Doctoral Thesis

# A Critical Discourse Analysis of a "My Share" English Lesson Plan Corpus: Exploring Beliefs, Identity, and Power

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## Part 1

## Introduction

The first part of this paper, "Introduction," is composed of three chapters. Chapter 1, "Introduction," presents the motivation for this study, addresses the scope of the analysis and the broad approaches used in the analysis, defines key terms, and states the goals of this research as encapsulated in four main research questions. Chapter 2, "Historical Background," gives a brief overview of relevant aspects of the history of education in Japan, focused mostly on foreign language education over the past sixty years, in order to provide a context for the research that follows. Chapter 3, "Literature Review," provides background on the three main research fields that this project falls under: critical discourse analysis, teacher identity/belief research, and corpus-based research. For each field, both a theoretical overview of the discipline and a review of prior works that fall within these fields and are linked to language teaching (especially language teaching in Japan) are provided.

# Chapter 1
## Introduction

In 2011, there was an article in an online blog/magazine that talked about how male teachers can or should handle teaching classes composed primarily or entirely of female Japanese students.[1] The article was offensively sexist, in that it dehumanized the female students, ascribed them stereotypical motivations and characteristics, and implied that the teacher was capable of knowing how these students were thinking and feeling without seeming to have ever actually asked the students about their ideas. A large number of people responded to the post (including myself), with a majority of those responses being highly critical of the original author, as well as the way the aggressive and dismissive way the author engaged with criticism from commenters.

This article, along with the discussions that were had about it both on site and on offsite mailing lists and social networking sites, played an important part in my development as teacher and researcher. In my response, I wrote, "I think that it really does matter how we talk about our students, even when they aren't around." It was and is my position that when teachers talk about students to other teachers, whether this is in formal settings like staff meetings and research publications, or informal settings like office chats or online discussions, our depictions of students not only reveal the beliefs that we have about those students (and language teaching/learning, appropriate classroom behavior, the purpose of education, and all manner of other beliefs directly and indirectly related to being involved in language education) but also help construct and persuade others of those beliefs. These beliefs become embedded in various discourses, and using these discourses is a part of performing the act of "being a teacher" and taking on the "teacher identity."

In a case like the blog post, the harmful beliefs embedded in the teacher's discourse about students was apparent to many readers, and the interactive nature of the online format allowed us to critically respond. Even though our responses

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[1] I have deliberately left the blog unnamed and un-cited, because 1) I do not wish to give any additional exposure to the article/author, 2) the article does not appear to be available online at present, and 3) I want to discuss the article only to help explain my own interest in and approach to teachers' professional discourse, not to engage in further criticism of the article.

didn't seem to positively affect the author, it did create an alternative discourse about gender and language teaching in Japan to serve as a counterpoint to the original article. However, in many cases teacher beliefs are not always so obvious, nor is there always an easy way to interact with potentially harmful discourses. Often, our discourses "hide" our beliefs behind an image of "truthfulness" or "science" or "scholarship." Nonetheless, those beliefs always already shape and are shaped by the discourses we inhabit and that inhabit us, and so it is important that the nexus of professional discourse and beliefs/identity be studied. The present project is part of a larger academic tradition (which goes by many names in many different academic fields, some of which are discussed below) of examining discourse to uncover beliefs which are present-but-hidden, in an effort to better understand beliefs, identities, ideologies, rules of discourse, and the power relationships which bind all of these together. I believe that research which seeks to understand our discourses is not just an academic exercise, but also an important step in seeing how the things teachers say shape our practice and help define who we are as professionals.

The professional discourse which I have chosen to investigate in the present project is a set of published English language lesson activity plans called "My Share." These articles appear in the journal *The Language Teacher*, one of the two main journals of the Japanese Association for Language Teaching (JALT). JALT is one of the largest professional organizations for language teaching in Japan, especially among non-Japanese teachers. Chapter 4 discusses the data set in detail, but for now, the summary that appears at the top of this section of the journal can serve as a brief introduction. It states that My Share articles "should be up to 600 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers."[2] These articles contain more than the practical information needed to conduct specific classroom activities: they also construct images of students, teachers, and language learning, and, consequently both reflect and help construct beliefs about what language teaching can or should be. For this reason and several others discussed in section 4.2, My Share articles are a particularly interesting and worthwhile genre of professional discourse to investigate in order to both

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[2] Prior to 2015, the word limit was 700 words.

understand the genre itself as well as to use it as an indirect window into the beliefs and social practices of the community which it was created by and for.

**1.1 Key Terms**

In this section, I will discuss some key ideas that feature prominently in this project so that the reader can have a sense for the theoretical background that underlies this work.

      **1.1.1 Discourse.** I have couched my description of these articles—these specific texts that were written by specific authors—by using the term *discourse*, and I have used the term as if the meaning were self-evident. However, as Alvesson and Karreman (2000) explained, discourse has "no agreed-upon definition, and confusingly many uses" (p. 1127). A commonly used schema for understanding the term comes from Gee (1999), who split the concept into "small-d-discourse," which are actual instances of talk/text, and big-D-discourse, which covers several different ideas such as discourse being knowledge as it is produced and expressed in talk, specific types of talking that are linked to a specific region/area/field, and the social practices constituted by a set of beliefs and actions. While I am certainly referring to these texts as actual texts, I also mean to invoke the sense of big-D-discourse of thinking of these texts as one form of social action related to teaching in Japan. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) stated,

> Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s), and social structure(s) which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned…. (p. 258).

Fairclough (2003) clarified that the idea of a "dialectical relationship" meant that situation, institution, and social structure are different elements, but that these elements are not "discrete" or "fully separable" (p. 205). Another way of approaching

this same idea comes from Foucault, who wrote that discourse is a set of practices that "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49).[3]

Conceiving of discourse as those practices which "form the objects of which they speak" has consequences for our understanding of the relationship between the world and the language we use to describe it. Under such a conception, people, as discourse-using animals, have no access to the "real world" unmediated by discourse (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004; Howarth & Norval, 2000). As Jäger (2001) says, discourse "forms consciousness" (p. 35), and thus studying discourse cannot be thought of as a process of seeking the "truth" behind the discourse. "Truth" is always constructed via discourse, and thus there is no "behind," and all truths are contextual and contingent (Hall, 1997; Jäger, 2001). This does not mean that there is no "truth"— every discourse has conditions that define how to determine truth from falsehood (Jäger, 2001); rather, there are no truths that are independent of the discourse used to produce them.

**1.1.2 Discourse communities.** If truths are contingent and contextual and always already bound up with the discourse used to produce them, it can also be helpful to think of discourses in the plural—that is, as context-specific sets of assumptions and rules that limit what can be said, who is entitled to speak, and what form that speech must take in order to be heard (Foucault, 1972; van Dijk, 1997; van Leeuwen, 2016). These rules are conditioned by the "local and macro contexts in which they occur," while simultaneously "shap[ing] the social identities and relationships of the participants engaged in these events themselves" (Bhatia, 2015, p. 11–12). It is not possible to draw definitive boundaries between groups of texts and say that a text belongs to one discourse and not another, since texts are always already connected to other texts, referring directly and indirectly to one another (Bhatia, 1997; Fairclough, 2003). However, it can be helpful during analysis to speak of certain texts as being strongly connected to a particular community and its social

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[3] Foucault also uses "discourse" in the small-d discourse sense, stating that they use the term "sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements" (p. 80).

practices. Conversely, many communities can be defined in part by the discourses which they employ.

Discourse communities are collections of people who recognize amongst each other a particular way of using language in respect to a common set of interests, and in some cases, common goals (Borg, 2003). These communities can range from the very specific to the very broad—from university English language teachers in Japan who employ neuroscience in their work to the wildly generic category of "educators" worldwide. While these communities are not inherently linked to professions (it is reasonable to speak of "fans of Sports Club X" as a potential discourse community), in my case, I am specifically concerned with what Bhatia (2015) called the "discourse of professional practice." Such discourse is not only important in laying out the common interests of the participants, but is also instrumental in the development of social identities within a specific practice—in my case, the practice of teaching foreign languages in Japan, particularly at the secondary and tertiary levels. Before I follow up on this notion of identity, however, I want to briefly turn to the idea of "genre," since it is used similarly to the idea of little-d discourses, though it comes out of a different academic tradition.

**1.1.3 Genre.** When discourse is viewed as social action, in the simplest sense, genres are "ways of acting" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 26). That is, genres are the sets of rules attached to particular collections of discourse. Similarly, Bazerman (2012) said that genres are "available and familiar patterns of utterances" (p. 229). These patterns are what allow for communication, since they allow both sides of a communicative act (whether that act is conducted in real time via speech or diachronically through writing) to interpret the actual language used in at least somewhat consistent ways.

Traditionally, genre analysis was strongly tied to applied linguistics, in that researchers sought linguistic rules that define how genres work (Bhatia, 2002). In many cases, this was done with the intent of providing rules to language learners about how to use and respond to genres they might encounter in their academic or professional lives (Bhatia, 2002). Bhatia (2015), however, wrote that critical analysts must be sure not to treat the analysis of genre as a goal in and of itself. Examining a genre solely to find out the "rules" of the genre inappropriately divorces the texts

from the social contexts in which they operate and are produced. Bhatia's approach, which they call Critical Genre Analysis, is different from traditional approaches not only in goal, but also in method. Bhatia (2015) argued that

> Discourse as genre extends the analysis beyond the textual output to incorporate context in a broader sense to account for not only the way text is constructed, but also the way it is likely to be interpreted, used and exploited in specific contexts, whether social, institutional, or more narrowly professional, to achieve specific disciplinary goals, which often require the use of methods that investigate not only linguistic issues, but also socio-pragmatic ones. (p. 10)

This is similar to the advice given by Gee (2014), who recommended that one of the tools discourse analysts should use is to "ask not just what the speaker is saying, but what he or she is trying to do, keeping in mind that he or she may be trying to do more than one thing" (p. 52). Thus, while my examination of the My Share articles in my corpus will involve an examination of the "rules" of the genre, my goal is to try to understand what these texts are doing—what role they are playing in the professional practice of language teachers in Japan.

**1.1.4 Identity.** Earlier I mentioned that the part of the role of discourse within a particular discourse community is to reflect and construct the identities of the members of said community. Here, identity is used in the postmodern sense, not as a singular thing that people have, but, rather, as plural things which people perform or enact in interactions with other people (Blommaert, 2005; Hall, 2000). As Hall (1985) said, "there is no essential unitary 'I'—only the fragmentary, contradictory subject I become" (p. 109). These identities are intricately linked with discourse; Blommaert (2005) called them "particular forms of semiotic potential, organized in a repertoire" (p. 207) and Beijaard (1995) called them "the various meanings someone can attach to oneself or the meaning attributed to oneself by others" (p. 282). The final part of Beijaard's point is particularly important—it highlights the idea that identity is not located solely within a singular self, but is also a product of interaction—interaction which must always already be mediated by

discourse. Thus, as I look at the professional discourse practices of a subset of foreign language teachers in Japan, part of my intent is to understand how this discourse structures the identities of the participants—not only the readers, writers, and editors, who have direct contact with the texts in question, but also the students about which they speak. I will be looking for how these texts represent the identities of both students and teachers, especially in terms of what they can and should do within the classroom, and how those identities are situated in the wider sociocultural context of Japanese education and language learning.

## 1.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

I want to return to the sexist blog post discussed that I began this chapter with. A major problem with the original article was that it unabashedly positioned the (male) teacher as the center of the classroom, arraying female bodies as objects for the male teacher's gaze and discussing female students as being concerned about and often desirous of the interest of the male teacher. That is, the sexist arguments were underpinned by an assumption of the power and centrality of the teacher, both as the institutional center of the classroom and as the primary *male* in the classroom. While in this case the teacher's (and author's) power were quite apparent, the role of power in other forms of teachers' professional discourse is not always clear from the surface of the text. The power invoked in teacherly discourse is connected to the operation of power within the classroom, along with the way that the classroom reflects and conditions the power dynamics that students and teachers can or do or should play with respect to the rest of the world. Thus, another part of what this project seeks to uncover is how power operates in the My Share articles and, by extension, in the classrooms in which the activities described in the discourse would be used. When I talk about power, here, I do not mean only the idea of centralized power which flows from the top of a hierarchical system via threats of coercion, but, rather, the diffuse force which permeates all discursive and social interactions, governing behavior through internal and external mechanisms (Foucault, 1995).

A focus on issues of power and identity, along with the recommendations of Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) which will be discussed in section 3.2.1, led me to use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the major lens through which to understand these texts. CDA is a way of approaching discourse-focused research that traces its

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roots to both the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory (Tenorio, 2011) and what Pennycook (2010) called "those forms of critique that carried a post prefix (postmodern, poststructural, postcolonial) as opposed to those I saw as modernist, materialist, and structuralist" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 3). This "post-" focus is often based upon the work of theorists such as Althusser, Bourdieu, Foucault, Gramsci, and Marx (Lin, 2014; Tenorio, 2011).

Numerous authors have provided definitions of CDA over the several decades it and its predecessor frameworks have existed (c.f., Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Fairclough, 2003; Tenorio, 2011; van Dijk, 2011), but one of the most concise and widely cited comes from Wodak (2001b):

> Thus, CL [critical linguistics] and CDA may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse). (p. 2)

Note that in this definition, Wodak describes the goals of CDA research, but not the techniques used to accomplish those goals. CDA is not a methodology or a method, but is rather "a state of mind, an attitude, a way of dissenting, and many more things, but not an explicit method for the description of the structures or strategies of text and talk" (van Dijk, 2013, para. 1). As a result, CDA-influenced studies can differ greatly in the types of evidence they look at and the theoretical lenses they employ; many studies (including this one) are multimodal and multivoiced. In Chapter 3 I will lay out what I believe are the most important principles of CDA along with examples of how it has been previously used to examine education-related topics, and in Chapter 4 I will discuss how I have implemented those principles in the design and conduct of this research.

## 1.3 Corpus Linguistics

As will be discussed in further detail in section 4.2, the collected texts that I will be analyzing are substantial in length—a total of approximately 100,000 words. As such,

one of the facets of this project is the use of corpus linguistics techniques. A corpus itself is nothing more than "a body of written or transcribed speech which can serve as a basis for linguistic analysis and description" (Kennedy, 1998, p.1). What may be hidden in this description for those unfamiliar with the history of linguistics is that it is a body of *actual* texts—that is, it is composed of texts that were produced for real-world purposes, whether they be research papers, conversations between friends, government documents, advertisements, works of fiction, or whatever. As Meyer (2002) explained, this is in direct opposition to much of the work done under the heading of generative grammar, the dominant linguistic paradigm of the 20th century. Generative grammar does not focus on actual language in use, but instead on so-called "native speaker intuition," with the goal being to determine the rules that were theorized to underly linguistic processing (Kennedy, 1998). Corpus linguistics, on the other hand, does not seek this sort of theoretical rule set (if it even exists), and instead tries to derive linguistic principles based on real world use. While there was once a strict division between these two fields many researchers now utilize both approaches to further linguistic understanding (Meyer, 2002).

As Meyer (2002) said, "corpus linguistics is more a way of doing linguistics…than a separate paradigm within linguistics." That is, it is a methodology for analyzing language, used by linguists and other researchers (like myself) who want to understand how language works, including how it is connected to other social practices. In fact, Baker (2009) argued that the boundaries between "corpus linguistics, computational linguists and linguists who use corpora" are blurring, and, furthermore, that that last group is experiencing the greatest growth (p. 1). It is in this vein that the present project lies—as is discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 8, certain aspects of this project make use of corpus-linguistics tools, even though it isn't accurate to characterize the entire project as falling under "corpus linguistics."

## 1.4 Research Goals

Regarding the mechanisms for beginning and organizing a CDA research project, Fairclough (2003) recommended the following: "Focus on a social problem which has a semiotic aspect. Beginning with a social problem rather than the more conventional 'research question' accords with the critical intent of this approach—

to produce knowledge which can lead to emancipatory change" (p. 209). I began this chapter talking about my concerns about how teachers talk about students. I am especially concerned about teachers who speak and write in ways that attempt to disempower students, to make or "help" students conform to conventional systems of behavior. That is, I am concerned with educational practices that seek to "integrate" or "incorporate" students into "healthy society" (Freire, 2005, p. 74). As with Freire, I believe that "The solution is not to 'integrate' them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become 'beings for themselves'" (p. 74).[4] I am also, like Fairclough, concerned about the ever-growing impact of neoliberalism and globalization, both of which are featured in Japanese government policy, on both students and the educational system itself.[5] Thus, part of my interest lies in determining whether and in what ways those ideologies are found in this professional discourse.

Having said that, this project does not solely examine these issues. Rather, my intent is to understand, in as complex a manner as possible, how this discourse acts as a response to the material conditions of being a foreign language teacher in Japan, as well as how the discourse attempts to shape those conditions and the social practices of language teaching here. While my end goal has always been, as Fairclough suggested, to understand the social problems which are reflected in and constructed by these texts, I found it useful to break down the work on this project to the addressing of four research questions, as follows:

1. What are the conventions of this genre? That is, beyond the explicit rules given in the guidelines for My Share articles (JALT, n.d.-a), what features are commonly found and not found in this genre, how is the information organized, and what implications do these conventions have for the rest of the research questions?

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[4] While Japanese students are not "oppressed" in the same way that the South American students that Freire was speaking of were, they are nonetheless being asked to shape themselves to meet the desires of the Japanese government, businesses, and society, rather than being taught how to question those systems and work for emancipatory transformation.
[5] As Pennycook (1989) said, "education is fundamentally political since it is constantly involved in the (re)production of social and cultural inequalities (both within and between nations), and of particular forms of culture and knowledge" (pp. 590-591).

2. In this corpus, what links can be found between discourse, pedagogy, and teacher beliefs? How is this discourse implicated in the reproduction of particular types of teacher identity, and how are those identities both created and resisted through this discourse?

3. In what ways does power operate in this discourse and the activities that it describes? What beliefs about teacher and student power are embedded in the linguistic structure of the text, and what sorts of power relationships will be played out when the activities are actually conducted? How does this relate to the social situations that teachers and students find themselves in both inside and outside of the classroom?

4. What links exist between the My Share discourse and wider discourses about education in Japan—especially those discourses which are promoted by the Japanese government in national education and language policy?

## 1.5 Outline

The remainder of this document is composed as follows. The second and third chapters constitute the remainder of Part 1, Introduction, and provide background information to situate this research. Chapter 2, Historical Background, discusses the history of Japanese education, focusing primarily on the recent history of language education in Japan, and several recent changes to the organization of Japanese universities. The intent of this chapter is to provide the necessary sociohistorical context for interpreting the My Share articles. In Chapter 3, Literature Review, I look to prior research from the fields of critical discourse analysis, teacher belief/identity research, and corpus-based research. In each case, I focus on research done in the education field, and, where possible, review studies done specifically on language education and/or education in Japan. This chapter also contains a brief theoretical overview of each of these fields.

In Chapter 4, Methodology (which is the sole chapter in Part 2, also called Methodology), I discuss JALT, the My Share corpus, and my data preparation methods in detail. I explain how the nature of this data and the principles of CDA discussed in Chapter 3 led to the use of a specific set of analytical tools and lenses. Finally, I provide an overview of the research design followed in the rest of the chapters.

Part 3, Results and Discussion, forms the bulk of the paper, and contains eight chapters. Chapters 5 through 11 each focus on a different lens via which I have analyzed the My Share corpus (see Chapter 4 for a justification for this multi-methodological approach). Chapter 5 contains a Structure Analysis; this establishes the broad rules of the contemporary My Share genre such as what subsections are required or are optionally allowed and how the section is positioned and formatted relative to the rest of the journal. Chapter 6 contains a Move Analysis of a portion of the corpus. This is a method from genre analysis that catalogues the rhetorical gestures used in a particular genre. Chapter 7, Argument Analysis, looks at the direct and indirect claims the authors make about what is "good," "beneficial," or "true" in language teaching in the Japanese context. Chapter 8, Lexicogrammar Analysis, looks at the microlinguistic features of word, agent, and co-occurrence frequencies. Chapters 9, Activity Analysis, steps back from looking at the articles as texts (as in Chapters 5–8) and shifts to considering the activities "behind" the texts. Chapter 10, Special Topics Analysis, examines the way three concepts related to Japanese educational policies (internationalization, active learning, and neoliberalism) are represented, promoted, or resisted in the corpus. Chapter 11, Interview and Questionnaire Analysis, is also used to understand the corpus, but does so by data drawn from outside of the corpus itself. This data was gathered from interviews of JALT editors and questionnaires sent to the My Share authors. The intent of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the context under which these articles were written, selected, edited, and published.

The final chapter in Part 3 is Chapter 12, Discussion. This chapter attempts to synthesize the information drawn from the results chapters. However, when I say synthesize, I don't mean to say that I create a grand theory that attempts to explain "truths" about either this genre/discourse or the beliefs/identities that it represents—such a totalizing move is inconsistent with a "post-" or "critical" approach to research. Rather, I seek to summarize how these varying lenses all contribute to a complex and sometimes contradictory set of interpretations of the role that this discourse plays in reflecting and shaping professional practice in Japanese language teaching.

Part 4, Conclusion, is composed of a single chapter (13), also called Conclusion. This chapter reviews the main findings and the implications of those

findings for the research fields being studied. The chapter also discusses the implications for the professional discursive behaviors of both authors and editors of My Share that might help improve what I see are some negative consequences of the way that My Share is currently written. Finally, I suggest ways that this study could be extended in Japan to understand a wider range of Japanese teaching practices or transposed to other contexts (other types of teacher professional discourse and other locations).

## 1.6 Formatting Note

Throughout this paper, when I use pronouns to refer to the authors of the My Share articles, the editors I interviewed, and other researchers whom I cite, I use *they, them,* and *their* for both singular and plural forms. I do this to avoid misgendering them based on my assumptions of what gender a particular name refers to. For consistency, I do this even in cases where the My Share authors are personally known to me or when the researchers are well-known public figures and I have a stronger idea about what gender they identify as. Also, in the case of the My Share articles, when I refer to the authors of individual articles, I use the singular "author" even in cases where the articles were co-written by two people.

# Chapter 2
# Historical Background

As set forth in the introduction chapter, this project will examine how issues of identity, power, and beliefs are expressed in and constituted by a specific corpus of published lesson activity plans. Such a task cannot be accomplished in a vacuum—that is, it is not meaningful to make claims about how these issues arise in these texts solely by looking at these texts. Rather, these texts must be analyzed within the sociohistorical circumstances in which they arose, circumstances which these texts necessarily respond to, directly or indirectly. First, I will define how I define the context within which these texts operate; then the bulk of the chapter provides a brief description of particularly salient aspects of that context.

## 2.1 Research Context

The journal from which the corpus for this research was drawn, *The Language Teacher*, is a professional journal written primarily for those engaging in some aspect of the social practice of teaching language in Japan. While this practice is embedded in countless professional and non-professional contexts and linked to countless other social practices both in and out of Japan, for simplicity, I view the context as existing at the nexus of four major domains, as visually depicted in Figure 1. These four domains are education in Japan (encompassing both public and private education for all ages, and including both formal credentialing such as diplomas and degrees and education conducted for personal improvement, job training, etc.), language policy in Japan (the formal rules created by the national government and enacted in both public and private spaces that determine what languages can or must be spoken in these spaces), language attitudes in Japan (the attitudes that all people in Japan have towards both the national language and other languages), and TESOL (encompassing the academic field of teaching English as a foreign, second, third, etc., language; the behaviors engaged in by both teachers and students of TESOL; and the actual practices of teaching, learning, researching, publishing, etc. in this field).
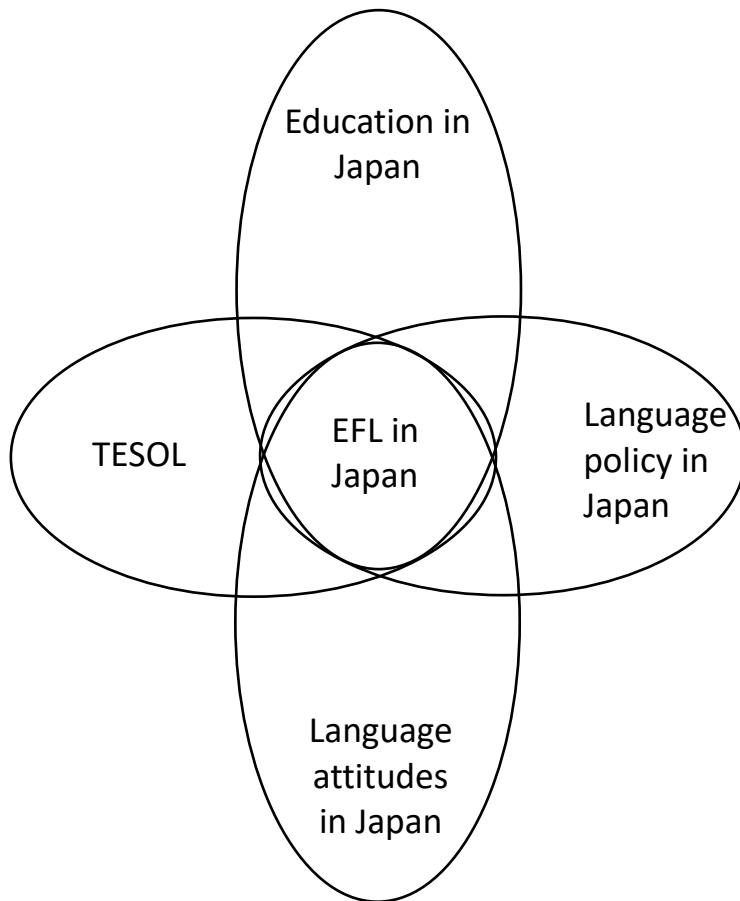
*Figure 1.* Visual representation of the context of this study.

The My Share articles are aimed directly at the intersection of these fields—English as a foreign language education in Japan—and are primarily targeted at EFL teachers. While JALT members come from all levels and types of language education, the majority teach at the secondary and tertiary levels. Furthermore, since my personal experience with the Japanese educational system has been as an ALT at the high school level and a lecturer at a several universities (the position I currently hold), I have chosen to focus this project on My Share articles describing activities that can be used at the secondary and tertiary level, since much of this analysis—especially the qualitative parts—relies upon my intuitions as an "in-group" member.[6] As such, the following history focuses on secondary and tertiary education in Japan, with particular attention to foreign language (i.e., languages other than Japanese) instruction. I also discuss the introduction of English language education in primary school, because the reasons for this expansion help explain wider issues

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[6]A full discussion of the selection criteria for the data is found in section 4.2.

within Japanese language and education policy, and that change will have a gradually cascading effect as those students who have just begun to learn English at a younger age advance through the education system. In addition, English education is strongly linked to other issues of schooling, so the history also deals with some non-language learning aspects of Japanese education. The history focuses primarily on the extends last several decades, which likely have the most direct effect on the authors of my corpus and the students they are interacting with, though there are brief references to earlier events.

## 2.2 Primary and Secondary Education

My goal in this section is not to lay out a chronological history of Japanese pre-tertiary education. Rather, I want to approach the issue thematically, in order to get an understanding of how students come to view education by the time they reach the university level, as well as structural issues that shape the interactions between education, business, Japanese society and social customs, and foreign language learning and use.

