. Metaphorical competence is part of conceptual fluency, but not all conceptual knowledge is metaphorical.

Many studies have empirically proved that metaphorical competence is measurable. Danesi (1992) measured metaphorical competence through metaphorical density in the writings of native and non-native Spanish speakers, dividing the number of sentences by the number of metaphorical clauses. He found that fluent L2 learners' language use approached that of native speakers in terms of metaphorical density. Russo's (1997) empirical study indicated that the rate of development of metaphorical competence was not as rapid as that of linguistic competence. Metaphorical competence could be quantified by linguistic, prosodic, paralinguistic, and kinesthetic components.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTUAL FLUENCY IN L2

4.1 Conceptual Fluency

As previously discussed, language learners' conceptual fluency is manifested in aspects of language use, such as lexical combinations, formulaic sequences, metaphors, and other conventional language forms. Focusing on formulaic sequences and metaphors, conceptual fluency is competence in using formulaic sequences and metaphors in appropriate situations. Danesi (1995) first defined conceptual fluency as the knowledge about "how the target language reflects or encodes its concepts on the basis of metaphorical structure and other cognitive mechanisms" (p. 42). According to Danesi, learning a language is learning a way of conceptualization. For native speakers, the conceptual base is a store of "the encyclopedic knowledge base, social skills, image system, and concepts that give meaning to all linguistic signs used in the given language" (Kecskes, 2013, p. 68).

Stressing its crucial role in L2 acquisition, Kecskes (2003) argued that conceptual fluency is as important as grammatical and communicative knowledge. Learning a second language means blending two conceptual systems: L1 and L2. The blending takes place in the Common Underlying Conceptual Base (CUCB), which is "a container of mental representations that comprise knowledge and concepts that are either language and culture neutral (i.e., universal or useable through both channels) or language and culture specific" (Kecskes & Papp, 2000a, p. 41). What makes a bilingual different from a monolingual is the symbiosis of the two languages' conceptual systems rather than the addition of a new grammar to the existent one. The L1-dominated conceptual base constantly undergoes changes which are qualitative in nature with the addition of concepts, skills, and knowledge acquired through the new language channel. When a certain hypothetical proficiency threshold is reached, the CUCB begins to emerge. Its emergence is the result of the reorganization of the existing L1-dominated conceptual base through conceptual socialization.

4.2 The Development of Conceptual Fluency in L2

The development of conceptual fluency in L2 is closely related to conceptual socialization, a process in which a language user's underlying conceptual base is reorganized—changing the L1-governed conceptual base. The concept of conceptual socialization was first proposed by Kecskes' (2003) to distinguish it from language socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Conceptual socialization "emphasizes the primacy of mental processes in the symbiosis of language and culture, and aims at explaining the bidirectional influence of the two languages in second language development" (Kecskes, 2003, p. 156). The term of conceptual socialization shifts research attention from how the knowledge base, grammar, and linguistic signs develop to how concepts are restructured, fused, and reshaped, particularly how individuals acquire the

culture-specific information carried by linguistic signs across a wide range of social experiences and contexts. Grammatical and communicative knowledge is not the only measure of language proficiency and native-likeness. Conceptual fluency also plays a crucial role (Kecskes, 2000, 2015; Kecskes & Papp, 2000a). Formulaic knowledge and metaphorical competence are among the key contributors of a second language learner's conceptual fluency.

4.3 The Differences in Conceptual Socialization between L1, FL, and L2

Language educators should be aware of the differences in conceptual socialization among L1, FL, and L2, as learners follow different paths towards conceptual fluency. Wray (2002) examined two modes of language processing: the analytic and the holistic. L1 learners use the holistic processing mode, or the top-down approach, and FL learners use the analytic processing mode, or the bottom up approach. In L1, conceptual fluency is obtained through chunking or gluing together from the start. That process is largely unconscious, automatic, and uncontrolled. In comparison, FL learners need to pass a hypothetical threshold to reach the phases of automatization that leads to a comparable degree of conceptual fluency. FL learners are exposed to the target language and culture from limited classroom experience which is generally grammar-based and input-poor, resulting in the learning of language segments. When producing language, FL learners must decide which words go together. L1 users are mostly spared this task as they already have the word combinations stored in memory (Forsberg & Fant, 2010). Erman (2009) also noted that learning formulaic sequences is problematic for FL learners because of their limited exposure to the target culture. She compared different types of formulae in the compositions of native and non-native English speakers and found that the learners' under-use of collocations made their language production less native-like. Forsberg (2008) provided empirical support for Wray's (2002) claim. He suggested that holistic chunking prevails in early FL learning, whereas incremental automatization is more typical of later phases of acquisition. L2 learning involves, in varying degrees, the analytic mode and the holistic mode, depending on the stages of language development, quality of exposure, language and culture attitudes, motivation, and other factors. L2 acquisition has more functional than formal elements because the target language community is present and language learners may interact with the environment in the target language (Kecskes & Papp, 2000a).

The concept of language socialization (Ochs, 1988; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) was proposed for L1 acquisition. It involves the intertwined processes of linguistic and cultural development in a language, as language development and cultural experience are inseparable. According to Schieffelin and Ochs (1986), language socialization is "a process requiring children's participation in social interactions so as to internalize and gain performance competence in these socio-cultural defined contexts" (p. 2). Language socialization researchers, as Howard (2014) emphasized, are interested in getting to know more about

how novices are simultaneously socialized ‘into and through’ language and discourse; that is, how they are socialized ‘into’ specific uses of language or other semiotic devices, and ‘through’ language/discourse to become familiar with their community’s ways of thinking, feeling, and being in the world (*Introduction*).

In contrast to the focus of L1 language socialization, Kecskes’ (2003, 2013, 2015) conceptual socialization focuses on L2 acquisition. He claimed that changes in pragmatic competence are conceptual. Pragmatic competence “allows us to use language appropriately in concrete situations, utter relevant arguments, act properly and be considered a competent communicator” (Kecskes, 2015, p. 420). Conceptual socialization concerns the changes that conceptual base undergoes with the newly added linguistic, metaphorical, and conceptual information of an additional language. Kecskes (2013) summarized the differences between L1 language socialization and L2 conceptual socialization:

L1 language socialization is basically a subconscious and partly automatic process through which the child gradually integrates into her/his environment and speech community both linguistically and socially. In the L2, however, much more consciousness is involved in the process in which age (...) and attitude of language learner are decisive variables (...) In L1, language and social development go hand-in-hand because people have direct access to the socio-cultural environment that shapes the norms, values, conventions, and beliefs... In L2 acquisition, language learners may have direct access to the linguistic material they need but not to the socio-cultural background knowledge that gives sense to the particular linguistic expressions in the L2 (pp. 68-69).

For FL learners, whose limited exposure to the target language and culture is mostly in the classroom setting, the changes in the L1-dominated conceptual base are minimal because of the socio-culturally deprived learning experience. Regarding L2 learners, the same process may be accelerated with increasing exposure to the target language and culture.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

5.1 Explicit Instruction of Formulaic Sequences

For second language learners, formulaic sequences as stereotypical socially sanctioned lines (Kuiper, 2004) play significant roles in shaping socially functioning beings. They must learn the lines for greeting, showing hospitality, complimenting, and other formulaic sequences that implement these rituals. Forsberg and Fant (2010) concluded that learners’ general proficiency level

coincides with the degree of mastering formulaic sequences. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning/Proficiency Guidelines (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012) encouraged the integration of pragmatics into classroom instruction. Integrating formulaic sequences into classroom instruction may improve students' pragmatic competence, as formulaic sequences are the basic language forms for L2 learners.

Formulaic language is the heart and soul of native-like language use (Kecskes, 2015). Native-like language use involves the ability not only to compose grammatically acceptable chunks but also to select what is conventionalized and idiomatic from among the grammatically correct items. The primary reason for the non-native-like production is the lack of knowledge of formulaic sequences. Unlike native speakers who interpret formulaic sequences holistically, non-native speakers adopt a bottom-up approach to language learning and rely on the compositional meanings of the expressions. The primary task for L2 learners, even for those most proficient, is to know which subset of grammatical utterances is conventionally used by native speakers. The author advocates a focus shift from lexicon and grammar to prefabricated chunks to be memorized as entire units. Learning a new language is as much about remembering as it is assembling. Fillmore (1976) made a similar observation that "an enormously large amount of natural language is formulaic, automatic and rehearsed, rather than propositional, creative or freely generated" (p. 9). Teachers and researchers usually focus on the ways L2 constructs its concepts, while neglecting the prefabricated portion of a language. Learners' ability to choose the grammatical and idiomatic sequences may be cultivated with teachers' explicit guidance. Norafkan (2013) suggested that L2 learners, after having received conceptual training, showed a significantly higher level of conceptual fluency than those without training. L2 educators should raise learners' awareness of the conceptual information in formulaic sequences and metaphors, expose them to various situations in which certain formulaic sequences and metaphors are used, and encourage them to discuss and discover the socio-cultural background information imbedded in linguistic chunks. Ideally, L2 learners may pinpoint the socio-cultural factors at play in such linguistic phenomena.

Formulaic sequences, differing in degree of semantic opacity and syntactic regularity, vary in their contribution to L2 development. Kecskes (2013) proposed the hypothesis of a formulaic continuum, as shown in Table 1, which contains *grammatical units* on the left, *fixed semantic units* in the middle, and *pragmatic expressions, situation-bound utterances, and idioms* on the right.

Table 1

Formulaic Continuum (Kecskes, 2013, p. 110)

<i>Grammatical Units</i>	<i>Fixed Semantic Units</i>	<i>Phrasal Verbs</i>	<i>Speech Formulas</i>	<i>Situation- bound Utterances</i>	<i>Idioms</i>
going to	as a matter of	put up	going	Welcome	kick the
have to	fact	with	shopping	aboard	bucket
	suffice it to say	get along	not bad	help	spill the
		with	you know	yourself	beans

The formulaic sequences, on the right of the continuum, are semantically opaque and syntactically irregular. The gap between “what is said” and “what is communicated” is wide. A proper interpretation depends on an understanding of the socio-cultural background of the target language. Those on the left are semantically transparent and syntactically regular. The gap between “what is said” and “what is communicated” in these expressions is narrow, so they may require less efforts to acquire. Formulaic sequences on the left have a closer relationship to grammatical knowledge than those on the right.

Formulaic knowledge is a type of competence that L2 learners develop, use, and possess. The challenge for L2 educators is to maximize the learning opportunities for students to develop formulaic knowledge. One approach is to teach L2 formulaic sequences, which may:

facilitate the learners’ sense of being able to find socially appropriate language for the situations that they encounter. Within second language studies and teaching, pragmatics encompasses speech acts, conversational structure, conversation implicature, conversational management, discourse organization, and sociolinguistic aspects of language use such as choice of address forms (Deda, 2013, p. 67)

5.2 Raising L2 Learners’ Metaphorical Awareness

Empirical studies have shown that metaphorical awareness is teachable. Littlemore (2001) found that instruction in metaphorical competence greatly increased L2 learners’ use of appropriate metaphors. Boers (1999, 2004, 2011) and Boers and Lindstromberg (2006) proposed that metaphor awareness be instilled in L2 learners to enable them to organize the steady stream of figurative language that they were exposed to. These ideas were empirically supported in several studies (Andreou & Galantomos, 2009; Hashemian & Nehzad, 2007; Kecskes, 2000; Norafkan, 2013). Andreou and Galantomos (2009) suggested that metaphorical competence be included in communicative competence pedagogy. Norafkan (2013) collected empirical evidence showing that the conceptually-trained L2 learners’ conceptual skills were significantly improved when compared to those of the control group. Hashemian and Nehzad (2007)

also confirmed the significant contribution of conceptual-fluency-oriented syllabus to L2 learners' understanding of the metaphor-dense texts.

Boers (2011) suggested that pedagogical strategies incorporating metaphorical competence significantly improved learners' conceptual fluency. Given the teachability of metaphorical competence, L2 teachers should cultivate students' awareness that metaphors are not only a rhetorical tool, but also a tool that can be used to understand the target language and culture. Learning a new language is not merely mastering its grammar and vocabulary, but accumulating the knowledge of how the native speakers perceive, think, and act in that language. Considering the socio-cultural dependency on metaphors, teachers should highlight the cultural similarities and differences between L1 and L2 and cultivate students' ability to analyze and learn language-specific metaphors. For example, strategies may be taught on how to tackle the underlying metaphorical structure of the idioms. It is necessary to make a distinction between conceptual and linguistic metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Conceptual metaphors are conceptual patterns that we employ in daily life to conceptualize the world, whereas linguistic metaphors are the linguistic realizations of these conceptual patterns. For example, *love is a journey* may be represented in the following linguistic metaphors:

They went their separate ways.
Their relationship hit a dead end.
Their marriage was back on track.

By presenting examples of conceptual metaphors and linguistic metaphors and by deciphering the source domain and target domain, L2 teachers may draw students' attention to the meaning of each conceptual metaphor. Such a teaching practice may increase students' awareness of metaphors and help them to use metaphors appropriately.

Learning a language is not simply learning a new set of linguistic signs but understanding the thinking patterns and world views of the target speech community. Second-language teachers need to teach basic metaphorical knowledge so that students may interact appropriately with native speakers (Chapeton, 2010; Hall, Hellerman, & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Nacey, 2013; Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2015). Both universal metaphors and culture-specific metaphors should be taught.

6. CONCLUSION

Learning a second language contains complex cognitive processes, such as mastering syntactic structure, making lexical choices, acquiring collocation and metaphorical structures, and developing conceptual fluency. Non-native-like production may be caused by poor grammatical knowledge, but it is more likely the result of low conceptual fluency in the target language. Fraser (2010) argued that second language speakers who lack appropriate pragmatic competence may produce grammatically flawless speech that nonetheless fails to achieve its

communicative aims. Erton (2017) also pinpointed the importance of teaching pragmatic competence:

The development of pragmatic competence which also entails linguistic and communicative competence frames the cognition and perception of the language user (even in unforeseen discourse) and enables him to interact with the addressee in a more appropriate and intelligent manner, such that both parties can enjoy and benefit from the essence of communication (p. 168).

The use of conventional knowledge and figurative language indicates native-likeness in L2 use (Kecskes, 2000). Formulaic sequences offer L2 learners a more convenient option in language production and comprehension. Selected use of formulaic sequences in communication reveals L2 learners' ability to handle the target language. Metaphorical competence helps learners describe the world in the same metaphorical manner as do native speakers. Because the conceptual system of a specific language is grounded in the socio-cultural environment, L2 learners should be encouraged to learn the language through socialization, so they may learn to "think as native speakers do, perceive the world the way native speakers do, and use the language metaphorically as native speaker do" (Kecskes, 2000, p. 148).

Many studies have focused on a theoretical discussion of the classification and characteristic features of formulaic sequences and their contribution to information production and processing. More empirical studies are needed to discover how formulaic sequences and metaphors contribute to the development of L2 learners' conceptual fluency. For example, research may emphasize formulaic sequences and metaphors that display a wide gap between "what they say" and "what they communicate." Additionally, more research is needed in how to develop metaphorical competence through effective L2 teaching. Further studies may be conducted in metaphor production, metaphor comprehension, and the speed of metaphor production or comprehension. The present study has merely presented the relevant literature on conceptual fluency, the understanding of which may help L2 educators and researchers devise sound approaches to teaching language conceptual systems, propose models for developing conceptual fluency, and conduct empirical studies to test the approaches and models.

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AUTHOR

Zhiqi Gong, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Chinese, Continuing Education, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.
Email: zhiqi.gong@dliflc.edu

Classroom Feedback Practices and Students' Learning Motivation: Experiences of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Students

Zhengdong Gan
The University of Macau

Jinbo He
Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen)

Fulan Liu
Jiangxi Normal University

Qing Xie
Jiangnan University

Although substantial research has examined how teachers respond to students' linguistic errors, the motivational influence of feedback practices in foreign language education has received relatively little attention. Drawing on recent feedback theories of educational assessment (e.g., Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Carless, 2017) and second language acquisition (e.g., Bitchener & Storch, 2016; Ferris, 2007, 2010; Lyster & Ranta, 2013; Yu & Lee, 2016), this study investigates what feedback practices university English as a foreign language (EFL) students experience, and how the feedback experiences relate to their motivation in learning English. Four hundred and seventy four (n=474) second-year students in the English language education program of four universities in China participated in the study. Data analysis shows four types of classroom feedback: 1) learning process-oriented; 2) teacher oral corrective; 3) teacher written evaluative; and 4) student self-feedback. Whereas participants reported teacher oral corrective feedback and written evaluative feedback as most frequent, student self-feedback and learning process-oriented feedback proved to be the best predictors of students' success as well as reinforcing positive attitudes towards English language instruction. The results suggest that not all types of classroom feedback practices are equally influential. The findings have important implications for EFL teachers who may innovate effective feedback to enhance student learning motivation in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: *classroom feedback practices, learning motivation, feedback and motivation, confirmatory factor analysis (CAF), structural equation modeling (SEM)*

INTRODUCTION

Recent empirical research has demonstrated that feedback is a powerful tool to engage students in the learning process (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute 2008; Boud & Molloy, 2013). Second language (L2) feedback literature shows that students benefit from teachers' selective, systematic, and strategically supplied commentary and correction (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 2007, 2010). L2 researchers and practitioners generally see feedback, written feedback in particular, as a means of channeling information, reactions, and advice to facilitate improvements (Hyland & Hyland 2001), "offering the kind of individualized attention that is otherwise rarely possible under normal classroom conditions" (p.185). Feedback, conceptualized as a transmission process, is largely controlled by and seen as the responsibility of teachers (Yang & Carless, 2013, Ajjawi & Boud, 2017). Students' engagement with feedback tends to be passive, such as reading tutor-provided comments (Higgins, Hartley, & Skelton, 2002). Furthermore, feedback is often reported as one of the weakest areas in teachers' classroom assessments. Although teachers often use feedback, there is a lack of feedback analysis (Ruiz-Primo & Li, 2013). Ruiz-Primo and Li (2013) argue that whereas feedback practice data are abundant, teachers may not be aware of how feedback influences student motivation. Feedback regulates student motivation—various forms of classroom feedback may motivate students to learn in the EFL learning context. The effectiveness of feedback depends on how students perceive it. The current study examines how various forms of classroom feedback practices are associated with EFL students' motivation to learn in university-level English education programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theorizing Feedback

Despite an agreement on the importance of feedback in improving student learning, researchers define feedback in different ways. For this paper, we have adopted Hattie and Timperley's (2007) definition of feedback as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding one's performance or understanding. This definition includes information provided to learners about learning goals. Such information may include domain knowledge, metacognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies (Winne & Butler, 1994). Hattie and Timperley's definition (2007) reflects key perspectives associated with the current Assessment for

Learning (AfL) movement, which encourages students to take ownership of their own learning. Hattie and Timperley (2007) identified four levels of feedback:

1. *Task-level* usually includes directions to acquire more, different, or correct information;
2. *Processing-level* is aimed at processes or strategies underpinning the task;
3. *Feedback at the self-regulation level* concerns strategies which students may use to improve their work and may lead to further engagement with, or further effort into, the task, or to enhanced self-efficacy; and
4. *Feedback at the self-level, which* may include information expressing positive and sometimes negative evaluations about the student.

A key feature of Hattie and Timperley's definition differentiating it from everyday understanding of feedback is that it views students as legitimate sources of feedback, suggesting that students can play an active role in all feedback processes. In other words, feedback functions as a central element in regulating the learning process. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback at the processing and self-regulation levels is more beneficial to students' learning than at the task and self-levels. There is a growing belief that students become motivated and thus demonstrate a higher level of engagement or persistence in the learning process if they take responsibility for judgements about their own learning and its progression (Gibbs, 2016). Consequently, student-led feedback practices may give them a greater sense of ownership of the feedback process (Andrade, 2010).

Drawing on earlier work by Butler and Winne (1995), Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) proposed a conceptual model of formative assessment and feedback that illustrates two types of feedback: *internal* at various levels (i.e., cognitive, motivational, and behavioral) generated by students' self-regulatory processes, and *external*, derived from sources such as the teacher, a peer, or other means. In Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's view, students generate internal feedback (i.e., self-feedback) when monitoring their engagement with the learning activities and assessing progress towards the learning goals. Such feedback has the potential to be more accessible, timely, and plentiful than teacher-generated feedback (Hattie, 2009). Whereas the capacity to generate internal feedback is crucial to students, both in terms of improving performance and improving learning strategies (Hyland, 2003), students' readiness to seek and interpret external feedback proactively is also important in terms of increased motivation to learn and greater understanding of the learning content.

Price, Handley, Millar, and O'Donovan (2011) identified five broad types of purposes of feedback: 1) correction; 2) reinforcement; 3) forensic diagnosis; 4) benchmarking; and 5) longitudinal development. The first two purposes, correction and reinforcement, are grounded in the traditional definition of feedback that views feedback as a *product*. These feedback practices are limited

in many ways as they involve an unambiguous corrective action, which does not exemplify most educational feedback particularly in university settings (Price et al., 2011). Subsequently, if students see themselves as receivers of feedback—a product, they may be less prepared to take ownership of learning.

The other purpose of feedback aligns broadly with a socio-constructivist view of learning, which sees feedback as a *process*—identifying the gap between student current and the desired performance to generate improved work (Boud & Molloy, 2013), suggesting strategies for students to improve learning, or helping them develop independent and critical thinking skills (Hyland, 2003). More recently, some researchers (e.g., Harks, Rakoczy, Hattie, Besser & Klieme, 2014) use the term *process-oriented feedback* for information on the process needed to complete a task, on individual strengths and weaknesses, or on supportive strategies about how to reach the learning goal. Harks et al. (2014) also observe that students perceive *process-oriented feedback* having a greater motivational impact than product-oriented feedback (e.g., grade) on their learning interest.

Feedback and Motivation

The link joining feedback and motivational factors has been discussed in several theories of motivation in the field of educational psychology. For example, goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2005) posits that to achieve goals or standards, learners use feedback to clarify goals, or monitor and evaluate their progress to reach the goals (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). In other words, feedback allows students to track performance in relation to the goals so that they may adjust effort, direction, and even strategy (Locke & Latham, 1990). From the goal orientation theory perspective, a learner's goal orientation is an important antecedent of the learner's approaches to learning (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; VandeWalle, 2003). VandeWalle (2003) proposes two types of learner goal orientation: *mastery* and *performance*. Students with a mastery orientation usually demonstrate positive attitudes toward the class, prefer challenging tasks, and use effective learning strategies and increased cognitive engagement (Brookhart, Walsh, & Zientarski, 2006). A performance goal orientation suggests that the learner wants to demonstrate ability by involvement in the task (Pintrich, 2000).

Research also suggests that learners with a mastery orientation, aware of the instrumental value of feedback, actively seek self-improvement information via inquiry strategies (Leenknecht, Hompus, & van der Schaaf, 2018). Consequently, feedback becomes a powerful motivator when delivered in response to goal-driven efforts (Shute, 2008). In Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) framework of formative assessment and self-regulated learning, feedback is shown to influence students' self-regulation of motivation, behavior, and cognition. As Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) point out, "feedback is involved when students actively control their study time or their interactions with others, and when they monitor and control motivational beliefs to adapt to the demands of the course (e.g., choosing a personal goal orientation)" (p. 202). Carnwell (1999) also suggests that the outcome of a feedback dialogue would improve student

autonomy and independence as it encourages a deeper, reflective approach to learning. As a result, there has been an increasing awareness among educators that feedback information may be highly salient elements that teachers may use to establish a motivational classroom climate (Stefanou & Parkes, 2003).

Educational psychologists consider motivation a complex concept that reveals why people undertake a particular activity, the amount of effort put forth, and length of time invested to achieve the goal of the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the second language acquisition (SLA) field, one important theoretical perspective on L2 motivation is Dörnyei's (2009) *L2 Motivational Self System*. A key element of the theoretical framework is the L2 learning experience, referring to situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience, includes attitudinal and/or affective factors such as learner attitudes and/or anxiety. In addition, Dörnyei and his associates in the past decade have studied motivated learning behavior, defining it as the intention to achieve a learning goal and as a central motivation construct (e.g., Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei, 2009; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008).

Dörnyei (2009) also argues that the motivational character of the classroom is largely a function of the teacher's motivational teaching practices, and is therefore under teacher control. In his view, feedback is one of the most powerful ways to enhance students' motivation because it may be gratifying and increase learner satisfaction, lift the learning spirit, and prompt the learner to reflect on areas that need improvement. In fact, the use of classroom feedback as a means of motivating students has received support in research-oriented discussions and curriculum policy statements across diverse school districts from Australia and Hong Kong to Great Britain.

Feedback Research in Second Language Acquisition

The bulk of SLA feedback research has concentrated on the effects of different types of corrective feedback on learning outcomes (Ellis, 2010). Ellis contends that current studies of *oral* corrective feedback focus on the effects of various feedback strategies on second language development (e.g., Lyster, 2004), whereas studies of *written* feedback center on the effect on accuracy when learners use specific grammatical structures in writing (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, Liu, Sinha, & Senna, 2013; Sheen, 2007). Whereas a substantial body of corrective feedback research has been conducted on the efficiency of the feedback strategies (e.g., recasts, requests for clarification, explicit correction, and elicitation) that L2 teachers use to correct errors (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 2013; Bitchener & Storch, 2016), less attention has been paid to the relationship between learner perceptions of and engagement with feedback (Ellis, 2010). Although various types of feedback influence the extent of student feedback engagement, motivational consequences are under researched. Improvement in learning occurs when students perceive feedback as enabling learning, rather than as judging achievement.

Based on these findings, this study examines the extent to which different forms of classroom feedback practices predict students' learning motivation. It addresses two research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do university EFL students experience different types of feedback practices?

RQ2: What is the relationship between various forms of feedback and the EFL learning motivation in English-language courses?

METHOD

Participants

This study was conducted in the English language education program at four universities in China. The researchers recruited 474 second-year EFL students to complete two questionnaires: one on classroom feedback practices and the other on learning motivation in English language courses. We followed the ethical guidelines of the lead author's University Research Ethics Assessment Committee to protect participants' rights when recruiting the participants. We explained the purposes of the research, the use of the data, and the security measures to protect the data. We also informed the participants that their participation was voluntary, i.e., they could withdraw from the research at any time. Among the 474 participants giving informed consent, 72 were male, 398 were female, and four did not report gender. The age of the participants ranged from 17 to 23 years old with $M_{\text{age}} = 19.78$ years, $SD_{\text{age}} = 0.98$ years. At the time of this study, the participants were studying in the English language education program at four universities. These English language education programs offer a set of unified courses in two fields: language and pedagogy. Language courses include grammar, phonology, vocabulary, and literature; pedagogy courses feature teaching methodology, teaching practice, and classroom management.

Instruments

Keeping with the purpose of the study, we developed two questionnaires: 1) The Classroom Feedback Practices Questionnaire (see Appendix A); and 2) the English Language Course Learning Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix B). For the Classroom Feedback Practices Questionnaire, a review of the research on classroom feedback practices, particularly feedback constructs, in general education and SLA (Harks et al., 2014; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 2013; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Price et al., 2011) led us to compile a pool of 23 items. Among the items, some were taken from existing feedback questionnaires, such as Zhang and Rahimi (2014). A panel of three experts reviewed the face validity and content validity of the 23 items. An item was retained only when the three experts agreed that it was appropriate for measuring EFL classroom feedback practices. This procedure resulted in a 20-

item EFL classroom feedback practices questionnaire with four factors in a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (not at all used) to 5 (used very often). The four factors, definition and illustrative example, are as follows:

1) *Learning process-oriented feedback*: Feedback aimed at processes or strategies underpinning particular learning tasks (measured by four items; e.g., “Teacher provides me with information on how to improve my learning outcome”);

2) *Teacher oral corrective feedback*: Oral feedback about whether student language output is correct or appropriate (measured by eight items; e.g., “Teacher corrects students as soon as they make grammatical or lexical errors in class”);

3) *Student self-feedback*: Feedback given by students themselves or by peers (measured by four items; e.g., “I give myself comments on my work”); and

4) *Teacher evaluative written feedback*: Feedback on whether written work meets the pre-determined criteria (measured by four items; e.g., “Teacher provides ticks and crosses on my exercises”).

Given the level of participants’ English language proficiency, the English version of the Classroom Feedback Practices Questionnaire was translated into Chinese by the authors. To further ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the Chinese version was independently translated into English by two native Chinese-speaking colleagues to identify any possible misinterpretation. The 20-item feedback practices questionnaire was piloted in a class of 30 university EFL students who commented on its clarity and readability. Based on the pilot, slight revisions of wording were made on some items.

The second questionnaire, the English Language Course Learning Motivation Questionnaire, was adapted from Guilloteaux and Dörnyei’s (2008) Student Motivational State Questionnaire designed to gauge EFL students’ situation-specific motivational disposition pertaining to their English language course. The questionnaire was piloted in an EFL class taught by the lead author. Based on student feedback, we removed several items. The English Language Course Learning Motivation Questionnaire included three factors measured by 16 items in a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The three factors, definition and illustrative example, are as follows:

1) *Intended learning effort*: Students’ perceptions of anticipated efforts to learn English (measured by eight items; e.g., “I persist in reading English newspapers, magazines, or novels to improve my English proficiency”);

2) *Learner anxiety*: Student anxiety in using English language inside and outside the classroom (measured by four items; e.g., “I am afraid other students will laugh at me when I speak English”); and

3) *Attitude towards the English language course*: Students’ perceptions of whether they enjoy the English learning experience (measured by four items; e.g., “I like the English language course this semester”).

The English Language Course Learning Motivation Questionnaire was also translated into Chinese by the authors. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the Chinese version was independently translated into English by two native Chinese-speaking colleagues.

The two questionnaires were later distributed to the students in normal class time when their English teachers were present. Before completing the questionnaires, students were informed of the study's research goals and their right to withdraw at any time during the study. Students were also assured that there were no correct or incorrect answers, and that their responses would not affect their status in the English language course.

Data Analysis Procedure

Following Gan, Nang, and Mu (2018) and Gan, Leung, He, and Nang (2019), to confirm factor structures underlying the Classroom Feedback Practices Questionnaire and the English Language Course Learning Motivation Questionnaire, we first conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), using Mplus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015) to assess the fit of the CFA model. Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR) were examined. The value indicating a good fit for RMSEA and SRMR should be below 0.08 and for CFI and TLI above 0.90 (better above 0.95) (Hu & Bentler, 1999). In addition, the reliabilities of the two questionnaires were assessed by internal consistency coefficient with the Cronbach's α coefficient. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r) analysis examined the relationship between feedback practices factors and English language course learning motivation factors. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) technique was used to examine the effects of the feedback practices on students' motivation with the feedback factors as predictors and motivational factors as the dependent variables.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

As Table 1 shows, the mean values for self-reported experience with feedback practices ranged from 3.00 to 3.90 (SD 0.59 to .86), indicating participant levels of engagement with the different type of feedback practices. The mean values for the two positive motivational factors (*intended learning effort* and *attitude towards the English language course*) were 3.48 (SD 0.63) and 3.00 (SD 0.70), suggesting an overall low level of endorsement for the experience in the English language course. The mean value of the negative motivational factor (*learner anxiety*) is 3.17, indicating that the English language course caused stress and anxiety for most students.

Classroom Feedback Practices

CFA analysis revealed a poor model fit of 20 items in the feedback practices questionnaire— $\chi^2_{(164)} = 590.66$ ($p < .01$), RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.84, TLI = 0.81, and SRMR = 0.08. After inspecting the factor loadings for the 20 items, two items were deleted because of weak factor loadings (i.e., less than .30) and one item was removed because the modification indices suggested that the item significantly cross-loaded on two factors. The CFA was then performed again with the remaining 17 items, and the model fit improved to $\chi^2_{(98)} = 303.13$ ($p < .01$), RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.89, and SRMR = 0.06, which is an acceptable model fit. Upon further examination of two items, however (“Teacher orally repeats a student’s erroneous utterance through adjustment of their intonation so as to alert the student to the error” and “Teacher uses a facial expression or gesture to show that the student has made an error”), we found that they convey similar meanings, leading us to modify the model. Finally, the modified model demonstrated a satisfactory model fit with $\chi^2_{(97)} = 260.18$ ($p < .01$), RMSEA = 0.06, CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.91, and SRMR = 0.06. A Cronbach’s α coefficient of 0.84 was found for the items used for measuring the classroom feedback practices. The Cronbach’s α coefficients for the four feedback practices factors were: 0.83 for *learning process-oriented feedback* (four items), 0.78 for *teacher oral corrective feedback* (seven items), 0.78 for *student self-feedback* (three items), and 0.67 for *teacher evaluative written feedback* (three items). (See Figure 1).

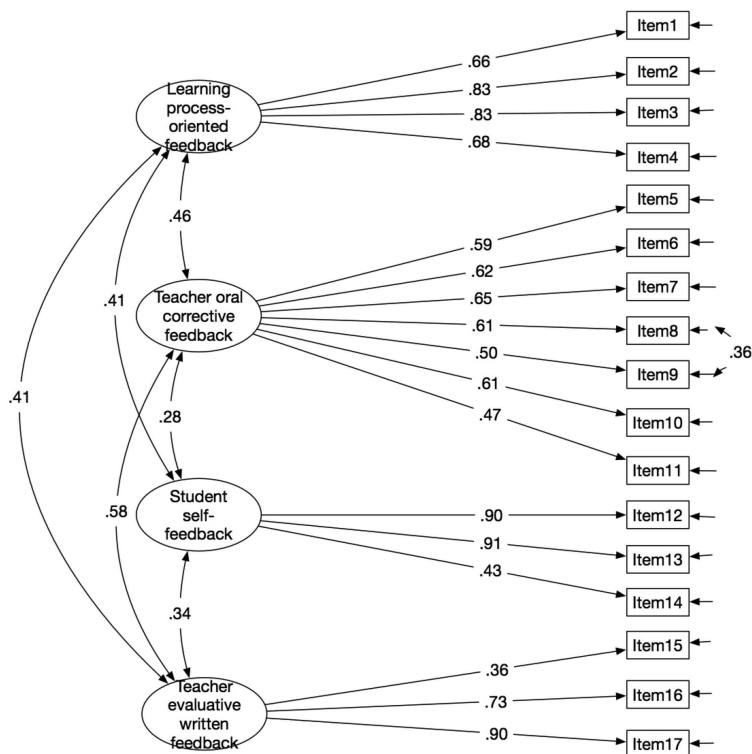


Figure 1
Measurement Model of Feedback Experience

Students' English Language Course Learning Motivation

After the CFA was performed with the 16 items of the students' English language course learning motivation questionnaire, a satisfying model fit was found with $\chi^2_{(101)} = 227.70$ ($p < .01$), RMSEA = 0.05, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.90, and SRMR = 0.06. A Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.78 was found for all items used for measuring students' learning motivation. In addition, the Cronbach's α coefficients for the three factors were: 0.82 for *intended learning effort* (eight items), 0.71 for *learner anxiety* (four items), and 0.66 for *attitudes towards the English language course* (four items). (See Figure 2).