**2.2.1 Academic testing.** It is impossible to understand the Japanese education system without considering the extraordinary importance of high school and university entrance exams. In 1983 Rohlen described entrance exams as Japan's "national obsession" (as cited in Takeuchi, 1997, p. 183), and Takeuchi felt it was still true in the 1990s. Later studies have confirmed that this "obsession" continues, and helped explain why it does. Large Japanese companies generally recruit new employees directly out of tertiary education primarily based upon which school the student attended (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 1997; Yonezawa, 2002; Yoshimoto et al., 2004), with schools being placed on a finely graded scale of "Z-scores" derived from mock-examinations (Takeuchi, 1997). This results in a "very hierarchical" system in which "there is a societal consensus on institutional rankings" (Newby, Weko, Breneman, Johanneson, & Maassen, 2009, p. 26). Most high school students and their parents tend to rely on those measurements when deciding which universities to apply to (Yonezawa, Nakatsui, & Kobayashi, 2002).

The nature of these entrance exams, especially the university entrance exams created by mid- to high level universities, requires a very particular kind of studying. Many of these exams test material that is significantly more extensive and difficult than is required by the Course of Study.[7] Modern entrance exams require large amounts of rote learning, and thus secondary school curricula are designed to meet that need. With regards to English, this leads to a focus on what is sometimes called *juken eigo*—English for exams (Hagerman, 2009). *Juken eigo* teaching is marked by the cramming of massive amounts obscure linguistic items (Law, 1995). In addition to the economic sorting role of such testing, Hadley (1997) and Law (1995) also saw a connection between this type of learning and neo-Confucian ideals elevating the importance of diligence, hard work, and obedience, a philosophy that dates all the way back to the fourth century. In particular, Law noted that teaching English as a system of arbitrary rules (rather than as a mechanism for communication) is perhaps the ultimate symbol of "obedience," since students are compelled to learn this arbitrary system for no reason (no personal benefit) other than to demonstrate that they are hard-working and obedient.

**2.2.2 Japan and the foreign: A complex relationship.** Another aspect of Japanese society, politics, and educational policy which must be understood to properly contextualize present-day language teaching is the highly complex and variable relationships that Japan and Japanese people have had with "the foreign," foreigners, and foreign languages. While these relationships have changed over time, many of the positions can be tied to the idea of *kotodama,* which is the idea that languages contain the "spirit" or "soul" of the cultures from which they originate (Hadley, 1997; Law, 1995). It is possible to read the varying approaches to foreign language as having been linked to the extent to which the Japanese government/elites wished to encourage the adoption of foreign influences. Thus, during times of isolation and nationalism (such as the *sakoku* period and the time leading up to and through World War II), foreign language study was discouraged since it might lead to the pollution of the Japanese spirit, while during the Meiji and

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[7] The Course of Study is the official policy document released by the Ministry of Education which governs primary and secondary education in Japan.

post-war eras, when the Japanese government sought to make use of foreign knowledge and skills, foreign language study was encouraged for both practical and social reasons (Hadley, 1997; Hagerman, 2009; Koike & Tanaka, 1995; Kubota, 1998).

Contemporary foreign language policy can be traced back to the post-war period, during which foreign language learning became nearly completely equated with learning English (Hadley, 1997). However, debates continued to exist about what the goal of English language learning was, with opinions ranging from those who wished to make English purely elective, to those who felt it was important for improving Japan's relationship with global trade partners, to those who valued English language learning as an academic exercise rather than preparation for actual communication (Ike, 1995). Some even advocated making English an official language in Japan, an idea that was proposed as far back as the late 19th century, though that idea has been strongly rejected each time it has been raised (Hagerman, 2009; Kubota, 1998).

While early language policy decisions were, as shown above, often linked to their value to Japan as a nation, by the 1980s, there came to be a convergence between national interests and business interests, to the point where the two come to be treated almost equivalently—that is, when neoliberal policies came to dominate Japan (along with much of the rest of the world).[8] One profound and lasting manifestation of this convergence was a significant amount of emphasis being placed on *kokusaika*, a term commonly translated as "internationalization" or "globalization," though as discussed in detail in section 3.1.2.1, Hashimoto (2000) demonstrates through close analysis of the texts various government documents that this is not internationalization in the sense of Japan becoming part of a larger international community in a sort of multicultural merging, but rather in the sense of Japan needing to interact with the other countries for practical (mostly economic purposes) while still maintaining a separate, distinct Japanese identity.

Furthermore, even when *kokusaika* is meant to actually involve contact with foreigners or foreign culture, it is often read or intended as "Westernization, or, more specifically, Americanization." (Kubota & McKay, 2009, p. 602). *Kokusaika* has had a

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[8] Neoliberalism is described by Davies and Bansel (2007) as a government policy which centralizes economics in both the public and personal spheres, and which subsumes individual interests into the advancement of national interests. Further details are discussed in section 10.5.

significant impact in educational policy, in which it has been included since the late 1980s and 1990s (Hashimoto, 2000, 2009; Koike & Tanaka, 1995). These policies called for progressively greater focus on "English for communicative purposes" and "English for international communication" along with a shift towards more oral language production and away from formal rule learning and translation activities.[9] This most recently culminated in the 2009 Course of Study document which both made foreign language instruction mandatory in the last two years of primary school (it had previously been optional) and which stated that high school English courses should, "in principle," be taught in English (Hashimoto, 2011; Tahira, 2012). While the exact pedagogical manifestation of this approach to English education was created and enacted by the Ministry of Education,[10] much of the impetus for the policies came from the business community (Butler, 2007; Kubota, 1998).

The stated goal of these changes, especially the most recent, was to create "Japanese with English ability" (Hashimoto, 2009, 2013b), which Hashimoto argued didn't mean the creation of bilingual Japanese individuals, but rather the creation of students/citizens who can use English when necessary while still strongly preserving Japanese national identity.[11] The 2003 Action Plan makes the neoliberal intent of this policy explicit, since the ultimate goal of English education for a university graduate was described as ensuring "graduates can use English in their work" (MEXT, 2003, cited in Hato, 2005). While the process of reform is still ongoing, and, in fact, several of the recent changes were implemented after the publication of the articles I will be reviewing, this attempt to shift the purpose of English education from "English as academic subject" to "English as communicative tool for the betterment of Japan/Japanese businesses" had and continues to have an effect on

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[9] One aspect of this was the 2003 addition of a listening component to the National Center Exam (Tahira, 2012), the standardized, national college entrance exam that all Japanese students take prior to taking university specific exams (and which have a small though significant impact on acceptance decisions).

[10] The Japanese Ministry in charge of education has undergone a several name changes over time, along with dissolution from and combination with other ministries. The current name is the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, officially abbreviated as MEXT. Rather than match terms used by the referenced authors (who usually used the term that was current at the time of publication) for simplicity, throughout this and future chapters, I will refer to the organization, regardless of the period being discussed, by the phrase Ministry of Education or MEXT.

[11] This can be seen in part as a continuation of the concerns about *kotodama*, since the goal is to promote foreign language skill while avoiding the risk of "spiritual" contamination from other languages/cultures.

not only students and teachers at the primary and secondary levels, but also indirectly on students at the tertiary level, since their attitudes towards English will have been shaped in part by not only how English was taught to them, but also by the wider social context (media reports, textbooks, etc.) of English use in Japan.

**2.2.3 Neoliberalism, autonomy, and student-centered education.** One of the impacts of neoliberalism in education (in general, not just in Japan) has been a shift from the idea that a good education is a civil right deserving of government investment to the idea that it is a private good and that the responsibility for success falls entirely on the individual and private institutions (Apple, 2006; K. Takayama, 2009). This shift has often been accomplished by arguing that government run institutions have failed in their responsibility (with part of the fault often leveled at teachers and unions who are portrayed as too powerful and self-interested), and that de-regulation and de-centralization are necessary to improve educational outcomes. In Japan, one of these major shifts came with the introduction of the *yutori* system in 1993 (K. Takayama, 2007).

*Yutori* means "relaxed" and "lower pressure." It was argued that increases in absenteeism, student violence (self-directed in suicides and other-directed in bullying and a few high profile cases of student-on-student homicide), and depression were caused by a schooling environment that was too stressful and demanding (Azuma, 2002).[12] *Yutori* practices took a wide variety of forms, but among the most noticeable were the abolishment of mandatory six-day school weeks alongside a decrease in the total number of credit hours required to graduate from junior and senior high school, and the creation of a period of Integrated Study (IS) lying outside of the standard academic curriculum (Azuma, 2002; Hashimoto, 2011; LeTendre, 2002). LeTendre argued that the change to five-day weeks, rather than giving students more leisure time, actually gave them less, at least at school. Teachers, who still felt the pressure to prepare students for competitive entrance exams had to find some way to keep the same amount of instruction despite the shorter week, so their solution (at least at some schools) was to eliminate optional

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[12] Azuma also noted that many of these changes were recommended by advisory committees as far back as the 1970s and argued that MEXT often intentionally proposes a variety of potential changes and then only implements those which seem to have wide public support.

classes like art and music and to decrease the amount of time available for club activities. Also, in my own personal experience, many higher-level schools continued to teach classes on Saturday, which although technically optional, are for all practical purposes just as required as before.

The IS period, which officially became part of the curriculum in 2002, "was regarded as a vehicle for encouraging the investigation of provocative issues that children face in their daily lives" (Bjork, 2009, p. 24). The Ministry provided little guidance about what to do during this period, instead leaving it up to individual schools, and thus was a part of the move towards MEXT providing increased autonomy to local schools and school boards (Butler & Iino, 2005). Furthermore, the intent was to increase not only school autonomy, but also student autonomy. In theory, teachers were supposed to act as "coordinators" for students who would "design projects that explored topics related to the themes that they found particularly interesting" (Bjork, 2009, p. 24). That is, the IS period, and *yutori* education in general, was supposed to promote student-centered education (Bjork, 2009; Tsuneyoshi, 2004) and encourage student autonomy through what might be called problem-based learning.

Student autonomy means allowing students to voluntarily study subjects that they choose in an independent, flexible way (Lee, 1998). The desire for autonomous learning has been discussed in Japanese education at least as far back as 1985, when the Ad Hoc Council on Education (called *Rinkyoushin*, discussed in more detail in section 2.4.3 below), included a "stress on individuality" in their recommendations for major curricular reform (Cave, 2001). Such a call was repeated and expanded on in the 1998 recommendations from the advisory Curriculum Council, who suggested that reform be undertaken "to help children develop ability to learn and think independently" and "to help children acquire basic abilities and skills and grow their own individuality with plenty of scope for educational activities" (cited in Kojima & Kojima, 2005). While it is important not to place too heavy an emphasis on the term *individuality*, because Cave (2001) argued it has long maintained an ambiguous meaning in Japanese educational policy, it does seem to point to a desire for the promotion of learner autonomy. However, a study by Nakata (2011) found that even though high school English teachers in Japan believed that promoting autonomy is an important part of language learning, they weren't taking as many steps as they

wanted to implement autonomy promoting activities because of personal experiences and a focus on entrance exams.

## 2.3 Communicative Language Teaching in Japan

As a bridge between my discussion of primary/secondary and tertiary education, I would like to examine an issue common to both, which is a consideration of how language can and should be taught in Japan. Most of the activities in the My Share corpus in some way utilize Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodologies, in the sense that they usually make student participation in actual communication their primary mechanism of language learning. As mentioned above, there has been an official push towards the inclusion of more CLT in secondary school English courses—and below I show a similar push at the tertiary level. Before considering whether this push has been successful, it's important to first understand what this "push" is moving away from.

The most typical form of language instruction in Japan is called *yakudoku*, which is usually equated with the Grammar-Translation method. However, Hino (1988) demonstrated that simply translating *yakudoku* as Grammar-Translation is a bit misleading, since it fails to understand the historical context out of which *yakudoku* arises—that is, the long history of Japanese interaction with Chinese writing. *Yakudoku* has three steps: first, each word is translated individually into Japanese; second, the translated words are reordered to match Japanese word order; and third, the Japanese is modified until it matches proper Japanese syntax (such as adding particles, modifying verb endings, etc.). Hino noted three major disadvantages to *yakudoku*: it's slow, it's inaccurate, and the back and forth eye movements necessary for even highly proficient *yakudoku* users are fatiguing.

If *yakudoku* is not an optimal method for learning a language, especially for listening and speaking, then why does it persist? Hino proposed three causes for *yakudoku's* persistence: teaching *yakudoku* takes little training and each class requires little preparation for the teacher, it is perceived of as a kind of mental training, and it is the established norm, so doing something different would be considered deviant.

These last two points (*yakudoku* as established norm and as a form of mental training) were echoed by Law (1995), who posited three ideological underpinnings

of English instruction via *yakudoku*. The first is that in some cases, English is treated in Japan the same way that Latin and Ancient Greek were treated in the West—as a source of knowledge to which a response is both impossible and unnecessary. Second, English is sometimes treated as an "inverted image of Japanese" (p. 215). This is consistent with the *nihonjinron*[13] perspective that there are two categories of things in the world: Japan and Japanese things, and that which is "not-us, outside, strange—*mukou* or 'over there'" (p. 216). Thus, learning English is used as a means of learning Japanese better.[14] This is consistent with the practice of *yakudoku*, since most of the actual work is done in Japanese. It is also consistent with the very modern way the government is treating *kokusaika*—as a chance for Japan to engage with the world while strengthening the Japanese identity and culture (Hashimoto, 2000, 2009, 2011). Third, English can be viewed as simply a set of arbitrary rules— that is, not as a language utilized for communication, but as a formal system that one learns simply because one must learn it, as discussed in section 2.2.2. Law and many others agreed that these ideas are out of place in the modern world, since Law took it for granted that English should be studied as a tool for international communication. However, the key point Law made is that it is critically important to understand that there are, in fact, ideological underpinnings to *yakudoku,*[15] despite the beliefs of some from outside Japan who act as if *yakudoku* persists merely due to resistance from teachers who don't want to leave the style of teaching they learned by and thus are comfortable with. Since there are, in fact, theoretical reasons justifying the continuation of *yakudoku*, if people (schools, corporations,

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[13] *Nihonjinron*, meaning "theories on the Japanese," is a term dating back to the Meiji period and popularized in the 1960s and 70s which attempted to explain how Japan was able to undergo such rapid economic success following World War II. It generally posits that the Japanese language, people, and culture are unique in the world, and attempts to explain what those unique characteristics are. Kubota (1999) explained the concept in detail, offered possible causes for its rise in popularity, and provided criticisms of it.

[14] In a more extreme and arguably prejudicial way, Harasawa (1974) argued that the Japanese were, in general, psychologically incapable of mastering foreign languages because they were "unduly addicted to or intoxicated by their own language" (p. 76), such that they could not leave psychological space for other languages. Harasawa further asserted that "ordinary Japanese learners have never really been able to convince themselves of the reality, the true 'livingness,' of English…. They are unable to realize that millions upon millions of people actually live and move and have their being exclusively in English all day long…." (p. 74).

[15] Law added that the goal of "English for international communication" also contains ideologies—in this case, of Western hegemony and colonialism.

governments, etc.) want to alter Japanese English education, they must do so through these ideologies, not in ignorance or in spite of them.

The above research looked at abstract, ideological reasons why *yakudoku* persists and CLT is difficult to implement. Several researchers have also looked at more practical considerations for why CLT continues to be underutilized in Japanese schools, especially at the secondary level. In an extensive study of the attitudes of Japanese high school teachers of English, Gorsuch (2000) found that the most "central" factor shaping teachers' pedagogical choices (especially with respect to implementing or not implementing CLT) was entrance exams, where "central" meant that, even though the exams weren't always directly cited as the cause for not adopting CLT, exams were the underlying component of several other factors that contributed to a non-adoption of CLT. For example, parents apply pressure on schools to focus their teaching on entrance exam success (Azuma, 2002; Cook, 2009; LeTendre, 2002). Cook (2009), who studied a group of teachers who spent six months in Canada learning how to conduct communicative English classes, went so far as to say that "paying parents (at the high school level) expect to be guaranteed that their children will succeed on entrance exams" (p. 112). Gorsuch's study showed that even though factors such as parental pressure were often stated as the proximal cause, many of these factors could be traced back, through factor analysis, to the entrance exams themselves.

Other factors have also been found to dissuade teachers from extensively implementing CLT. Cook (2009) found that in addition to parent/exam pressure, the teachers felt that Japanese classroom culture is different from that in Canada—specifically that students are significantly less talkative in Japan, making a fully communication-focused class much more difficult. Additionally, some of the teachers didn't see a way to implement CLT while still using Ministry-mandated textbooks or within courses designed to teach non-oral skills. Gorsuch (2000) found that it was likely that many teachers view teacher-centered classes focused on student memorization and translation to be a key part of language learning in Japan. Both researchers also suggested factors that might make adoption of CLT more likely. Cook found that those teachers who had specifically studied education (which is not required to be a secondary school teacher) were more likely to have found ways to adapt what they had learned in Canada to their classes back home in Japan. Gorsuch

suggested that teachers would be more likely to include communicative activities if the entrance exams specifically tested communicative ability.[16] Further discussion of these issues and examples of studies investigating the lack of uptake of CLT is found in section 3.2.

The final point I would like to consider regarding CLT, though, stands a bit in contrast to those above. Many of the authors who examine why CLT has not been universally implemented in Japan (and other Asian countries) proceed from the assumption that CLT is simply, undeniably better, with Gorsuch (2000) being a particularly salient example. But it is worth noting that the naturalization and valorization of CLT and the related task-based learning methodology has come under significant criticism (e.g., Bax, 2003), including specifically in Japan (Sato, 2010). Bax (2003) criticized a white, Western teacher who came to Japan and was shocked and stunned at the Japanese teachers who "had remained oblivious to developments in language teaching" and didn't immediately accept the obvious (Western) idea that CLT is not just a better, but, in fact, the only means of reasonably learning a language.[17] Thus in the same way that Law (1995) asserted that teachers need to understand current ideologies if they want to alter them, they also need to be self-reflexive and examine whether the desired change is appropriate to the local context rather than being rooted in an outsider/colonialist mindset that fails to recognize that there are sociocultural reasons why Japanese classes are run the way they are.

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[16] On the other hand, Brown (2000) suggested that the university entrance exams could have a positive washback on secondary school language teaching only if "there was comprehensive teamwork and collaboration between the university examination writers and the instructors who teach high school English" (p. 5) something that is unlikely to occur due to the strict wall between the two levels which is generally attributed to fear that pre-knowledge of the test would hamper its effectiveness as a sorting mechanism.

[17] I want to be clear here about my position with reference to these articles: I am the oppressor, the privileged. I am the white, male, cisgender, Christian who teaches English in a non-Western country. At times I have probably been the person in Bax's story. I have almost certainly told Japanese teachers that their methods are not only wrong but that they would be considered backwards outside of Japan, without stopping to consider (or even thinking it was important to consider) the local educational context. I don't want to be this person, and part of my motivation for this study of My Share articles (many of which are rooted in teaching methodologies originally imported from outside of Japan) is to find and criticize cases where hegemonic attitudes towards the ownership of English and English language teaching persist in our professional discourse.

**2.4 Tertiary Education**

Tertiary education in Japan consists of a variety of types of schools, including universities, two-year colleges (both junior colleges and technical colleges), and various vocational schools. Some of these schools are operated by national, prefectural, or municipal governments, though most are privately owned. While there are countless aspects of Japanese university education that could be reviewed, I will focus on those which have relevance to the present project. Specifically, I will start by examining demographic trends which have had a significant effect on Japanese university education. Second, I will provide a brief explanation for what goes on inside of Japanese tertiary classrooms, paired with a discussion of the purpose of university education. Finally, I will look to major policy overhauls that have taken place in the last 30 years, all of which can be encapsulated under the trend of deregulation.

**2.4.1 Demographics and college opportunities.** The first key to understanding $20^{th}$ and $21^{st}$ century Japanese tertiary educational policy is the changing demographics of Japan, along with the change in expectations of what educational opportunities could/should be available to the average Japanese citizen. After World War II, a guarantee of universal education was placed into the constitution, and it was interpreted to cover primary and lower secondary school (junior high school). Enrollment in secondary school grew over time: while in 1955 only 55% of males and 46% of females attended secondary school, by the 1980s this had risen to 93% for males and 95% for females (LeTendre, 2002). At the same time, the post-war government sought to significantly expand the opportunity for Japanese citizens to attend tertiary schools (Newby, et al., 2009), since, in 1950, only 3% of Japanese citizens attended any form of tertiary education (Umetani, 1977). This desire was also supported by the American occupiers, who wanted to widen access to university education as part of a broader plan to "democratize" and "rationalize" Japan (Baba & Hayata, 1997; Hadley, 1997).

The goal of raising tertiary education enrollment levels was gradually achieved, though different researchers have reported different numbers. Umetani (1977) reported enrollment of 9% by 1970, while Amano (2010) reported enrollment of about 10% by the 1960s moving up to 35% by 1975. The most recently

published figures (as of 2013) from the Ministry of Education place current enrollment rates at about 53% (MEXT, n.d.). This transition to mass education and the consequent demand for increasing enrollment slots could not be achieved solely through the public university and college system. So, the government also supported and encouraged growth in the private post-secondary sector—a system that resembled the U.S. tertiary education system more than the European one on which Japan's national system was originally modeled (Amano, 2010; Arimoto, 1997). Arimoto indicated that private universities went from representing 60% of the total market in 1955 to 73% in 1996, while Newby, et al. (2009) stated that by 2006, private schools accounted for over 90% of junior and technical colleges and over 77% of universities.

This move towards ever increasing numbers of schools and enrollment started becoming problematic in the late 1990s when Japan's population began to undergo a contraction as Japanese people had fewer and fewer children. The number of high school graduates peaked in 1992 and had already fallen by 32% by 2004 (Goodman, 2005).[18] This meant that the government and universities knew that Japanese universities could expect to see a decrease in the number of available students, which would lead to greater competition (Kitamura, 1989, as cited in Yonezawa, 2002). With fewer total incoming students, many universities had to make significant adjustments to their acceptance standards. This led to a decrease in the overall academic level of student applicants at any given school. A number of universities even had to institute remedial programs, something previously unnecessary in Japan because students at each university used to possess a very narrow band of academic ability, as demonstrated by their entrance exam scores (Yonezawa, 2002). Also, the government reversed the earlier policy of allowing an ever increasing number of post-secondary schools so as to prevent new schools from further exacerbating the competitive pressures caused by the decline in the number of college age students (Kitamura, 1997); even so, many private institutions are potentially in danger of insolvency—Newby, et al. (2009) estimated that 30% of

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[18] This trend is still continuing: in 1990, the percentage of the population under the age of 15 was 18.2%, but in 2010 it had fallen to 13.2%; in the same time period, the percentage of elderly (65 and over) residents had increased from 12.1% to 23% of the population (Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, 2016).

private universities and 40% of junior colleges were not reaching their enrollment caps at that time. Thus, at present, much of the concern in Japanese tertiary schools is about getting or retaining students, which, at least in the experience of myself and my colleagues, can be inconsistent with enforcing academic standards or mandating learning outcomes.

**2.4.2 Being a Japanese university student.** To understand what it means from a student perspective to be enrolled in a Japanese university, it is necessary to look to two things: a description of what goes on in Japanese classrooms (historically and today), and an examination of the primary purpose of Japanese university education.

*2.4.2.1 Education? Or something else?* As just discussed, the key focus of government policy for the tertiary education sector in the mid to second half of the 20th century was growth—the central government wanted to expand education to a significantly larger portion of the population for the economic benefit of the nation-state. However, the quality of that education was sometimes questioned, both inside and outside of these universities. The 1960s and 70s saw the first major attempts by students to actively and politically criticize the way their professors taught. They specifically criticized the teacher-fronted classes that typified Japanese universities at the time, and asked that their teachers engage with them instead of simply lecturing and focusing on research (Amano & Poole, 2005). Amano[19] said that when these criticisms were roundly ignored, students moved to a form of "passive resistance," wherein they chose to refocus their energies away from classes and into extracurricular activities (p. 692), a switch which was later described in an OECD report on Japanese tertiary education as a "rational adaptation" by the students (Newby, et al., 2009, p. 63). This behavior—declining to engage with classes—continues in many cases today, and can be challenging for language classes, since such classes (at least, the types of communication-focused classes described in my

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[19] A note about this reference: the article is mostly a translation of a chapter from Amano's (1999) Japanese book entitled *Daigaku: Chosen no Jidai.* Poole translated the work into English, but is credited as a separate author due to a lengthy forward providing context for those unfamiliar with Japanese universities. However, the portions I have cited all come from Amano's original work.

corpus) tend to require significant student interaction with the language, the teacher, and each other.

One might argue, in fact, that university education continued to drift further and further away from "education" in the sense of helping students acquire knowledge or skills. Garland (1996) provided a detailed and dismal picture of actual classroom practice in several prestigious national universities at the end of the last century, with professors who cared little about their students;[20] classrooms without temperature control and fewer seats than the number of enrolled students; teaching practices consisting solely of lectures; administrations that pressured teachers to give out only high grades, yet didn't ensure that there were sufficient books or clean classrooms; a lack of student access to technology; and students who had been trained by the examination hell system to simply endure, and who believed that college, in any event, wasn't about learning but rather about making personal connections.

A common encapsulation of Japanese university education is the Japanese phrase "*hairinikui, deyasui*," or "difficult to enter but easy to graduate from" (Goodman, 2005). McVeigh (2002) went further and said, "What impressed me most about Japan's higher education was that university operations and policies did not just fail miserably: they often counter their own professed aims. While working in Japanese higher education I noticed countless examples of how this system…was not only academically empty, but the antithesis of education" (p. 10). From an outside perspective, it may be hard to understand how such a system could persist—after all, one might imagine that such an education would leave students underprepared for post-university employment. This, however, is not generally a problem in Japan, as will be explained in the next section.

**2.4.2.2 Purpose of university education.** I briefly mentioned in section 2.2.1 that many Japanese companies, especially large companies, recruit new employees primarily based upon the university they attended, without being concerned what the students did or didn't learn at those universities. The rationale for this type of recruiting lies in the historical presumption of lifetime employment—that is, the

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[20] Harasawa (1974) made the same claim decades earlier.

assumption by both employer and employee that once hired, the employee would remain with the same company until retiring.[21] Under such a system, companies felt that students didn't need to have learned anything in particular at college, since they would be expected and able to engage in a lengthy period of in-house training (Amano & Poole, 2005; OECD, 1997). Or, as Takeuchi (1997) said, "New graduates are hired not to do a job, rather, they are employed as members of a company" (p.194), a concept they equate with military recruitment. Furthermore, there was a generally antagonistic relationship between universities and industry, due to anti-Establishment stances by many professors and a belief among industry that professors lacked "self-governing and self-managing capabilities" (Amano & Poole, 2005, p. 695). Given this goal, the most important thing that mattered for the hiring companies was the entrance standards for the university, as measured by the passage rate and difficulty level of the university entrance exam (Amano & Poole, 2005).

Ever since the mid-twentieth century, there have been calls from the business sector for universities to modify the educational process. Kitamura (1997) found that over 400 reform proposals were created by "universities, governments, political parties, business circles, teachers' and labor unions, and other groups during the period from 1967 to 1970" (p. 142). As with the student proposals of the time, however, those from other groups led to few substantial changes in Japan's tertiary education system. Amano and Poole (2005) recorded similar calls from major industry groups in the 1980s. A recent example comes from *Keizai Doyukai* (an organization of over 1400 senior executives from over 950 companies in Japan), who, in their 2011 "Vision for Japan 2020" report called for education which will

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[21] It is important to note, though, that by examining actual employment statistics, Yano (1997) showed that lifetime employment beginning directly after graduation is more of an ideal than the normal pattern, given that only 7% of high school graduates and 20% of college graduates have continued working with a single company into their 50s—and this was based on 1991 census data, so mostly prior to Japan's recent economic troubles. More recently, though looking at a shorter term, Newby, et al (2009) found that in 2001, 35% of college graduates had changed jobs within 3 years of graduation, and in 2003 15.3% had changed within 1 year. While entirely outside of the scope of my project, it would be useful to examine why this myth of current or previous lifetime employment persists, and how the discourse of employment and education perpetuate this statistically inaccurate belief.

produce human resources who have a good grasp of basic knowledge; who are highly diverse and creative; who have high aspirations and moral awareness, and who are equipped with global communication skills so that they can engage in a wide variety of activities both within Japan and in the international arena. (*Keizai Doyukai* (Japan Association of Corporate Executives), 2011, p. 40)

Note that this call for university changes is grounded in an almost obscene level of neoliberal sentiment—students are not people, but rather "human resources," universities don't teach but rather "produce," and the ultimate goal is not education but rather the inculcation of attitudes and skills that can potentially benefit these companies.