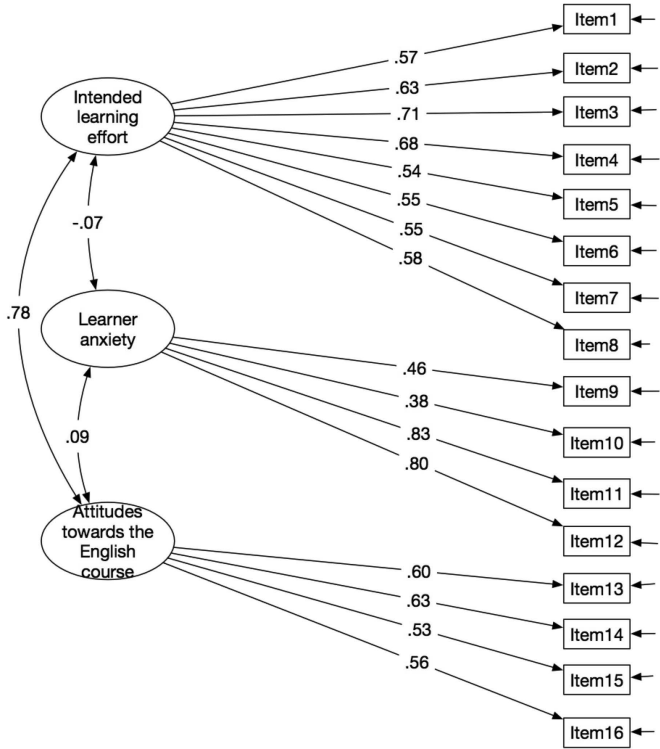


Figure 2
Measurement Model of Learning Motivation

Correlation between Feedback Practices and Learning Motivation

Correlation coefficients between classroom feedback practices and students' learning motivation are presented in Table 1. As can be seen, *learning process-oriented feedback*, *teacher oral corrective feedback*, *student self-feedback*, and *teacher evaluative written feedback* were significantly and positively correlated with *intended learning effort* with the correlations of $r_s = .20 - .36$ ($p < .01$); however, all feedback practices subscales showed small and non-significant correlations with *learner anxiety*. *Learning process-oriented feedback*, *teacher oral corrective feedback*, *student self-feedback*, and *teacher evaluative written feedback* were significantly and positively correlated with *attitudes towards the English language course* with correlations of $r_s = .14 - .34$ ($p < .01$).

Table 1
Descriptive and Correlation Analyses

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Learning process-oriented feedback	3.29	0.81	-					
2. Teacher oral corrective feedback	3.90	0.59	.40*	-				
3. Student self-feedback	3.00	0.86	.35*	.29*	-			
4. Teacher evaluative written feedback	3.57	0.85	.30*	.39*	.26*	-		
5. Intended learning effort	3.48	0.63	.29*	.25*	.36*	.20*	-	
6. Learner anxiety	3.17	0.80	.02	.04	.01	-.06	-.03	-
7. Attitudes towards the English language course	3.00	0.70	.32*	.20*	.34*	.14*	.58*	.07

Note: * $p < .01$

Structural Model of Influence of Feedback Practices on Motivation

We then examined the effects of feedback practices on English language course learning motivation through SEM analysis. The model showed a satisfactory fit with $\chi^2_{(473)} = 871.84$ ($p < .01$), RMSEA = 0.04, CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, and SRMR = 0.06. Specifically, *learning process-oriented feedback* ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < .05$), *teacher oral corrective feedback* ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < .05$), and *student self-feedback* ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < .01$) significantly predicted *intended learning effort* ($R^2 = .19$, $p < .01$). None of the feedback practices factors showed statistically significant effects on *learner anxiety*. In addition, *learning process-oriented feedback* ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < .05$) and *student self-feedback* ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted *attitudes towards the English language course* ($R^2 = .27$, $p < .01$). *Teacher evaluative written feedback* showed no significant effect on

Teacher evaluative written feedback in this study consisted of items that focused on teacher evaluation and comments on students' written assignments such as "Teacher provides ticks and crosses on my exercises" and "Teacher gives written comments on my exercises." *Teacher oral corrective feedback* and *teacher evaluative written feedback* emerged to be the most frequently used feedback practices in the English language courses, which confirms that corrective and evaluative feedback was predominantly used in EFL classrooms.

Learning process-oriented feedback in this study includes items such as "Teacher provides me with information on how to improve my learning outcome" and "Teacher advises me what I need to do to improve my English proficiency," whereas *student self-feedback* contains items referring to students themselves actively seeking support from various sources. Both *learning process-oriented feedback* and *student self-feedback* obtained a much lower mean score than *teacher oral corrective feedback* and *teacher evaluative written feedback* in this study (see Table 1), indicating that the former were less frequently used, although feedback research literature suggests *process-oriented* and *student self-feedback* tend to be more effective (Hattie & Timperly, 2007).

Lee (2008) observed that correcting errors and commenting on students' written assignments are among the most common functions of teachers' daily work in secondary ESL classes. Our finding suggests that teacher corrective and evaluative feedback practices appeared equally prevalent in tertiary EFL classrooms. A reason for predominantly used teacher-based corrective and evaluative feedback practices is that teachers may not be able to provide balanced coverage of different types of feedback in the EFL classroom (Ferris, 2007, 2010). As such, there is a need to improve teachers' feedback practices, making the feedback more productive. This is particularly important for teachers in training EFL teacher candidates, as what the trainees experience in university may affect how they teach following graduation. Research has shown that in-service teachers' feedback practices arise from their own educational experiences (Gan & Yang, 2018; Pennington & Richards, 1997).

It needs to be noted that SLA researchers disagree on the extent to which oral or written corrective feedback assists language learning/acquisition. For example, Nassaji (2017) suggests that although task-based corrective feedback helped learners retain target linguistic forms during the study period, there was no evidence that such feedback resulted in learners incorporating the particular target linguistic forms into their long-term interlanguage system. There was also no evidence that students were able to transfer their knowledge of particular target linguistic forms to new contexts. Feedback researchers increasingly recognize that the predominance of teacher-based corrective feedback may result in a narrowed range of student learning outcomes and overdependency on teacher feedback at the expense of other student-led feedback practices. Nevertheless, our results suggest that oral or written corrective feedback dominates in the classroom, raising significant implications to a need to equip teachers with knowledge of innovative feedback practices and with awareness of productive feedback processes.

This study found that teachers use oral corrective and evaluative feedback more frequently than other types of feedback, confirming that EFL teachers' feedback practices are dominated by traditional product-based and error-focused orientations (Lee 2008). As the teacher oral corrective and evaluative written feedback documented in this study were substantially task-based, they could thus be referred to as task-based corrective feedback. To introduce real changes in classroom practice for effective student learning, our hope lies in both educating teachers and establishing a school environment that offers students opportunities to monitor their own learning and improvement. As such, an important implication of the results of this study is for EFL classroom teachers to challenge existing assumptions about corrective feedback practices and undertake change to improve feedback practices in the EFL classroom.

The second research question of this study asked how classroom feedback practices are related to students' English language course learning motivation. Correlation analysis (see Table 1) shows that *learning process-oriented feedback*, *teacher oral corrective feedback*, *student self-feedback*, and *teacher evaluative written feedback* were significantly and positively correlated with two dimensions of motivation, i.e., *intended learning effort* and *attitudes towards the English language course*. The results suggest that various feedback practices have the potential to enhance students' learning motivation.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used in this study to explore the impact of classroom feedback practices on students' learning motivation in an English language course. As shown in the SEM model (see Figure 3), the four factors of feedback practices (i.e., *learning process-oriented feedback*, *teacher oral corrective feedback*, *student self-feedback*, and *teacher evaluative written feedback*) were used as independent variables to predict students' motivational processes. Among the feedback factors, *student self-feedback* and *learning process-oriented feedback* were the most powerful predictors of students' learning motivation.

As Hattie and Timperly (2007) argue, feedback is effective to the degree that it directs information to enhanced motivation and self-regulation, such that student attention is directed to academic tasks, causing students to invest more effort and commitment to the academic tasks. Their model highlights that feedback attending to self-regulation is powerful to the degree that it leads to further engagement with or more effort into the task, resulting in enhanced self-efficacy. Nevertheless, there has been little empirical evidence supporting this hypothesized relationship between feedback practices and students' learning motivation. In this study, student self-feedback includes self-directed feedback-seeking and feedback-processing behavior, which can be considered aspects of self-regulation. As such, student self-feedback operationalized in this study aligns with the concept of self-regulation in Hattie and Timperly's feedback model.

This study found that student self-feedback and learning process-oriented feedback were the most powerful predictors of their motivational factors, thus providing the empirical support for Hattie and Timperly's feedback model. Feedback practices may sensitize students to the competence and/or strategy

information in the learning process, which may help them attend to self-regulation needed for academic tasks and use self-feedback as a learning tool. In the end, students may develop positive attitudes towards learning and enhance learning motivation (Al-Barakat & Al-Hassan 2009). The English language education program of the universities in this study should make explicit provision for students to develop evaluative skills based on direct and authentic self and peer evaluative feedback experiences in the classroom.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Teaching and learning are interactive (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Gamlem & Munthe, 2014) and feedback is a significant factor in motivating learning in classroom interactions (Shute, 2008). Nonetheless, the motivational influence of feedback in foreign language education has received little attention in previous research. This study has drawn on feedback and motivational research in general education and second language acquisition to investigate the relationship between feedback and students' learning motivation in English language courses, thereby contributing to an evidence-based documentation of how classroom feedback may enhance students' motivation to learn in a university-level EFL context. This study identified four types of classroom feedback practices that university EFL students experienced. Although students reported that the most frequent feedback included teacher oral corrective and teacher written evaluative feedback, student self-feedback and learning process-oriented feedback were found to be a more powerful predictor of students' learning effort and positive attitudes towards the English language course. In other words, the type of classroom feedback may, in varying degrees, predict students' learning motivation. The results argue for the significance of feedback that sensitizes students to the competence or strategy in the learning process, enabling them to use self-feedback as a learning tool.

Whereas this study provides empirical findings to classroom feedback, it has several limitations. The first is the sample size (e.g., an imbalanced proportion of male and female, second-year students). The potential moderating impact of gender and year level on the relationship between feedback and learning motivation was not explored in the current study. Another limitation is the use of the self-report questionnaire as a measuring tool. Students might report what they believed to be important instead of the feedback practices they actually experienced. Future research may employ a qualitative approach to complement and triangulate the findings (Dörnyei, 2007). Notwithstanding these limitations, this study is an examination of the structural relationships between classroom feedback and students' learning motivation in a tertiary-level EFL context.

The results suggest a need for EFL teachers to innovate and enhance classroom feedback practices. The university English language education program involved in this study needs to introduce assessment tasks/activities that maximize opportunities for students to generate self-feedback (Carless, Salter, Yang, & Lam, 2011; Tang, Cheng, & So, 2006). To this end, professional development on feedback needs to be provided for university EFL teachers. As

Kennedy, Chan, Fox, and Yu (2008) point out, the existing culture in a school or a community may constrain the implementation of innovative feedback practices as teacher knowledge and views of teaching are embedded in particular social and cultural contexts. Consequently, innovative feedback entails changes not only in teachers' knowledge and views of teaching but also in the community and school climate that nurtures new feedback practices. In other words, professional development for teachers alone may not suffice; rather, teacher development and school policy in curriculum should go hand-in-hand if measures are to be taken to facilitate effective pedagogical uses of innovative feedback practices to promote student motivation and learning in EFL classrooms.

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APPENDIX A
ITEMS IN THE FEEDBACK PRACTICE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The teacher provides me with information on how to improve my learning outcomes.
2. The teacher makes comments about my studying.
3. The teacher advises me about what I need to do to improve my English proficiency.
4. The teacher talks to me about my work.
5. The teacher answers students' questions orally.
6. The teacher helps me understand new learning content by questioning.
7. During class, the teacher orally prompts students to correct themselves by questioning.
8. The teacher orally repeats a student's erroneous utterance through adjustment of intonation to focus their attention on the mistake.
9. The teacher uses facial expressions or gestures to signal that the student has made an error.
10. The teacher corrects students as soon as they make grammatical or lexical errors in class.
11. Pursuant to examinations, the teacher provides feedback to the whole class.
12. My friends make comments about my work.
13. My classmates make comments about my work.
14. I comment on my own work.
15. The teacher provides ticks and crosses on my exercises.
16. The teacher provides written comments about my exercises.
17. The teacher tells me what I got wrong so I can get it right.

APPENDIX B
ITEMS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE LEARNING
MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I persevere in listening to English-language radio programs and seeing English-language movies to enhance proficiency.
2. I persist in reading English-language newspapers, magazines, or novels to improve proficiency.
3. By persistent effort, I feel I am making progress in English this semester.
4. Learning English is a challenge that I enjoy.
5. I often think about how I can improve my English.
6. I spend time and effort to improve spoken English.
7. I try to learn as much as I can during English class.
8. I think that I am doing my best to learn English.
9. I am nervous in English listening and speaking classes.
10. I am worried about my ability to do well in English this semester.

11. I am afraid other students will laugh at me when I speak English.
12. I get very worried if I make mistakes during English class.
13. I enjoy my English lessons.
14. I want to work hard in English lessons to make my teacher happy.
15. I enjoy my English lessons this semester because what we do is neither too hard nor too easy.
16. I am willing to speak in English class.

AUTHORS

Zhengdong Gan, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, the University of Macau.

Jinbo He, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen).

Fulan Liu, Professor, Foreign Languages College, Jiangxi Normal University (China).

Qing Xie, Lecturer, School of Foreign Studies, Jiangnan University (China).

Foreign Language Learning Motivation in a U.S. Military Academy: A Comparative Case Study on the Effects from the Learning Environment

Zachary F. Miller
U.S. Military Academy at West Point

Dustin Crowther
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Using a case study design, we compared two prior-service cadets learning Portuguese at a United States (U.S.) military academy on how they dealt with aspects of foreign language learning (FLL). In particular, we explored how three specific components contributed to the formation of the cadets' second language (L2) motivational selves. These were (a) the learner (with unique military experiences); (b) the learning environment (the military academy); (c) and the learning task (communicative competency). Findings indicated that cadets constructed ideal L2 selves in accordance with their prospective (and imagined) uses of Portuguese, albeit for different purposes (military versus non-military). The divergence in potential foreign language application was manifested primarily within the context of the learning environment. This study informs L2 instructors of the complex, multiple facets that can contribute to foreign language motivational development. We note that instructors may find it useful to help guide students' L2 ideal selves in order to maximize motivation and enhance overall FLL efforts.

Keywords: *foreign language motivation; L2 motivational self system; military L2 education; foreign language learning; second language acquisition*

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learning (FLL) for United States (U.S.) military cadets and midshipmen (henceforth *cadets*) is a significant endeavor, as graduates are likely to serve in at least one foreign country and interact with military personnel and civilians whose native language is not English.¹ As such, military academies place a primary emphasis on developing cadets' ability to communicate in their target foreign language. Within this emphasis exists a complicated, interconnected nest of constructs (e.g., foreign language anxiety and willingness to communicate), all of which have been shown to influence FLL (e.g., Horwitz, 2010; MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noels, 1998). Of particular interest to us is the relationship between L2 motivation and military-specific considerations. Specifically, to what extent do cadets' *imagined communities* (Anderson, 1983) of military practice inform their foreign language studies? Henry (2015) stressed that "motivated behaviors do not take place in relative isolation but are shaped by the other ongoing activities in which the learner is engaged" (p. 83). These ongoing activities are of particular interest because, unlike FLL in traditional college settings, FLL at a military academy occurs within a larger structure aimed at developing cadets on three fronts: academically, physically, and militarily (with a significant focus on character building). Within a military academy, not only are cadets swiftly exposed to a rank hierarchy that may induce additional stressors during learning (Argaman, 2009; Avtgis & Kassing, 2001; Jablin, 1979), but other considerations such as career trajectory, specialty service, and overseas deployment may likewise affect motivation to learn a foreign language. Given that such extra-curricular considerations inform cadets' imagined communities, understanding the link between their perceived future military belonging and FLL (Kanno & Norton, 2003) can, and should, inform foreign language teaching in a military academy.

We view FLL in U.S. military academies as falling under the larger umbrella of languages for specific purposes (LSP), in which teaching emphasizes "both linguistics and content area knowledge that are specific to a particular context" (Trace, Hudson, & Brown, 2015, p. 3). Within LSP, emphasis is placed on the language practices "related in content (i.e., in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities" (Strevens, 1988, p. 1-2). Though interest in LSP "has existed for as long as language instruction itself" (Trace et al., 2015, p. 2), English has served as the primary language of interest (e.g., Paltridge & Starfield, 2014). Yet, given the increased global presence of languages such as Chinese (e.g., Chan, 2018; Sharma, 2018), it becomes necessary to consider the range of specific purposes for which such languages are learned. As such, with the intent of identifying different factors that impact foreign language motivation within a military academy, we consider the cases of Cadet (CDT) Alexander and CDT Chamberlin, two second-year (sophomore) students from a major U.S. service academy studying Portuguese. By focusing on the unique nature of the specific context, we provide additional insight into the

development of FLL motivation as it relates to learners' imagined occupational usage.

LANGUAGE LEARNING WITHIN A MILITARY CONTEXT

Overall, FLL research within a military context is underrepresented in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Certain factors, such as a lack of access to this specialized community or an unfamiliarity with military culture, may contribute to the dearth of literature in this area. Nonetheless, the ability for soldiers to learn and utilize a foreign language effectively has important career-progressing and mission-related consequences. As stated by Olynyk, Sankoff, and d'Anglejan (1983) in their study of bilingual speakers at two Canadian military colleges, "their [Francophone military personnel] ability to use the language [L2 English] will have important repercussions on evaluations of their competence as they carry out their duties alongside native speakers" (p. 214). The following provides background information on the service academy in focus and the role of FLL within this unique institution.

Although most cadets entering U.S. service academies (such as West Point, the Air Force Academy, and the Naval Academy) directly after high school, a small minority (~5.5%) are accepted while already serving as active duty enlisted soldiers and sailors (e.g., *prior service*). By enrolling in a U.S. service academy, cadets agree to serve as military officers immediately upon graduation. The base commitment is a mandatory 5-year active duty service obligation, but there also exists a 20-year term that will take officers to retirement. During the periods of service, officers are afforded opportunities to pursue specialty career fields that emphasize foreign language utilization, which include Special Forces, Military Intelligence, and the Foreign Area Officer field.² Within such specializations, foreign language use may include interacting with foreign military forces for operational planning and training, liaising with foreign diplomats, and conducting interrogations.

Specific to the service academy highlighted in our study, foreign language learning is a complex affair. With two semesters of mandatory study, cadets can choose from eight languages on which to focus (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish). Classroom instruction is given by both military and civilian instructors, with a range of study abroad opportunities available (in both military and civilian locations). Whereas the initial years of language study emphasize the development of communicative ability, the final two years provide learners with military-specific language courses. As previously stated, foreign language learning carries potential high-stakes, real-world implications, as cadets are likely to serve in at least one foreign language-speaking country during their post-graduation service. For this reason, the academy's foreign language program stresses communicative ability as the primary outcome of its curriculum.³

L2 MOTIVATION WITHIN A MILITARY CONTEXT

The fact that language study is mandatory for cadets does not guarantee their interest, much less success. L2 motivation is a complex system that warrants further inquiry (Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013). In recent years, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) has proposed a model that often serves as the foundation for contemporary FLL motivational research. His second language (L2) motivational self system includes three key constituents: the *ideal L2 self*, the *ought-to L2 self*, and the *L2 learning experience*. The first two components address which specific motivational factors orient an individual towards the future L2 self, and the third factor encompasses the context of L2 acquisition. Internal desire and intrinsic motivation normally guide one's ideal self. Dörnyei (2010) noted that the ideal self is linked with two dimensions: *integrativeness* (e.g., the desire to communicate with members of an L2 community) and *promotional instrumentality* (e.g., professional success or career advancement). Dörnyei and Chan (2013) described the ideal self as a powerful motivator that pushes L2 learners to reduce discrepancies between their actual and ideal selves.

Alternatively, social pressure and avoidance of negative outcomes usually dictate the ought-to self (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Papi & Teimouri, 2014). Here, the learners' perceived obligation to acquire an L2 may not necessarily align with future goals or desires. *Prevention-focused instrumentality* (e.g., studying to not fail an exam) attends one's ought-to self (Dörnyei, 2010). Finally, the L2 learning experience refers to situation specific motives tied to the immediate learning environment and experience (Dörnyei, 2005). Unlike more traditional college-level settings, FLL at a military academy promotes not only academic growth, but also physical and military growth. The ultimate goal is to transition cadets into junior officers for service to their nation. Given this holistic emphasis on personal development, it would seem inappropriate to discuss FLL without considering the learner environment beyond the immediate foreign language classroom.

Whether the ideal or ought-to L2 self (e.g., *wants-based* versus *needs-based*) guides the formation of cadets' L2 identity is yet to be determined. One possible entry point into this relationship may be through Anderson's (1983) *imagined community* construct. Anderson referred to an imagined community as groups of people, largely intangible and inaccessible, with whom we connect via our imagination. Such imagery has been strongly associated with FLL motivation (Kanno & Norton, 2003) and is worth further discussion. The concept of an imagined language community, for example, stipulates that the learner maintains little to no initial contact with the members of that L2 community. As such, students must conjecture affiliation requirements as they are not in routine interaction with the group. Individuals must ultimately reconcile their entry into an imagined, globalized L2 community, with their ideal L2 self (Ryan, 2006). Cadets are likely influenced by several imagined communities as they start to acquire a foreign language. These may include native speakers of a particular country, specialized military L2 users, such as Foreign Area Officers, or others.

Additionally, learning a foreign language may improve a cadet's position for future rank promotion or access to unique overseas assignments. Although many cadets will deploy to at least one foreign nation during their tenure in the military, specific locations are determined by operational requirements and often do not align with an individual's language proficiency. That said, how cadets begin establishing their L2 selves is strongly related to their career aspirations, and aspirations are generally quite malleable. Though cadets may differ in their initial military knowledge, practical experience gained through study at a military academy is likely to significantly inform their long-term military aspirations.

PRESENT STUDY

The current study is guided by three research questions:

1. What links do two military cadets indicate between their FLL goals and their military learning experience?
2. How do they foresee their future foreign language usage in reference to military application?
3. To what extent do their FLL goals relate to their desired belonging to a larger, imagined language community?

To address the interaction between FLL motivation and military-based foreign language study, we conducted a comparative case study of two sophomore cadets majoring in Portuguese at a U.S. military academy. A comparative approach (e.g., Crowther, 2019; Menard-Warwick, 2005) allows for a focused comparison of the similarities and differences between two focal participants. Though limited in terms of the generalizability, a more nuanced investigation derived from the experiences of two cadets allows for more in-depth consideration of potential context-specific variables at play during FLL. We specifically consider the formation of their motivational selves in relationship to their specific learning environment (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). We divided the data into three distinct categories to better focus our analysis: (a) the *cadet* to understand the learners' backgrounds (i.e., L2 learner); (b) the *military academy* as the FLL environment; (c) and the military academy goal of *communicative proficiency* as the learning task for potential future foreign language application.

Participants

Cadet (CDT) Chamberlin and CDT Alexander,⁴ two second-year (sophomore) students from a major U.S. service academy, were the participants for this research study. Importantly, both CDTs were "prior-service," having already spent significant time as active duty enlisted soldiers. Such experience provides cadets with specific military training, familiarity with rank hierarchy, and job experiences that are generally unfamiliar to the overall academy student population. Both cadets were starting their first semester of beginner Portuguese at the time of data collection. The students were native English speakers and

possessed no prior knowledge of the target L2. Military-related information about the two cadets is provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Cadets' Military-based Biographical Data

<i>Cadet</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Highest rank attained</i>	<i>Component</i>	<i>Duty position</i>
Chamberlin	22	Male	E4/Specialist*	National Guard	Combat Engineer Team Leader Blackhawk
Alexander	23	Male	E4/Specialist*	Active Duty	Helicopter Crew Chief

*E4 refers to a Department of Defense paygrade; *Specialist* is a rank for junior enlisted soldiers.

Researcher Positioning

As an officer in the U.S. armed forces, the first author (and sole interviewer) maintained unique access to the participants in this study. A former instructor at a military academy, he was familiar with the academic environment, including the FLL curriculum, study abroad opportunities to foreign military universities, and possible L2 career paths offered to commissioned officers. Despite an insider connection to the U.S. military, he concealed his identity to (a) make the cadets feel comfortable and facilitate open and honest dialogue, and (b) discourage the cadets from leaving out pertinent, military-relevant details. As such, he positioned himself as a researcher-as-befriender (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003) throughout the data collection period. The second author, who possessed no prior military knowledge, did not engage directly with either cadet, but served as the primary transcriber and conducted the initial thematic coding of interviews (see below).

Data Collection

We employed two methods of data collection. First, the cadets completed a Preliminary Background and Anxiety Questionnaire relating to service background, L2 communicative anxiety, and apprehension levels around military officers. The documentation measured each cadets' general trait anxiety and foreign language anxiety. Secondly, the first author conducted two, semi-structured interviews with each cadet via telephone. The interviews were exploratory in nature and allowed the cadets to discuss in detail any topics or concerns that arose from the interview questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). All interview materials are available via the IRIS (Repository of Instruments for Research) database (Marsden, Mackey, & Plonsky, 2016).

Data Analysis

We evaluated all interview data using content analysis to ascertain themes and patterns (Friedman, 2012). Specific coding procedures followed the outline as described by Baralt (2012) for organizing qualitative data. That is, (a) open coding identified specific words or phrases redundant throughout the transcribed texts; next, (b) we extracted thematic content from relationships or patterns in the coding; and finally, (c) we interpreted these themes in response to our interest in the complex nature of L2 motivation within a military academy context. Findings of this study are presented analytically to detail, as Saldaña (2011) explains, any “proposed discoveries and insights” (p. 148) extracted from the data. In all excerpts provided, ‘C’ represents CDT Chamberlin, ‘A’ represents CDT Alexander, and ‘M’ represents the interviewer (i.e., the first author).

RESULTS

Overall, cadets presented themselves as confident L2 learners not afraid to use foreign language in a military setting (including during foreign military engagements or overseas deployments). Analysis of the Anxiety Questionnaire indicated little foreign language anxiety, and even a preference for military over civilian instructors (in contrast to prior concerns regarding the negative effects of rank hierarchy (Argaman, 2009; Avtgis & Kassing, 2001; Miller, 2016). Given the minimalized presence of foreign language anxiety felt by the two cadets, we drew upon content analysis to further examine how cadets’ experience during prior military service and current military academy study informed the interaction between their military aspirations and current FLL motivation. The initial interactions with CDTs Chamberlin and Alexander centered on their backgrounds as prior-enlisted soldiers, their transitions from soldier to cadet, and their initial period as novice Portuguese learners. The second interviews, conducted one month later, examined how the cadets viewed themselves utilizing Portuguese post-graduation.

The L2 Learner: Setting the Groundwork for SLA

CDT Chamberlin

Prior to becoming an Academy cadet, CDT Chamberlin was a student at a public university. Although his primary goal was to attend a military academy, it took him several attempts to gain acceptance. While waiting, CDT Chamberlin enlisted in the National Guard as a Combat Engineer. During his service, he worked closely with the platoon leader, whom he viewed as a role model. This mentor-mentee relationship positively influenced CDT Chamberlin and later situated him on two spectrums as a Portuguese student. As a mentor, CDT Chamberlin leaned on his prior-service background to become a class leader and

help peers learn Portuguese. As a mentee, he developed rapport with his military foreign language instructor that likely enhanced student-teacher relatability.

(1)

C: I actually prefer a military (foreign language) instructor. So, I was excited when I saw that...a lot of instructors here are officers that went here, so they understand what we go through as cadets...that connection is more easily seen and just easier to make with an officer. (Interview 1, CDT Chamberlin)

In addition, CDT Chamberlin's strong self-assurance positioned him well as a foreign language learner. His extroverted nature lessened the likelihood of experiencing communicative anxiety during his foreign language coursework. For example, CDT Chamberlin discussed his study abroad application to a military engineering university in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. When asked if he felt nervous or overwhelmed at the thought of total Portuguese immersion for an entire semester, CDT Chamberlin dismissed any notions of apprehension. To the contrary, he was delighted at the future prospect. Such confidence, likely a function of both individual character and a strong, military background, further propelled his determination to acquire a foreign language.

CDT Alexander

CDT Alexander came from a family with strong military roots and knew that he wanted to serve in the Army at a very young age. After enlisting in the Active Duty military, he quickly realized that the lifestyle and salary of a soldier would not be conducive to raising a family. To establish a more secure future, CDT Alexander applied to the military academy. He believed that becoming an officer would afford a greater level of financial stability, allowing him to "provide more for [his] family." Unlike CDT Chamberlin, CDT Alexander did not possess prior college experience. He did, however, spend his teenage years in Germany. During this time, CDT Alexander opted to learn German at his overseas high school. While motivated at first, he described the pace of coursework as "fast" and felt "intimidated" by the learning environment which did not, in his opinion, facilitate sufficient time for practice. He admitted feeling less anxious learning Portuguese at the academy than studying German as a teenager, due in large part to better pacing and more frequent L2 interactions with peers and instructors.

CDT Alexander also shared similar characteristics with CDT Chamberlin. For instance, CDT Alexander highlighted constructive encounters with unit leadership in the military, both in an office setting and during field exercises. These interactions proved influential in shaping his opinions of military officers at the academy. In particular, CDT Alexander expressed a high degree of relatability with his military instructors.

(2)

A: I would say nine out of ten instructors here are from the Army, and especially have graduated [from this service academy]. So, that kind of helps because you can relate to them because they've gone through a similar struggle that you're going through. (Interview 1, CDT Alexander)

These officers, he declared, often provided helpful examples of how to utilize academic training in a post-graduation, military context, including the application of a foreign language. In addition, CDT Alexander exhibited a high degree of self-confidence, both as a cadet and as a Portuguese learner. CDT Alexander was passionate about his L2 development and highlighted the Portuguese class as a bright spot in his academic schedule.

The FLL Environment: Military versus Non-military Application

CDT Chamberlin

Data from the cadets' second interviews revealed a disparity between how CDTs Alexander and Chamberlin envisioned future foreign language applicability. In concert with the military FLL environment, CDT Chamberlin anticipated military uses. For example, CDT Chamberlin discussed the possibility of attending specialized training with the Brazilian military during the summer months. His desire to attend this event stemmed from perceived military advantages.

(3)

C: I think it will be awesome working with a different force other than U.S. forces to see how another army operates...I think that would be pretty awesome, not only for my future career in the military, but future endeavors and life outside of the military. (Interview 2, CDT Chamberlin)

As seen in Example 3, CDT Chamberlin imagined developing military contacts for reference after graduation. He showed genuine excitement in using the foreign language and learning how foreign militaries trained in different environments. CDT Chamberlin treated the endeavor as an initial and necessary step in the path towards fluency.

During data collection, CDT Chamberlin was accepted into the academy's Portuguese study abroad program (scheduled for the following year).⁵ Although he did not know which school he would attend, CDT Chamberlin's first choice was another military school in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Besides experiencing the cultural aspects of the region, CDT Chamberlin reasoned that attending a school affiliated with the armed forces would put him into contact with Brazilian soldiers, forcing him to speak Portuguese throughout the day. He contrasted such a rigorous L2 immersion to that of a Brazilian civilian university, where he would be tempted to speak English with other exchange students.

CDT Alexander

CDT Alexander focused his anticipated use of Portuguese on broader cultural implications and away from military applicability. During the interview, he used words like “culture,” “people,” “food,” and “travel” to orient his future foreign language agenda. This was most notable while sharing his desire for immersion opportunities. CDT Alexander was also selected to participate in the academy’s study abroad program. Example 4 highlights his aspirations to practice Portuguese at a civilian university and away from a military environment.

(4)

A: I am more than likely going to get the civilian one [university] in Portugal.

M: Okay, and why do you say that?

A: Based on preference. Most of the cadets at my school want the schools in Brazil, so that eliminates the majority of the cadets, and a lot of them want the military experience. I personally want the one that, ah, I want to experience some civilian schools to see what that’s like. I think I would enjoy myself more there. (Interview 2, CDT Alexander)

Whereas the military academy emphasizes FLL for military purposes, CDT Alexander’s future interests appeared to lie elsewhere. He focused his FLL on more standard applications. In short, CDT Alexander did not appear to desire access to an imagined military community for which he would put his language skills to use. For CDT Alexander, the FLL environment did not position him as a future military linguist.

The FLL Task: Communicative Proficiency for Career Progression*CDT Chamberlin*

Both cadets also maintained different sentiments of foreign language use post-graduation. CDT Chamberlin viewed Portuguese as critical to his future military career path. He indicated that knowledge of Portuguese would likely facilitate acceptance into the Special Forces community, an elite branch.

(5)

C: My goal eventually is to be in Special Forces and doing that requires knowing a foreign language. So, like 7th Group Special Forces operates in South America primarily, so I see Brazil as a huge base of operation...I think that’s a main reason, military-wise, to learn the language. (Interview 2, CDT Chamberlin)

Interview data also suggested that FLL functioned as a specialized skill to help differentiate an officer from his peers. CDT Chamberlin perceived Portuguese fluency as an integral component to becoming a successful officer. When asked if he would be willing to take the Defense Language Proficiency Test

(DLPT)⁶ prior to graduation and alert the military of his L2 proficiency, CDT Chamberlin declared the following:

(6)

C: Absolutely. We are a part of a merit-based [service], so it's competitive for going for elite units and stuff like that. You want to have a leg up on the competition and having a foreign language background is one of those things that is kind of a rare X-factor that not everybody has and sets you apart. (Interview 2, CDT Chamberlin)

Additionally, when questioned if he would accept an assignment as a Foreign Area Officer to Brazil or Africa if presented the opportunity, CDT Chamberlin responded "probably" because, "it's a very prestigious job" that would set him up for more prominent positions in the future. Ultimately, CDT Chamberlin perceived that a linguistic niche would be good for a successful military career and thus held a more instrumental approach to SLA.

CDT Alexander

In contrast with CDT Chamberlin, CDT Alexander did not equate foreign language knowledge with career progression in the military. Although CDT Alexander expressed an interest in taking the DLPT, he had never considered the idea until the subject was broached in the interview. He wanted to evaluate his study abroad experience first before committing to the proficiency exam. CDT Alexander also did not envision himself utilizing Portuguese in the role of a military officer. When asked about using the language during post-graduation service, he quickly responded, "no." His FLL goals, he explained, centered on overseas trips and developing cultural perspectives. As seen in Example 7, CDT Alexander even believed that acquiring Portuguese would help him when vacationing in other parts of the world.

(7)

A: I know it's somewhat similar to Spanish, so I can see it as helpful when taking trips to Spanish-speaking countries. (Interview 2, CDT Alexander)

Furthermore, CDT Alexander did not place a great emphasis on making a career out of the Army. When pressed, he admitted to perhaps committing "twenty years and retiring." He claimed that he would need to reevaluate this position after his initial five-year service commitment. He also acknowledged the prioritization of family over military, which would significantly factor into any forthcoming career decisions.

(8)

A: My biggest goals aren't military-related as much as they are family-related. So, I'm looking towards more at having a family and that route. So, as far as the military goes, I'll just do the best I can while I'm there and be content with what I have. (Interview 2, CDT Alexander)

CDT Alexander's focus on family over a potential military career may have stemmed from his own experiences growing up in a military household (as discussed in Interview 1). From the perspective of a military dependent, attending an overseas high school and experiencing financial adversity could have a negative impact on domestic stability. As such, his commitment to the Army appeared less certain than CDT Chamberlin's. In the end, CDT Alexander's decision to learn Portuguese was not directly linked to a military future. Rather, cultural interactions and integrativeness served as the impetuses for his SLA at the academy.

DISCUSSION

The present study addressed the FLL motivation of two military cadets, CDTs Chamberlin and Alexander, in reference to their FLL goals, military learning experiences, and military career aspirations. The cadets' motivations for FLL appeared to diverge specifically in reference to the *learning environment* or, more specifically, how they viewed their future within the larger military community which encompassed their learning environment. Here, both cadets' ideal L2 selves played a major role in facilitating FLL, albeit for different reasons. CDT Chamberlin primarily viewed himself as a future L2 user within a specialized military community, whereas CDT Alexander wanted to learn Portuguese to enhance world travel and cultural awareness in non-military settings.