There are a few signs that hiring practices have been changing, though the shifts thus far appear to be small. The 1997 OECD "Thematic Review of Higher Education in Japan" mentioned that a small number of employers at that time were beginning to include criteria such as experience and job skills in their hiring processes (OECD, 1997). In addition, by the late 1990s (following the collapse of Japan's "bubble economy"), there had been a decline in the number of male graduates who were able to find employment at "big enterprises," leading more to seek employment at smaller companies who were more likely to want people with immediately usable skills (Takeuchi, 1997).[22] This was in part due to the decrease in the number of *shiteiko* schools—those whose graduates were almost automatically accepted by companies due solely to the university's prestige—with Arimoto (1997) estimating that there were likely less than 60 universities in this category as of 1996. However, numerous other studies since the 1990s have reported that, for the most part, corporate hiring practices continue to focus on university affiliation above all other factors (OECD, 1997; Takeuchi, 1997; Yonezawa, 2002; Yoshimoto, et al., 2004). Yonezawa even cites a conference presentation by Yoshimoto indicating that over 95% of all college students begin looking for a job prior to graduation, clearly

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[22] A recent news article from CNBC argued that this trend is accelerating, in part because of the high levels of success of startups such as Mercari, Rakuten, DeNA, GREE, and Mixi—images of success outside of the big national companies that didn't previously exist in Japan (Choudhury, 2018).

indicating a lack of concern by the recruiters for what students are doing in university.[23]

**2.4.3 Deregulation.** As government and business interests came to be more aligned (i.e., as neoliberalism took greater hold of Japanese government policy), the calls for change by the business community gradually came to have increasing effect on Japanese tertiary educational policy (Amano & Poole, 2005; Newby, et al., 2009; K. Takayama, 2009). These changes were justified by business concerns that universities were not productive enough (in terms of the quality of student they produced), especially in light of the recession in Japan that lasted throughout the 1990s (Goodman, 2005).

The biggest early push to alter the university experience came in 1984 when Prime Minister Nakasone formed the Ad Hoc Council on Education (called *Rinkyoushin* in Japanese), a committee specifically created to be independent of the Ministry of Education, thus potentially allowing Nakasone to make changes to educational policy without their input (Amano & Poole, 2005; Azuma, 2002; LeTendre, 2002). Though the Ad Hoc Council's recommendations were never directly acted upon, some of them were later incorporated into MEXT policies via the recommendations of their in-house committee called the University Council (Yonezawa, 1998). Other aspects of *Rinkyoushin*'s ideas were taken up by the *Daigaku Shingikai*, a committee that eventually produced the Standards for Establishment of Universities (SEU), legislation originally implemented in 1987 and then overhauled in 1991. These changes were not universally accepted, with many academics in Japan expressing strong criticism of what would now be called the neoliberal nature of the changes (Cave, 2001). Writing at the time, Horio (1986) said the proposed changes would "lead to the subordination of education to the demands of the pursuit of profit" (p. 33). Horio went on to say, "In appraising the situation in Japan, we find the problem is that the members of the Ad Hoc Council are less

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[23] While my own experience is only anecdotal, at several private universities where I and my colleagues teach, the goal for students is to complete all of their required classes by the end of the third year, thus leaving the students entirely free during their fourth year to concentrate on job-hunting activities.

interested in the actual situation of schools and pupils in crisis than in how to maintain Japan's advantage in the world economy" (p. 33).[24]

The SEU significantly altered the relationship of universities to the national government, changed curriculum requirements, and reorganized university departments (Amano & Poole, 2005). The overriding theme of these changes was deregulation—the shifting of control away from the center (the Ministry) towards local levels, especially towards the universities themselves. The new system significantly decreased the requirements for university establishment; as a counterbalance, the system required that all schools engage in an ongoing process of self-monitoring and self-evaluation (Kitamura, 1997; Newby, et al., 2009; Yonezawa, 1998, 2002). To what extent this truly freed up the universities to conduct independent affairs is debatable. Newby, et al (2009) argued that the changes enabled universities to move towards strong independence based on corporate governance models,[25] while Amano (2010) said the monitoring process implicitly maintained a significant amount of central control. Amano also noted that many of the top administrators in public universities were "on loan from the Ministry of Education" (p. 89), and that the significant amount of time and work involved in preparing these reports will take time away from major structural changes. One point they did agree on is that the Ministry itself had not made major changes, and thus was not able to adequately advise or assist universities who did want to engage in experimentation.

Another aspect of the 1991 changes was a significant restructuring of the 4-year pedagogical process, moving away the prior model of having 2 years of general education followed by two years of specialized education. The new system eliminated general education requirements completely, with the intent of allowing each school more flexibility in curriculum planning (Amano & Poole, 2005; Hadley, 1999; Kitamura, 1997). The change explicitly removed the requirement that all

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[24] However, Cave (2001) also said that later in the 1990s some people argued that the reforms weren't nearly neoliberal enough and that Japanese education needed more competition, more individual choice, and less egalitarianism.

[25] However, Newby, et al also stated that many of the more elite universities were resisting change, and chose to rely on their high status to insulate them from the need to institute major reforms. They even speculated that if a private accrediting firm found an elite institution to be lacking, the strength of the university's reputation might be so strong that rather than the public doubting the university's quality, the would instead doubt the quality of the review process itself.

university students learn English, thus allowing schools to do away with compulsory English classes and/or allow students to study languages other than English (Kobayashi, 2013). [26] Hadley (1999) reported that this deregulation enabled a number of universities to create innovative English curricula, including immersion classes at Keio University, intensive study abroad programs at Asia University, and integrated subject-language classes at Miyazaki International College. However, they also noted that few public universities were engaging in significant change, and were in some cases actively resisting changing from traditional teacher-fronted English classes.

Overall, there is dispute about how significant these reforms are or will be. Many have described them as the largest change in Japanese university education since at least the post-war period; in fact, an entire book was produced called *The 'Big Bang' in Japanese Higher Education* to consider in large part if these reforms are just as dramatic as they appear to be. On the other hand, Newby, et al (2009) argued that they are more incremental in scope—what they call a "shift from control to supervision" (p. 18)—and that a combination of resistance and lack of professional management skills at the universities had resulted in situation where "the rhetoric of change has been accompanied by the reality of conservatism" (p. 20).

In summary, there has been a clear trend since the 1980s towards a deregulation of Japanese higher education, and a promotion of the idea that "everyone" (where "everyone" really means companies, but is claimed to mean everyone from students to parents to teachers to government) will benefit if tertiary institutions, including public universities, are able to/forced to engage in market competition and students can get a more "practical" education. Within English education, this has meant that universities have, or at least have promoted that they have, switched to curricula that are more focused on actual English use for practical purposes, rather than being an academic subject for translation. This is consistent with Japan's alleged goal of "internationalization" and the changes at the pre-tertiary levels ostensibly designed to make English learning more communicative.

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[26] Koabayshi noted that one of the main consequences to this was to significantly decrease the demand for non-English European languages and increase the popularity of other Asian languages, especially Chinese and Korean. However, they also noted that the supposed market benefits of English (in line with the continued belief in the intersection of *globalization* and English's supposed status as a *lingua franca*) have kept it prominent and widely taught across universities in Japan.

**2.4.4 Change in progress: active learning**. I said that the 2004 changes were the last major set of reforms, and that is accurate when referring strictly to formal policy. However, many times the Ministry of Education makes recommendations that have nearly as much of an effect as actual policy. With respect to higher education, one of the most famous changes of late was the "official educational method" called "active learning" that came from a 2012 report by the Japanese Central Council of Education (Matsushita, 2018). The report defined active learning as "the general term for a teaching and learning method that incorporates the learners' active participation in learning, unlike education based on one-sided lectures by the instructor" (cited in Matsushita, 2018, p. 16). However, the term has taken on a variety of meanings, both in and out of Japan (Jones & Palmer, 2017; Prince, 2004). Perhaps the cleanest definition from Japan came from Arimoto (2016), who said that active learning "means any kind learning where students play an active role in the process of learning" (p. 226). However, Arimoto suggested that "active study" is probably a better English translation, since this highlights connections with the Japanese word 学修, (*gakushuu*, or "study"). While learning can take place in any context, in or out of class, *gakushuu* refers strictly to what goes on in class, in conjunction with teachers, and the government's use of "active learning" was intended to refer to in-class activities.

The goal of active learning is for university instructors (though, as noted in section 2.2.3, the Ministry has promoted similar goals at the primary and secondary levels) to use teaching techniques which encourage students to actively interact with new material. This is generally associated with moving away from teacher-fronted lectures towards activities where students must engage with the material through the support of their teacher (Matsushita, 2018), or, as Claxton (2007) said, moving away from helping students learn to helping students increase their "learning capacity" (Claxton, 2007, p. 116).[27]

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[27] While Claxton was supportive of this goal, they also criticized the use of this and related terms, since the meaning is ambiguous and "it has proved very hard to prevent these fine words slipping back into a concern with improving test performance" (p. 116).

The actual practice of active learning has involved a wide variety of methodologies, techniques, and activities. Prince (2004) provided four general ideas that are linked to active learning, defined as follows:

- active learning: "any instructional method that engages students in the learning process" (p. 223)
- collaborative learning: "any instructional method in which students work together in small groups toward a common goal" (p. 223)
- cooperative learning: "a structured form of group work where students pursue common goals while being assessed individually" (p. 223)
- problem-based learning: "an instructional method where relevant problems are introduced at the beginning of the instruction cycle and used to provide the context and motivation for the learning that follows" (p. 223)

Speaking about the English language program at their Japanese university which was strongly influenced by active learning principles, Jones and Palmer (2017) listed a variety of activities that they used, including student-led research, games that required active engagement in learning materials, a writing program focused on teaching students to recognize and use genre conventions in their field, student-to-student teaching, and student planning and implementation of activities that occur outside of the classroom.

Matsushita (2018) claimed that active learning came to be rapidly adopted in Japanese universities after the Council report, but also claimed that by 2018 it was becoming clear that this change was not having the desired outcome. They argued that there were two main problems with the implementation of active learning. First, surveys showed that many students preferred lecture courses, especially if those courses could be passed easily. Second, active learning sometimes moved too far, in that practitioners sometimes used pure externalization (that is, active work on a problem or task) without any internalization (that is, the acquisition of knowledge necessary to successfully complete the task). The general lack of success that Matsushita found with active learning in Japanese universities contrasts with

findings elsewhere. For example, Prince (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of research on active learning implemented in university engineering classes in the U.S. Prince found that some aspects of active learning, such as incorporating small amounts of learner interaction into otherwise "normal" lectures along with collaborative activities had at least some positive effects on learner performance and retention. Problem-based learning seemed to improve student attitudes but had mixed results otherwise. One possible reason for active learning seemingly being less successful in Japan is that, according to Ito (2017), Japanese university instructors have treated it as just another method to be sometimes employed in classes, whereas it should be understood to be a fundamental shift in teaching ideology. As such, Ito recommended focusing on the idea of "proactive learning;" similarly, Matsushita recommends switching to the idea of "deep active learning." Both proposals, however, came after the publication of the My Share texts in my corpus, and are thus beyond the scope of this paper.

In the same way that Law (1995) argued that *yakudoku*, CLT, and other language teaching techniques are always already ideological, MEXT's promotion of active learning is likewise not a neutral policy. Rather, it is a part of the larger neoliberal agenda of contemporary Japanese education, since the main point of active learning is to help students acquire skills that will make them more "employable," with those skills being things like creativity and innovation (Ito & Kawazoe, 2015). A similar situation has occurred with respect to active learning in Europe, about which Drew and Mackie (2011) stated "the drivers for the adoption of active learning have been largely economic" (p. 452). Part of the value of critical discourse analysis, as in this project, is to uncover these ideologies in professional practices and discourses.

## 2.5 Summary

This chapter has provided the briefest of overviews of a few key aspects of Japanese education, focusing primarily on language education. Japanese education is intimately linked to the education-to-employment path in Japan. The consequences of both the history of education and the theoretical offering of lifetime employment have led to a system in which one of the primary purposes of secondary education is obtaining the skills and knowledge necessary to pass high school and university

entrance exams. For English, this means rote learning (much of it using *yakudoku* language learning techniques) of specialized test-English that doesn't have much connection to English used for communicative purposes.

In large part because of neoliberal concerns about the "value" of education, changes have been implemented at all levels of education. English has been introduced to elementary schools, and junior and senior high schools are supposed to have more communicative language teaching and encourage student autonomy. At the tertiary level, deregulation has at least opened up the possibility of more flexibility in teaching, all the while that the government encourages schools to move their classes away from passive, lecture-based learning towards active learning that will supposedly nurture the skills needed for economic success in a post-industrial world.

An additional aspect running through all levels of education is the focus on *kokusaika*, or "internationalization." This internationalization is heavily bent towards Westernization, and so foreign language learning is essentially equated with the learning of English. However, *kokusaika* is a particular style of internationalization that values skills, like language skills, that enable Japanese people to interact with the rest of the world while retaining a core, unshakeable Japanese identity.

This chapter has been intended to serve two purposes. First, it would be impossible to analyze the My Share corpus without situating it in the wider context of Japanese educational practices. Second, one aspect that has been repeated throughout this history is that educational decisions are always tied up in larger social movements and ideological agendas. It is incumbent upon teachers to critically investigate our professional practices (including both teaching and publishing) to understand what ideologies our practices are bound up in. It is neither possible nor desirable to escape the political nature of education, but if teachers do not try to understand the connections between politics, society, and education we will necessarily perpetuate the dominant ideologies and inequalities of present systems.

# Chapter 3
## Literature Review

This chapter presents an overview of the three main fields that this project falls under: critical discourse analysis, teacher identity and beliefs, and corpus-based linguistics. For each field, I provide a brief theoretical overview followed by a survey of prior research in said field. However, given the significant depth and history of each field, a full survey is not possible for reasons of time and space. Thus, I have chosen to focus on works closely related to the present research project. For CDA, this meant examining research linked to education and education-related fields, while for both teacher identity/belief research and corpus-based research the scope was limited to research connected to second language education, with the teacher belief research focusing primarily on work done in Japanese educational settings.

## 3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is the governing framework for this project. This section first provides a general explanation of the CDA field via a set of principles commonly used by CDA researchers. Second, I provide examples of CDA research in the field of education, focusing where possible on second/foreign language education.

*3.1.1 Principles of CDA.* As discussed in Chapter 1, CDA is neither a method nor a theory, nor even a truly unified field of inquiry. Rather, it is an attitude towards discourse focused research that is "critical" in the sense of both "critical theory" and "criticizes inequity." The wide variety of techniques and even foundational theories makes it challenging to lay out a single set of principles that govern all CDA research. Nonetheless, many authors have attempted to describe features that, if not universal, are at least somewhat commonly agreed upon. The following compilation of principles represents my contribution to this "theorizing" of CDA; though perhaps it is more accurate to describe it as "the principles of CDA which I have found to be most useful in my own project analyzing a corpus of teacherly professional discourse." It borrows most heavily on the work on Lin (2014), Tenorio (2011), and Rogers and Schaenen (2014), but interprets their ideas through the needs of the present project and my own opinions about what ideas seem to be most prevalent

in the field. After briefly listing the items, I will discuss each in more detail in its own sub-section; furthermore, in Chapter 4, I will show how I have attempted to implement each of these principles in this project.

1. CDA is socially committed.
2. CDA is flexible and diverse in methods and approach.
3. CDA examines both macro- and micro-linguistic issues.
4. CDA does not examine only linguistic matters.
5. CDA should involve researcher reflexivity.

*3.1.1.1 Focus on social problems.* Critical discourse analysis is not undertaken merely to "understand" or "analyze" a text or group of texts. Rather, CDA is a lens or framework for studying the world that is focused on the interaction between language, practice, and social problems (Fairclough, 2003; Lin, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Pennycook, 2010). Most often this takes the form of seeking to uncover (in the sense of revealing that which is not obvious) how language is used to perpetuate social inequities and unequal power relations (Fairclough, 2003; Rogers & Schaenen, 2014; Tenorio, 2011), and often looking specifically at "the interests, expertise, and resistances of those groups that are subjected to discursive injustice" (Lin, 2014, p. 214). Note that when CDA authors speak about power, they are not talking solely or even especially about the commonsense idea of power as something wielded by those at the top of a hierarchy, often supported by the threat of force. Rather, this is power as Foucault (1995) conceived of it—a diffuse aspect of all social interaction that works to maintain or disrupt hierarchical systems often without the direct application of force. As Tenorio (2011) says, "It formulates the idea that power can be exercised and domination achieved not only through repressive coercion, oppression and exploitation, but also through the persuasive potential of discourse, which leads to consensus and complicity" (p. 188). In other words, this is power that operates not just materially, but also discursively (Huckin, Andrus, & Clary-Lemon, 2012).

Many researchers further argue that it is not sufficient to simply deconstruct the ways that inequity is perpetuated in discourse; rather, it is also important to look at ways that these formations are resisted and subverted in discourse

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(Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lin, 2014; Rogers & Schaenen, 2014). Having conducted such an analysis, theoretically a CD analyst should also be contributing, directly or indirectly to resisting these structures of domination, though, at least in the use of CDA in education research, Rogers and Schaenen (2014) note that this final step is still rare.

*3.1.1.2 Methodological diversity and flexibility.* CDA is flexible and diverse in approach and methods, and, as such, is often described as interdisciplinary (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Lin, 2014; van Dijk, 2013). Lin explained this interdisciplinary approach is tied to the first principle: since the goal of CDA research to investigate and help disrupt social problems, the researcher must be committed to using whatever techniques and methods are best suited to address their specific issues rather than being tied to only a single approach. Even in the case of authors such as Chouliaraki and Fairclough who have proposed a highly specific set of analytic steps which are bound very closely to the tools of systemic functional linguistics (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003), they explicitly indicated that "CDA is in a sense a method which can appropriate other methods" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 210).

Part of the desire for interdisciplinarity stems from the need to provide multiple perspectives for understanding discourses and social practices based upon the recognition that all discourses are multivocalic. Thus, there is benefit in using a variety of approaches to search for complexity and depth in analysis. This interdisciplinary approach is also a means of achieving qualitative triangulation, which Vidovich (2003) described as being done "to provide a more robust and holistic picture" of a phenomenon by "cross-checking or cross-referencing the data" (p. 78). One thing to note here is that Vidovich did not state that the resulting picture is more accurate or objective, only that it is "more robust and holistic." Making such a claim (that triangulated data is more accurate) would be a fallacy—as Rothbauer (2008) explained, "the use of triangulation of methods to minimize measurement biases has been critiqued over the years by qualitative researchers for corresponding too closely to positivistic notions of reliability and validity" (p. 892). Stevens (2011) went so far as to say that triangulation is a "misapplied notion from the irreconcilable field of quantitative analysis." In saying this, Stevens is not

rejecting the use of multiple methodologies and data sources to better understand the data, but rather rejecting the idea that the results of one set of research techniques can be used to prove the interpretations drawn from another.

*3.1.1.3 Concerned with both micro- and macro-language.* Since the goal of CDA is not understanding language use itself, but, rather, understanding the links between social practice and language, CDA is not limited to examining a single "level" (e.g., phonological, morphological, semantic, etc.) of texts. In fact, individual research projects may include a variety of levels of analysis, looking down to the level of micro-linguistic characteristics like individual word and grammar choices, and scaling all the way up to the macro-linguistic level of how an entire organization, institution, academic field, country, or culture broadly treats a topic (Huckin, Andrus, & Clary-Lemon, 2012). Analyzing language at a wide variety of levels strengthens the ability to make connections between individual texts and portions of text with large-scale discursive (and other social) practices. Lin (2014) went further and argued that even as CD analysts move up and down in levels of specificity, they should reject the very idea that there is a strict division between micro and macro language.

*3.1.1.4 Analysis of non-linguistic data.* Fourth, CDA does not need to confine itself to only "linguistic" discourse—rather, CD analysts can examine any social practice which is related to meaning making (Fairclough, 2001; Huckin, et al., 2012; Tenorio, 2011). Often this is termed "multimodal" analysis, especially when more than one channel of information is being examined. Since the term "discourse" is conventionally understood to refer specifically to language, Fairclough (2001) and others following them have come to speak about the analysis of semiosis, which is the analysis of any sort of "sign" (meaning bearing objects). In CDA, multimodal analysis can look at things such as the visual layout of words (especially in mixed media texts combining words and images); at the paralinguistic semiosis involved in gestures and body language that accompany spoken language use; or at the ways that the physical spaces and other instant circumstances of communicative acts themselves carry meaning and determine in part what can or cannot be said.

There is a second way to interpret the idea of stretching the focus of CDA to the "non-linguistic," and it is closely linked to principle 1: CDA doesn't try to understand language use by itself, but, rather, tries to understand how language use is a social practice that conditions and is conditioned by other social practices and social structures (Fairclough, 2003). Because the focus of my research is on the links between a specific genre (the My Share genre) produced by and for a somewhat specific discourse community (mostly, though not entirely, language teachers in Japan), I have found the closely related field of critical genre analysis, especially as articulated by Bhatia (2002, 2015) provides a helpful way of understanding this aspect of analysis. Bhatia argued that critical genre analysis is "essentially multiperspectival and multidimensional in scope, and attributes equal, if not more, importance to practice, in addition to the semiotic means that are often employed" (2015, p. 12). That is, when trying to understand the broad shape and function of a whole genre, it is important to attempt to understand not only the texts of that genre themselves but also the contexts in which they are produced, who produces them, and for what purpose.

*3.1.1.5 Self-reflexivity.* Many, though not all, CD analysts insist that CDA must involve researcher reflexivity (Bucholtz, 2011; Lin, 2014; Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005; Rogers & Schaenen, 2014; Stevens, 2011). A commitment to reflexivity requires that "the analyst's choices at every step in the research process are visible as part of the discourse under investigation, and critique does not stop with social processes, whether macro-level or micro-level, but rather extends to the analysis itself" (Bucholtz, 2011, p. 166). Not only the analysis, but also the analysts themselves should become the target of the critical discussion—since the work of CDA is inherently interpretive, the research should attempt to make transparent how the researchers arrived at those interpretations (Lin, 2014). However, Lin stated that reflexivity is one of the most commonly overlooked aspects of CDA. It is interesting to note that some within the teacher identity field also call for researchers to be both aware of and forthcoming about the way their own biases affect their research; for example, Clandinin (1985) said,

I cannot enter in to a teacher's classroom as a neutral observer and try to give an account of her reality. Instead, I enter into the research process as a person with my own personal practical knowledge. My knowledge of teaching interacts with that of my participants. Inevitably, the data collected reflects my own participation in the classroom and my own personal practical knowledge colors the interpretations offered. (p. 365)

Thus, two of the research traditions in which this project is grounded call for not only a consideration of the effect of research subjectivity, but also an explicit accounting of at least some of the biases held by the researchers.

**3.1.2 Prior CDA research in education**. The amount of CDA research examining various aspects of education has increased over time. In their 2014 review article, Rogers and Schaenen noted a significant increase in the number of research articles published between 2005 and 2013 as compared to an earlier review Rogers had been involved in (Rogers, et al., 2005) covering the 1983–2003 period. This included a quintupling of CDA research projects specifically on literacy education (Rogers & Schaenen, 2014), within which TESOL projects like my own fall. Their review itself arguably underreported the number of such analyses, because Rogers and Schaenen only included those articles which explicitly used the term "critical discourse analysis," even though drawing such a strict boundary might miss projects with similar goals to CDA work.[28] In my brief review below, I have chosen to include some research articles which do not explicitly declare themselves to be using CDA, but which seem to me to fit within the broader critical project and contain a significant discursive component. I have divided the following prior research into four broad categories based upon the object of their research (though a few of the projects span more than one category): educational policy analysis, analysis of talk within the classroom, analysis of classroom linked educational texts (textbooks, course syllabi, and lesson plans), and the use of CDA to explore teacher identity.

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[28] Pennycook (2010) argued that it is problematic to try to draw strict disciplinary boundaries for critical work, as various projects may object to either being included or excluded in any given categorization scheme.

***3.1.2.1 Educational policy analysis.*** Luke, McHoul, and Mey (1990) stated that all language policies are necessarily interested and political, and further went on to point out that one of the biggest problems is that policies often hide their political nature behind a "veneer of scientific objectivity" (p. 27). While they were speaking of language policies, of which educational policies are only a part, the same holds true when looking at documents created by the government or related groups designed to set rules for which and how languages should be taught. With regards to Japanese educational policies, Hashimoto (2011) noted that while there have been a substantial number of studies that look at said policies, most of them do so from a content analysis perspective. Hashimoto argues (and I would agree) that it is necessary to also apply a tool like CDA because a purely content analysis "assumes an interpretation of a text identical to the one intended by the policy makers" (p. 168) while CDA offers the chance to situate interpretation in a wider context and to examine how specific linguistic choices demonstrate hidden ideologies and goals. Much of the CDA work on Japanese language and education policy that is published in English was done by Hashimoto;[29] I will summarize four of their works here (Hashimoto, 2000, 2009, 2011, 2013b). While these summaries a bit longer than many of the others in this chapter, I have chosen to include more detail because these works not only provide good examples of CDA linked to Japanese education, but also the findings of these studies are important for the educational, social, and political contexts in which the My Share articles exist in.

Hashimoto (2000) put forth the key contribution on which each of the rest of their analyses lie: that *kokusaika*, the Japanese term usually used for "internationalization," is probably more accurately understood as "Japanisation." By looking at a Japanese policy document on education from 1994 (including comparing the Japanese version with the official English translation) Hashimoto showed that *kokusaika* is depicted as a process coming from outside Japan, and if Japan is to successfully engage with an increasingly international world, it must do so through expanded English and other "international" abilities. At the same time, *kokusaika* requires a doubling down on the preservation of the "unique" Japanese

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[29] Much, but not all—for example, the article by K. Takayama (2009) mentioned in 2.2.3 is also a CDA analysis of Japanese education policy.

identity. They noted that this sense of externalization and othering was much more present in the Japanese version than in the (presumably, internationally facing) English one. This analysis coincides with that of several other authors, such as Kubota (1998, 2002), who argued that *kokusaika* is strongly linked with *nihonjinron*, and that a true "internationalization" would require fostering a "critical awareness with regard to English domination, construction of identities, and social, linguistic, racial, and ethnic inequality" (Kubota, 1998, p. 302).[30] Hashimoto's close analysis, however, showed that the development of such an awareness was not the intent of official policy, no matter how inclusive and engaging the terms may sound in their English translations.