Two themes emerged from the data that demonstrated how both cadets appeared primed for foreign language acquisition within a military environment: (1) interactions with military officers and (2) individual confidence levels. First, the two cadets reported positive relationships with military officers throughout their time in the armed forces. Terms such as "positive," "wasn't intimidating," and "mentee-mentor" influenced their impressions of officers that carried over into cadet life. In fact, CDTs Alexander and Chamberlin seemed to prefer military foreign language instructors (Examples 1 and 2), highlighting *relatability* as a key developmental component within the classroom. Our findings aligned with Miller (2016), who reported that service academy cadets perceive military instructors as reliable sources of foreign language applicability in post-graduation venues. Whereas some studies suggest that officer-subordinate encounters may negatively impact the communicative positioning of the lower-ranking individual (Dean, Willis, & Hewitt, 1975; Halbe, 2011), we found no evidence of adverse hierarchical relationships or L2 speaking anxiety during our inquiry. That said, both cadets exhibited personality characteristics (i.e., low neuroticism and high extroversion), which appeared to lessen the negative impacts of foreign language anxiety (Dewaele, 2002, 2013). As reported on the Anxiety Questionnaire, CDTs Alexander and Chamberlin did not worry about learning a foreign language in the presence of a military instructor or using an L2 in a military context. Interview data also suggested that both cadets were extroverted.

Findings from the present study also aligned with elements of Dörnyei's (2005; 2009) L2 Motivational Self System, producing two distinct themes: (1) military versus non-military application, and (2) career progression. Both cadets' ideal L2 selves drove their desire to learn the Portuguese language. However, there were differences in how the *learning environment* influenced which motivational elements the cadets accessed when constructing their ideal selves (see Dörnyei, 2010). CDT Chamberlin presented a more pragmatic stance toward FLL, displaying higher quantities of promotional instrumentality over integrativeness. His interview data suggested a love of the Portuguese language, tempered with aspirations of foreign language use for military career opportunities (Example 3) and advancement in rank. CDT Alexander, on the other hand, seemed to rely on integrativeness as his foundation, expressing a love for the L2 and the Brazilian and Portuguese cultures. These differences are also highlighted in the two cadets' choices for study abroad: a civilian university for CDT Alexander (Example 4) versus a military school for CDT Chamberlin. Ultimately, the two cadets' ideal L2 selves revealed a strong difference in regards to the imagined community that drove their FLL. CDT Chamberlin clearly projected an interest in military access, seeing FLL as a tool for professional advancement. On the other hand, CDT Alexander's imagined community, clearly outside the military, focused on opportunities for cultural engagement and learning. Comparing the two cadets' imagined communities, CDT Chamberlin would appear to emphasize long-term involvement, whereas CDT Alexander's access is seemingly fleeting or episodic (e.g., travel, vacation).

The two cadets were split on how to apply their FLL post-graduation. CDT Chamberlin's future L2 path was rife with Brazilian and U.S. military checkpoints, including the Brazilian military training event, study abroad at a Brazilian military institute, and acceptance by the Special Forces community (Example 5). Here, Special Forces functioned as an imagined community that guided CDT Chamberlin's desire to learn Portuguese and Brazilian culture. He envisioned himself as a part of this elite group and viewed L2 fluency as a likely requirement for acceptance (Ryan, 2006). He also regarded successful FLL as a requisite for career progression. For him, acquiring Portuguese served as an "X-factor" to secure elite military positions and facilitate quick advancement through the officer ranks (Example 6). In this regard, acquiring a foreign language for specific purposes (here, inter-military communication for training or combat operations) may have informed CDT Chamberlin's desire to learn Portuguese (see Gollin-Kies, Hall, & Moore, 2015; Grosse & Voght, 2012). Conversely, CDT Alexander's perceived application of the Portuguese language was rooted in non-military qualities (Example 7). His imagined community revolved around conversing with native Portuguese speakers, expressing an eagerness to utilize the L2 for cultural enlightenment and leisure opportunities. CDT Alexander did not express a desire for foreign language utilization in a military context. Rather, he seemed to favor the potential application of Portuguese in a civilian environment.

Though drawing from a unique FLL context, implications for broader instructed foreign language settings are present. Findings from the study may

inform foreign language instructors about the complexities of L2 motivation. Indeed, beginning foreign language learners at the undergraduate level likely construct initial ought-to L2 selves from a variety of learning expectations. This ought-to L2 self may either align with or diverge from the ideal L2 self over time depending upon the influential nature of the learning environment. Therefore, it is important for teachers to remind students about the ways in which their language learning may benefit them in the future. In the LSP contexts, such as the military academy considered here, the reminders should be presented through the introduction of L2-specific content into the curriculum, focused on specialized vocabulary or potentially future-related, task-based scenarios. Doing so may prove advantageous to forming, fostering, and even maintaining the ideal self. Of concern in our U.S. military context is that such dedicated coursework does not appear to occur until later in the foreign language curriculum, with early emphasis placed on establishing the building blocks of the target language. This delay in LSP-foci may initially limit cadets' ability to link their FLL to a military future. However, increased access to military instructors in the early years of study may be one way to mitigate this issue.

A key to the military instructor-student relationship in the current study was the perception of relatability. Finding ways to become more relatable with L2 learners may also promote the ideal self, as well as guide students towards career paths or other opportunities linked to foreign language application. Instructors may shape this process by soliciting learners' specific FLL motivations and thoughts about future use at the beginning of the course, and use this information to inject targeted examples of foreign language applicability throughout the curriculum. Sharing relevant, personal L2 experiences in the classroom is an invaluable method of establishing relatability. In lieu of personal experiences, an instructor may utilize outside resources to help foster rapport (e.g., relevant news articles, guest lecturers, etc.). Aside from promoting relatability and increased awareness of applicability, such efforts may also provide the added benefit of decreasing foreign language anxiety in the classroom and thus enhancing learnability.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigates factors that may influence FLL for prior service cadets at a U.S. military academy. In our analyses, we considered how the *L2 learner*, *learning environment*, and *learning task* contributed to the formation of FLL motivation. Our findings indicated that both cadets demonstrated similar potential for FLL based upon shared personality traits and previous military backgrounds. However, motivational tendencies diverged within the learning environment and influenced how each cadet viewed his future foreign language utilization. Here, expectations for foreign language application within a military career strongly influenced CDT Chamberlin's motivational system. Similar career aspirations did not appear to affect CDT Alexander's desire for FLL, which was rooted more in civilian applications. In short, that CDT Chamberlin's imagined

community of choice (U.S. military) aligned with his military-based ideal L2 self should not come as a surprise. Similarly, that CDT Alexander's imagined community was not U.S. military-based aligns with his non-military-based ideal L2 self.

Whereas informative about how various military-related factors may work in tandem to inform cadets' foreign language motivations, the current study is limited primarily by *a posteriori* view of this dynamic relationship. A longitudinal project (spanning perhaps the entire time of foreign language education at a military academy) that measures the L2 progression and changes in foreign language motivation of multiple learners would remedy this concern. Military-specific variables, such as perceived future foreign language usage in a military context, critical versus non-critical languages, and aspects of career progression could serve as points of departure for such an inquiry. How these factors inform issues of identity (e.g., ideal versus ought-to L2 selves) for students within a military context is ripe for further development (see also Geertz, 1973, on "thick descriptions" in ethnographic research). Lastly, incorporating a more extensive collection of participant documents, including course grades, proficiency test results, and journal entries might provide better insight into learner motivation and future L2 self-construction and how these two areas influence growth in proficiency.⁷

NOTES

1. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, “our military service members and civilians operate in every time zone and in every climate. More than 450,000 employees are overseas, both afloat and ashore” (from the Department of Defense website <https://www.defense.gov/About/DoD-101/>).
2. Foreign Area Officers are specialized, regionally-focused military officers who serve overseas tours as defense attachés or other political-military advisors. Additional information can be found at <http://www.faoa.org/FAO-What-is-a-FAO>.
3. The Department of Foreign Languages emphasizes communicative ability as a primary outcome for cadets and is referenced within the academy’s Academic Program Goal #1 (i.e., *Communication: graduates communicate effectively with all audiences*). The department states, in part, that, “graduates can communicate basic information, needs, and requests in a widely-spoken foreign language.” The current Academic Program Goals were approved by the Academic Board and Superintendent on 25 April 2013.
4. All names used are pseudonyms.
5. It is important to mention that the academy offers a variety of locations for semester-long, study abroad opportunities, including both foreign military service schools and civilian universities. While cadets are offered a chance to list their individual preferences, the Department of Foreign Languages ultimately decides where each individual is placed.
6. The Defense Language Proficiency Test is a proficiency measure of language ability for Department of Defense personnel. See <http://dliflc.edu/dlpt-guides/>.
7. This research did not receive funding or grants from any public, commercial, or not-for-profit sources.

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AUTHORS

Zachary F. Miller, Ph.D. Department of Foreign Languages, U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Correspondence for this article should be addressed to zachary.miller@westpoint.edu

Dustin Crowther, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Second Language Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa. Correspondence for this article should be addressed to dcrowth@hawaii.edu

Challenges and Gains through Internships in Japan

Nobuko Koyama

University of California, Davis

This study examined the results of a post-internship survey and a follow-up survey and interviews with 11 undergraduate students from the University of California in Davis, who worked as volunteers in a ten-week unpaid internship in Japan to examine their perceptions of the challenges and gains of working abroad. The results of the post-internship survey indicated that all students perceived that (1) the internship's most positive outcome was language gains, particularly the improvement in listening comprehension, and (2) the language barrier was the greatest challenge during their internship. The follow-up interviews and survey further revealed that students used various strategies to overcome difficulties—adjusting attitudes and perspectives when facing the language barrier and cultural differences. In addition, students strongly believed that the support system of the senpai (senior)-kohai (junior) relationships prepared and helped them to survive and thrive in the internship.

Keywords: overseas internship, language gains, language barrier, intercultural competence, cultural differences, senpai-kohai relationships

INTRODUCTION

Overseas internship programs help participating students expand their horizons and immerse themselves in different cultures and languages. Gains from these experiences include increased language proficiency, personal growth (e.g., self-confidence, a sense of achievement, open-mindedness, and a global perspective), and the development of intercultural competence (IC) (Deardorff, 2009a; Dwyer, 2004; Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). More specifically, overseas internships help students feel more comfortable working with people from different cultures and backgrounds, which is conducive to developing IC. Overseas internships also make international careers more accessible and viable for students. Clearly, the effects of overseas internships

extend beyond academic benefits (Erickson, 2011; He & Qin, 2017; Honigsblum, 2002; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2006; Orahood, Kruze, & Pearson, 2004; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Twombly et al., 2012). It is no surprise that, in many disciplines overseas internship programs are considered “an increasingly popular experiential learning method” (Toncar & Cudmore, 2000: p. 55). Experiential learning is a recursive process “of constructing knowledge that involves a creative tension among the four learning modes that is responsive to contextual demands,”; these modes are experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 194).

Curiously, student perceptions of a successful internship do not always align with their advancement in language skills. Erickson’s (2011) study on international engineering internships in France revealed that although students “described a great deal of learning and growth...very little had to do with language or engineering (pp. 5-6).” Kurasawa and Nagatomi’s study (2006) of internships in Japan reported that students were not “expected to have a very high proficiency in Japanese language” and that they “had little opportunity to use *katakana* and *keego*, contrary to the assumption of the importance of both” (p. 25). Both studies showed that students evaluated the entire internship experience positively, even though internships abroad did not warrant language gains. In other words, students’ perceived success was not solely dependent on language gains (Erickson, 2011; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2006).

This study examined how internship participants perceived and evaluated the overseas internship experiences through the Japan Children’s Home Internship Program (JCHIP), focusing on students’ perceptions of gains and challenges. Through the post-internship survey and the follow-up interviews and survey, this study revealed key factors of successful internship experiences, not only for participants but also for educators and administrators involved in overseas internship programs.

INTERNSHIPS IN JAPAN

What is JCHIP?

Eleven undergraduate students (seven female and four male) participated the JCHIP in the summer of 2017. JCHIP was established in 1993 between the University of California at Davis (UCD) and a children’s home in Kyoto, Japan. Since then, it has expanded to include eight affiliated children’s homes in Japan, from the northernmost home—Sendai, to Fukushima, Saitama, Tokyo, Yokohama, Aichi, Kyoto, and the southernmost home—Kumamoto. The children’s homes are a combination of an orphanage and a group home, providing shelter for underprivileged children. Each home has its unique features, capacities (ranging from 40 to 90 children, ages 2 to 18), and religious affiliations (various Christian denominations). Whereas some homes require more professional supervision and support for children with mental and psychological issues, other are less restricted group homes, where children may visit families regularly. For instance, the

children's home in Fukushima has six group-home facilities, each housing six to seven children supervised by two to three staff.

Every summer, 13 to 15 selected undergraduate students from UCD work as volunteers at the JCHIP children's homes for ten weeks. All JCHIP interns are required to have completed at least one year of university-level Japanese language study. The volunteer work includes housekeeping chores (e.g., cleaning, laundry, and table-setting), activities with children (e.g., playing, talking, supervising in the playground or outside the home, and helping with homework), and assisting the Japanese staff with other tasks. In addition to their daily volunteer work, interns offer English language and cultural lessons (e.g., introducing American food culture—popular ethnic foods, vegetarian/vegan foods, etc.). In exchange for the volunteer work, the children's homes provide the interns room and board on site, creating an immersion setting.

Prior to their internship, pre-departure preparation is provided to the interns. During the pre-departure orientation in March, an information booklet is distributed and new interns are introduced to former interns. New interns undergo the following preparations: (1) two 2-hour language/cultural training sessions between April and May, and (2) establishing communication with their prospective children's homes between May and June.

After returning from the JCHIP internship, the "returnees" participate in a debriefing session in early October that serves two purposes: (1) reflecting on the internship experience, sharing thoughts, and comparing experiences; and (2) planning by faculty and returnees for a new JCHIP recruitment cycle by updating the information on the homes and the Japanese language and culture training sessions. Kurasawa and Nagatomi (2007) used "recounting of problem episodes" by internship returnees as one of the Japanese language classroom activities "to become familiar with the patterns of misunderstanding that commonly arise" (p. 27). Similarly, the JCHIP returnees update the language training sessions by suggesting vocabulary/expressions and useful pragmatic information. For example, one returnee explained that it was awkward to keep asking *Genki desuka?* ("How are you?") every morning; but small talk, such as discussing the weather, was an innocuous and effective conversation starter. In fact, talking about the weather with her Japanese coworkers became the returnee's daily ritual. Returnees' experiences in the children's homes provided valuable information for incorporation into the training sessions.

Moreover, JCHIP Japan compiles interns' feedback and evaluation of each home and shares this information with UC Davis. The feedback and evaluations are important resources for faculty in recruiting new interns and providing more effective training and for supervisors in planning and improving the program.

The Past, Present, and Future of JCHIP

This study began to take shape when the researcher noticed that many JCHIP returnees pursued international careers, mainly in Japan. In its 25-year

history, many students had informally provided positive remarks, but there had been no studies on the JCHIP experiences. Returnees, past and present, shared the same sentiment—JCHIP changed their lives. This is the first formal study to examine how students perceived their JCHIP experiences.

In 2017, 13 undergraduates, selected as JCHIP interns, completed a 10-week internship. Then returnees participated in the post-internship survey, which examined their perceptions of language and other gains through the internship. To supplement the initial findings of the post-internship survey, a follow-up survey and interviews were conducted: six returnees participated in the interviews (five graduated) and two in the survey (one graduated). One returnee, who did not take the post-internship survey, participated in the follow-up interview.

The post-internship survey provided the basis for this study, exploring the following research questions:

1. What aspects of the internship posed challenges, and how did students overcome them?
2. What was the impact of the JCHIP internship on students' life?

In the follow-up survey and interviews, many participants, particularly those who graduated, delved into the questions by relating to their lives after college and elaborating on the internship experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overseas Internships

Overseas internships, valued in the globalized job market, are considered by educational institutions to be an ideal opportunity for experiential learning outside the classroom (Honigsblum, 2002; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000). In recent years, many studies have examined the benefits of overseas internships, including language gains, personal growth, increases in intercultural competence (IC), and gains in desirability and competitiveness in the job market (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Erickson, 2011; He & Qin, 2017; Honigsblum, 2002; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2006; Matsumoto, 2004; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Yashima, 2010). Many non-language factors bring a sense of accomplishment to participating students, such as working and interacting with people from other cultures, accomplishing tasks/projects, and learning about workplace culture (Erickson, 2011; He & Qin, 2017; Honigsblum, 2002; Matsumoto, 2004). Among the benefits, language is positioned in a unique place, depending on the particular internship program. In some cases, language skills are crucial for interns to accomplish tasks and projects and to survive in the working environment. In general, language influences participants' perceptions of the internship experience. According to He and Qin (2017), students who positively evaluated the internship experience reported that it helped them develop "language proficiency, intercultural competence, and professional knowledge" and "enhance students' global view of their future career plans" (p. 69).

Intercultural Competence (IC) and Personal Growth

Personal growth is an umbrella term for self-confidence, maturity, a sense of achievement, open-mindedness, tolerance, patience, and a global perspective (Deardorff, 2009a; Dwyer, 2004; Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut & Klute, 2012). Enrichment of any personal aspect, from identity to intellectual development, is subsumed under personal growth, whereas intercultural competence (IC) may be defined as “the successful engagement or collaboration toward a single or shared set of goals between individuals or groups who do not share the same cultural origins or background” (Twombly et al., 2012, p. 69). IC can be summarized by three themes: “empathy, perspective taking, and adaptability” (Deardorff, 2009b, p. 265), which inherently underlie an important aspect of relationships and relationship building among individuals.

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) defined IC as “the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientations to the world (p.7).” When individuals “manifest aspects of, or are influenced by, their group or cultural affiliations and characteristics,” such as their nationality, ethnicity or religion, when interacting with others, this interaction becomes “an *intercultural process*” (p. 7) (*italics in the original text*). IC is also construed as a unique composite facility with a set of skills “and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p. 97).

Notice that many attributes of IC encompass personal growth, and differ only in a cultural context. Overseas internships provide this specific cultural context, where interns’ exposure to different cultures and languages affect their personal growth. IC and personal growth are treated synonymously for the remainder of this study.

Some claim that IC is increased by exposure to other cultures through being abroad (Euler & Rami, 2006, as cited in Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012). Still others argue that the duration of study/work abroad is what matters—the longer the better (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012; Davidson, 2010; Dwyer, 2004; Sasaki, 2011). The notion of “being there is enough” mirrors the long-standing myth that studying abroad is a “cure for all language problems” (Kinginger, 2011, p. 58). According to Behrnd and Porzelt (2012), students “often found the experience abroad more challenging than they had expected” (p. 214). As observed by Stephenson (1999, 2002), study abroad poses both “social and psychological challenges” stemming from “socialising with others, living together or managing the daily routine (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012, p. 214).” These challenges may threaten students’ personal beliefs.

Preparation

Students can prepare for their overseas experience; a growing number of studies stress the importance and effectiveness of preparation in increasing IC, which has a positive impact on other gains, including language gains (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012; Bhawuk, 1998; Cemalcilar & Falbo, 2008; Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert & Hoff, 2005; Erickson, 2011; He & Qin, 2017; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2007; Kurpis & Hunter, 2017). It is suggested that effective preparation may maximize students' experiences and gains and facilitate their development of IC. Preparation also acts as a shock absorber for upcoming challenges and surprises.

Well-designed preparation may include pre-departure orientation, workshops, training sessions, or a combination of these. For instance, Kurasawa and Nagatomi (2007) explained the format of pre-departure preparation for students going to Japan for internship programs. Their preparation included "seminars and survival-type training" comprising a retreat where new interns had a chance to interact and learn with fellow interns and alumni (p. 24). Cohen et al. (2009) examined the effect of preparation using a *Students' Guide* that supported study abroad for students at three stages: pre-departure, in-country, and re-entry. They concluded that the *Students' Guide* had a positive effect on students' experiences and helped them improve intercultural skills. In short, effective preparation facilitates the improvement of students' IC, equips them with necessary skills and knowledge, and reduces potential stress and anxiety when encountering novel situations and problems abroad.

METHODS

Participants

Eleven students participated in this study. All underwent the training sessions prior to their internships. Ten out of the 13 JCHIP returnees took the post-internship survey, five of the ten took the follow-up interviews and two of the ten took the follow-up survey. One student who did not take the post-internship survey took the follow-up interview. Table 1 shows the students' academic backgrounds, levels of Japanese courses completed at the time of the internship, and approximate language proficiency levels defined by the ACTFL language proficiency scale (2012). It also shows which survey/interview each student took.

Table 1
Students' Academic Backgrounds and Language Proficiency

<i>Student (pseudonym)</i>	<i>Major(s)</i>	<i>Minor(s)</i>	<i>Japanese Courses Completed</i>	<i>ACTFL (2012)</i>
Erica (G)**	Economics	Japanese	2nd year	Intermediate Mid
Tom*	Japanese, Linguistics		1st year	Novice High
Fred*	Japanese, Economics		2nd year	Intermediate Mid
Roy (G)*	Japanese, Biology		2nd year	Intermediate Mid
Jessica (G)	Design, Communi- cation	Japanese, Chinese	2nd year	Intermediate Mid
Mary*	Japanese, Economics	Business Administration, Accounting	3rd year & 1 year of Japanese language tutor	Advanced Mid
Mark (G)	Japanese, International Relations		3rd year	Advanced Low
Sarah	Japanese	Political Science	1st year	Novice High
Olivia (G)*	Comparative Literature		1st year	Novice High
Sophia (G)**	Psychology	Japanese	2nd year	Intermediate Mid
Rose***	Neurology/ Physiology/ Behavioral Sciences	Japanese, Education	2nd year	Intermediate Mid

*=took the follow-up interview, **= took the follow-up survey, ***= Did not take the post-internship survey but took the follow-up interview, (G) = Graduated at the time of follow-up interviews/survey.

Procedures

A post-internship survey was conducted upon the return of students from Japan, followed by a follow-up survey and interviews nine months later.

The post-internship survey consisted of four parts to determine (1) students' gains (language, personal, career, and IC); (2) the lasting impact of the internship on their worldviews, (e.g., political view, education, family life...); (3)

the ways students handle difficulties and challenges, and (4) students' preparedness. Parts (1) and (2) used a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree), and Part (3) had open-ended questions to elicit comments and anecdotes. Part (4) asked students whether they felt well-prepared for the internships, and those who answered "No" were asked to elaborate on what could be done to make them better prepared. The survey questions were selected based on the key elements that previous studies had focused on, such as the development of language, career, and IC (Dwyer, 2004; Erickson, 2011; Kinginger, 2013; Savicki & Brewer, 2015; Twombly, et al., 2012). These elements had also been mentioned by many JCHIP returnees in the previous years. This study focused on student responses to Parts (1), (3), and (4). As Part (2) focused on students' socio-political worldviews, which were not directly related to the two research questions, they were not discussed in this paper.

In the follow-up interviews, the students were asked to reflect on (1) reasons for applying to JCHIP, (2) thoughts on pre-departure training sessions, (3) difficulties during the internships, particularly language barrier, (4) how the difficulties were overcome, and (5) the impact of JCHIP on their life and career goals. The same questions were asked in the follow-up survey. Question (1) was posed as a thought-provoking question to help students reflect on the internship experiences by taking them back to the beginning. Students' input was analyzed to answer the two research questions.

RESULTS

Students' Perceptions of Overall Gains

Part (1) of the post-internship survey had 16 questions on students' perceived gains in language, personal growth, IC, and relevance to career plans (see Table 2). Each question was associated with one or more elements: L (language gain), P (personal gains), C (career relevance), and IC. Note that the overall percentage was calculated with the highest possible score of 50 when all ten participants scored a factor of 5.

Table 2
Students' Perceptions of Gains from Internships (N=10)

<i>Gains</i>	<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Likert Scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree)</i>					<i>Average Rating</i>
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	
L	1. I am more confident with my Japanese language skills and proficiency than before the internship.				1	9	4.9
L/IC	2. This internship helped me better understand the Japanese language and culture than before the internship.				2	8	4.8
L/IC	3. This internship helped me better understand my own language and culture.		1		6	3	4.1
L/P/IC	4. I am more comfortable interacting with people from different cultures.				3	7	4.7
L	5. I am more comfortable speaking Japanese.				4	6	4.6
C	6. This internship influenced my career goals and plans.	1	2	1	1	5	3.7
C	7. This internship influenced my academic goals and plans.		1	2	4	3	3.9
C	8. This internship caused changes in my career goals and plans.	1	1	3	0	5	3.7
L	9. This internship motivated me more to further my Japanese language learning.			1		9	4.8
P/IC	10. Through this internship I became more open-minded.				2	8	4.8
P/IC	11. Through this internship I became more tolerant.				3	7	4.7
P/IC	12. Through this internship I became more patient.			1	4	5	4.4
P/IC	13. Through this internship I became more mature.				4	6	4.6
C	14. Through this internship I became more interested in international work/volunteer.			1	1	8	4.7
P	15. This internship increased my self-confidence.		1	4	5		4.4

P/IC	16. This internship caused me to change/refine my understanding of Japanese culture.	1	4	5	4.4
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The survey results showed two areas of important gains. First, all students perceived high language gains (Questions1, 4, 5, and 9), regardless of their language proficiency level prior to the internship. Second, most students felt that they had realized personal growth toward becoming more open-minded, tolerant, patient, and mature (Questions10–13).

When individual perceptions were examined, a large gap was found between 5.00 (Sophia) and 3.45 (Roy), as shown in Table 3. This gap is further discussed in the following sections.

Table 3
Individual Ratings of Gains

<i>Name</i>	<i>Average Rating</i>
Sophia	5.00
Olivia	4.80
Sarah	4.80
Jessica	4.75
Tom	4.65
Mark	4.55
Mary	4.25
Erica	4.15
Fred	4.15
Roy	3.45
Group Average	4.45

Language Barrier and Language Gains

Davidson (2010), summarizing the experiences of U.S. students’ study abroad, explained that studying abroad represents “the first serious encounter with the challenges of self-managed learning, self-conscious strategy selection, and formative self-diagnosis—all qualities they will need for lifelong learning in general” (p. 10). Learning strategy and self-assessment are also important for overseas internship.

The post-internship survey contained two open-ended questions about participants’ attitudes, learning methods, and coping mechanisms when encountering difficulties. Although all students believed that they became more confidence and comfortable speaking Japanese, the language barrier and language-related issues were perceived as the most difficult aspect of the internship. Students used strategies and problem-solving methods to overcome the language barrier. They first assessed their attitudes towards speaking Japanese and decided on a “gung-ho” attitude—trying to speak Japanese all the time. For instance, Sarah and Olivia resolved to force themselves to take the initiative of

talking with Japanese coworkers. Similarly, Mark “tried to minimize the amount of miscommunications and misunderstandings by properly spending the time to communicate to the staff effectively” (Mark, post-internship survey, November 29, 2018). Meanwhile, students dealt with language-related stress and frustration by “venting” or “debriefing” with peers at the end of the day, when they freely expressed themselves in English. The post-internship survey showed that students all resolved to speak Japanese.

The follow-up interviews/survey provided more details about the mental and emotional struggle that students had with the language barrier. Olivia explained how her belief in needing to be “perfect” in speaking Japanese got in the way during the first half of the internship. Sophia also mentioned in the follow-up survey that “I had been insecure about my ability to properly communicate with the children and staff members” (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 14, 2018). They were conscious of their speaking skills and struggled with speaking Japanese. Interestingly, half-way through her internship, Olivia decided to “give up on being perfect” (Olivia, interview, September 14, 2018). Sophia came to understand that making mistakes “was not a large concern of the children and staff members” (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 14, 2018). Furthermore, Sophia was encouraged by her Japanese coworkers “to teach [them] English through daily tasks,” which made her “feel like an asset” and boosted her morale. Consequently, this language exchange helped her feel “more comfortable talking” in Japanese (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 14, 2018). Once they assumed a new attitude and perspective toward speaking Japanese, they felt they were making more progress in speaking without the fear of making mistakes.

At the follow-up interviews, all six students agreed that their listening comprehension had improved significantly. For instance, Olivia explained that, toward the end of the internship, she found herself being “able to understand almost anything without issue” (Olivia, interview, September 14, 2018) of what people were saying at a normal or fast speed, which gave her a sense of accomplishment. Olivia also realized that her speaking proficiency was not up to par with her improved listening comprehension, and this gap in her language skills frustrated her from time to time. Similarly, during the follow-up interview, Tom noted that his listening comprehension was improved and his vocabulary was increased more than his peers who did not take the internship (October 2, 2018). The same sentiment was shared by Roy who “could hear better” (Roy, interview, September 17, 2018). Erica also commented that “I improved my ability to switch from casual to formal Japanese without much trouble” (Erica, follow-up survey, September 23, 2018). Switching between different styles in Japanese is considered an advanced skill. Erica believed she had developed this particular skill during her internship.

There was a disparity among students in problem-solving methods for the language barrier. Whereas all students mentioned adjusting attitudes toward language-related issues in the post-internship survey, Fred, Roy, and Tom emphasized the importance of using a tool during the interviews; they relied on translator apps to communicate with Japanese coworkers and explained how those

tools facilitated their communication. Interestingly, none of the female returnees mentioned the use of apps or tools. It was not clear whether there was a gender difference in dealing with the language barrier.

Career Relevance

As shown in Table 2, the average rating of career relevance (Questions 6–8) was below 4.00. Analysis of individual responses revealed that Roy gave a lower rating across the board (the lowest rating in Q 6–8). Table 1 shows that Roy, a biology major, had a career goal of becoming a medical professional. Volunteering at the children's home had no direct impact on his career goal or trajectory. However, in the follow-up interview—a few months after he graduated from the university—some interesting developments occurred in his career trajectory. Roy decided to take a gap year to work in Japan as an English language teacher before entering medical school. With his new career plan, he hoped the JCHIP experience would impress his prospective employers in Japan. Roy explained that JCHIP was a great experience in learning different cultures, preparing him for this new career development (Roy, interview, September 17, 2018). He felt a renewed appreciation of the internship experience and evaluated it more positively in the follow-up interview.

By contrast, Sophia, a psychology major, was specifically interested in children's mental health and education. As Table 3 shows, Sophia highly evaluated her overall internship experience. In the follow-up survey after she graduated, Sophia explained:

I definitely came back certain that I wanted to find a career in which I would be working with children. Prior to JCHIP, I had an interest in working with children, but I wasn't sure if I was truly cut out for working with children. JCHIP not only pushed me outside of my comfort zone but also challenged me in ways I never could have experienced anywhere else. I discovered just how rewarding working with children—of all kinds of backgrounds—could be, and as a result, decided that pursuing a career working with children was something I wanted to do (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 4, 2018).

For Sophia, the JCHIP experience served as an opportunity to test the waters. Shortly after the follow-up survey, Sophia landed a job as a specialist working with children who have attention deficit disorders and other developmental problems. The same sentiment was shared by Rose. Prior to the internship, Rose had a vague idea of becoming a teacher, but the internship experience reaffirmed her love for children and reinforced her aspiration to become a teacher.

Similar to Sophia, Olivia rated high gains across the board (4.80) but observed that the JCHIP internship was only the first step in pursuing an international career. At the follow-up interview after she graduated, Olivia

explained how the JCHIP experience prompted her to (1) study in Japan and (2) to apply to the Peace Corps to work in Thailand. She no longer saw any limits to what she could do, “After JCHIP, I feel like I can do anything I want ... no more self-imposed limits to where to go” (Olivia, interview, September 14, 2018).

The findings about career relevance in the post-internship survey confirmed those of many studies on study/work abroad that students became interested in working internationally and considered the global job market within their reach (Dwyer, 2004; He & Qin, 2017; Honigsblum, 2002; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2007; Norris & Gillespie, 2009; Orahod et al., 2004; Smolcic, 2013; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Twombly et al., 2012). Furthermore, the follow-up interviews and survey revealed students’ thought processes of progressing from overseas internship to career goals.

Although not all students observed a significant impact of JCHIP on their career choices and goals, most agreed that they became more interested in international careers, regardless of their career/academic plans. They also appreciated learning about a different work culture and environment. Hands-on work experience at JCHIP provided an opportunity to test the waters: participants realized their aspirations and other aspects of themselves. For example, Mary, initially interested in teaching, was grateful for the opportunity to work with children in JCHIP. At the follow-up interview (October 3, 2018), she explained how she discovered a new aspect of her personality. Although she was comfortable interacting with Japanese coworkers and making friends with them, she was surprised to realize that she did not work particularly well with small children. She decided not to pursue a teaching career, but to pursue her interest in economics and business administration.

Other Challenges and IC

The language barrier was not the only challenge that students experienced during the internship. Cultural differences abounded in their daily interaction with coworkers and children, ranging from the mundane to the more philosophical and intellectual. For instance, many found Japanese coworkers’ attitudes toward children and methods of disciplining them different from their own ideas and cultural norms.

At the follow-up interview, Rose explained the challenge in detail. She was assigned to a home where many children had behavioral, mental, emotional, and psychological problems. Emotionally, Rose found it difficult to deal with the ways her Japanese coworkers disciplined these children. Some disciplinary methods were inappropriate and inconsistent—some resorted to using harsh reproaches and others ostracized problem children. This prompted her to engage in dialogs with Japanese coworkers about how to discipline children. She “did not always agree with their discipline methods” (Rose, interview, September 28, 2018). The experience led her to question the quality of the training that her Japanese coworkers had undergone. Meanwhile, she tried to provide moral support to the children who were harshly disciplined by engaging them in

conversations. Similar to Rose, some returnees mentioned cultural differences in disciplinary methods. They noticed too much or too little disciplinary intervention by Japanese coworkers, but most chose to disregard the difference as a way of expressing respect for the Japanese culture. Some commented that “They know better than us” at the follow-up interviews and did not question or broach this subject with Japanese coworkers. Nevertheless, this seemingly passive acceptance was just as emotionally loaded as Rose’s response. Most expressed their afterthoughts and confusion about disciplinary issues with comments like “I wish I had known” or “I wish they had told us.”

Bennett (2009) identified the four steps to develop IC: “(1) fostering attitudes that motivate us, (2) discovering knowledge that informs us of our own and others’ cultural position, (3) assessing the challenge and support factors that affect our adaptation, and (4) developing skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately” (p. 125). When the students decided to invest their time and energy in JCHIP, they were motivated to take on a new endeavor abroad. Faced with cultural differences, they assessed them by comparing with their own cultural references, adjusted their attitudes and perspectives, and decided how to handle them. Whether it was passive acceptance or emotional difficulty, students developed IC that involved internal and mental processes.

Reflecting on her emotionally loaded experience because of the disciplinary methods at a children’s home, Rose came to develop a different view about Japan and Japanese culture. She assessed some negative aspects of Japanese society and culture through active dialogs with Japanese coworkers, recognizing a fundamental difference between Japan and America in educational philosophy—Japanese institutions rely more on the traditional method of disciplining students whereas American institutions use updated theories and practices. After returning from Japan, Rose gained a more balanced and critical view of Japan than in the pre-internship days when she “idolized Japan” (Rose, interview, September 28, 2018).

Preparedness

Many returnees appreciated and valued the predeparture preparations and the information booklet. For instance, Olivia and Sophia both stressed the effectiveness of language sessions in the follow-up interview/survey. Sophia commented:

The orientation and language sessions were both necessary to help with ease of mind in terms of knowing what to expect and how to act (asking for help, presenting oneself, etc.) ... I found that the language sessions helped a lot to guide me in the beginning through even some of the simplest things such as asking for help to navigate through the airport and train stations, as well as how to properly communicate with the director of the home to help him know when my partner and I would be arriving (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 4, 2018).

In the post-internship survey, five students believed that they had been well prepared, whereas the other five wished they had more preparation. The latter five elaborated on what they wished they had done more. Most of their concerns focused on the information specific to the children's homes to which they were assigned, including the home's specific needs (e.g., underfunded children's homes welcome the card games and board games brought by interns from America), ways to interact with older children, and the locations of their assigned homes (for example, those assigned to Kyoto wished to have learned more about its rich culture and ancient history to better appreciate it). The predeparture training sessions might not fully address students' specific needs, but the "*senpai* (senior)-*kohai* (junior)" support system helped prepare students.