Hashimoto (2009) turned to the phrase "Japanese with English ability," which first appeared in a 2002 planning document from MEXT. This study examined the diachronic construction of this phrase by a variety of governmental agencies as manifested in various policy documents. In addition, Hashimoto shows that these documents further the trend of equating foreign languages and English. Hashimoto found that these policy documents constructed a binary opposition between "those who can do English" and those who cannot, and furthermore that individuals must submit to the plan to make them into "*eigo ga dekiru nihonjin*" ("Japanese who can use English" or "Japanese who are capable of using English") regardless of their own goals and preferences, because this is what Japan (the nation) needs in the age of globalization. However, there was not an expectation that most Japanese will "live in an international community"—rather, an elite class of high-level English users must be cultivated in order to "solve key issues in contemporary society" (p. 31). English was marginalized as a "tool" used to advance Japan's economic interests, while Japanese (written in Japanese as *kokugo,* or "country-language") was seen as a key component, bearer, and marker of the Japanese identity.

Hashimoto (2011) turned from general documents on English education to those linked to the implementation of mandatory English activities in 5th and 6th grade in 2011. Hashimoto's arguments were framed under the principle expressed in Apple (2005), who said that "Education is a site of struggle and compromise"

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[30] Kubota saw such a move as consistent with the perspectives of both critical pedagogy (e.g., Freire, Giroux) and critical ESL (e.g., Pennycook).

(p. 213). Hashimoto identified a struggle both between various government agencies as well as between competing visions of the purpose of foreign language activities. For example, Hashimoto discussed how the JET Programme, in which "native English speakers" are recruited by the national government and sent to local school boards to assist with language teaching in primary and secondary schools, serves the almost contradictory aims of improving foreign language education and improving foreign relations by bringing young foreigners into contact with Japan. A similar contradiction was found to be manifested in the way policy documents talked about the introduction of foreign language activities at the elementary school level, with such activities seeming to simultaneously be involved in teaching foreign languages, promoting early contact for Japanese students with foreign cultures, and further emphasizing the differences between Japanese culture and the collective "other" culture (with the promotion of the former and distancing of the latter). Furthermore, in part because Japanese study is linked to the Japanese word 国語 (*kokugo*) while English study is linked to the loan word コミュニケーション (*komyunikeshon,* "communication"), the former is valued as an academic subject while the latter is treated as a hobby or a part of popular culture.[31] As with Hashimoto's other articles, in the end there is a reaffirmation that *kokusaika* has to be viewed as means for interfacing with the outside world while maintaining or strengthening the Japanese identity.

Hashimoto (2013b) analyzed the connections between three topics related to language use in Japan. First, Hashimoto showed that when bilingualism is discussed in education policies, it is an ability that only foreigners have. Furthermore, in the case of returnee students who acquire a foreign language while living abroad, the policy focused on re-Japanizing them and making up for presumed deficiencies in their Japanese language skills. Second, the article examined the English-only policy at Japanese high schools, and the conclusions closely matched the positions

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[31] Law (1995) similarly held that the distinction between *eikaiwa* and *eigo* is a product of the old ideology of "English as an inversion of Japanese." Law went further and said that the same problem holds in the way native speakers are utilized in cases like the JET Programme—arguing that this further reifies the division between Japan and Other, and reinforces to students the idea that English communication is something they cannot or should not do, since, apparently, their teachers can't/don't, either.

taken in the 2000 and 2011 articles in which globalization is something which happens to Japan and which Japan must deal with, but not something Japan and Japanese people should embrace and become a part of. Third, Hashimoto discussed the Global 30 project, which was a program allegedly designed to promote internationalization at some of Japan's top universities through the institution of English-only degree programs. However, the public universities participating in the project only accepted foreigners (non-Japanese nationals or permanent residents)—Japanese students were not able to participate in this "internationalization" effort. In all three cases, Hashimoto read these policies as furthering hardening the division between Japan and Other, and as being designed to enhance the Japanese identity as a buttress against internationalization.

*3.1.2.2 Analysis of discourse used in the classroom.* Kumaravadivelu (1999) argued that CDA is a particularly well-suited research framework for researcher-activist-teachers who want to engage in transformative research centered on classrooms because 1) CDA presupposes that all language use is embedded in and constrained by discursive practices, 2) it is not only not afraid of tackling the relationship between classroom instruction and wider political issues, but actually actively pursues it, and 3) unlike other approaches, it seeks not only understanding of classroom language use but also ways to transform current classroom behaviors into ones which will upset oppressive forces that perpetuate inequality.[32] In this section, I examine a few of the many research projects which have examined how discourse in the classroom is related to issues of power and ideology. While my own project does not explicitly "enter the classroom," some of the My Share articles do contain supposed reports of classroom language (suggestions for what readers should say when using the activities and reports of what the authors and their students have said in the past), so there is some overlap

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[32] Kumaravadivelu was especially interested in the connection between education and colonialism, relying on Gramsci who argued that education was always a major tool for the colonizer to not just dominate, but to also naturalize the domination. Kumaravadivelu also referred to Pennycook's more extended argument that ELT is a legacy of colonialism and continues to carry many of the values of the colonizers (to the detriment of those who were formerly colonized). This does not mean that ELT classes are merely sites of domination, though, as Kumaravadivelu suggested ways in which L2 classrooms can be the sites of resistance to systemic oppression.

between this work and my own. Only one of the articles discussed in this section deals with second language education, and none of them were conducted in Japan; each was chosen because they relate to themes that will be discussed later in the present project.

The first article I want to discuss, Graff (2009), drew conclusions that connect directly to the position I began this dissertation with: how we talk about students matters. Graff looked at the interactions between a teacher and a student whom that teacher had labeled a "difficult student" in a grade seven English/Language Arts class. Graff isolated several instances where the teacher's ways of addressing the student were likely a large factor in why the student appeared to be difficult—that is, the identity "difficult student" was not something inherent in the student, but rather an emergent identity arising out of classroom interaction and discourse. For instance, many of the teacher's means of addressing the "difficult" student differed significantly from the ways that the teacher addressed other students in a way that seemed to label the "difficult" student as being unworthy of equal attention. Thus, Graff showed a pedagogical example of the discursive nature of identity, and further showed that even though identity is performative, it is not something that is strictly within an individual's control.

Leander (2002) combined an analysis of classroom speech, social space analysis (the way students sit, move, and gaze and thus shape the physical space around them), and the use of silence to analyze the power relationships in a high school history class in the United States. When a female student in the class objected to a claim by other students that women have equal rights, she was challenged by a group of males in the class, who isolated her physically (through their gaze directions and bodily placement) and verbally (through the creation of "we" groups that excluded the female student). Another female student, on the other hand, physically relocated to align herself with the embattled female, and similarly took up a discursive defense of her with one of the male instigators. However, as the discussion continued, the first female student was silenced. While some of the silences could be read as forms of resistance, Leander argued that by the end of the discussion the female student was denied the ability to represent her opinions and life experience in the classroom. The attention to space and movement in classroom

interactions complemented the discursive analysis and demonstrated that meaning making (semiosis) is multimodal.

Lastly, I want to give one example of CDA research focused on "classroom" discourse in the EFL field. I have placed the word "classroom" in quotation marks because the study in question, Song (2013), examined an educational television show on English created by the South Korean government. The South Korean government's official policy towards the English language is that it is an international language used for communicating with diverse groups of people. Song demonstrated, however, that this English education program treats English as almost entirely linked to North America, and especially the United States, and when the Korean language learners on the show interact with others in English, it is almost always with U.S. speakers. Thus, Song argued that the underlying message of this television show undermines official policy. While their argument is that the designers of curricula should pay more attention to the messages they are putting forth with regards to English, I was struck by the similarities to Hashimoto's descriptions of the disconnect between some of the explicit statements of Japanese language policy and its actual, intended implementation.

***3.1.2.3 Course materials.*** In addition to looking at extra-curricular texts (policy documents) and in-class speech, some researchers have looked specifically at written texts that are directly used in classroom practices. However, as one of the authors discussed below said, such examinations are rare: "few studies have investigated the teacher-student relationship by using critical discourse analysis (CDA) of course materials" (Liao, 2015, p. 13–14). I will discuss three types of course materials which have been examined using CDA: textbooks, course syllabi, and lesson plans.

*3.1.2.3.1 Textbook analyses.* Textbooks often represent the primary text that students and teachers interact with in a class. Furthermore, textbooks can have strong connections to national language policy, especially in a country like Japan where textbooks must be approved by the Ministry of Education (Azuma, 2002; DeCoker, 2002). In fact, Azuma asserted that textbooks probably give MEXT more control over classroom practices than the Course of Study, since teachers don't often

attend closely to changes in the latter after they have finished teacher training. While none of the CDA-influenced studies I found look at textbooks in Japan, the following examples do all discuss EFL textbooks.

Garcia (2014) presented three separate articles in a single doctoral dissertation, all of which are related to EFL textbooks used in China. The second of these articles used a critical discourse analysis framework to examine portions of three EFL textbooks. First, Garcia looked at a list of summaries of passages from a reading textbook and found that they took place exclusively in Western countries (mostly the UK), and a significant number of them discussed topics and events which represented significantly more wealth than the average Chinese student would have or be familiar with. The second passage came from a grammatical footnote in a university entrance exam cram school book. They found that this passage worked to reinforce the idea that "correct English" is defined as "that which is tested on exams," and also that the real purpose of studying English is to pass exams. Third, they looked at a sample answer for a writing prompt, wherein the question was written in the second person, and thus was presumably intended to elicit a first-person singular response, while the sample, idealized reply answers with "we." They argued that the universalizing nature of the "we" sends an implicit message disapproving of autonomous learning and thinking, authorizing instead a "collective" response as the "correct" one (i.e., as better than any individualized/first-person response could be). Taking all these in concert, Garcia argued that these textbooks isolate English as a language used outside of China (especially in the United Kingdom). Second, the textbooks reinforced the idea that the goal of English is to pass exams, not for communication. Third, these textbooks worked against the idea that English can/should be used to express personal opinions. Each of these stances operates directly in opposition to China's national curricula, which supposedly support the implementation of communicative language teaching for the purposes of developing international communication skills.

Sahragard and Davatgazadeh (2010) and Karimaghaei and Kasmani (2013) both used CDA to look at a single ESL/EFL textbook, with Sahragard and Davatgarzadeh looking at *Interchange* and Karimaghaei and Kasmani looking at *Top*

*Notch 2A/2B*.[33] They use the same analytical techniques—transitivity analysis from systemic functional grammar and social actors analysis following van Leeuwen's (1996) model—and both are concerned primarily with the representation of gender in these textbooks. Sahragard and Davatgarzadeh explicitly drew a link between their use of CDA and their feminist project, focusing on the idea of *investedness* present in critical analysis, by which they mean the principle held by CD analysts that language is "not neutral but invested….critical discourse analysis which shares that assumption of *investedness* is an ideal research tool since it reveals the articulation and operation of that investment" (p. 68, emphasis in original).

While the two research papers were nearly identical in their approach to textbook analysis, their findings were quite different. Karimaghaei and Kasmani found major problems in terms of representation. First, men were included significantly more often than women; more importantly, though, males were functionalized (van Leeuwen's term for when a social actor is defined in terms of what they do, as opposed to identification, where an actor is defined in terms of what they are) significantly more often than females. Furthermore, men tended to be functionalized in high status jobs, while women were functionalized in low-status jobs. Finally, far more famous men were included than famous women. As a result, Karimaghaei and Kasmani argued that the textbook very strongly represents and reinforces the idea of a male-dominated society. Sahragard and Davatgazadeh, on the other hand, felt that *Interchange* did a very good job of portraying balanced gender roles, perhaps even emphasizing women more. Females were included more than males, they were more frequently activated (the active agent of an activity, as opposed to being passivated) than males, and were specifically more often activated for the verbs "know" and "learn" while they were not overactivated for verbs of "saying" (which the authors contrast with the stereotype that women talk more than men). Finally, women were more individualized, meaning that they were represented as specific, independent individuals, rather than as just samples of a

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[33] In their CDA review article, Lin (2014) said that single-texts approaches are useful mainly as a proto-analysis or a pilot study and need to be followed up by subsequent studies that systematically sample a broader range of the curriculum materials in question and over time" (p. 221). I find Lin's criticism to be a little strong, though, particularly in places like Japan where tertiary teachers can often dictate their own curriculum, and thus a single textbook may serve as the primary source of textual input for an entire class or sequence of classes.

class/category. Overall, women played a prominent role throughout the textbook, on both macro- and micro-linguistic levels.

  *3.1.2.3.2 Syllabi analyses.* Liao (2015) examined the syllabi of five required English listening and speaking courses for English majors at a Taiwanese university. They found that one of the primary goals of the syllabi was to establish the authority of the professors, though this was often done in indirect (hidden) ways. One of the ways that this power was hidden was through the use of nominalizations. For example, several of the syllabuses had a section called "Requirements," but, as Liao explains, this nominalization is really a shorthand for "The instructor requires the students to perform specific tasks" (p. 190). The one area where some of the teachers seemed to genuinely cede authority was in the realm of grading. While one of the teachers was very strict in establishing what content was necessary for achieving of a good grade, the other four offered some level of negotiation in the grading process, up to and including the requirement that students would have to, in part, grade their own progress in the course. Thus, while the syllabi could be seen as mostly establishing a strict hierarchy between teacher and student, there was some lessening of that distance for some of the teachers in some of the aspects of the class.

  As with several of the textbook analyses above, syllabi have also been examined for ways in which they reinforce or resist traditional gendered roles and gendered ways of learning. Parson (2016) examined 18 syllabi from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) courses at a U.S. university. Parson examined three specific linguistic aspects of the text: stance (as measured primarily by the use of modal verbs), pronoun use, and interdiscursivity. They found (perhaps unsurprisingly) that the professors (the authors of the syllabi) utilized each of these techniques to establish a clear power hierarchy, generally though not always positioning the professor as the primary or only arbiter of what constitutes not only class policy, but appropriate student behavior. That is, the professors were setting out to establish the identity that they wanted students to take on. These constructions defined knowledge as fixed and learned, not constructed and negotiable, which Parson associated with a masculinist way of knowing. They further found that the professors established a fairly "chilly climate that

marginalizes women" (p. 111), wherein students were strictly told that they would not receive assistance if they hadn't mastered the course prerequisites, and that the courses focused on individual work, analysis and achievement with no opportunity for collaborative work. Overall, Parson argued that these highly masculinist ways of knowing and educating likely contribute to the broader climate of hostility towards women in STEM fields.

*3.1.2.3.3 Lesson plan analyses.* The final type of course-linked text analyzed via CDA that I will discuss are lesson plans. As far as I am aware, there has been only one study in this field, a doctoral dissertation by Swayhoover (2014). Swayhoover stated that their goal was to analyze lesson plans for upper elementary school students related to global social issues. They originally sought to collect lesson plans directly from teachers to see what teachers were actually doing in the classroom on these topics, but were unable to gather sufficient examples. As a result, Swayhoover turned to Open Educational Resources, which are lesson plans that are either public domain or are published in a way that teachers can freely use them. The majority of lesson plans that were studied came from NGOs.

In the methodology chapter, Swayhoover briefly stated the intent to work from within a CDA perspective, following the principles set out by Fairclough, van Dijk, and van Leeuwen. However, I would argue that while the analysis is critical, it is hard to classify it as critical *discourse* analysis, since almost all the analysis is of the activities themselves. They only linguistic feature that Swayhoover attends to is metaphor, and that only briefly in reference to a few of the lesson plans. In some cases, they analyze the semiotics of the images associated with the activities. But most of the analysis is on the topics of the lessons, the links they have to the practices of the NGOs that provided them, and other non-linguistic aspects. This does not mean to say that this analysis isn't highly valuable and also highly critical, just that it doesn't seem to match up to the types of analysis done by the CDA authors they initially cite.

*3.1.2.4 CDA and teacher identity.* As mentioned in the introduction, while there is a long tradition of research on teacher identity, only a little of that work

explicitly use a CDA framework in the analysis. I have selected two such articles to discuss here, chosen because both focus on the identity of second language teachers.

The first, Davison (2006), looked at the way ESL and content teachers collaborated at an elementary school in Hong Kong. Davison showed how the identities that teachers take on with respect to the collaborative process is inherently discursive and performative in nature. That is, the teachers performed their identities through the ways they talked about the collaborative process, and these performances were closely linked to the other social practices of "doing" teaching, in terms of how willingly the participants engaged in the collaboration, how they negotiated conflict, and how they assigned work and roles during actual teaching.

Moin, Breitkopf, and Schwartz (2011) studied teachers and principals at two bilingual preschools—one in Germany and one in Israel, both of which were bilingual with Russian and the host country's language (German and Hebrew, respectively). They found important differences in the ways that the teachers and principals talked about the school and language learning between the two schools, as well as differences between the way teachers at the two schools evaluated and promoted their preschool's curricula. They argued that these differences arose due to the complex interplay between 1) differences in the national law governing preschool curricula (which Israel has and Germany does not), 2) a different orientation to the relative importance of the heritage and local languages at the schools, and 3) the fact that typical teaching methods in Russia more closely resemble those of Israel than those of Germany. The interplay of these various social, political, and pedagogical forces shaped the identities of the teachers and the way they expressed those identities in discourse.

## 3.2 Teacher Identity and Beliefs

In Chapter 1, I discussed the theoretical stance from which I approach identity in this project, as well as how it connects to the other goals of this research project. This section narrows the discussion of identity to the specific research field of teacher identity and teacher beliefs. First, I provide a general background of this research field, and then provide examples of teacher identity/belief research done

on language teachers, focusing when possible on studies done in the Japanese context.

**3.2.1 Overview of teacher identity and belief research.** There has been interest in teacher identity since around the mid-twentieth century. Connelly, Clandinin, and He (1997) argued that teacher identity research represented a fundamental change from perceiving teaching success as primarily driven by teacher characteristics and the choice of methodologies towards a belief that "the most important area is what teachers know and how their knowing is expressed in teaching" (p. 666). Similarly, an even earlier review by Shavelson and Stern (1981) situated this field as focused on the principle that "a teacher's behavior is guided by his [sic] thoughts, judgments and decisions" (p. 457).

Clandinin and Connelly (1987) noted that while early teacher identity research was conducted under a wide variety of terms such as "teacher perspectives," "teacher practical knowledge," personal knowledge," and so on, this variety did not seem to have been caused by fundamentally different perspectives, but rather occurred because this research grew out of a variety of different research traditions. What these various studies had in common was the idea that teacher identity (like all identity) is a complex construct, with researchers including various components such as subject matter knowledge, their previous experiences as both a teacher and a learner, their beliefs (about not only teaching but every aspect of life), morality, emotions, and more (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Golombek, 1998). Furthermore, identity was seen as a dynamic process, rather than a fixed thing, though some saw these changes as a sort of trajectory of becoming (focusing on delineating developmental stages of the teaching identity) while others saw identity as a site of constant flux or even struggle (Nagatomo, 2012). While some authors like Gee (2000) seemed to hold to the possibility of a "core identity," I personally stand with Zemblyas (2003) who, among others, said that the "the relation of teacher to self is historical rather than ontological" and thus there is no "singular 'teacher-self' or an essential 'teacher identity' hidden beneath the surface of teachers' experiences" (p. 108).

One important point regarding the majority of the research discussed below is that it was conducted by directly asking teachers about their beliefs and

experiences, mostly through interviews or surveys. Narrative research provides both direct insight into what teachers say that they believe as well as indirect insight into the assumptions embedded in their stories (Bell, 2002). However, narrative research tends to focus on teachers as individual actors, without exploring the wider social practices which necessarily shape individual performances of identity. Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) recommend that researchers interested in identity (they speak about identity research in general, not specifically teacher identity) should consider the incorporation of critical discourse analysis to obtain insight into the discursive acts that condition and perpetuate ideas across communities. This is linked to Blommaert's (2005) idea of identities being "particular forms of semiotic potential, organized in a repertoire" (p. 207). The present research is in part an attempt to take up the call of Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) with respect to teacher identity research.

**3.2.2 Survey of language teacher identity and belief research.** There has been an extensive amount of research done on the intersection of language learning, teaching, and identity (Gu & Benson, 2014; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pennington & Richards, 2016). A substantial portion of that, such as the studies reviewed by Norton and Toohey (2011), focused on the link between student identity and language learning; however, my interest lies mostly in issues of teacher identity. In a review article, Vargheese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) outlined four major areas of research on language teacher identity: the marginalization experienced by some language teachers inside and outside of schools, the relative status of so-called native and non-native speaker teachers, the professional status of TESOL teachers, and the relationship formed between students and their teachers (including the hierarchical nature usually built into said relationship). It is with this fourth category that my own research is most closely related. Many language teacher identity studies focused on the way that identity is formed (or transformed, or added to, depending on how the researcher and teacher view identity) during pre- and in-service training (e.g., Gu & Benson, 2014; Johnson, 1992; Le Ha, 2008; Tsui, 2007; Varghese, 2004); others, however, looked to the more complex interaction between language teacher identity and other aspects of their history and lives such as their experiences as learners or the other communities of which they are a part (e.g.,

Golombek, 1998; Nagatomo, 2012, 2016; Tran & Sanchez, 2016). Varghese, et al (2005) also demonstrated that a wide range of theoretical foundations and methodological tools have been used to examine language teacher identity, though most seem to flow at least somewhat from the postmodern notion of performative, dynamic identity discussed in the introduction. However, as they and others (for example, Gee, 2000) pointed out, it is not that any one of these theoretical perspectives is necessarily better, but, rather, that using them at different times (or even simultaneously) helps researchers get a better composite picture of teacher identity.

There have been some studies published in English which looked at the issue of language teacher identity and beliefs in Japan. Of those researchers explicitly working on the belief/cognition/knowledge side, many examined the beliefs of Japanese teachers about communicative language teaching or other similar imported forms of teaching (see Chapter 2 for further discussions on the history of CLT, *yakudoku,* etc. in Japan). Many studies have found that Japanese high school teachers have positive views of communicative language teaching (Benthien, 2017; Cook, 2009; Gorsuch, 2000; Nishino, 2011; Sakui, 2004; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Underwood, 2012), though many of those same studies also found that said teachers did not to use those techniques in their classroom (or, at least, that they did not do so often). These studies found that this lack of uptake had many causes, such as the belief that students could not succeed at it or that they would reject it due to the desire to focus learning on entrance exams (which were perceived as being focused on grammar, not communication); a lack of understanding of how to implement CLT (because they generally had few models of it during their own learning experiences and they felt they had not received enough training in CLT);[34] the influence of other, older teachers during pre- and in-service training; and/or low confidence in their ability to work more directly in English. Similar concerns have also been reported at the elementary school level, though at this level the predominant problem identified

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[34] One recent study noted that just experiencing a strongly CLT-focused learning experience, such as during a study abroad program, will not necessarily lead the recipient to implement CLT when they become a teacher in the future (Benthien, 2017). In that case, the subject of the study, a Japanese native who did a study abroad program prior to becoming a Japanese secondary school teacher, noted that during their study abroad experience they were wholly focused on language skills improvement, and thus did not focus much on the way the language was taught.

was a lack of confidence, since the home room teachers tasked with teaching English likely studied it only to the compulsory level (Fennelly and Luxton, 2011). Another common thread among many of the teachers studied was the idea that even if learning how to communicate in English is important, it is a higher-level goal that can only be tackled after the "basics" of grammar and vocabulary had been mastered (Sakui, 2004; Underwood, 2012; and, at the university level, some of the teachers in Nagatomo, 2012).

The studies of pre-tertiary teachers didn't only focus on their orientation to CLT. For instance, Benthien (2017) spoke more generally about concerns felt by teachers about the conflict between MEXT demands and local needs. H. Takayama (2015) talked about the way some Japanese teachers focused on the identity of "model of a successful language learner," attempting to encourage students by showing their own history as language learners to students; in addition, they used their knowledge (as Japanese learners of English) of typical difficulties to improve their teaching. Sato & Kleinsasser (2004) discussed how the school environment tended to demand the attention and time of new teachers. They specifically noted the influence of institutional focuses on testing, the need to keep pace with other teachers at the same grade level, and the lack of time to engage in professional development because of all the non-teaching demands. This meant that teachers tended to adopt teaching identities that were compatible with these institutional demands, regardless of what teacher beliefs they may have held prior to joining the schools. In a parallel to the studies above talking about attitudes about CLT, Nakata (2011) reported that MEXT's push for increasing learning autonomy is likewise worrisome to high school language teachers—they support the idea, but lack confidence in their ability to carry it out in practice.

One study by Geluso (2013) looked at non-Japanese foreign language teachers working in pre-tertiary education in Japan, and found that their experience trying to establish a professional identity was shaped in large part by the perceptions of their students and Japanese colleagues. The participants reported being "othered" and were often unable to perform the teacher identity because the option was unavailable to them. Even those foreigners who became permanent, full-time teachers found that their classes (weekly oral communication classes, as opposed to almost daily grammar and reading/writing classes taught by Japanese

teachers) were treated by the students as less important and more "fun," due to what the teachers perceived was student focus on non-communicative, entrance exam English (*juken eigo*).

Research on post-secondary teacher identity and beliefs in Japan has been less common. Some studies, such as Matsuura, Chiba, and Hildebrandt's (2001), drew broad conclusions based on surveys of a large population. They used a questionnaire to measure the beliefs of both university teachers and students regarding what styles, topics, and materials were best for university level language learning. A key finding was that there were significant differences between student and teacher expectations. For instance, students tended to value translation, pronunciation practice, and teacher-fronted lectures more than teachers; Matsuura, et al., recommended that in cases where teachers choose to not meet student expectations, they should explicitly explain to students why they have chosen their methodologies.

Most research on post-secondary teacher identity and beliefs, however, is focused on the more in-depth analysis of smaller groups of participants, and was generally conducted through interviews. While each study had particular highlights, common themes ran through many of them. First, teachers' experiences as students (that is, the models they received about how to teach English) played a significant role in how they taught—sometimes directly influencing how they thought of themselves as teachers (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Nagatomo, 2012), and other times causing them to either connect with or experience conflict with their students, depending on how much similarity they saw between themselves and their students (Nagatomo, 2011a). Teacher identity was not a separate, "independent" identity, but was bound up with gender, nationality, social expectations (both internal and external to the teaching environment), family issues, economic status, etc. (Duff and Uchida, 1997; Nagatomo, 2012, Simon-Maeda, 2004, Stewart, 2005). Nagatomo (2012) and Simon-Maeda (2004) paid special attention to the way gender interacted with the opportunities, expectations, and constructed identities of female teachers, as they had to negotiate the often conflicting demands of traditional Japanese expectations of women—that they be subservient to male colleagues, that the ideal role for woman is *ryousaikenbo* (good wife, wise mother), and that, consequently male teachers were generally more seen as more deserving of positions and status.

Nagatomo (2012) also noted a significant difference between teachers who thought of themselves as "English teachers" and those who thought of themselves as specialists in another field but who happened to have to teach English.[35]

Finally, I would like to turn to two works that look at the intersection of gender identity and language teacher identity among foreign teachers in Japan (Appleby, 2014; Nagatomo, 2016).[36] Both works studied teachers working in a wide range of jobs, from *eikawa* employees to *eikawa* owners, from full time university teachers to teachers juggling multiple part-time jobs at many levels. Nagatomo specifically studied foreign female teachers. Most of the participants were mothers, and all had married Japanese spouses, though some were divorced by the time of the study. Nagatomo found that there was a complex interaction across the participants between the different aspects of their identity—their gender, non-Japaneseness, family relationships, and professional positions. Some participants were able to gain either personal or professional benefit from these interactions, but others were limited by the roles that people around them attempted to ascribe them. Additionally, Nagatomo traced strong connections between the identities of the participants to the wider sociopolitical role of English in Japanese society and the Japanese educational system. Appleby (2014), on the other hand, looked at the narratives of males (all white, mostly heterosexual) who had lived and taught in Japan, and interpreted their stories through various constructions of masculinity that arise at the intersections of gender, race, and nationality. The men in the study often defined themselves and their fellow foreign teachers (both male and female) in alliance or opposition to these identities and beliefs, having to interact with the historical role that white males have played as occupiers in Japan, with the eroticization of male teachers that is often part of the marketing of *eikaiwa*, with the role men are traditionally supposed to play in Japan as breadwinners and devoted company workers, and with the potential image represented in the online comic *Charisma Man* in which a male who is perceived in his home (white) country as plain and

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[35] Nagatomo found similar results among a wider population in an earlier study relying on questionnaire responses from university teachers across Japan (Nagatomo, 2011b).
[36] As noted above, Simon-Maeda (2004) also focused on the intersection of gender and professional identities, but does so using a mix of foreign and Japanese subjects.

nondescript is transformed into a "superhero" in Japan who easily attracts Japanese women.