In the follow-up interviews, Mary, Olivia, Roy, and Tom stressed the importance of the "*senpai-kohai*" support system for a successful internship. During the orientation, new interns were introduced to their *senpai* from the previous years to get what Sophia mentioned "an insider perspective on what to expect in the homes" (Sophia, follow-up survey, October 4, 2018) and other specific information, such as which train station to get off and where to visit on a weekend. Moreover, *senpai* often reached out to *kohai* during the internship to provide moral support and help them manage everyday problems and issues. Supported by *senpai*, *kohai* interns were motivated to become good *senpai* the following year and provide the same support from which they had benefited. In this way, the "*senpai-kohai*" support system continues and is reinforced year after year for a smooth running of the internship.

Reflecting on this "*senpai-kohai*" relationship, Roy found that he did not have enough *senpai* help. His *senpai* was not proactive in helping him or providing information about the home. The lack of his *senpai*'s support motivated Roy and his partner to become better *senpais*, supporting and caring for their *kohai* the following year. They made a point to contact their *kohai* during the internship (Roy, interview, September 17, 2018).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined students' perceptions of challenges and gains in an overseas internship program. The post-internship survey revealed that all students perceived gains in four areas (language, personal, career, and IC) and language gains were regarded as the most positive outcome, regardless of students' proficiency levels. Whereas language gains may not be central to overseas internship experiences (Erickson, 2011; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2006), students in this study believed that they had improved their Japanese language skills, particularly listening comprehension. Meanwhile, they observed that the most difficult aspect of the internship was the language barrier and they made efforts to improve the situations by applying various problem-solving methods.

The follow-up interviews and survey further revealed emotionally loaded processes when handling difficulties and cultural differences. For example, to overcome the language barrier, students "forced" themselves "to speak," or

come up with different ways to “interact and entertain the children and staff.” Some overcame their self-consciousness and fear of making mistakes, whereas others relied on translation apps to perform the tasks and communicate with Japanese coworkers. By recognizing and assessing the challenges and situations, students were able to select and implement solutions. It was a critical process for them to grow as individuals (Davidson, 2010) and to develop their IC (Bennett, 2009). More importantly, encountering the language barrier, students did not resort to language avoidance—the behavior of shying away from using L2 when learners experience foreign language anxiety (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005). In fact, the nature of the JCHIP internship made it impossible to avoid using Japanese or to remain inactive or withdrawn. The routine chores and work at the children’s homes pressed students to interact with Japanese coworkers and children. Moreover, students lived in onsite quarters, which reinforced an immersion setting. All of these factors created a *no-way-out* situation that forced students to use Japanese.

Cultural differences in disciplinary methods prompted some students to re-evaluate their beliefs. As interns, they were not directly responsible for disciplining children, but as they witnessed how Japanese coworkers dealt with children’s behavioral problems or emotional outburst, some decided to accept the practice as a way to show respect of Japanese culture. Some, however, underwent emotional, mental, and intellectual stress to adjust their perspectives and attitudes, developing analytical and critical skills. Adjusting perspectives and attitudes was an active learning process that students went through to manage cultural differences and challenges. Even passive acceptance was not merely being passive, as it required considerable tolerance and patience in withholding judgment—there was nothing actually passive about *any* process.

This study, the first formal study investigating JCHIP interns’ gains through internship, has its limitations. Students’ perceived language gains were not measured or compared with actual improvement. To accurately measure language improvement, pre- and post-internship language tests should have been administered. In addition, conducting a pre-internship survey would clarify the changes in students’ expectations and perceptions. Future studies may consider using pre- and post-internship assessments to document the changes.

Despite the limitations, this study’s findings strongly support the usefulness, benefits, and advantages of JCHIP for students, the importance of preparation, and the support systems such as “*senpai-kohai*” relationships. The pedagogical and administrative implications include the following: (1) overseas internships may be beneficial to participants; (2) planning, designing, and executing effective overseas internship programs require a myriad of groundwork and preparations, which has been discussed in previous studies (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012; Bhawuk, 1998; Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Cemalcilar & Falbo, 2008; Cohen et al., 2005; Erickson, 2011; He & Qin, 2017; Honigsblum, 2002; Kurasawa & Nagatomi, 2006; Kurpis & Hunter, 2017; Matsumoto, 2004; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Yashima, 2010); and (3) a key to successful internships is establishing a sustainable support system for students, such as “*senpai-kohai*” relationships.

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AUTHOR

Nobuko Koyama, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Japanese Language Program Coordinator, East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of California, Davis.
Email: nkoyama@ucdavis.edu

The Power of Positive Emotions: Cultivating Global Competence in Introductory-level Spanish through Learner Interest

Claire Mitchell

University of Wisconsin, La Crosse

In today's interconnected and globalized world, there is a need for pedagogies that can "successfully prepare learners for intercultural encounters" (Drewelow, 2017, p. 255). In particular, instructional approaches that focus on cultivating learners' global competence, that is, the ability to communicate in more than one language with understanding and respect (ACTFL, 2014), are vital to guiding learners to interact appropriately and effectively in today's society. Whereas there are numerous approaches that can be used to develop global competence inside the classroom context, this article explores ways in which positive emotions, specifically that of interest, can be evoked in the foreign language classroom. Drawing on the potentially powerful effects that positive emotions can have in the language learning environment (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), this article outlines a how-to guide for implementing interest in the introductory-level language classroom to broaden learners' perspectives, connect them to the target culture on a more personal level, and subsequently encourage global competence.

Keywords: culture, positive emotions, interest, Pinterest, global competence

INTRODUCTION

Today's globalized world is becoming increasingly diverse, both linguistically and culturally. In the context of foreign language learning, this shift has created the need for pedagogies that can "successfully prepare learners for intercultural encounters" (Drewelow, 2017, p. 255). To interact in such

encounters effectively, it is paramount that learners become globally competent speakers of another language so that they might develop the ability to communicate in more than one language with an understanding and respect of cultural differences (ACTFL, 2014).

However, cultivating global competence is a recursive process, one that cannot be achieved quickly (Garrett-Rucks, 2016). To develop global competence, learners need time to learn about cultural differences during their foreign language experience and to process these differences; in addition to adequate time dedicated to engaging with cultural difference, developing global competence requires a depth of study in which learners have opportunities to connect with the target culture(s) on a more personal level. Such connections can aid learners in their understanding of today's diverse and dynamic globalized society (Mitchell, 2018; Reeve, 2005).

Despite the clearly stated need for global competence, research shows there is a lack of time dedicated to cultural instruction that can develop this competency in students (Garrett-Rucks, 2013). At the beginning levels of instruction, cultural topics often remain at the surface level and can be characteristic of a tourist's guidebook (Allen, 2014; Kramsch, 2014) or may be completely ignored (Garrett-Rucks, 2013; Sercu, 2005). Furthermore, research suggests that educators find it challenging to integrate cultural components that would lead to global competence at the introductory levels, based on students' limited linguistic proficiency in the target language (Garrett-Rucks, 2013; Sercu, 2005). As Sercu (2005) reported, educators at the introductory level have also commented that they opt not to prioritize cultural instruction because they believe it will be addressed in the advanced-level courses of language instruction.

Problematic to this understanding, however, is the number of language learners who are matriculating to the advanced levels of language study. As the most recent Modern Language Association (MLA) Enrollment Survey noted (Looney & Lusin, 2018), there has been a decline in the number of students who continue to the advanced level of language studies in all modern languages. For example, for every five enrollments at the introductory level of French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish, only one enrollment occurred at the advanced level. The divide was even greater for some less commonly taught languages: Arabic and Modern Hebrew had a 7:1 ratio, American Sign Language a 9:1 ratio, and Italian a 10:1 ratio. Whereas some of the ratios "may simply be a reflection of the remarkable recent growth" (Looney & Lusin, 2018, p. 5-6) of some programs—i.e., higher enrollments at the introductory levels in Korean and American Sign Language—it is still worth noting that there is a consistent decline in the number of students who continue to the advanced level of language study (the MLA Enrollment Survey designates as third- and fourth-year courses).

Based on this information, most language learners enroll primarily in introductory language courses, yet the aforementioned research suggests that curricula at these levels do not generally prioritize the development of global

competence. Thus, this concern brings us to the goal of this article: in order to cultivate global competence at the introductory level, there is a need for pedagogies that promote and encourage in-depth engagement with the target culture(s) inside the classroom setting. This article, therefore, outlines various instructional principles and techniques that educators at the introductory level can tailor to their own needs and utilize to foster global competence.

Building on the understanding in the field of foreign language regarding the power of the affective domain and its ability to connect students with learning (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), this article focuses on techniques that connect positive emotions and cultural learning to cultivate global competence. Specifically, three main conceptual pillars that promote global competence in the language classroom are foregrounded in this article: 1) Positive emotions and learner interest, 2) in-depth engagement with the target culture, and 3) opportunities for reflection. In discussing the instructional principles vital for cultivating global competence, it is equally important to provide practical and ready-to-use examples so that educators might get a sense of how to put these techniques into classroom practice. Thus, this article discusses a sample learning module that provides examples of ways to enact each conceptual pillar. The context of the module (which is described in more detail in the following sections) centers on learners imagining themselves working for a local bilingual magazine and guides them through a process-oriented approach to learning about the target culture(s) in which they complete a combination of research on social media, reflective exercises, and a post-module journal entry.

THE LEARNING MODULE

The learning module described in this article was designed with the following three conceptual pillars in mind so as to promote global competence in the language learning classroom: 1) Positive emotions and learner interest, 2) in-depth engagement with the target culture, and 3) opportunities for reflection. This module was tested over the duration of five weeks in a 15-week semester course of introductory Spanish, with the target audience being mostly false beginners of Spanish (i.e., students who are at the novice level linguistically but have had some prior classroom experience with Spanish).

Based on these conceptual pillars, then, the context of the learning module centered on having learners imagine that they had just acquired a new job to earn extra money to support their summer travels and adventures, thus relating to their everyday interests as well. Their new job was as a freelance journalist for a local bilingual company, *HOLA Latino*. As part of their first assignment for *HOLA Latino*, learners were to utilize *Pinterest* to investigate one holiday (aligning with their textbook chapter at the time) in a Spanish-speaking country and compare and contrast it with a similar holiday in the United States, pinning various images to their pinboards on *Pinterest* with descriptions that represented the holiday. Then, as part of their job as a

freelancer, they would complete various assignments pertaining to this topic of holidays, all of which are discussed in the following sections of this article (Mitchell, 2018).

In each section below, I first introduce one of the three main conceptual pillars and then describe a portion of the learning module before progressing into the next conceptual area of the article.

Developing Positive Emotions and Learner Interest: A Motivational Construct

Research shows that positive emotions can have broadening effects in language learning, that is, they can lead learners to an open mind to differences, absorb new information more easily, and become more resilient in their learning (Fredrickson, 2004). However, in order for educators to capitalize on positive emotions and create an environment conducive to cultivating global competence, it is imperative that the imagination be activated, as “imagination is a powerful route with which to influence emotions” (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 200).

Specifically, educators can utilize Dörnyei’s (2009) motivational construct of the second language (L2) self in tandem with relevant and current cultural topics so that learners might imagine a future version of themselves who is more culturally competent. Positive emotions are also the fuel to motivate learners to become this more culturally competent L2 self. That is, if learners find topics they are studying to be interesting or exciting, i.e., they are able to emotionally connect with the content, then they subsequently become more engaged and work to become this imagined future self who is more culturally competent.

Putting It into Practice: Evoking Positive Emotions and Learner Imagination

Practically speaking, one avenue in which educators can evoke the imagination in the foreign language classroom is through the use of social media. Social media provides sufficient content through which learners can explore topics related to their interests, learn about the target culture(s), and dig as deep as they desire into a topic they are studying. Additionally, certain social media platforms can be used in the classroom as a means of visualizing what life is like in the target culture. Some examples of such visual social media applications that may evoke learners’ imagination include *Pinterest*, *Instagram*, and *Snapchat*, among others.

Another way to tap into learners’ imagination in the classroom setting is to draw upon their interests when designing the content topics of various learning modules. Educators can relate to learners’ interests and activate their imagination through instructional techniques that utilize current and relevant topics that learners *want* to learn about. In allowing learners to explore topics related to their everyday lives and the real world, they are more likely to see the

relevance that learning about different cultures has in today's world. Additionally, research points to topics that relate to learners' lives as sparking their interests in learning (Clifford, Friesen, & Lock, 2004); when combining culture and learners' interests, educators increase the potential for learners to connect with the target culture(s), which can facilitate progression toward global competence.

The Learning Module: Imaginative Investigation on Pinterest

In this section, the first components of the learning module are outlined to provide two different examples of (1) how to activate the imagination and (2) how to select culturally relevant and interesting topics for students.

First, to stimulate the imagination, the social media application *Pinterest* was utilized. *Pinterest* is a multimodal (e.g., visual, text, and content-based) exploratory social media tool that allows users to discover and search for new content; as such, it served as an appropriate tool to encourage learners to explore their interests as related to the target culture(s). Furthermore, the visual nature of *Pinterest* also played a vital role in evoking learners' imagination through the visualization of what the target culture(s) is like.

Secondly, in order to connect learners with relevant, interesting, and engaging cultural topics, educators may utilize a focus group or survey prior to the start of the learning module to gain insight into the topics that students would like to learn about. In the learning module described in this article, learners participated in a short focus group in which they commented that they felt required in projects and activities to think about when or how they could use Spanish in a foreign country or context. Learners suggested that a topic that focuses on using Spanish in a local context would be relevant to their everyday lives and relate to their interests in using Spanish on a daily basis. Thus, based on their feedback, the topic of working for *HOLA Latino* was created to 1) tap into their interests of using Spanish for everyday purposes and 2) activate their imagination as a freelance worker who is more culturally aware as a result of his/her job.

In-depth Engagement with the Target Culture

When cultivating global competence in the foreign language classroom, it is equally vital that learners' interests and imagination be paired with opportunities for in-depth cultural engagement (Knutson, 2006; Kramsch, 2014), which is the second conceptual pillar of this article. Specifically, it is important that learners have experiences in the classroom in which they are exposed to cultural difference and are encouraged to go beneath the surface level in learning about the target culture. When learners are afforded multiple opportunities for in-depth cultural learning—as opposed to covering many different cultural topics in less depth—they are more likely to increase their global competence to explore, discover, and reflect on new cultural products, practices, and

perspectives (3 Ps) and make connections between these 3 Ps. Research shows that understanding the interrelation between the 3 Ps can more adequately prepare learners for intercultural interactions in today's society and thus develop their global competence (Drewelow, 2017; Mitchell, 2018).

Putting It into Practice: Creating Cultural Experiences with the Standards

To create opportunities in the classroom that provide ample experience with cultural content, educators can utilize the World Readiness Standards (the National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015) and the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NCSSFL-ACTFL) Intercultural Can-Do Statements (2017) as foundations because they serve as a guide for learning a foreign language in the United States and articulate how global competence can be promoted inside the classroom context.

In particular, the Cultures goal area from the Standards is beneficial to use when developing culturally focused activities because it centers on leading learners toward cultivation of a deeper understanding of the target culture(s) by relating the cultural products, practices, and cultural perspectives of the target language. Possible activities that incorporate the Cultures goal area and learners' interests involve learner-directed exploration of content, incorporation of learner-relevant content themes, and connecting learning to the real world (Chen, 2013; Clifford et al., 2004).

Possible student learning outcomes that incorporate learners' interests and in-depth cultural learning opportunities are as follows: Learners will be able to (1) identify current cultural products and practices of the target culture(s), (2) recognize and relate cultural perspectives to the products and practices of the target culture(s), (3) investigate their own personal interests and connect them to the cultural topic being studied, and (4) create a final product that demonstrates understanding of the cultural content and reflects learners' interests.

The Learning Module: Guided Activities that Provide Engagement with the Target Culture

In this section, the next two components of the learning module are outlined in order to provide two different examples of in-depth engagement with the target culture. In each activity, exploratory and reflective learning (Furstenberg, 2010) is encouraged, as learners must first review the cultural content they pinned to *Pinterest*, reflect and analyze, and then create new content, thus demonstrating their own understanding.

Continuing with the same context of working for *HOLA Latino*, learners' next two tasks were to advertise for and host a radio broadcast sponsored by *HOLA Latino*. First, to activate prior knowledge, learners reviewed and utilized the information that they had collected on *Pinterest* to design and create an advertising flyer for the upcoming radio broadcast. In this

activity, learners reflected more specifically on the target culture's products and practices as well as made comparisons and connections between the target culture(s) and learners' native culture(s). In doing so, they utilized the comparative information along with the photos and phrases in the target language which they had stored on *Pinterest* to create an 8 ½ x 11-inch flyer.

Secondly, building upon the advertising flyer, learners then created a radio broadcast (using the recording function in *iTunes* or a similar application). Similar to the goals of the written activity, this oral activity provided learners with another opportunity to reflect on the cultural information they had learned thus far in the module. In this radio broadcast, learners compared the two different holidays that they investigated in their *Pinterest* research, focusing specifically on the cultural products, practices, and perspectives that they discovered in the previous phases of this module. Additionally, to tap into learners' interests, they were encouraged to express their creativity through the broadcast by incorporating music, sound effects, etc.

Engaging in Reflection as a Means of Understanding Difference

Research highlights the understanding that learning takes place most when students have time to reflect and process the content being studied (Mitchell, 2018; Wilkinson, Calkins, & Dinesen, 2015). Thus, the third and final conceptual pillar to cultivate global competence in the classroom is opportunities for reflection.

As connected to cultural learning, when learners have time to reflect, they are able to consider their previous assumptions regarding cultural differences, evaluate if they are correct or true, and then challenge them where necessary (McAllister, Whiteford, Hill, Thomas, & Fitzgerald, 2006). Such a process-oriented approach to learning provides adequate time and space for learners to evolve in their cultural understanding and facilitates the process of becoming more globally competent. That is, by guiding learners to consider the multiple cultural perspectives they have encountered and then reflect on the differences, they are able to progress in understanding differences in the world around them (Knutson, 2006).

Thus, in considering how to incorporate reflective practices into the language learning classroom, a process-oriented approach to learning should be utilized to provide opportunities for learners to reflect throughout the project they are completing (as evidenced through the written and oral activities in the previous section). However, equally important is the inclusion of a final reflective component where learners are able to look back at their learning process, evaluate, and analyze their own cultural journey.

Putting It into Practice: Encouraging Learners to Dig Deeper into Their Reflection

In designing the final reflective component that promotes global competence, educators should draw upon the two previously mentioned conceptual pillars as well—learner interest/positive emotions and in-depth experiences with the target culture. Specifically, by selecting a topic that 1) ties in with the entire project, and 2) relates to students' everyday lives, students are more likely to recognize the importance and connection to the real world that their learning has. Such understanding can encourage students to engage in reflection on a deeper level because they feel personal relevance to the topic. Furthermore, educators can structure reflections so that they continuously ask learners "to reflect on difference in a way that push[es] beyond superficial comparisons and engage[s] their understanding of variable perspectives and values" (Michelson, 2017, p. 13). Practically speaking, including open-ended, guiding questions that ask learners to consider any preconceived notions they might have had previously can lead to new and important personal discovery and awareness (Michelson, 2017). As Knutson (2006) notes, such discovery of self as a cultural subject is a necessary part of developing an understanding of difference in the world. In addition to guided questions about learners' own personal assumptions, educators can also utilize prompts that ask learners to identify and reflect upon a cultural product, practice, and perspective they learned about. In particular, the focus should be on the interrelation of the 3 Ps and what these cultural perspectives teach about the values and beliefs of the target culture.

The Learning Module: A Reflective Journaling Opportunity

The final component of the learning module provides a ready-to-use example that details how to structure a reflective activity. In particular, the activity discussed in this section provides extended time and space for learners to reflect on cultural differences, a vital element in progressing toward global competence.

The context of this activity continued with the theme of working for *HOLA Latino*, prompting learners to imagine they were writing an opinion piece for publication in *HOLA Latino*. In doing so, the prompt drew upon relevant and current content and activated learners' imagination again, thus encouraging them to continue to close the gap between their current and future self. In this learning module, the journal assignment instructed them to review their classmates' *Pinterest* boards and choose any holiday that interested them. Learners then explained why they selected the holiday, what it represented for people in the Spanish-speaking world and in the U.S., and how it was celebrated. In this activity, the specific focus was on cultural perspectives, that is, why people celebrate the holiday in the manner they do and what the holiday means to them, which aligned with the learning outcomes in this module that aim at helping

learners make connections between the cultural products, practices, and perspectives so that they might progress in their global competence.

CONCLUSION

Fostering Learners' Global Mindsets

The three conceptual pillars described in this article incorporate a pedagogical approach that encourages learners to visualize a future version of themselves, one who is more culturally aware, and then utilizes instructional techniques to guide that learner toward becoming this more culturally aware self. Ultimately, it is an individual endeavor on the behalf of the learner to work toward this type of competence; however, implementing activities that are culturally relevant, engaging, inquiry-driven, and reflective in nature can impact learners in dynamic and long-lasting ways, as leading learners to discover and reflect upon cultural differences can nurture their appreciation for such differences. By tapping into learners' interests and imagination, learners' minds open to see the world from a different perspective, and in doing so, their potential for global competence may increase because they become more open to interacting with newness and difference in the world. In the context of language study, such understanding comes about when learners begin to realize that learning a language is much more than a system of sounds and words put together but rather is about understanding a different way of seeing and being in the world and interacting with people who are different from them (Wenger, 1998).

Limitations and Future Directions

Whereas the theme of working for *HOLA Latino* did align with learners' interests as related to using Spanish in everyday interactions, it should be noted that the topic of holidays at times was more superficial. In designing the module described in this article, I selected the topic of holidays to align with the textbook chapter that was being used in the introductory Spanish course. As a result, learners often struggled in the module to find and identify the cultural perspectives behind the holidays, an important step in progressing toward global competence. Thus, the instructor of the course had to provide more scaffolding than what was originally planned in order to aid learners in their understanding of the interrelation between the cultural products, practices, and perspectives.

In moving forward, it is recommended that in order to truly tap into learners' interests, educators could: 1) have students rank the various textbook chapter topics that they find interesting, and then, instructors could reserve this type of learning module for one of the chapter topics that the majority of students find most interesting; or 2) utilize a focus group or survey to have students say exactly what cultural topics they want to learn about and then use this type of pedagogical approach in tandem with the specific cultural topic that

students want to study. In doing so, the goal becomes learners further progressing in their global competence, as “a focus on learners’ interests and curiosities about culture has proven to guide them to better understand the intrinsic link between language and culture” (Drewelow & Mitchell, 2015).

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AUTHOR

Claire Mitchell, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Spanish, Department of Global Cultures and Languages, University of Wisconsin, La Crosse.
Email: cmitchell2@uwlax.edu

REVIEW

Gameful Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning: Theory, Research and Practice. By Jonathon Reinhardt (2019). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 311.

Reviewed by Brunella Bigi

Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center

Gameful Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning: Theory, Research and Practice is the latest effort of Jonathon Reinhardt to bring the world of games and video games to the attention of language instructors and second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, which follows the publication of *Language at Play: Digital Games in Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning* (2013) by Sykes and the author. Gamification is not a new concept in foreign language teaching (Atkinson, 2011; Baltra, 1990; Gee, 2003), but this book deepens the study of the relation between video games, literacy, and learning from a broad cognitive and cultural perspective initiated by Gee (2003), with a focus on language teaching.

Whereas Sykes and Reinhardt's interdisciplinary study (2013) provided a guide for combining the theory of play and foreign language classroom practices with gamification, this book focuses on the use of commercial video games as opposed to the wide array of educational digital games previously considered. Reinhardt identifies commercial video games as those designed for entertainment purposes; that is, they use vernacular language and are devoid of educational purpose. Examples of the most popular current video games include *SimCity*, *War of Warcraft (WoW)*, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*, and many others played daily by millions around the world.

By contrast, we have a multiplicity of digital games designed with a variety of educational purposes; among these are *Mentira* (Spanish), *Zon* (Chinese Mandarin), and *Language Island* (multi-languages), which were created to facilitate the study of a language in a playful and interactive way. Although these games use language as authentic as possible, the language is distributed around a complex set of implicit or explicit linguistic goals.

For those claiming that commercial video games cannot be legitimate contenders for more typically structured language activities, *Gameful Second and*

Foreign Language Teaching offers an extensive analysis of common principles shared in second language acquisition, such as goal-oriented interactions, context, culture, motivation, and feedback, explaining how they can be found embedded within the structure of video games. By highlighting the similarities and peculiarities of video games, the author challenges other traditional concepts of reality, authenticity, and student's agency about which foreign language educators thought they might have reached a common understanding.

The book questions the traditional conceptual framework of learning. Reinhardt divides the book into ten chapters and organizes the subject matter in three main areas. In the first three chapters, he delineates the theoretical fields of gaming development: from learning theories to cultural and social practices. Next, he situates language learning at the core of the domains for which interactions are essential. In the fourth to the eighth chapters, the author specifies different gaming boundaries, correlating their structural differences (i.e., rules, narrative, and media) with learning affordances. Reinhardt stresses the traits of three areas of a gameful language learning environment: game-enhanced (using vernacular games not originally intended for learning); game-informed (language instruction informed by gaming principles); and second language teaching and learning (L2TL) (using games designed for educational purposes). The last two chapters reiterate the principles and the substance of the previous chapters, focusing on current and future L2TL research through gaming with a specific emphasis on commercial video games.

Reinhardt fully embraces the idea that learning is a fundamentally fun-driven and heuristic activity. Playful learning is examined not only from a cognitive and behavioral perspective, but also from social and psychological point of view. He proposes a convergence of player's styles to other learning theories, such as Kolb's experiential learning model (1984) or the instructional scaffolding (Cope & Kalantzis, 2017). The origin of the correlations to learning typologies can be found, according to the author, in the concept of play forms and modalities such as *paidia* (playing without a specific goal) and *ludus* (playing with a goal), introduced by the philosopher Roger Caillois. "As Caillois wrote his book [in 1958] before the invention of videogames, he focused on real world games and play activity (e.g., sports, cards, drama). His taxonomy can be applied to digital games because of its comprehensiveness. He proposes that gameplay involves elements of *agon* (competition), *alea* (chance), *mimicry*, and *ilinx* (vertigo)" (Reinhardt, 2019, p.45). Many other researchers in the field of digital media also found Caillois' play forms taxonomy to align with video game genres on today's market.

Reinhardt also classifies the different genres and sub-genres of such video games as Action, Action-Adventure, Adventure, Role-Playing, Simulation, and Strategies, implying a correlation between players' choices and personal characteristics that Reinhardt assimilates to learning styles. He cites Baltra's definition of play styles: achievers, socializers, explorers, and killers (1990), correlating them to motivational trends and popularity scales among commercial gaming theorists and bloggers congregating on specialized websites like

Gamasutra.com. The book also provides many other classifications—a detailed table (see Table 5.1 Gameful affordances for L2 learning, pp. 114-115), which guides the reader through the analysis of games according to affordances, mechanics, dynamics, commensurable SLA/L2 pedagogical principles, and questions guiding research implications.

Correlating cognition, playful preferences, and learning styles to video game genres deserve scrutiny. Reinhardt reminds the reader that, generally speaking, there is no linear correspondence in any learning theory, suggesting that the relationship between learning styles and a player's preferences may be provisional in technological applications. However, his cautionary warning seems to be contradicted by the intricate web of taxonomies and correlations created or presented by the author. As an example, we cannot avoid noticing that Table 5.1, mentioned above, cited a linear correlation of affordances with specific mechanics and other characteristics. This linearity is also implied in Fig. 6.1 between specific activities to L2 gaming within the experiential model. Later on, we find a set of similar correspondences between linguistic pragmatic functions and actions (p.161). The linear structural-behavioristic view becomes inescapable also in pedagogical mediation. Alternative perspectives may become increasingly difficult for the reader and language practitioner to conceive within a more open ecosystem less dominated by Reinhardt's precise taxonomies.

Gameful Second and Foreign Language Teaching provides an exhaustive list of video game choices in one of several useful appendices. The language instructor may recognize familiar echoes of learning and personality type definitions, such as the Visual, Aural, Read/Written, and Kinesthetic (VARK) model or the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, often used by educators to strategize daily classroom dynamics.

It should be added that the analysis of language features characterizing video games communication is still in the groundwork stage, but the study of semantics and discourse suggests that a framework for further analysis is in place. The preliminary differentiation between embedded discourse and emergent and attendant discourse, for example, demonstrates an attempt to distinguish language properties and their pragmatic use within the domain of digital media.

In Reinhardt's work, embedded communication is examined as a mode of interaction within the boundaries of the game, either among players in multi-players modality or within single player games (interaction with a computer-generated language). Within the constraints of the game, random interactive communication among gamers generates a social language, or vernacular, that is defined as emergent discourse. Finally, the attendant discourse, or gameful literacy, forms outside of the game platforms and within the gamer's communities. This is the language of the insiders, those who navigate the gaming world with language attributes or lingo/jargon/argot, which defines this growing culture.

Reinhardt attempts to elevate the intrinsic and extrinsic value of video game materials by bringing it out of the commercially driven environment and presenting various affordances to the language practitioner. The author states that

this material should not be discarded as inauthentic or unrealistic to language instructional practices. In fact, the authenticity should be found in the experience of the gamer/learner communication—in the vernacular interlanguage that emerges from the gamers' interactions.

There are some noteworthy structural and narrative features in video games, for example, the intrinsic characteristics of the gamers' vernacular, specifically in multiplayer and single-player environments, and the use of idiomatic forms in vernacular communication targeted to achieve specific goals in tasks (collaboration or competition) versus the informal language during multiplayer's social interactions as a way to know each other or strategize over moves. These forms are also known as *linguaging*.

It is somewhat disappointing that neither discourse nor other facets of foreign languages are thoroughly analyzed, especially considering that this book is about language learning. However, every chapter of the book is accompanied by a series of reflective questions and project ideas that stimulate the reader to consider and plan blended classroom practices or extracurricular pedagogical applications of videogames.

Reinhardt frames the pedagogical underpinning of gamification by identifying opportunities for learning in video game context, time, and space. His vision is accompanied by a historical overview of instructional methods for languages. The author should be commended for unpacking structural and instructional characteristics of well-known classroom activities such as info gaps, role-plays, and tasks by correlating them with similar structural designs contained in video games, and highlighting parallel learning potentials of using video games to enhance language learning goals. Fully aware of the challenges in acquiring a second language, such as affective and other forms of resistance at the early stages of language learning, Reinhardt asks the reader to ponder the most appropriate interventions.

Finally, Reinhardt's considerations are particularly useful for those who may feel intimidated or overpowered by the apparent complexity of the technology. The book offers comparative data to show the results obtained in experimental language classroom projects that use videogames as supporting resources, suggesting that the role of the instructor/mediator is still very important in spite of the attractiveness and engaging affordances of video games. Guidance, scaffolding, and feedback are needed for the language learning process with tailored interventions. In the end, gamers present similar, if not identical, learner characteristics. Games afford learners the use of language in different modalities according to the mechanics of the games: more problem-solving situations, more interactive opportunities in affinity spaces, and more immersive and authentic experiences in a classroom. As understanding of the gaming ecosystem evolves, further research will be warranted.

The most intriguing aspect is the possibility for the player/learner to assume different identities. Whether this is accomplished through the construction of an avatar or the anonymity that a player can assume in synchronous communication with other players on international platforms, such as in a

massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG), the identity issue presented by Reinhardt intersects with learner motivation. He points out that motivation is a dynamic phenomenon both in learning and social interactions, so a player's identity and motivation may evolve with different levels of participation just as a language learner may change disposition and engagement in response to internal and external stimuli. The phases indicated by Reinhardt highlight the psychological and social factors, which outline the path of a transformative self that the author calls the ideal L2 self, the ought-to self, and the self L2 learning experience.

The accessible language with which Reinhardt explores digital media shrinks the intimidating and cryptic halo surrounding the video game world. The book establishes clear connections between gamification and beliefs of foreign language pedagogies. It may be read and enjoyed by educators of all ages as well as passionate video gamers with a penchant for foreign languages. The resources provided have opened new dimensions in L2 education and, for that alone, it is a must read for the language instructor in search of new ideas for teaching. To this end, it is recommended that interested researchers take full advantage of the last chapter where numerous references and resources are indicated for further empirical studies in this new field.

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2020 EVENTS

MARCH-APRIL

- March 18* *American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Spring Conference*, Boston, MA
Information: www.aatj.org/conferences-spring
- March 26-28* *Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT) Annual Conference*, Mobile, AL
Information: www.scolt.org
- March 28-31* *American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Annual Conference*, Denver, CO
Information: www.aaal.org
- Mar 31-Apr 3* *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Convention*, Denver, CO
Information: www.tesol.org
- April 3-5* *Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA) Annual Conference*, Washington, DC
Information: clta-us.org/clta-annual-conference/

MAY

- May 24-29* *NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference and Expo*, St. Louis, MO
Information: www.nafsa.org

OCTOBER

- October 10-13* *Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting*, Washington, DC
Information: mesana.org/annual-meeting/future-meetings

NOVEMBER

- November 20-22* *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention (ACTFL)*, San Antonio, TX
Information: www.actfl.org
- November 20-22* *American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Fall Conference*, San Antonio, TX
Information: www.aatj.org
- November 20-22* *American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Session*, San Antonio, TX
Information: www.aatg.org

2021 EVENTS

JANUARY

- January 7-10* *Modern Language Association (MLA) Convention*, Toronto, Canada
Information: www.mla.org/convention
- January 7-10* *Linguistic Society of American (LSA) Annual Meeting*, San Francisco, CA
Information: www.linguisticsociety.org

FEBRUARY

- February 25-28* *American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL)*, Philadelphia, PA
Information: www.aatseel.org
- February 24-28* *California Language Teachers' Association (CLTA) annual conference*, San Diego, CA
Information: cita.net

MARCH

- March 20-23* *American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Annual Conference*, Houston, TX
Information: www.aaal.org
- Mar 23-26* *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Convention*, Houston, TX
Information: www.tesol.org

MAY-JUNE

- May 30-June 4* *NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference and Expo*, Orlando, FL
Information: www.nafsa.org

OCTOBER

- October 28-31* *Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting*, Montreal, Canada
Information: mesana.org/annual-meeting/future-meetings

NOVEMBER

*November 19-21 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Annual Convention (ACTFL), San Diego, CA*

Information: www.actfl.org

*November 19-21 American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Fall
Conference, San Diego, CA*

Information: www.aatj.org

*November 20-22 American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)
Session, San Diego, CA*

Information: www.aatg.org

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Applied Language Learning (ALL) is to promote professional communication within the Defense Language Program and academic communities on adult language learning for functional purposes.

The Editor encourages the submission of research and review manuscripts from such disciplines as: (1) instructional methods and techniques; (2) curriculum and materials development; (3) testing and evaluation; (4) implications and applications of research from related fields in linguistics, education, communication, psychology, and social sciences; and (5) assessment of needs within the profession.

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- Follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style (the 6th Edition)
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- Use double spacing, with margins of one inch on all four sides
- Use Times New Roman font size 12
- Number all pages consecutively
- In black and white only, including graphics and tables
- Create graphics and tables in a Microsoft Office application (such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel)
- Graphics and tables should not exceed 4.5" in width
- Do not use the footnotes and endnotes function in MS Word. Insert a number formatted in superscript following a punctuation mark. Type notes on a separate page
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It should describe, discuss, and evaluate publications that fall into a topical category in foreign language education. The relative significance of the publications in the context of teaching realms should be pointed out. A review article should be 15 to 20 double-spaced pages.

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