**3.3 Corpus-based Research**

As mentioned in the introduction, while there is a branch of linguistics called "corpus linguistics," it can also be considered a methodology that can be part of the toolbox of any research which includes a linguistics component. At its base, it means nothing more than studying language use in practice through an examination of large collections of texts called corpora. Portions of the present study fall under what McEnery and Hardie (2012) call a "corpus-based approach," with the clearest case being parts of the analysis of My Share's lexicogrammar in Chapter 8. However, the entire project is "flavored" with corpus linguistics, in that 1) the analysis is entirely on actual, real English (not that which I have invented myself) and 2) the goals are focused on understanding the broad trends that occur across the My Share genre. However, since corpus linguistics plays a lesser role in both the practical implementation and the theoretical underpinnings of this research, this section will be briefer than the previous two.

   **3.3.1 Overview of corpus linguistics.** While the only true requirement for research to fall under corpus-based linguistics is that it examines actual (usually large) bodies of texts, there is an additional feature common to almost all modern corpus linguistics: the use of computational tools to analyze these large corpora in ways that cannot practically be done by hand. (Baker, 2008; Kennedy, 1998; McEnery & Hardie, 2012). There are numerous software tools that can help researchers examine and measure various aspects of natural language. Almost all these tools can create concordances, conduct frequency and keyword analysis, and generate lists of collocations, though individual software packages may contain other features (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

   Corpus-based studies can examine both general corpora—usually collected from a wide variety of domains, genre, and media, such as the British National Corpus (BNC)—and specialized corpora, which focus on some specific facet of language (Baker, 2008). As Baker explained, discourse analysts like myself are usually more interested in specialized corpora, since the goal is to understand how

language is used by a certain type of speaker and/or in a specific situation. Researchers can either use publicly available corpora[37] or, as I have, create their own. When creating a corpus, Meyer (2002) recommended that "in general, the lengthier the corpus, the better" (p. 33). Baker (2008) summarized several statistical analyses which showed that answering many types of general lexicogrammatical questions requires corpora between 500,000 and a million words, though they go on to say that focused genre-based studies can successfully work on corpora several factors smaller than that (p. 28).

**3.3.2 Survey of prior corpus-based research in second-language education.** There have been three major uses for corpus-based research in second-language education: the examination of corpora of so-called native speakers to better understand how language is used in practice (and thus make better recommendations for how it should be taught), the examination of corpora of L2 learner-generated language to identify common patterns in language learning, and the use of corpora by students themselves as tools for learning.

*3.3.2.1 Better understanding of actual language use through corpus-based research.* In a sense, this category could include large swaths of what is generally considered to be corpus linguistics, since usually the goal of corpus-based research is to understand how language works in practice. In some cases, researchers have turned the results of those findings into recommendations that significant changes be made in L2 teaching because standard curricula and textbooks don't match real-world use. Speaking about studies of this type, Barbieri & Eckhardt (2007) said, "Surprisingly, these studies unanimously show that there is a great divide, a lack of fit, between grammar and textbook descriptions of the target language and real language use" (p. 321). Here I provide just a few examples of research that fits in this category.

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[37] Various sites maintain lists of corpora, with those at The Linguist List (https://linguistlist.org/sp/GetWRListings.cfm?wrtypeid=1) and the Corpus Resource Database (http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/corpora/index.html) being two of the most up to date at the time of writing.

At the vocabulary level, Sznajder (2010) looked at the teaching of metaphor in business English textbooks, and found that there was little overlap between the metaphors in the textbooks and those used in a large corpus of business periodical articles. At the grammatical level, Frazier (2003) found that even though textbooks almost always teach *would*-clauses as requiring an adjacent *if*-clause, corpus analysis showed that, at least for counterfactual/hypothetical meanings, *if*-clauses need not be adjacent to the *would*-clause, or even occur at all. Finally, at the discursive level, Gilmore (2004) showed that textbook dialogues contain significant structural differences from real-world dialogues (things such as turn-taking patterns, false starts, and overlap).

Other studies have argued that there are more holistic problems with the way English is taught. Biber and Reppen (2002) showed that popular textbooks focus on grammatical structures and order them in ways that are fundamentally inconsistent with how frequently they occur in real use. Carter and McCarthy (1995) specifically looked at spoken language instruction, and argued that such instruction was regularly taught using written grammar rules, which corpus research has shown fundamentally differ from those of spoken grammar. Kennedy (2003) argued that collocations are significantly undervalued in language teaching, because corpora demonstrate that certain words correlate much more strongly with some words than others. Kennedy saw this as evidence that curricula must heavily emphasize large amounts of realistic input, since this is how learners will come to build up collocations in their mental lexicon. McCarthy (1994) and Hughes and McCarthy (1998) found that many language choices which are taught as sentence-level grammatical choices are more often the consequence of larger, discursive concerns. Thus, they felt that teaching needed to provide more language in context and explicitly demonstrate the role that discourse plays in language use.

***3.3.2.2 Analyses of L2 corpora.*** Most of the studies in this category involved the researchers comparing the language use of a corpus of L2 learners with a similar corpus of L1 users. This was usually done to determine differences in language use between the learner population and what was often considered to be the "normal" use of the L1 users in the reference corpora. Most such studies focused on a specific language feature, such as conjunctive adjuncts (Muddhi & Hussein, 2014), linking

adverbials (Lei, 2012), logical connectors (Rojanavarakul & Jaroongkhongdach, 2017), verb usage (Tono, 2002), or even specific phrases like "on the other hand" (Tazegül, 2015). In addition, each of these studies focused on the writing of a single nationality of L2 users, sometimes even from a single university. Thus, the goal of much of this research was to determine if there were particular areas of difficulty that the specific population has in using English that could be addressed by language teachers in those locations.

Not all work in this area was predicated on a deficit model, however. In some cases, especially when the researchers were looking at well-established English variants such as South African English (Elsness, 2016) and Hong Kong English (Coto-Villalibre, 2016), the goal was to establish the features of those Englishes without judging these differences as wrong or lacking. Such research, however, has been rare in cases where English is considered a fully foreign language—in those cases, such as those described in the previous paragraph (which came from Kuwait, China, Thailand, Japan, and Turkey, respectively), the presumption was that the differences were the result of incomplete acquisition of the target L2 (English). However, very recent work coming from researchers grounded in a World Englishes paradigm such Laitinen (2016) and Edwards (2017) has offered a new way of looking at what is often called "Expanding Circle" English. Laitinen's research looked at a newly compiled corpus of L2 usage from Finland and Sweden. Rather than the strictly academic (either classwork or research publications) used in the articles discussed above, the corpus also included other forms of practical English use, such as business and government documents, online communication, and fiction. Laitinen's study shifted from looking at L2 learners with the intent of finding if and how they are "deficient" compared to L1 users, towards thinking of L2 users as attempting to communicate with the resources at their disposal. It also considered the observed "changes" to be a part of ongoing changes in English as it is used in a globalized context. Edwards (2017), who did similar work in the Netherlands, argued that a global understanding of English is incomplete so long as Expanding Circle English is represented only by learner data.

*3.3.2.3 Inclusion of corpora in language teaching.* The use of corpora in the language learning classroom is often called "data-driven learning" (DDL) (Johns,

1994). Braun (2005) stated that, even by the early 2000s, the suggestion that corpora could be used in the classroom by students to aid in their language learning had become, if not common, at least "trendy" (p. 47). However, they also explained that there are numerous potential problems with the use of corpora, with the two major ones being that corpora and corpus-analysis software is usually designed with linguistic researchers in mind and thus may be overly complex or confusing for students, and that corpus software presents data in decontextualized chunks (such as in concordances), which is a problem because it is hard for new learners to mentally construct the context from such fragments due to a lack of both linguistic and cultural awareness. In a more recent review article, Boulton (2007) found that research on DDL has been relatively rare in the several decades since the idea was first proposed, that most of that research didn't measure results, and that most of those which did looked only at advanced, university level students and primarily measured the results qualitatively. Given the state of the field, I want to mention just two studies on corpora use in ESL/EFL classrooms to give an idea of what some authors are proposing may be possible.

Simpson and Mendis (2003) argued that corpora can be an effective way to teach idioms. They said that idioms are usually taught as individual vocabulary items, and placed into artificial sentences which fail to fully convey the meaning or provide enough context for students to understand. They found that using carefully edited examples of idiom usage drawn from an academic corpus can help students see how these idioms are used in real life, and allow them to use context clues to infer meaning. One problem they found during the search for idioms in their corpus was that users often modify idioms (such as using the phrase *arm twisting* as a derivation of the idiom *twist someone's arm*) or even make performance-based errors, and thus the use of examples drawn from corpora needs to account for these variations and help students understand that idioms are not the fixed units that classroom teaching sometimes claims them to be.

Daskalovksa (2015) examined whether students could use corpora to better learn adverb-verb collocations. The group which used corpora performed statistically significantly better on a variety of post-treatment test than those in a control group who did not. However, the students were university level English language and literature majors who had already had at least eight years of

experience studying English, so the method may not be appropriate for a broader group of English learners. Furthermore, Daskalovksa points out that part of the success could well be the result of novelty, a factor which is well-known to, in and of itself, have a positive effect on L2 learning.

### 3.4 Discussion and Connections to the Present Project

This chapter has looked at prior research using a CDA (or other critical) framework in education, teacher identity and teacher beliefs, and the application of corpus linguistics tools to second language learning. The field of teacher identity and belief research is very extensive, but almost none of that research has been done through a CDA lens. Of the teacher identity and belief research that has been conducted in Japan, it has been conducted almost entirely through studies that sought answers directly from the teachers, via interviews and questionnaires; no studies have yet looked at the role that professional discourse plays in reflecting, constructing, and resisting various aspects of teacher identity in Japan, as called for by Ainsworth and Hardy (2004). Some CDA work has been done in the educational field in Japan, but that work has focused mostly on national education policy. Even looking outside of Japan, CDA research on classroom-linked textual documents has been mostly focused on documents designed to span a whole course, such as textbooks and course syllabi. The one example of CDA research on lesson plans examined lessons for elementary school students on the topic of global issues, and only treated the discourse aspect of CDA lightly. Corpus-based research linked to second language learning has focused on comparing L2 learner language with that found in "standard" reference corpora, and with disconnects between the language instruction offered in textbooks and that used in the real world. Outside of textbook analysis, the methodology of corpus linguistics has not been turned on the professional discourse of language teachers that supports classroom practice such lesson plans. Furthermore, as Mautner (2009) pointed out, there has so far been little integration between CDA and corpus linguistics, despite the two fields having the potential to be highly complementary.

As such, I believe that the specific topic discussed in this paper is ripe for examination: language learning activities published outside of textbooks have never been examined, and the link between professional discourse and teacher beliefs,

identity, and power relationships has not been established, especially in the Japanese context. While my project will only look at one small selection of professional discourse in one specific professional teaching community, I believe that this is a key first step in building an understanding of the links between discourse, identity, language teaching, and broader sociocultural issues. My hope is that while this project both illuminates some of the hidden facets of teaching, discourse, and power in Japanese secondary and tertiary language classrooms, it can also serve as a model for more future studies of other forms of professional teacher discourse.

# Part 2

## Methodology

The second part of this thesis is composed of a single chapter—Chapter 4, "Methodology." This chapter discusses the source for the main data used in this project—lesson plans called "My Share"—as well as the publication they come from and the organization that publishes them. The chapter then discusses how the principles of CDA (the main analytical framework of this paper) were implemented, and how those, when combined with the project's research questions, led to the selection of three broad analytical lenses for examining seven aspects of the My Share discourse. The relationship between those lenses, aspects, and the wider sociohistorical context are both discussed in the chapter and depicted in several symbolic models.

## Chapter 4

## Methodology

This chapter describes the main data source used for this study and provides an overview of the methods used to analyze that data. First, I provide background information about the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) and *The Language Teacher*, the publisher and publication, respectively, of the My Share articles which are the subject of analysis in this project. Second, I explain the My Share articles in more detail, discuss why I chose to examine this genre, and describe how the articles were prepared for analysis. Third, I return to the principles of CDA discussed in section 3.1 and explain how I have incorporated those principles into this project. Fourth, I briefly explain the three major analytical lenses that are used in this research. Finally, I show how the lenses and principles led to the specific research design of this project, and what aspects of the discourse I analyzed. I also provide visual representations showing how all of these things are related.

### 4.1 JALT and *The Language Teacher*

As stated in the introduction, this project examines articles called My Share from the Japan Association for Language Teaching's (JALT) journal *The Language Teacher*. JALT is a professional organization of teachers and others related to education. As of July 2018, JALT had 2664 members, of which 44 were private organizations (such as publishing companies who join as "associate members" to promote their products), 88 were institutional subscribers (schools that "join" mainly to receive JALT publications for display in libraries) and 2532 were individuals (Carruth, personal communication, August 19, 2018). These members are spread across Japan, though, just like the Japanese population itself, are clustered in Tokyo, with 28.4% connected to the Tokyo and West Tokyo chapters (with Tokyo itself having more than 3.7 times as many members as the next largest chapter of Osaka).[38] Note that this represents a very small part of the Japanese teaching profession, with 2013 statistics showing

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[38] Chapters are sub-organizations within JALT based upon geographic areas. Most chapters hold local events; for instance, the Fukuoka Chapter of which I am a member holds meetings 8-9 times per year at which presenters speak on both practical and academic subjects related to teaching, and which are also often accompanied by a social event.

over 1.3 million teachers in kindergarten through tertiary education (MEXT, n.d.).[39] Thus, I am not trying to claim that my conclusions are representative of teacher beliefs (etc.) across Japan. In fact, in some cases I will specifically note that the ideas embedded in these articles seem to contradict those which are commonly held in Japan. Nonetheless, JALT is one of the largest professional organizations for foreign language teachers in Japan, and while I don't know of any statistics to verify this, I am fairly certain it is the largest organization with majority foreign membership (at the time of the membership numbers reported above, 69.2% of the members were not Japanese nationals). In addition, chapter meetings, SIG events, and national events are open to the public (though attendance fees, if charged, are supposed to be lower for members); also, since the publications are present in institutional libraries and online, they can likewise be accessed by non-JALT members. Thus, even though JALT members represent a small part of the wider Japanese teaching community, I believe that the JALT community and its practices have a large enough impact to be worthy of analysis.

*The Language Teacher* is one of JALT's two main publications. It contains a mix of research articles, pedagogical information (such as the My Share articles, reports of new educational technology, etc.), opinion articles, and practical information related to the JALT organization itself (such as election materials, reports on the activities of JALT chapters, etc.). The other main journal, called the *JALT Journal*, is closer to a "normal" academic journal, in that it contains only research articles, summaries of recent research published elsewhere, opinion articles, and book reviews—there is no organizational information. It is published semi-annually. Several of the editors who were interviewed indicated that the *JALT Journal* is generally considered to be a more prestigious journal than *The Language Teacher*, especially among Japanese teachers, and that it thus a more desirable place to publish. At the national level, JALT also publishes two conference proceedings per year. In addition, many of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs), which are sub-groups of JALT focused on topics like "College and University Education" or "Vocabulary" that JALT members can join for a small extra fee, publish journals, though the

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[39] These statistics do not appear to include private supplementary education, such as *juku* (cram schools where students prepare for secondary and tertiary entrance exams) or *eikaiwa* (English conversation schools); some members of JALT teach at least a portion of their time at the latter.

publications vary in whether their articles are peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed, or if they contain a mix of the two.[40]

The Language Teacher has been published for over 40 years. It is currently published bimonthly, though prior to 2010 it was published monthly. The subsections included in the journal have changed over time; a detailed breakdown for the 2011 to 2016 period can be found in section 5.6. My Share has always fallen into one of the practically focused sections. Online archives are available back to January, 1990 (volume 14), though the contents of those archives have varied over time—while the most recent archives contain both a pdf of the entire journal and an html copy of each article, older archives sometimes include only one of these, and the oldest archives include only a scanned copy of each issue's Table of Contents. While most of this archive is available without charge to anyone, the most recent six months can only be accessed by members.

## 4.2 My Share Articles

**4.2.1 Description of My Share articles**. In Chapter 1, I provided the short description of the My Share articles that heads each My Share section: they "describ[e] a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers." The online Guidelines for potential authors provide a much longer explanation of these articles which I quote here at length to give readers a more complete understanding of the section:

> The My Share column is a unique feature of *The Language Teacher* (*TLT*) in that it comprises a collection of published procedures for classroom activities and lesson plans. Contributions come directly from members of our readership, classroom practitioners. Most every teacher has an original lesson idea or teaching technique that works like magic in the classroom. The editors welcome you to share your lesson ideas and classroom procedures with your colleagues in the field through a submission to this column. My

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[40] For disclosure, I have worked on the Gender Awareness in Language Education's (GALE) journal since 2012; in 2014 I was an Associate Editor, in 2015 and 2016 I was a Co-Editor, and from the end of 2016 until September 2018 I was the (sole) Editor.

Share submissions are to be step-by-step procedural instructions that can be used "right out of the box."

Thinking of writing up a submission? We encourage you to try this: Imagine you have just come out of a lesson exhilarated with how well the class went. You meet a fellow teacher in the corridor who notices the spring in your step and is eager to try the activity too. You tell them, in simple, clear language how to go about executing the activity, step-by-step. When writing your article, you might add caveats at each step or perhaps group them together in your conclusion. You will be amazed at how quickly your activity idea writes itself up! The most important point is not trying to turn your submission into an academic paper. You might choose to reference current research, where necessary, if an understanding of it is indispensable to communicating your idea. That said, My Share is a how-to column, and your writing style must reflect this. Previously published My Share articles have included such diverse write-ups as a whole term's syllabus on how to get students to raise their hands and participate actively in class and how to turn the contemporary obsession with mobile phones to an English teacher's advantage. Any idea you have dreamt up yourself—or else significantly adapted from someone else, whom you credit—that worked well is suitable. (JALT, n.d.-a)

Thus, My Share articles are positioned as being primarily practical in nature, in that the main intent is for teachers to share successful lesson activities. This practical nature is explicitly opposed to the style of "academic paper[s]." Authors are writing not as "researchers" but as "classroom practitioners." The goal is the publishing of concise, easy to use ideas—that is, teachers helping teachers to teach (not research, not understand language learners, etc.).

**4.2.2 Reasons for choosing to research My Share.** The My Share genre[41] provides insight into at least some of the professional practices occurring in Japanese language classrooms. This would, however, be the case for nearly any examples of lesson activities, such as those found in teachers' manuals of language textbooks or in online (user-submitted, subscription based, or created by other professional organizations) repositories of lesson plans. However, I chose to study the My Share genre because of a few unique features.

First, the My Share genre is very specifically targeted at language teachers in Japan. Not only is the print journal distributed primarily in Japan, most of the submissions were written by people working in the education field in Japan. This means that it is possible to directly connect the genre with localized teaching concerns arising out of Japanese educational philosophies, social structures, and governmental policies. This would not be the case for a general collection of lesson plans.

Second, I myself am a member of the discourse community in question—I became a member of JALT in 2010, have had an article published in *The Language Teacher* (Hahn, 2013), and have been an officer of a Chapter and SIG. In addition, I am the "median" JALT member—a white, male foreigner teaching English in Japan. As such, this genre is one that I am comfortable analyzing, and I believe that I can persuasively argue about not only the intent of these activities but also how they might fit into the common teaching/learning conditions in Japanese educational institutions.

The most valuable aspect of the My Share genre, however, lies in the typical contents of those articles. While Chapter 5 examines the structure and content of My Share articles in detail, for now it will suffice to look at one example. Figure 2 contains a sample My Share article from the corpus. I selected this article as an example not due to any outstanding qualities, but merely because it fit entirely on one single page (most articles break across two pages), making it easier to see here.

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[41] Note that while it isn't necessarily the case that texts found in a particular section of a professional journal share enough to rightfully be called a genre, the strongly shared purpose, high level of restrictions on the format and structure of the articles (see Chapter 5 for more details), and the fact that they are primarily by and for a limited community of practice all point to the label being appropriate in this case.

## Appendices

The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

# Better Understanding English Proficiency Exam Essay Expectations

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## Quick Guide

» **Keywords:** *TOEFL, IELTS, writing, consciousness raising*
» **Learner English level:** *Lower intermediate to advanced*
» **Learner maturity:** *High school to university*
» **Preparation time:** *20 minutes*
» **Activity time:** *45-60 minutes*
» **Materials:** *Sample scored essays from an English proficiency test (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS), essay-rating sheet*

Students struggle with achieving high scores on tests of English proficiency for a variety of reasons: lack of preparation or motivation, the grueling nature of the exams, years of ineffective English instruction, and so forth. One additional factor, which this lesson seeks to address, is comprehending what is expected on the exams. The first step in reaching a goal should always be understanding what is necessary to achieve it; however, this step is often missed. This lesson is a consciousness raising activity for both teacher and student, specifically with regard to essay writing for English proficiency exams.

## Preparation

**Step 1:** Print scored example essays from a relevant English proficiency exam (enough sets for students to examine them in groups of three to five). One essay per page makes sharing between group members easier.

**Step 2:** Hide the scores of each essay, and instead label them with letters (e.g., A – E). Randomize the order so the letters do not correlate with the score.

**Step 3:** Create and print out a rating sheet. It should have space for students to order the essays from best to worst, and to also provide written justification for their choices. An example is available as an appendix to this article.

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Organize students in small groups of three to five and provide each group with a set of essays.

**Step 2:** Instruct students to read each essay and discuss as a group which they felt were best and worst, and why they felt that way.

**Step 3:** Students may be quiet at first, as they focus on reading. After some time has passed, encourage them to discuss the merits of the essays together.

**Step 4:** Once there has been some healthy discussion, hand out the rating sheets. Encourage students to not only order the essays from best to worst, but also give their reasoning. If time is short, have students focus specifically on explaining their choice of best and worst essays.

**Step 5:** Discuss, as a class, how each group chose to order the essays. Contrast these results with the official scoring and reveal the criteria on which essays are rated. Use any disparities as a jumping off point for further discussion of essay writing skills.

## Conclusion

This activity should raise awareness for both student and teacher. The students will leave with a better understanding of what is expected on English proficiency exams, while the teacher will gain a better understanding of how their students think about writing, and what aspects might be worth devoting more time to in class. In my experience with this exercise, students favored essays that were (1) simple, easy to read, (2) relied on transitional words to explicitly organize points, and (3) provided many (often weakly supported) main points. In contrast, the scoring criteria and example essays from exams often favor essays that are (1) complex, with room to demonstrate advanced grammar and vocabulary, (2) organized by logic, with transitional words being used but not relied on, and (3) focused on strong development and support of reasoning, even though there may be only one or two main points. This exercise could also be adapted for writing for other purposes than proficiency exams.

## Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

*Figure 2.* Sample My Share article from the September/October 2016 issue of *The Language Teacher* by Brent Auburgey.

While my analysis in subsequent chapters deals with all the constituent sections, it is the (unlabeled) introduction and Conclusion sections that most

strongly drew me to this genre. While the bulk of this article, as with most My Shares, is taken up by the practical "how-to" sections (Preparation and Procedure), the introduction and Conclusion sections contain a key additional feature that is not, in my experience, commonly found in other activity plans: they provide a contextually appropriate justification from the author about why the activity is good/effective/useful. In the example in Figure 2, the article provides one main argument in the introduction: Japanese students aren't good at English proficiency tests in part because they don't understand what they are expected to do on said exams (i.e., the scoring criteria). It goes on to explain that the following activity is designed to help fill in that gap. The Conclusion reiterates that this activity helps students learn what they need to do to succeed on English proficiency exams, and how this is not what most students previously thought was the key to success. The Conclusion closes with an additional argument (what I will later call a "benefit"), which is that the activity can be adapted to other types of writing instruction.

In other words, My Share articles contain not only an explanation of how to conduct a language activity, they also include statements from which it is possible to infer beliefs about good language teaching, about what students can or should be able to do (and what is good for them to learn during foreign language lessons), what role a teacher can or should play in the classroom relative to the learners, etc. Note that the goal of this analysis is not to impute the actual beliefs of actual individual authors—in fact, I have tried, throughout this project to deliberately assume that these beliefs are not those of individual authors, but are rather the result of discursive/generic rules. So, in the example above, the point is not that Brent Auburgey "believes" that students don't understand language proficiency exams, but rather that the discourse that was produced and is now available to potentially influence a community of practice represents the belief that students lack a certain kind of knowledge. Whether the author wrote that statement because they personally believe it or because they believe that this idea is common among language professionals in Japan and thus including it will make their My Share more persuasive is irrelevant—what matters is that said beliefs can be said to be both representative and constructive of the beliefs of a wider discourse community. This is particularly true for beliefs that appear repeatedly in the corpus, which is what led much of the following research to focus on words, phrases, and ideas that occur

frequently across many articles. As Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) asserted, research on identity and beliefs should expand into discourse analysis to help determine how and why beliefs are perpetuated throughout communities.

**4.2.3 Scope of data.** For this project, I chose to study the My Share articles published from 2011 to 2016. Since I joined JALT in 2010 and have been a member ever since, this provided me with both the online versions (for ease of data preparation) and the print versions for verification (especially relevant for the visual analysis found in Chapter 4). In addition, while I conducted some earlier, less structured analysis of the My Share genre, this present project formally began in 2016, with most data analysis beginning in 2017. Thus, 2016 was the most recent year for which a complete year of articles was available for analysis.

From 2011–2015, most issues contained four My Share articles, with one issue per year being a "My Share Special" issue that contained 12–14 articles. In 2016, there was no "My Share Special" issue, but the journal switched to including four My Share in each print issue plus another two in the online archive of the issues. In total there were 204 articles published in this time frame. However, prior to beginning analysis, I excluded three sets of articles. First, I wanted to narrow the range of activities to include only those which the authors stated could be used at the university level—that is, 16 articles for which the target "Learner Maturity level" (see section 9.3.2 for further information) listed the maximum age as senior high school or lower were excluded. The reason for this exclusion was twofold. First, as discussed above, context is critically important when doing critical discourse analysis. I believe that articles designed solely for young learners may include significantly different assumptions about both students and language teaching than those designed either for older students or for all ages. I was a little concerned that using the "Learner Maturity level" wasn't a precise way of drawing this boundary, since, as I show in section 9.3.2, the authors themselves don't seem to be using consistent criteria to establish this level. However, substituting my subjective judgment for that of the authors wouldn't have made this division any more persuasive.

Second, I excluded 10 articles which listed the institution of the authors as non-Japanese schools (the small number of authors who were listed as working for

publishers and other non-school organizations were all included). The specific sociohistorical context in which texts are produced and intended to be read is extremely important to interpreting those texts. Thus, my analysis will attempt to make direct connections between the ideas in the texts and the Japanese educational system. While it is possible that the authors who were listed as having non-Japanese organizations had taught in Japan (for example, they may have resided in Japan and moved prior to publication), it seemed to me to be safer to exclude those articles. Finally, I excluded one article which described an activity designed to be used only with students preparing for a speech contest—that is, an activity not linked to classroom learning.

After these exclusions, 177 articles remained. 160 authors were represented, since some authors published two to four articles during this period, while other articles had two authors. This corpus of articles contains more than 100,000 words in total, though most of the analysis was conducted only on the main body of the articles. The Quick Guide section (see 5.2.1 for further explanation) was analyzed independently of the rest of the articles (see sections 9.3–9.5), and the titles (both article and section titles), authors' names, and institutions were not analyzed directly. Lastly, the analysis looked only at the text printed in the articles—that is, I did not analyze the Appendices which 54.2% of the articles had, since, first, those sections were stored in separate pdf files available only from the website archives,[42] and, second, because the appendices mainly contain handouts that readers can print and use in class, and thus represent student-directed speech, while the articles themselves are all teacher-directed. This meant that majority of the analysis was conducted on a corpus of 99,216 words, 5609 sentences, and 2266 paragraphs.[43]

**4.2.4 Data preparation.** In order to analyze these texts, I had to move them from the online archives into files which I could easily examine and which could be used by the specialized computer software (more on those below) that I chose to assist in my work. First, working from the html versions of the articles in the online

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[42] This file format, plus the fact that many of the appendices contain specialized layouts, would have made analysis of the appendices very difficult on a practical level.

[43] These numbers represent what I believe are the most accurate numbers from the estimates provided by the different software tools used in this analysis. Different tools count each of these items slightly differently.

archive, I transferred each article to a separate Microsoft Word file. I then aggregated the files by month, then year, and then eventually placed all the files into a single Microsoft Word file. During this aggregation, I removed the titles; author information; and the Quick Guide, Appendix, and Reference sections. Two additional versions of this compiled document were made, one in Microsoft Excel format and one as a plain text document. For both versions, I removed the section titles and some of the longer instances of classroom examples (such as a sample essay to be given to students, since those are also student-directed). These files represented the basis for most of the computer-aided analysis, since they contained only the actual teacher-directed text; for the content analyses, I generally worked from the full Microsoft Word file. For the Excel version, each paragraph was placed in a separate cell in the first column, with other columns used to record information about where the text came from. Other special versions of these files were created to handle problems and situations that arose in certain of the analyses.

## 4.3 Implementation of CDA Principles

In section 3.1.1 I listed five principles that are widely embraced by critical discourse analysts. While I have sought to follow all the principles in my research, some have played a bigger role than others. Thus, this section discusses how I have utilized those principles in shaping this project.

The first principle, being socially committed, motivated the choice of subject matter and my research questions. As was discussed in Chapter 1, the purpose of this project is to examine the interaction between the language used in a particular genre of professional discourse in foreign language teaching in Japan and the practice of teaching and learning in Japan. While this project has been conducted in part to understand how the previously unexplored My Share genre functions, it is also chiefly concerned with understanding the links between the genre and teacher beliefs, teaching practices, classroom power relationships, attitudes towards foreign languages and foreign language education, and the wider social, political, and cultural context of language learning in Japan.

The second principle, embracing methodological diversity, led me to adopt a wide range of methods in the study design. As is shown below in sections 4.4 and

4.5, I used methods coming out of three distinct research traditions to examine seven separate but linked aspects of the My Share discourse. The methods utilized are not tied together by a theoretical foundation, nor were they expected to produce convergent results. Rather, they were deliberately chosen to produce a wide range of results, and the diversity acts as a type of triangulation in this analysis. Note that this is not triangulation in the sense of getting multiple types of data that all help to confirm each other and support a single unifying theory. Rather, the diversity of methods was deliberately eclectic and intended to at least potentially provide complex and contradictory results, thus providing a deeper understanding of the genre, the community of practice, and its actual practices. Finding contradictions and complexities, rather than indicating flaws in the analysis, is desirable because both individual and social identity are themselves multivoiced, internally inconsistent, and constantly in flux (Hodge, 2012). Furthermore, this type of eclectic approach is particularly important when trying to seek out hidden inequities and other power structures which are obscured, sometimes intentionally, by dominant ways of speaking (Kaomea, 2003).

This eclectic triangulation is also connected to the third principle of examining both micro- and macro-linguistic data. While the details are discussed below in the research design, this project includes work at the level of individual word choices (especially Chapters 7 and 8), grammatical structures (especially Chapter 7), semantic units (especially Chapters 6, 9, and 10), major article sections (Chapter 5), broader thematic levels that exist across multiple texts in the corpus (Chapters 9 and 11), and data from outside of the My Share articles (Chapter 12). The intent, again, is to build up a complex understanding of the genre and the beliefs, identities, and power relationships that that are created by and reflected in the genre.

The fourth principle—looking at non-linguistic data—is the least reflected in this project. I have included a small section in Chapter 5 discussing the visual features of the My Share articles, especially as those features contrast with the presentation of research articles in *The Language Teacher*.

Finally, I have implemented the fifth principle of self-reflexivity through the deliberate inclusion of information about myself, my opinions, and my practical relationships to this genre, the ideas contained in it, and the social practice of teaching in Japan. As an overview, I am a white American male, teaching English in

Japan. I spent five years working as an ALT at a Japanese high school through the JET Programme followed by over six years teaching at the tertiary level in Japan (where I am currently employed). In addition, I have done some private tutoring and *eikaiwa* work. Finally, prior to coming to Japan I taught in the United States (rhetoric and composition at a university and test-preparation at a private school). My experience teaching English in Japan both helps and hinders my ability to interpret these texts—that is, I can use my intuitions about the intents of the activities, the probable responses of students, etc., to better contextualize the articles, but since I have taught at only a handful of schools, and only within the Fukuoka area, my limited experience may cause me to make assumptions that aren't broadly applicable across the wide variety of teaching situations in Japan. I have, whenever possible, attempted to use not only my own ideas, but also perspectives of teaching that I have heard expressed by other teachers.

However, as with the teacher-authors, it is not only my experience teaching but also my other life experiences and identities that affect my interpretive practices. Self-reflexivity requires that I understand that I am not a generic "teacher of English in Japan," but, rather, that I am a white male English teacher identified as a so-called "native speaker of English." It is impossible to separate these aspects of my identity (whether they are self-determined or imposed from without) from my professional practices, as either a teacher or researcher. For example, the JET Programme that first brought me to Japan is open only to nationals of a select group of countries, with the most recent figures indicating that over 87% of the 5528 current JET participants come from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Ireland (The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, 2018). Similarly, the full-time university position I currently hold is only open to "native speakers of English."[44] Japanese natives can hold a similar position, but are hired under a separate quota, since the university endeavors to give students classes with both "native" and "non-native" English teachers. This division between so-

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[44] It is also possible that part of what enabled me to be hired was the social relationships I had developed with one or more of the hiring committee, mostly through a network of connections that grew out of my JALT membership; this may mean that other aspects of my identity such as my gender, marital status, and nationality also indirectly aided in achieving this position. Appleby (2014) discusses how all of these factors regularly play roles in the employment of foreign teachers of Japan, usually in ways that benefit western males.

called native and non-native English teachers is well documented throughout the TESOL industry, and though the division has little linguistic validity, it is nonetheless widespread and actively harmful to the professional opportunities of non-native speaker teachers (Holliday, 2013). The valorization of native speakers and "native English"—especially English from the United States and the United Kingdom—in Japan is well documented (e.g., see Chiba, Matsuura, & Yamamoto, 1995; Kubota, 1998; Matsuda, 2003) and is fundamentally intertwined with Japanese government policy on education and internationalization (Kubota & McKay, 2009; Hashimoto, 2013a). My interaction with my employing institutions, students, and the My Share articles to be analyzed is necessarily colored by this divide between native and non-native English and English speakers—that even though I reject this division as both unethical and harmful to students and teachers, it nonetheless plays a role in how I make interpretive decisions.

Furthermore, as discussed in section 2.3, there can be tendency among foreign western teachers who come to Japan to believe that western methods are better than those found in Japan (Bax, 2003); this is a part of what Holliday (2005) calls the division between BANA (British, Australasia, and North America) and TESEP (tertiary, secondary, and primary English language education in the rest of the world), with the former significantly privileged over the latter in professional publications, presentations, and training programs. And as I mentioned in footnote 16, I have played the role of "all-knowing foreigner" in harmful and dismissive ways; my interpretation of the My Share articles is colored by both my desire to reject this approach to being a teacher, and my inability to completely do so.

## 4.4 Analytical Lenses

In order to answer the research questions discussed in section 1.4 while working within the CDA principles discussed above, I have chosen three main analytical lenses for examining the My Share discourse. I use the word "lens" because these three items are not individual methods, but, rather, are better understood as perspectives on how to do research and what it is important to focus on in that research. Each lens is associated with different methods, and is better suited for certain types of research questions or linguistic data than others. The following

sections explain my interpretation of these lenses and why I have chosen them for this project.

**4.4.1 Corpus-based research.** From a technical perspective, one challenge that I faced when considering how to make persuasive claims about the My Share articles was the size of the corpus. With 177 articles and nearly 100,000 words, it wouldn't have been possible to analyze every aspect of the corpus by hand. Particularly at the microlinguistic level, I needed to employ computational tools to find patterns in the data—that is, use a corpus-based approach and the tools of corpus linguistics to examine some of the aspects of the data. My approach most closely follows the recommendations of Baker (2008), who provided a set of principles and reasons for combining corpus linguistics with discourse analysis (including critical discourse analysis). According to Baker, the use of corpus-based approach to discourse analysis helps alleviates criticism that researchers have cherry-picked discursive examples based upon a preconception about what is happening in the discourse (for an example of such criticism, see Widdowson, 1996). Using corpus analysis tools can help justify both why certain features are discussed and how common they are in the discourse being analyzed. Corpus linguistics thus helps researchers focus on how aspects of language are used in practice, rather than how the researcher may theorize that it is or could be used (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). This does not make the work more "objective," since the researcher still makes the (interested, contingent) choices about what questions to ask and how to use the tools—as Mautner (2016) says, "The evidence that corpus software lays before us never speaks for itself. Knowledge is not generated by the mere act of data processing, but as a result of what the analyst makes of the evidence" (p. 174).[45]

**4.4.2 Genre analysis.** Genre analysis includes any type of research that seeks to understand how groups of text which share a common purpose, structure, and/or discourse community function as social practices. Per research question 1, I wanted to establish the "rules" of the My Share genre. However, as discussed above in

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[45] Or, as Pennycook (1990) says, speaking of researchers in general, "the knowledge we produce is always interested" (p. 25).

relation to the first CDA principle, the goal of CDA work is not to seek out abstract, contextless linguistic "truths." Rather, the goal is to understand how this genre is a form of social action that has value for the discourse community that produced it, and, in so doing, understand how that genre is implicated in systems of power and inequality (Fairclough, 2003; Lin, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Pennycook, 2010). That is, by understanding what rules govern the genre (how it is structured, what sorts of topics are acceptable, what arguments can be used, etc.), it is possible to better understand the community from which it came, what that community values, and what beliefs its members hold (including beliefs which are widely agreed upon as well as those which are in dispute). Some researchers—most especially, Bhatia (2002, 2012, 2015)—have described the use of a critical approach to genre studies as constituting a distinct research paradigm called Critical Genre Analysis (CGA).

Bhatia has argued that CDA and CGA have significant differences. In Bhatia (2012), they argued that CDA tends to "analyze social structures in such a way that they are viewed as invulnerable" and thus fails to provide opportunity for progressive resistance to harmful social structures, while CGA (as they construct it) is "a way of 'demystifying' professional practice through the medium of genres." (p. 23). However, I think that this is too narrow a view of CDA, given that many CD analysts argue that CDA should involve analyzing, building, and disseminating tools of resistance (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lin, 2014; Rogers & Schaenen, 2014). In addition, Bhatia (2015) discussed several other differences. First, they said that CGA is more focused than CDA, in that the former can only be applied to professional practices and genres, while CDA can apply to wider social contexts. In addition, they argued that CDA has a stronger focus on power and ideology, while CGA has greater analytical rigor. While this seems to me to be somewhat true, Bhatia seems to take Fairclough's approach to CDA as the dominant if not the sole approach, whereas there are numerous different approaches of CDA—for instance, in their review article, Tenorio (2011) identified six different schools of CDA, none of which are monolithic. Third, Bhatia argued that CDA is primarily discursive, owing to an allegiance to Foucauldian theory, while CGA is primarily interdiscursive; this, however, seems to undervalue how important interdiscursivity is to some types of CDA, such as that found in Fairclough (2003). Finally, Bhatia said that CGA is focused more on analyzing social practice through the use of extra-textual work (such as

ethnographic research), while CDA tends to focus first and foremost on discursive actions and analysis. Other researchers are split in how they treat the relationship between CDA and CGA, with Koteyko (2009) stating that CDA "includes" CGA (p. 114), while Han (2013) stated that their research "combines" CDA and CGA (p. 85), implying that they are distinct paradigms.

Given that power and ideology are two of the four main focuses of my project, that my intent is to understand social practice through analyzing discourse (using My Share to understand the social practice of teaching in Japan) rather than placing social practice first as in CGA, and that I have deliberately chosen to use an eclectic mix of methodologies rather than a single "rigorous" one, I consider the present research to fall squarely within CDA, regardless of whether CDA and CGA are distinct or overlapping.

However, this very eclecticism means that I also find it appropriate to incorporate some of the ways that Bhatia discusses genre and the CGA approach.[46] In particular, I have incorporated Bhatia's (2015) suggestion that when analysts look at genres, they do so by focusing on how that genre "is likely to be interpreted, used and exploited in specific contexts," (p. 10). In part, this is an issue of attitude—in that, for whichever tools I'm using to interpret the My Share corpus, I make those interpretations within the context of the Japanese language education and the professional lives of the teachers writing and reading the genre. Related to the latter point, this is why I chose to include what Bhatia calls an "ethnographic" component: the author questionnaire and editor interviews discussed in Chapter 11. However, since I am using CGA mostly in these limited ways, I am not using ideas from other CGA researchers, such as Fage-Butler (2015), who proposed adding ideas from Foucauldian discourse analysis to CGA (since Bhatia places little emphasis on the work of Foucault, even implying in Bhatia (2015) that Foucault is a more important resource for CDA than for CGA).

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[46]Note that I have chosen to mix CGA concepts into this CDA project even knowing that they may contain fundamental differences. This follows Kaomea's suggestion that critical work (in their case, postcolonial analysis) should be comfortable using contradictory approaches and methods, since the ultimate goal is not methodological consistency but rather the uncovering of that which has been hidden (especially that which is potentially causing harm) by dominant discourses and ideologies.

**4.4.3 Discourse analysis and text analysis**. Just as "discourse" has many meanings (see section 1.1.1), so too is "discourse analysis" an ambiguous phrase. In the simplest sense it is "the study of language at use in the world, not just to say things, but also to do things" (Gee, 2014, p.1). The discourse of My Share exists within the framework of professional language teaching in Japan. If we take the genre at face value, its purpose is to share successful language lesson plans amongst teachers. However, texts can and always do things other than their expressed purpose; the whole point of this project is to determine what else this discourse is doing in terms of attempting to construct and represent the beliefs and identities of both teachers and students in the Japanese language learning context (and how this is linked up to issues of power and ideology).

While my approach to discourse analysis has been modeled after that used by a wide variety of researchers (especially including Baker, 2008; Gee, 2014; Hashimoto, 2000, 2009; Hodge, 2012), the single largest inspiration is Fairclough's (2003) approach which they call "textually oriented discourse analysis" (p. 2). One of the features of Fairclough's work is that it simultaneously examines multiple levels of language use, ranging from micro-linguistic features like individual word and grammar choices up through the "orders of discourse" which includes macro-linguistic features like structure and genre, and all the way "away from" texts to social practices themselves. Fairclough often uses the term "text analysis" to refer to cases where they are specifically looking at the linguistic elements of a discourse, and the broader term "discourse analysis" when looking at how the discourse operates at the level of social practice, though they are not consistent in this distinction. For this paper, I will generally use the term "text analysis" when referring to methods, approaches, and principles linked to the examination of the linguistic aspects of My Share (other than those linguistic aspects which are analyzed via corpus-based approaches), and will generally avoid the term "discourse analysis" so as not to cause confusion with Critical Discourse Analysis, which is the framework within which this entire project and all of its components rest. Finally, to reiterate and clarify what I said above, while my overall approach resembles Fairclough's "textually oriented discourse analysis" in its goals and broad perspective, the actual methods I use were drawn from a wider set of sources, especially since Fairclough's

main techniques of linguistic analysis are drawn from Systemic Functional Linguistics, which I chose not to employ in this project.

## 4.5 Research Design

To clarify how I have implemented these principles and utilized these lenses, as well as show how they relate to the broad project goals, this section provides an overview plus several visual representations of the research design of the project. Before I can discuss the present project, I first need to give a more general description of how I understand the theoretical relationship between discourse and practice (and the components thereof); a visual representation of this relationship is shown in Figure 3.
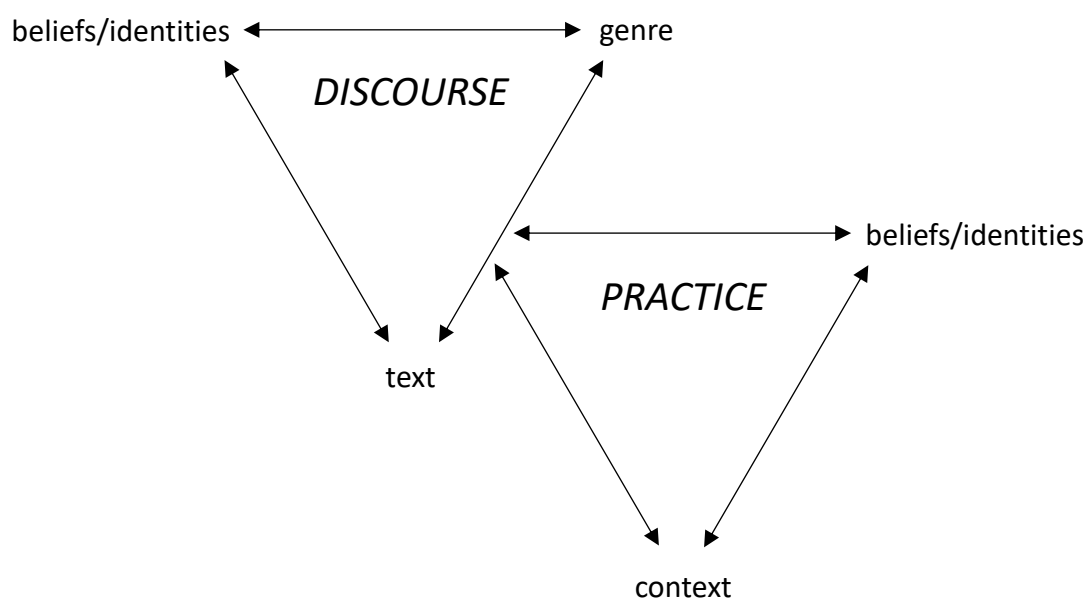


*Figure 3.* Representation of the relationship between discourse and practice.

In this diagram, the left triangle represents discourse—language in use. Discourse, however, is more than a collection of language; rather, as discussed in section 1.1.1, it is a is a set of practices that "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). Collections of discourse which share a common purpose and/or set of producers or consumers can be called "a discourse" (that is, making it a countable noun). Discourses are governed by rules (influencing and influenced by the social practice from which they arise and which they create) that define (usually, implicitly) what is allowed to be included, what the rules of truth and

falsehood are, who is authorized to use this discourse, etc. These rules can be described as the genre of the discourse.[47] Furthermore, while these texts usually share a particular set of purposes, they are also bound together because a particular set of beliefs and identities are manifested in them (that is, beliefs and identities both represented and constructed by the texts). "Beliefs/identities" is represented as a single vertex of the triangle because the difference between them is more a matter of terminology than a difference of "fact." For simplicity, I will generally use "identities" when describing characteristics of people, and "beliefs" when describing ideas those people hold about themselves, other people, or the rest of the world; however, it should be understood that I do not mean to draw a strict division between these ideas.

Discourse does not exist in the world as an independent object. Rather, discourse is in a dialectical relationship with practice, which is represented by the right triangle in the diagram. The production and consumption of discourse is itself a social practice (which is why the whole "discourse" triangle is shown as one of the vertices of the "practice" triangle), but it is also linked to other forms of social practice. Practice is emergent from the context in which it takes place; what discourse can be produced is a function not only of the beliefs, identities, and genre rules in the left triangle, but also on the context (the "rest of the world" within which the discourse is produced, though local influences are likely to dominate). In addition, note that "beliefs/identities" is included in both triangles. This is because beliefs and identities are both things that are manifest in texts (a piece of discourse can be said to express a belief or define people in a certain way) and are mental images carried by people who create and read/hear discourse. Of course, these are not separate "beliefs/identities." For that matter, none of these objects are truly separate—all of them are involved in dialectical relationships with one another—as Fairclough (2003) said (speaking of a similar set of concepts), they are different elements but are not "discrete" or "fully separable" (p. 205). This interdependence

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[47] Note, however, that the distinction drawn here is fuzzy, as it is throughout research on discourse and genre (see section 1.1). One of my own beliefs is that while linguistic projects need to demonstrate a "theory of language" to be fully credible, they aren't responsible for providing a complete, unassailable theory or model—particularly since coming from a postmodern perspective means believing that there is no such thing as an objective, "True-with-a-capital-T" model of reality or language use.

is why all links in the diagram are bidirectional arrows—each item influences and is influenced by each of the others.

Figure 3 is a general depiction of any discourse/practice dialectic. Next, I want to show how that same visualization works in the context of the present study; to do so, I need to review what this study is examining and what it is setting out to analyze. The genre in question is the "My Share" genre, a genre of professional practice that is found in the professional journal *The Language Teacher*. However, for practical reasons, the genre will be represented by only a selection of all the texts included in it: 6 years of articles (2011–2016), with articles coming from outside of Japan or made solely for use with young learners excluded. The practice is the practice of being a teacher in Japan—note that this includes not only the practice of teaching (being in a classroom and facilitating student learning) but also all the other tasks (administrative, preparatory, and, in some cases, research/publishing) that teachers must engage in. The context contains many elements, including but not limited to the institutions in which the teaching/learning occurs, the students who learn/are taught, wider social views about learning, and national policies about all these things.

There are four specific goals of this research, represented by the four research questions introduced in section 1.4. A simplified version of those research questions is as follows:

1. What are the rules of the My Share genre?
2. What teacher and student beliefs and identities are manifest in the My Share genre?
3. How does power (especially between student and teachers) operate in the My Share genre?
4. How is the My Share genre linked to larger ideologies and other aspects of Japanese language teaching/learning?

In order to link the abstract relationships depicted in Figure 3 with the specific, practical details discussed in the two previous paragraphs, Figure 4 was created. In it, each of the general terms in the discourse/practice dialectical triangles have been replaced with the specific items being studied in this project. In addition,

the four research questions have been mapped onto the diagram to show roughly which items they are connected to—with the caveat that, as above, none of these items (or, in fact, the research questions) are discrete or separable.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

RQ3 (power)

Teacher beliefs/identities

My Share genre

PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE

RQ3

RQ3

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF BEING A TEACHER

Teacher beliefs/identities

2011-2016 corpus

RQ3

RQ3

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Japanese language teaching and learning context

RESEARCH QUESTION 4
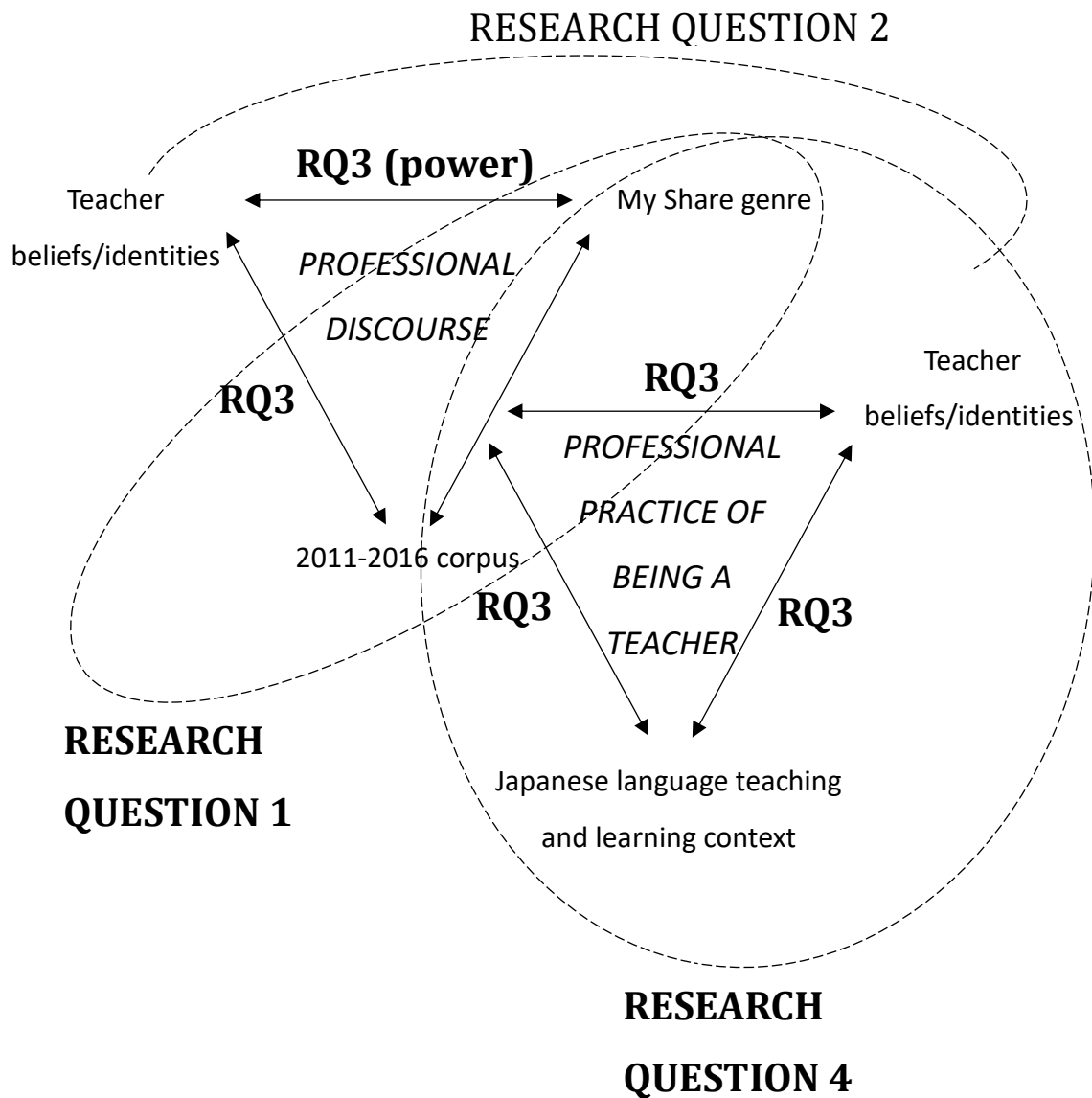
*Figure 4.* Representation of the present research project. The regions enclosed by dashed lines represent the portions being assessed by each of the research questions.

Research question 1 operates across the middle of the diagram, focusing mostly on the genre and the texts themselves, but extending in part to issues of practice (as in, what types of teaching are allowed to be included in the genre) and beliefs/identities.

Research question 2 operates primarily at the top of the diagram, since it is focused on what teacher beliefs and identities are manifest in the corpus. One side note with respect to the terminology here: while the project will discuss how both students and teachers are represented in the genre, this analysis ultimately provides information about only what the discourse community, composed solely of teachers, thinks. While there are claims embedded in the corpus about what students think or what roles they should play, since the corpus is written by and for teachers, the "student beliefs and identities" that seem to be revealed are always actually beliefs and identities that the teacher-author-community are attempting to inscribe on students.

Research question 3, which is about the role power plays in the discourse, has the most unusual representation, in that it appears in multiple places throughout the diagram. This is because I mean "power" in a Foucauldian sense—not as a top-down threat of coercion, but rather as a diffuse force permeating all discursive and social interactions (Foucault, 1995). The easiest way to represent this in the diagram was to imagine power as operating along each of the bidirectional arrows, since it is power that determines how different aspects of material and textual reality influence one another, and that determine, in part, how discursive practices will be interpreted, who will be allowed to make them, and what is marked as being "in" or "out" of a particular discourse/genre. Thus, research question 3 is shown at several of these arrows. Though this is an oversimplification (it is more accurate to imagine it invisibly diffused across the entire diagram), it helps show how this question is linked with the entire discourse-practice construct, rather than any individual part of it.

Research question 4 is shown as being linked primarily to the Practice triangle, but it is perhaps better understood as trying to examine how the Discourse and Practice triangles are linked. While the first three questions start from the texts, the fourth (primarily) begins outside of the corpus, with concepts that are widely prevalent in Japanese language learning (especially at the national policy level) and then looks to see how they are represented in the genre.

Neither Figure 4 nor the accompanying explanation explain how the research will be conducted—that is, how the lenses discussed in section 4.4 are put into practice to answer the research questions. When I started this project, I did not have

a preconceived notion of what specific techniques would best enable me to reach my research goals, nor did I know which aspects of the My Share discourse I would need to investigate to find the desired answers. Instead, I began with a commitment to an eclectic methodology, which arose from the second and third CDA principles described above in section 4.3, the principled eclecticism of Kaomea (2003), and Baker's (2008) suggestion that projects combining discourse analysis with corpus-based approaches use an iterative research process. It is this latter approach that most shaped the actual process of "doing" this research: at each stage, I began with a particular method or a particular aspect of the corpus, and conducted an initial investigation. The results of that investigation often led to new questions or new aspects that needed to be studied, and so I followed those leads. I iterated on this process (in some cases using new results to reinterpret older results or even rethink and rework how those results were obtained). Thus, the research design discussed below is a post factum reconstruction of the work that was done. Over the course of this project, I looked at seven aspects of the My Share discourse; those are shown in Figure 5 in relationship to the three analytical lenses. Note that "CDA" sits behind the rest of the figure, because all the lenses, methods, etc. are utilized within the framework/stance of CDA (which, as discussed above, is not, in itself, a method).
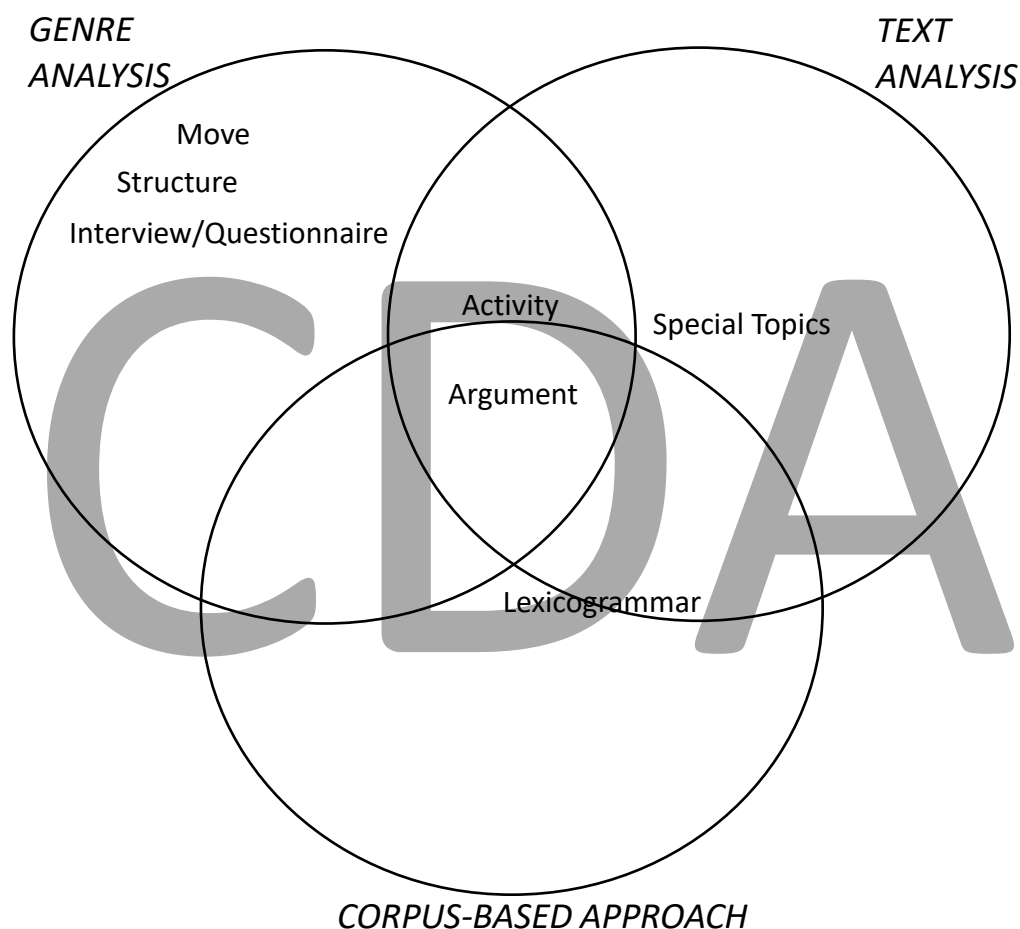
*Figure 5.* Map of the aspects of the discourse being examined in relationship to the three analytical lenses.

  Each of the seven aspects occupies a separate chapter of this dissertation. Because each of these chapters employs different methods (in many cases, more than one), I won't go into detail now about the specific techniques that I used, as it would be confusing to list all them here. I will, however, give a brief overview of each chapter/aspect here so that the scope of the project is clearer; in addition, for each chapter/aspect, I describe what information I hoped would be revealed through the analysis done on that aspect and which of the lenses play the most prominent roles (keeping in mind that all the lenses and aspects, and thus all of the chapters, are being used in the context of CDA). Each of the chapter titles is formatted as "<Aspect> analysis," in the sense that each one is "an analysis of the <Aspect> of the My Share discourse." The chapters/aspects are as follows:

- Chapter 5, "Structure Analysis," looks at the macro-level rules of the My Share genre—that is, the rules governing how the My Share articles should be structured and organized. I originally intended to include two approaches. First, I look at what subsections appear in My Share articles, how long those subsections and the whole articles are, and what the broad purpose of each subsection is. I chose to start here to capture a holistic view of what a My Share article typically looks like, to give the rest of the research a clear context. Second, I conducted a comparison of my corpus with a survey of older My Share articles to test if and how the genre had changed over time. Two observations that I made during the course of the first two steps led to the analysis of two additional aspects: the language of publication and the visual elements of the articles are examined to see if these aspects of the genre have consequences relevant to the research questions. Since each of these analyses look at the overall structure of the genre, they are placed within the genre analysis lens.
- Chapter 6, "Move Analysis," looks at the rhetorical moves made to structure the texts and the arguments in them. Since neither the My Share genre nor the more general potential genre of "lesson plans" have been previously studied from a discursive perspective, analyzing the moves is an important foundational aspect of this project, since it defines the basic discursive tools available to the authors that both define and limit what can be "said." This chapter falls under the genre analysis lens since the methodology (which is also called "move analysis") comes from the field of genre research.
- Chapter 7, "Argument Analysis," examines some of the moves found in Chapter 6 in more detail, and is particularly focused on how these moves develop the articles' arguments. It includes methods falling under all three analytical lenses. The starting data are a selection of the moves identified in the previous chapter, thus giving it an element of genre analysis. However, the intent is to move beyond the organizational characterization of Chapter 6 to understand what arguments the authors are making; this requires text analysis to determine what claims those moves are representing and supporting. Finally, the approach of much

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(though not all) of the chapter is to look for trends that appear across the corpus (rather than picking out individual examples), meaning that it maintains the philosophy and quantitative nature of corpus-based analysis. Overall, I chose this synthetic approach as a way of both finding broad patterns in the genre as well as digging deeply into the beliefs and identities that are represented and constructed by this discourse.

- Chapter 8, "Lexicogrammar Analysis," is the "finest" portion of the project, in that it looks for traces of teacher belief and identity at the lexical and grammatical levels. In Figure 5, this aspect is placed at the boundary of the corpus-based approach and text analysis because some parts of this chapter (the word and N-gram frequency analyses) are almost entirely corpus-based, while other parts (the analysis of how the main actors are represented and what actions they take) use corpus-based tools but rely on text analysis to interpret what meaning those results have in the context of the social work the articles are doing. These methods were chosen to determine if there are any patterns in the most microlinguistic aspect of the articles (the words chosen and the grammatical structures they are arrayed in), and, if so, if those patterns have any implications for the research questions. In addition, the use of a highly "quantitative," corpus-based approach helps counter the argument sometimes leveled at CDA projects that they that they are based on cherry-picked examples.

- Chapter 9, "Activity Analysis," looks at the activities themselves—that is, rather than focusing on the texts as linguistic artifacts, it looks "behind" the texts and analyzes the features of the classroom activities that these articles describe. This aspect of the My Share discourse is interpreted using methods from the lenses of text analysis and genre analysis, because the goal is to understand how the texts operate along with and constructive of the social practice of being a teacher (or student) in a language learning classroom in Japan. In addition, since there is a light component of corpus-based analysis in part of the chapter, I have placed it in Figure 5 in the overlap of the text and genre analysis zones near the boundary of the corpus-based approach zone. The methods in the first half of the chapter are mostly quantitative, with the intent being to look

for broad trends across the corpus about practical details of the activities such as what materials are used and what pedagogical goals they have. For the second half, the chapter switches to highly qualitative text analysis. The intent is to holistically examine individual and sets of closely-related activities (in contrast to the rest of this chapter and the prior chapters, which all, in varying ways, break the articles down into different types of component parts) in order to better understand connections between the types of activities that are conducted, how they are conducted, and the beliefs/identities that are manifested in the articles.

- Chapter 10, "Special Topics Analysis," is primarily within the realm of text analysis but also makes light use of the other two lenses, and so in Figure 5 is placed within the first lens near the boundary with the other two lenses. The previous chapters each ask, "What are common features of aspect X in the corpus, and what do these features tell us that can answer the research questions of this project?" Thus, prior to those analyses, I didn't know what specific topics or findings would be most salient in the corpus. With this chapter/aspect, however, I chose to start from "outside" of the corpus with a set of three topics that play a large role in language education in Japan and examine if and how those topics are treated in the corpus. This reversal is enacted to look more directly for connections between the corpus and ideological trends in Japanese education, and was hoped to be particularly useful for answering research question 4.

-  Chapter 11, "Interview and Questionnaire Analysis," looks at an aspect of the My Share discourse that doesn't reside within the texts themselves, but rather is a part of the social practices that caused these texts to be created. It reports on the results of interviews of some of the editors and questionnaires completed by some of the authors. By choosing to use information taken directly from the producers of the genre (both authors and editors) it was possible to add a component of ethnographic understanding to the analysis. This aspect falls under the genre analysis lens because it is an attempt to implement Bhatia's (2002, 2015) call for the inclusion of ethnographic information in critical genre analysis. Questionnaires were chosen for the authors because they allowed me to

gather a large collection of general information based on a pre-planned set of concerns. Interviews were chosen for the editors since there are far fewer of them and I was less certain of what sort of information they could provide, so semi-structured interviews allowed me to explore ideas as they arose in dialogue.

Neither the lenses nor the chapters map one-to-one to the research questions. While many of the chapters lean strongly more towards one of the questions than the others, most of these analyses provide information pertinent to multiple questions. As such, in the introduction and conclusions of each chapter I discuss which research questions that chapter provides results for.

## 4.6 Summary

The intent of this project is to conduct an analysis of a corpus of texts drawn from six years of My Share articles—that is, a collection of professional discourse produced in response to specific sociohistorical conditions and responding to the needs of a specific discourse community. It is grounded in the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, and relies upon the CDA principles articulated in section 3.1.1 and developed here in the specific context of this project. Methodologically speaking, the project uses a variety of approaches, but most especially those drawn from genre analysis, corpus-based linguistics, and textually oriented discourse analysis. With these approaches, I will examine seven aspects of the My share corpus, the genre which it forms/is formed by, the discourse community shaping and shaped by the genre, and the wider context of English teaching in Japan. Together, these lenses will produce a complex, multivoiced picture of this discourse and the community which produced and is produced by it.

# Part 3
## Results and Discussion

The first seven chapters of this part each describe the analysis of a specific aspect of the My Share discourse. Chapter 5, "Structure Analysis," looks at the frequency and contents of the major sections of the My Share articles, compares the corpus being analyzed to a sampling of older My Share articles, examines the layout and other visual aspects of the genre, and discusses the language of publication. Chapter 6, "Move Analysis," breaks the introduction and Conclusion sections into segments called "moves" that each serve a single rhetorical purpose; these moves are analyzed in terms of frequency, distribution, and sequencing. Chapter 7, "Argument Analysis," subdivides four of the moves from Chapter 6 in greater detail to show what sorts of arguments frequently occur across the genre (and what types of beliefs and identities those arguments represent and construct). Chapter 8, "Lexicogrammar Analysis," measures the most frequent words and phrases in the corpus to see what sorts of biases are embedded at the most basic linguistic level of the genre; in addition, the chapter compares how students and teachers are represented and what verbs they co-occur with. Chapter 9, "Activity Analysis" examines not the articles themselves but rather the activities that they describe. The first half looks at specific details of the activities, while the second half looks at the activities more holistically in terms of common teaching topics and activity types. Chapter 10, "Special Topics Analysis," looks at how the corpus reflects and resists three concepts that play a large role in the discourse of Japanese language education policy: internationalization, active learning/autonomy, and neoliberalism. The final results chapter, "Interview and Questionnaire Analysis," steps back from the corpus itself and looks at results from a survey of the contributing authors and interviews of JALT publications editors; this helps provide a better understanding of what authors hoped to accomplish with their articles and what role the editors played in shaping the published texts.

The final chapter in this section, Chapter 12, "Discussion," summarizes the results presented in the seven preceding chapters. These results are synthesized into complex, multidimensional answers to the research questions.

# Chapter 5
## Structure Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the rules that define the structure of My Share articles. As will be shown below, some of these rules are explicitly defined by the column's guidelines, while others are unstated but nonetheless evident from a statistical examination of the corpus. Furthermore, some of the rules are absolute, in that they are followed by every article in the corpus, while others are followed to varying degrees by each author. Specifically, this chapter will examine how the articles are structured, what subsections are required, which are optional (and how frequently those subsections occur), what languages the articles are written in, and how the My Share articles visually appear in *The Language Teacher*. The original goal of this chapter was to provide answers to research question 1, but, over the course of the analysis, some information about teacher beliefs (question 2) and power relationships (question 3) were also revealed. Overall, this chapter does two things: it helps establish some of the larger-scale rules for the My Share genre and it provides insight into the values that are implicit in the genre with regards to the professional practices of teaching and being an academic. It is this second step that makes this genre analysis a critical one, keeping this analysis consistent with both CDA (Fairclough, 2003) and CGA (Bhatia, 2002, 2012, 2015).

### 5.2 Method

The original plan for this portion of the project was to use two methodological tools. First, I examined what sections occur in the My Share articles in this corpus and how frequently they occur. Also, I gathered a broad understanding what types of information are used in each section, with the understanding that these preliminary interpretations would likely be refined or even challenged by the results of the more rigorous analyses found in the next several chapters. In addition, the lengths of both the articles and the sections were measured.

Second, I conducted a simpler set of analyses on My Share sections from the 1990 to 2010 time period. Most of these were done on only a random selection of

the older My Share sections.[48] The points analyzed were the number of My Share per issue, the lengths of these articles, and the subsections included in those articles. In addition, these articles were skimmed to see if there were any significant topical difference between older My Share articles and those in my corpus.

While conducting these analyses, I made two observations that led me to add analyze two additional aspects of the structure of the articles. First, I noticed that the visual layout of the My Share articles had changed over time and was different from the layout of the rest of the journal, so I conducted a more detailed analysis of this visual layout to see if these visual elements (as opposed to just the linguistic elements) reflected/constructed teacher beliefs or identities. Second, I realized that not only does my corpus contain no My Share articles written in Japanese, I only found two articles written in Japanese throughout the online archives. Thus, for the final results section of this chapter I analyzed what implications the monolingual nature of this genre might have.

## 5.3 Section Analysis

In this section, I will describe the organization and contents of the My Share articles as they existed during the time frame of my corpus. In addition, I will explore the length of each section, and explain what sorts of information they usually contain. This serves two main purposes. First, it will help readers who aren't familiar with My Share articles to understand what is contained in these articles. Second, it defines some of the core attributes of the My Share genre on a whole-article level.

According to the online guidelines, My Share articles should consist of five sections, per the following three rules:

3. feature the My Share masthead material, including the article title and the contributor's full name, affiliation, and email address; …
5. consist of an introduction (i.e., activity overview) followed by subsections labeled Preparation and Procedure, written in the imperative mood (i.e., recipe style) and a Conclusion. …

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[48] Since the goal of this portion was to provide a broad comparison, and since I wanted the focus to remain on the contemporary corpus, I felt that a random sampling would provide sufficient information rather needing than an exhaustive analysis of all My Share articles in the online archives.

12. follow the My Share style template (See PDF or refer to a current issue of The Language Teacher). (JALT, n.d.-a)

The third and twelfth rules together imply the need for a Quick Guide section, since this is part of the formatting of all My Share articles. The fifth rule specifies four other sections: introduction, Preparation, Procedure, and Conclusion. The word "introduction" is not capitalized and is preceded by the article "an." This corresponds to the current article layout in which the introduction is not given a title, while the other three mentioned sections are labeled with a title.[49]

Other sections have also been included in My Share articles, and the five listed are not actually all obligatory.[50] Table 1 lists all the sections that were included in My Share articles in this corpus. I will go through each of the sections, explaining the kind of information they contain, as well as discussing how frequently they are used.

*Table 1*

*Occurrence of Sections in Articles*

| Section | Number of articles containing that section | Percentage of articles containing that section |
|---|---|---|
| Quick Guide | 177 | 100 |
| Introduction | 177 | 100 |
| Preparation | 159 | 89.8 |
| Procedure | 177 | 100 |
| Conclusion | 176 | 99.4 |
| Alternative/Variation | 38 | 21.5 |
| Extension | 21 | 11.9 |
| Alternative/Extension (combined) | 59 | 33.3 |
| Notes | 3 | 1.7 |
| Resources | 2 | 1.1 |
| Materials | 1 | .6 |
| Assessment | 1 | .6 |
| Other sections (combined) | 7 | 4.0 |
| Appendices | 96 | 54.2 |
| References | 33 | 18.6 |

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[49] Note that what the guidelines call a "subsection" I am calling a "section" throughout this paper. In addition, for consistency, I call the introduction a section, even though it does not have a title, though I do not capitalize the word like I do the other sections to indicate its unlabeled status.

[50] Here, I borrow the term "obligatory" from genre analysis, where it is used to refer to moves (see Chapter 6 for more details) which occur in 100% of the texts in that genre (Upton & Cohen, 2009) and adapt it to refer to sections, which constitute a larger unit of text than a move typically does.

**5.3.1 Obligatory sections.** An examination of the articles in the corpus confirms that three of the five sections described as necessary in the guidelines are in fact obligatory, in the sense that every single article in the corpus contains them: Quick Guide, introduction, and Procedure sections. In addition, the Conclusion section is nearly obligatory, as it is omitted in only one article. The reason for omission there may be length—the article is over 600 words (and published in 2015 when 600 was the maximum) even without a Conclusion, and contains a complex activity necessitating a long Procedure, so it may be that author or editor decided to omit the Conclusion to keep the whole article near the maximum number of words.

In the corpus, the Quick Guide section always follows the title and author. It almost always consists of six points, each of which is preceded by a bullet point (except in 2011, when the points were listed without a bullet point). The six points are "Keywords," "Learner English Level," "Learner maturity," "Preparation time," "Activity time," and "Materials." On rare occasions, either the Activity time or the Materials are omitted, and even more rarely the order of the final three points changes. In most cases, the information is presented as a clause or list of clauses (not a complete sentence), except in some cases where a longer explanation expressed as a full sentence is used. It appears that the intent of this section is to give the reader a quick introduction to the articles and to enable a reader to quickly decide whether any given activity matches their needs (i.e., a teacher could look for only quick warm-up activities, activities focusing on a particular level of student, particular teaching topics listed in the keywords, etc.). In sections 9.3–9.5 I provide a detailed analysis of the contents of each of these bullet points.

The introduction section is also used in 100% of the articles. As mentioned above, the introduction is not given a title, but is always included in the modern My Share as a separate section. The lack of title is consistent with APA guidelines for introductions in research articles. The introduction section can provide a wide variety of information, but it usually gives an overview of the activity, and/or a justification for why the activity is worth doing.

The last fully obligatory section is the Procedure section. This is the heart of the My Share article, and almost always accounts for the majority of the words in each article. The purpose is to tell readers how to perform the activities, step by step. In the time period of my corpus, Procedure sections are always written as a set of

steps, with each step in its own paragraph and preceded with a bolded "**Step 1:**," "**Step 2:,**" etc. Each step is usually one paragraph, though steps sometimes contain an embedded example, including dialogues, which can lead to multiple paragraphs in a single step. Also, in a few articles, there are additional sub-headings in the Procedure section, such as one article that spanned multiple lessons and had the subtitles "Class 1 -- Students will learn how to describe photos deeply," "Class 2 -- Students will learn about visual elements of photography," and two more for classes 3 and 4. Per the instructions in the guideline, Procedure sections are supposed to be written in imperative mood, though as I discuss in section 8.4.4, this rule is not universally followed.

The Conclusion section usually follows the Procedure section. In cases where optional sections are included, the Conclusion can either follow or precede them, though the Conclusion always precedes References or Appendices when they are included. Like the introduction, the Conclusion serves a variety of purposes, including summarizing the activity, touting the benefits, providing examples from the author's experience about what can occur in the lesson, etc.

**5.3.2 Semi-obligatory section.** Despite being listed as required in the guidelines, the Preparation section occurs in just under 90% of the articles. In this section the articles describe any work that a teacher needs to do prior to the activity to get ready. Most often this involves preparation of materials, though it can also involve things the teacher needs to learn (most often, how to use special websites, but also topics as varied as photography, poetry, or science) or setting up special technology, like making online accounts or creating custom audio recordings. However, there are a few unusual Preparation sections that involve work done in class. In these articles, the Preparation section contains a description of work that students do, such as writing a speech or learning vocabulary. This "preparation" work might take place in a class session before the "real" class (the one described in the Procedure section), at home (as homework), or at the beginning of the class (preceding the work done in the Procedure section). there is a division between the main activity, which is described in Procedure section, and additional work done by students (sometimes with the teacher in an earlier that is described in the Preparation section. There are 10-12 articles using this format (depending on how

exactly this special case is defined). In section 9.3.3 I discuss a similar issue with the Activity time Quick Guide point, and in section 12.2.5 I discuss why this inconsistency is a problem for the genre.

In order to understand why this section has been omitted over 10% of the time, I examined those articles more closely to see if the authors gave any indication of their decision to omit. Of the 16 articles that don't include a Preparation section, six of them state in the Quick Guide that no preparation is needed, and an evaluation of the activities confirms this. An additional four require either "5 minutes" or "Minimal" preparation, which is also confirmed by examining the articles, and thus also justifies the lack of inclusion of this section. Two of the articles require preparation time, but the activities are multi-lesson activities, and the out-of-class preparation time takes place between lessons, and is thus logically explained in the Procedure section. For four of the articles, the preparation information is built into the Quick Guide and procedure, and mostly consists of physical preparation of items to be given to students. In some cases, this was very short preparation like making handouts, but in one case it involved preparing a lot of craft material for making book marks. One of the articles has a sentence of explanation in the Quick Guide point for "Preparation Time," but the preparation refers to work that students do, and thus no Preparation section is needed for the teacher. Finally, one article mentions the need for 120 minutes of preparation (30 minutes before each of four classes), but doesn't explain what that preparation would be, and, reading through the actual activity, I'm not sure what the author is referring to since it appears that everything is done in class or as homework by the students (there aren't even any handouts to copy for students), so the lack of Preparation section makes sense, and the 120 minutes of Preparation time doesn't. [51] Thus, in almost all the cases where there is no Preparation section, the choice appears to be deliberate, motivated by the actual needs of the activity.

**5.3.3 Optional text sections**. In addition to the mandatory sections, there are five additional textual sections (that is, sections with paragraphs of information,

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[51] In section 9.3, I discuss other examples where I the information provided in the Quick Guide for this and other points seems to be poorly estimated.

as opposed to the Appendices and References sections discussed in section 5.3.4) that are sometimes included, though three of those sections were included three or less times each. The first of the two semi-frequent optional sections is called "Alternative(s)," "Variation(s)," or "Modification."[52] This section occurs in 21.5% of the articles in the corpus. The function of the section is to provide a different version of the activity or part of the activity. In some cases, the variation is a small change, such as substituting a news article for a story in a reading activity, or changing from a group writing activity to an online blogging activity. Sometimes, the variation is specifically given to meet the needs of a specific student population, such as a section that offers a variation "for higher level learners." In other cases, what is described as a variation could just as easily have been called an Extension (the next semi-frequent optional section), since it involved adding to the activity rather than only changing a part (one section is actually called "Extension/Variation"). The variations are sometimes formatted as normal paragraphs, and other times are listed in numbered paragraphs or bulleted lists like the Procedure section.

Extension sections occur in 11.9% of the articles in the corpus. These sections have a variety of titles, with "Extension" being the most common, but also including "Expansion" and "Follow-up Activity." These sections offered activities that can be done in addition to the main activity. Some of them explicitly talk about adding extra time within a single lesson, as in one that says, "If time permits…." Others transform an activity which takes a single lesson (or less) into one which takes multiple class periods, or which students complete at home. Extension sections are usually formatted in paragraphs, though there are a few examples with numbered lists.

Also, there are cases where variation or extension information is included in the article but not in a separate section. Sometimes phrases such as "As an alternative…" occur in either the Procedure or Conclusion sections. In addition, the last one or two steps of the Procedure section (or, in one case, the first step) are sometimes labeled as "Step N: (Optional)." Thus, even though the Extension and Alternatives collectively appear in only 33.3% of the articles, portions of other articles contain similar information.

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[52] In one case, I counted an Appendix as an Alternative, since it was included in running text (rather than as a pdf download like most appendices, as described below) and the information included was equivalent to that included in other Alternative sections.

For completeness, the other four types of optional sections are Notes (three instances), Resources (two instances), Assessment (one instance), and Materials (one instance). In two cases, the Notes offer the authors' reflections on possible difficulties with the activity, and in the other case it explains the materials development process in more detail. It is unclear why these were written as separate sections, as similar issues are raised in other articles via sentences in other sections. One of the Resources sections (titled "Useful Links") provides a list of videos that could be used as part of the activity; in other articles, resource lists of this type are put into the References (see below), Appendices, or simply included in running text (the latter occurring mainly when there is only one such resource). The other Resources section also provides an online site, but includes some explanation that would make it impossible to put in the References section. The one Assessment section provides a detailed description of how the author grades the stories produced in the activity; other activities include this information in either the Procedure or Conclusion sections. Finally, the one Materials section provides a paragraph of information about how to prepare the materials for the information. This same article uses the Preparation in an unusual way, in that it talks about how the students can be prepared, such as suggesting that the rules be explained in a lesson prior to the actual activity.

**5.3.4 Optional lists.** Two additional sections, which provide information in list form (rather than paragraph form), appear in some of the articles. The first, Appendices, occurs in 54.2% of the articles. Almost all the appendices are handouts that the authors have written to accompany the activities, and are designed to be printed, copied, and distributed by readers who use the activities. The Appendices are not usually included in the print version of the article. Instead, a sentence appears in the article that states, "The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>." This address takes users to a list of the My Share articles, organized by title. When the correct article is clicked on, the Appendix section says, "The appendix for this article is available below" or another similar phrase. Below that is a link to a pdf which contains the appendices. In a few cases, when the appendix is short, it is printed directly in the articles, sometimes in a box or other special formatting.

The final section, which appears in 18.6% of the articles, is References. The number of references per article is shown in Table 2. There are 59 references in the corpus, and the average number of references in articles that have them is 1.74. The references serve three different purposes. 10 of the references are the equivalent of resources—places the reader can look to get texts such as movie scripts or other information that they can use directly as part of the activity. 10 of the references provide a source for the activity, in the sense that the author is acknowledging that their activity is modeled after another activity. The remaining 39 are used in the way that references are usually used in research articles—they point to prior research in the field connected to the activity being described. This is a form of intertextuality, as described by Fairclough (2003), in which the authors are bringing the conventions and style of another genre into the My Share genre. In this case, the source for the second genre is always directly identified, as per the convention for academic referencing. The intent of these citations (and the statements that reference them, described as "authorizing" moves in Chapter 6) is generally to justify the approach to language teaching that the articles incorporate in their activities. That is, these citations provide support for the value of the activity described in the article, by implicitly saying "A respected authority says we should do X in language classes, and this activity does X, so this is a good activity."

Table 2

*Number of References Per Article*

| References | Number of articles |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | 144 |
| 1 | 16 |
| 2 | 14 |
| 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 |

While the articles include references to a wide variety of scholars, there are a few scholars who are cited in more than one My Share article: J. C. Richards (2), Z. Dörnyei (4), and P. Nation (5). The latter two speak to the prevalence of two specific language teaching issues in the corpus: motivation for Dörnyei, and vocabulary for Nation.

**5.3.5 Summary and analysis of section types and frequency.** There is fairly little variation in the corpus with respect to what sections are included. Four of the five sections prescribed by the guidelines are always included (with one exception for the Conclusion section), and the fifth is included in about 90% of the articles. There are only two frequent types of optional textual sections, with a very small number of other sections. Finally, the inclusion of handouts is fairly common in appendices, while references are rare. The mostly fixed structure (especially, as is shown below, in comparison to how the My Share articles looked in prior years) helps define the My Share as a specific genre with fairly rigid rules. However, the seven rare sections discussed in section 5.3.3 seem to indicate that the genre has not yet fully been solidified, as truly strict editing criteria would likely have required that at least some of those sections be moved into the other standardized sections.

The rigid structure makes it easy for readers to quickly assimilate the relevant information. During an initial examination, a reader can look to the Quick Guide and immediately determine if the activity could possibly apply to their teaching situation. Later, the clear differentiation between the argument surrounding the activity (introduction, conclusion, and most references) and the actual "work" of the activity (preparation and procedure, plus some of the additional sections) makes it easy to understand the author's position on the activity prior to deciding whether or not to use the activity, and then to focus on the actual process when it comes time to prepare for and conduct the activity. In comparison to other Resource/Praxis sections of the journal, the rigid structuring makes the articles appear more similar to the Feature Articles, which are traditional research papers. However, the lack of references makes them appear more casual. This dichotomy in style is reflected in the guidelines. On the one hand, there are 12 numbered points of specific rules, such as those discussed above that indicate a rigid, structured style. On the other hand, the introduction to the guidelines has a more casual feeling, saying,

We encourage you to try this: Imagine you have just come out of a lesson exhilarated with how well the class went. You meet a fellow teacher in the corridor who notices the spring in your step and is eager to try the activity

too. You tell them, in simple, clear language how to go about executing the activity, step-by-step.

The tension between these two styles of writing is part of what helps mark the My Share genre as its own distinct genre, rather than it being a subtype of another genre.

## 5.4 Length

Another constraint on the articles is the limit placed on article length. The official word limit was 700 between 2011 and 2015 and was lowered to 600 words in January, 2016. However, not all articles adhered to these limits. Figure 6 shows the lengths of the articles relative to the official word limit at the time of publishing. Note that these word counts were made with Microsoft Word, based upon the html files, and may not be identical to the word counts that the editors used.[53] Between 2011 and 2015, 80.8% of the articles were at or below the word limit, and only 3 articles (2.1%) exceeded the limit by more than 10%. For 2016, 54.8% of the articles were under the limit, and 6 articles (19.4%) exceeded the limit by more than 10%, though none exceeded it by more than 20%. It seems likely that the higher incidence of articles over the limit in 2016 was caused by the transition. As discussed in section 11.3.2.2, the authors I surveyed reported average processing times of about 1 year, and that the majority of time came after acceptance and editing was complete—that is, the articles were waiting in a queue to be published in the next available slot. Thus, some of the authors must have submitted and had articles accepted at the 700 word limit but published after the 600 word limit came into force. While one survey respondent indicated that "The majority of the edit suggestions was reducing word count to adhere to new guidelines of 600 words," the relatively high percentage of articles between six and seven hundred words in 2016 implies that the editors allowed overages on a case-by-case basis.

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[53] For all the word counts, I subtracted 10, because the html files contain a line listing the issue the article was published in, which did not appear in the original print articles (such information appears in the footer of each even-numbered page of the journal). Also, there are a few cases where my word count undercounts the actual number of words, because I removed long example sections from my files due to the other forms of analysis I had to carry out.
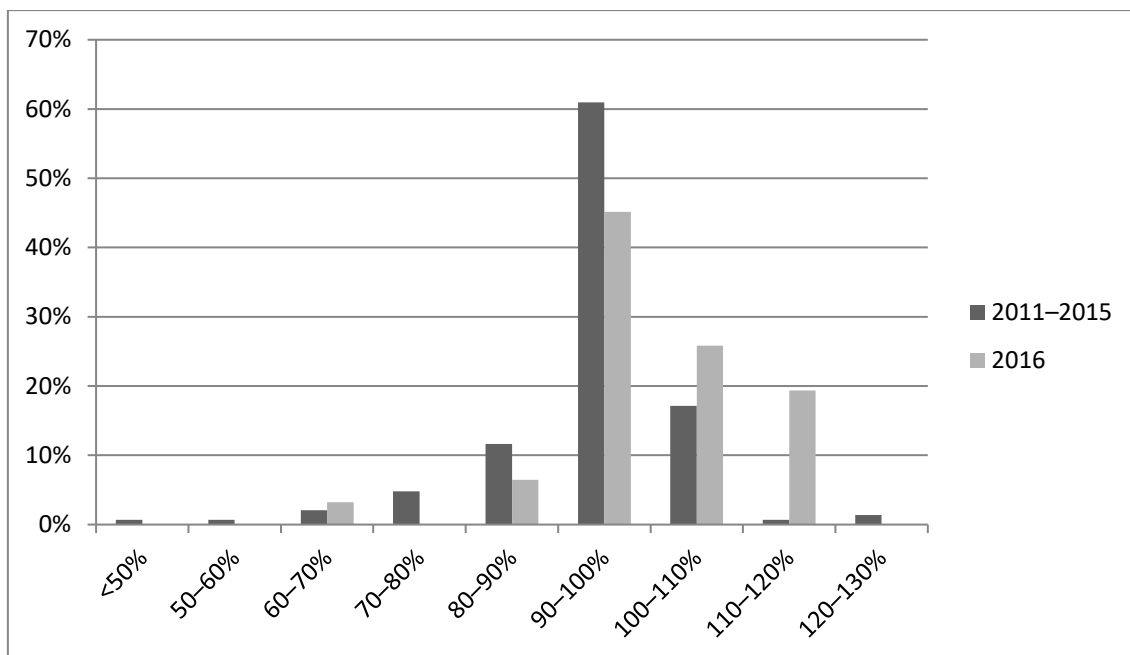
*Figure 6.* Size of articles as measured relative to the word limits (700 words for 2011-2015, 600 words for 2016). The categories are inclusive of the upper limit, so an article with exactly 600 words in 2016 would be recorded in the 90–100% range, not the 100–110% range.

The fairly strict word limit necessarily constrains the number of paragraphs that were included in each of the sections. Table 3 lists the number paragraphs in the common textual sections other than Preparation and Procedure, which are discussed separately below. 85.1% of Introduction sections and 88.1% of Conclusions sections consist of exactly one paragraph. Alternative and Extension sections are exactly one paragraph 60.5% and 71.4% of the time those sections are included, respectively. Note for the Alternative and Extension sections, if a bulleted or numbered list is used (rather than normal paragraphs), each point is counted as a separate paragraph; this explains the larger number of articles with more than one paragraph in each of those sections, since many of those "paragraphs" consist of only one or two sentences.

Table 3

*Number of Articles That Have the Listed Number of Paragraphs in Each of Several Selected Sections*

| Number of Para. | Introduction | Conclusion | Alternative | Extension |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 139 | 156 |
| 1 | 151 | 154 | 23 | 15 |
| 2 | 16 | 15 | 11 | 4 |
| 3 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

For the Preparation and Procedure sections, counting Paragraphs didn't seem to be as useful as counting steps. This is because in some articles these sections contain either example text (especially dialogues) or long lists of sample questions. For example, one Preparation section in an activity about asking students "quick-fire questions" contains a list of 15 sample questions. This would give the section a paragraph count of 16 (since each question is listed on a separate line), even though it is a singular unit of information. Another article has an 8-line sample dialogue included inside of one step. Since every Procedure section is a set of steps, and most Preparation sections are as well, I felt that steps conveyed a better sense of the amount of information provided. Table 4 contains a summary of the step counts.

These sections show much more variability in terms of units of information than the other common and obligatory sections. The most frequent step counts are 3 for Preparation and 5 for Procedure, but these represent only 28.9% and 19.8% of the total number of articles with these sections. This variation is not surprising, since the activities themselves vary quite a lot in complexity—as will be discussed in more detail in section 9.3.4, some of the activities are designed as simple, 5-minute warm-ups, while others span multiple lessons, and a few even extend to an entire semester.

Table 4

*Number of Steps in the Preparation and Procedure Section Per Article*

| Number of Steps | Preparation | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 20 | 0 |
| 1 | 46 | 0 |
| 2 | 32 | 0 |
| 3 | 43 | 9 |
| 4 | 22 | 29 |
| 5 | 6 | 35 |
| 6 | 4 | 30 |
| 7 | 1 | 19 |
| 8 | 2 | 20 |
| 9 | 0 | 10 |
| 10 | 1 | 16 |
| 11 | 0 | 2 |
| 12 | 0 | 3 |
| 13 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | 0 | 2 |
| 15 | 0 | 2 |

## 5.5 Historical Comparison

When looking at a genre, especially when starting that analysis at a point late in the genre's history, it can be easy to think of the rules of the genre as having always been fixed, or even as inherently necessary (natural) to that genre. For instance, over the time frame of my corpus, only two major changes occurred in the structure: first, the number of maximum words was changed from 600 to 700, and the journal began publishing an additional two My Share articles in the online version of the journal. Both changes were instituted in the January 2016 issue. Both before and after these changes, however, the rest of the format stayed basically the same, with the same subsections, the same structure, and the same types of information—even the online only activities follow the same format as the print versions, lacking only the author contact email found in the print articles.[54] The only major indication of genre fluidity comes from the points discussed above about the low-frequency optional sections, some of which seem to be unnecessary deviations from the standard. For a newer JALT member, it would probably appear that the My Share has a fixed format whose style has been in place as a necessary condition of its existence since its inception.

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[54] This is not unique to the online-only articles—all the html archives lack an email address. This is likely to protect against email scraping.

However, while genres may have mostly static periods like the one that this corpus was collected during, over longer historical time periods they often undergo change. For example, consider the IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) format that is widely used in research articles, especially in the sciences and science-adjacent fields. The ubiquity of this format is a relatively recent construct within the history of scientific publication. Sollaci and Pereira (2004) found that, while the format was utilized in 100% of research articles in four of the top medical journals by 1985, in 1935, not a single article followed this format. The adoption of IMRAD was a gradual process occurring over several decades. I was able to use this JALT's archive of past TLT issues (discussed in section 4.2) to get a better understanding of how the My Share genre has evolved over time.

The first point I examined was the number of My Share articles published per issue. Table 5 contains the counts for every issue from January 1990 until December 2010. After that point, during the time frame of the corpus I am examining, four were published per bimonthly issue until 2016, at which point there were six published per issue, except for the five My Share Special Issues, which had 14 articles each. To try to get a better feeling for whether there were any general trends in number articles printed, I graphed the article counts, removing the special issues (both the themed issues with no My Share and the My Share specials with many); this graph is shown in Figure 7. In this graph, there is no clear pattern of growth or change. There are short periods of stability, such as January 1990 to November 1991 where each issue had only one My Share, and 1997–1998, where 75% of the issues had exactly three My Share articles. Since 2010 (coinciding with the switch to bi-monthly publication), there has been no variation in the number of articles per normal issue.

Table 5

*Number of My Share Articles Per Issue, 1990–2010*

| Mo. | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | [a] | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Feb. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0[b] | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Mar. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | [a] | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Apr. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | [a] | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| May | 1 | 1 | [a] | 1 | [a] | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Jun. | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Jul. | 1 | 0[b] | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Aug. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Sep. | 1 | 1 | 0[b] | 2 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Oct. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Nov. | 1 | 0[b] | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Dec. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 |

| Mo. | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Feb. | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Mar. | 3 | 2 | 12 | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Apr. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| May | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Jun. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Jul. | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Aug. | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Sep. | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 12 | 4 |
| Oct. | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Nov. | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Dec. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| Mo. | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| Feb. | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| Mar. | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 14 |
| Apr. | 3 | 12 | 12 | 12 | |
| May | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Jun. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| Jul. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Aug. | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | |
| Sep. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Oct. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| Nov. | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| Dec. | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | |

*Notes.* Blank spaces represent months in which no was issue published. [a] Issues for which a My Share section is listed in the Table of Contents, but individual articles were not listed, so the number is unknown. [b] Issues which had a special topic, so no My Share were published.
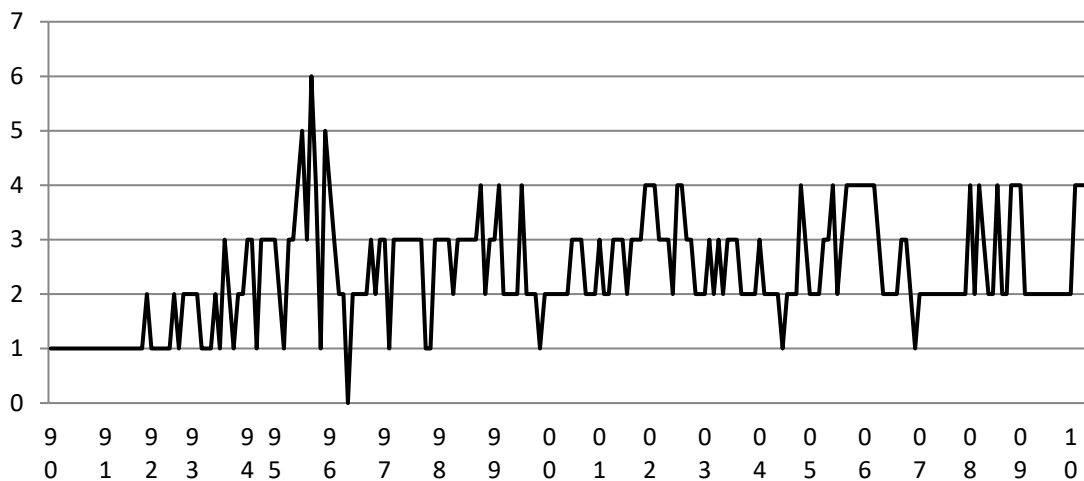
*Figure 7.* Number of My Share articles per issue, excepting special issues with 0 or more than 10 articles.

To obtain a deeper comparison with the data in the corpus, I randomly chose two issues per year (one from the first half, and one from the second half) from January 1997 until December 2010, plus one for the second half of 1996.[55] I looked for three main things as I examined these articles: 1) the word counts, 2) what sections were included, and how long they were; 3) any easily observable large-scale differences, such as when the articles didn't describe a single activity but rather dealt more generally with a teaching idea. The fully compiled data was too long to include in this chapter, so it can be found in Appendix A.

Table 6 provides a summary of the number of words in each article that I examined, plus a measure of the total number of words per issue in My Share articles—I was wondering if perhaps "number of articles" was the wrong measurement, and that total word count might instead show either constancy or a general trend. However, this was not the case. Figure 8 shows a line graph of the total My Share words per issue over time, and, just as with the graph of articles per issue above, there appears to be no general trend over time. It is possible that if word counts for every issue were included, there would be a clearer curve, but this seems unlikely given how widely these counts varied.

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[55] Detailed information is unavailable from January 1990 to August 1996 since only the table of contents is shown in the archives.

Table 6

*Number of My Share Articles and Word Counts in Randomly Selected Issues of* The Language Teacher, *September 1996–December 2010*

| Year | Month | Number of articles | Word count 1 | Word count 2 | Word count 3 | Word count 4 | Total words |
|------|-------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1996 | December | 3 | 700 | 690 | 750 | | 2140 |
| 1997 | April | 3 | 780 | 1050 | 670 | | 2500 |
| 1997 | October | 1 | 1480 | | | | 1480 |
| 1998 | June | 3 | 710 | 870 | 690 | | 2270 |
| 1998 | September | 3 | 1030 | 750 | 1380 | | 2230 |
| 1999 | February | 4 | 1010 | 680 | 520 | 740 | 2950 |
| 1999 | August | 2 | 1400 | 1160 | | | 2560 |
| 2000 | June | 2 | 1050 | 420 | | | 1470 |
| 2000 | October | 2 | 840 | 1040 | | | 1880 |
| 2001 | April | 2 | 1110 | 820 | | | 1930 |
| 2001 | December | 3 | 910 | 750 | 1860 | | 3520 |
| 2002 | May | 3 | 450 | 490 | 1060 | | 2000 |
| 2002 | November | 2 | 650 | 670 | | | 1320 |
| 2003 | February | 3 | 350 | 600 | 530 | | 1470 |
| 2003 | August | 3 | 940 | 980 | 850 | | 2770 |
| 2004 | January | 3 | 660 | 790 | 670 | | 2120 |
| 2004 | July | 2 | 550 | 650 | | | 1200 |
| 2005 | March | 2 | 750 | 920 | | | 1670 |
| 2005 | September | 4 | 720 | 650 | 840 | 1190 | 3400 |
| 2006 | May | 2 | 760 | 600 | | | 1360 |
| 2006 | November | 2 | 400 | 760 | | | 1160 |
| 2007 | June | 2 | 840 | 710 | | | 1550 |
| 2007 | October | 2 | 530 | 620 | | | 1140 |
| 2008 | February | 2 | 340 | 350 | | | 690 |
| 2008 | August | 4 | 530 | 520 | 690 | 520 | 2260 |
| 2009 | January | 4 | 540 | 610 | 620 | 640 | 2410 |
| 2009 | December | 2 | 590 | 700 | | | 1290 |
| 2010 | May | 4 | 600 | 620 | 560 | 640 | 2420 |
| 2010 | September | 4 | 700 | 510 | 610 | 660 | 2540 |

*Note.* All word counts are rounded to the nearest 10 and do not include the Quick Guide (unlike the counts in Figure 6, where the Quick Guide is included); when a pdf of the print version was available, I drew the count from that; otherwise I used the html copies.
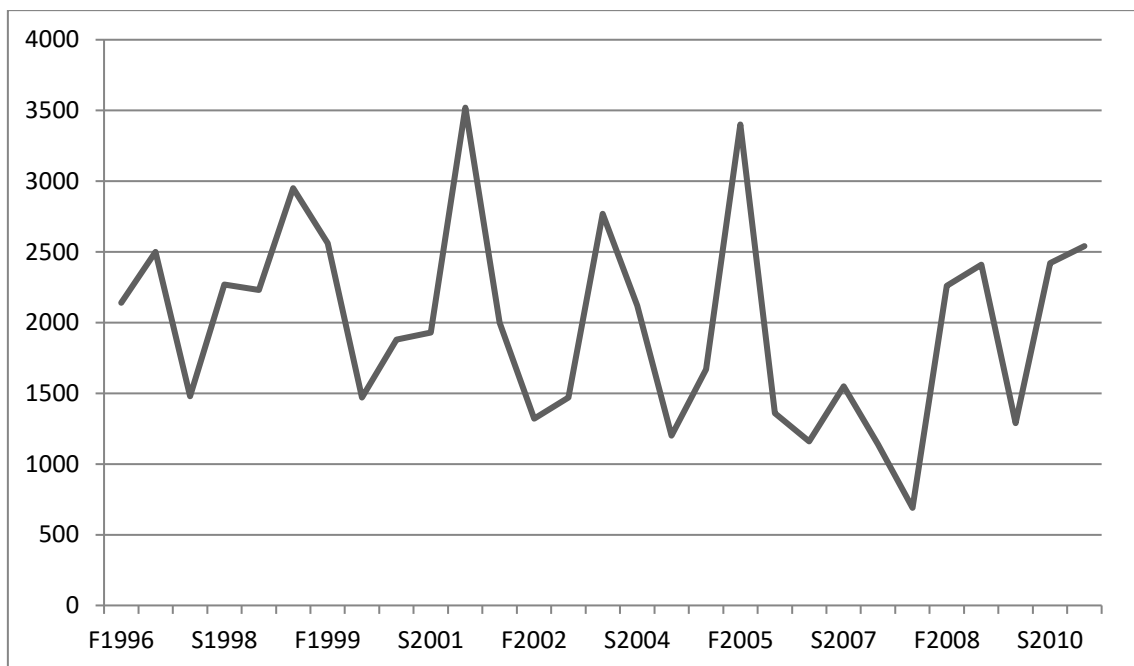
*Figure 8.* Total word counts per issue in randomly selected issues, September 1996–December 2010. F1996 = Fall 1996, S1998 = Spring 1998, etc.

More interesting information comes from an examination of what sections were typically included in the articles. In Table 7, for each article in the randomly chosen 1996–2010 issues, I have marked whether they contained the obligatory and semi-obligatory sections. In addition, for articles containing the Procedure section, I marked whether the section was stepped or non-stepped—that is, whether the procedural information was written as a series of numbered steps, as they are in the contemporary corpus, or whether they were written in descriptive paragraphs. In counting the sections, I considered sections with different names but very similar content to be the same as the current section. For example, two articles from 1997 had sections at the end of the article called "Commentary," which I marked as being the equivalent of modern-day Conclusion sections. Three articles—two from 1999 and one from 2002—stand out as being unusual, in that they contained all the introductory, preparatory, etc. information of a modern My Share, but had no section titles whatsoever. Lastly, every My Share I could see, going all the way back to the beginning of the My Share archives, contained a Quick Guide section, so that is not noted in Table 7. In fact, the mandatory inclusion of a Quick Guide is essentially the only aspect of the genre that hasn't changed since 1996.

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| MN/YR | Activity 1 | | | | Activity 2 | | | | Activity 3 | | | | Activity 4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | PE | PO | C | I | PE | PO | C | I | PE | PO | C | I | PE | PO | C |
| 12/96 | Y | N | N | N | Y | Y | N | N | Y | N | S | N | | | | |
| 4/97 | Y | N | N | Y | Y | N | N | Y | Y | N | N | Y | | | | |
| 10/97 | Y | N | N | Y | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/98 | Y | N | NS | N | Y | N | S | N | Y | N | S | N | | | | |
| 9/98 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | N | NS | N | N | N | N | N | | | | |
| 2/99 | Y | N | N | Y | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | Y | Y | N | Y |
| 8/99 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | NS | N | | | | | | | | |
| 6/00 | Y | N | N | N | Y | N | S | N | | | | | | | | |
| 10/00 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | N | NS | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 4/01 | Y | N | N | N | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 12/01 | Y | N | NS | Y | Y | N | S | N | Y | N | S | N | | | | |
| 5/02 | Y | N | NS | N | Y | N | S | Y | Y | N | NS | N | | | | |
| 11/02 | Y | N | NS | N | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | | | | | | | | |
| 2/03 | N | N | S | N | Y | N | S | N | Y | N | S | N | | | | |
| 8/03 | Y | N | S | N | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | |
| 1/04 | Y | N | S | N | Y | N | S | Y | Y | N | S | N | | | | |
| 7/04 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | N | | | | | | | | |
| 3/05 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 9/05 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | N | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y |
| 5/06 | Y | Y | S | N | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 10/06 | Y | Y | S | Y | N | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 06/07 | Y | Y | S | N | Y | N | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 10/07 | Y | Y | S | N | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 1/08 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | N | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 8/08 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y |
| 1/09 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | N | S | Y | Y | N | N | Y |
| 12/09 | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | | | | | | | | |
| 5/10 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | N | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y |
| 9/10 | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y | Y | Y | S | Y |

*Notes.* I = Introduction, PE = PrEp, PO = PrOcedure, C = Conclusion. Y = Yes (included), N = No (not included). In the Procedure column, S = Stepped, NS= Non-stepped (normal paragraphs). The Yes and Stepped results are shaded in gray, to call attention to places where the articles conform to modern My Share formatting. Activities 2 and 3 from 2/99 and activity 2 from 11/02 are special cases, discussed in the chapter above.

In Table 7, I shaded the Yes sections for introduction, Preparation, and Conclusion, and the Stepped sections for Procedure. Each of those shaded entries represents a case where that article conforms to the contemporary My Share format. The high amount of unshaded entries earlier in the table shows that the modern format was not used consistently throughout the history of the section. While there

are articles as far back as August 1999 that have the full, four step organization, and an article in September 1998 that has the three obligatory sections but not the semi-obligatory Preparation, this was not the norm among the articles until around 2005.

The Preparation section was the least frequently occurring section, appearing in only 32 (41.0%) of the articles. Of course, since the section is not obligatory even in the modern corpus, it is unsurprising to see it appearing inconsistently. It may be that in some of the cases where it doesn't appear, especially in the post-2004 era where the rest of the sections seem to have stabilized into their modern form, the author purposefully omitted it because there was no significant preparation needed, as occurred in the contemporary corpus.

The second most frequently omitted section was the Conclusion section, with 47 cases of inclusion (60.3%). It is the only one of the obligatory sections to have been omitted more than once in the post-2004 era. Except for one article in 1999 where the last paragraph of the Procedure section acts as a Conclusion, there weren't any clear textual indications for why there was no Conclusion section. It could be argued that a Conclusion section isn't strictly necessary to fulfill the rhetorical purpose of the My Share section, since as long as the introduction (which was present in all but one of the cases where the conclusion was omitted) contains the background information for the article, then finishing the article once the activity is described doesn't deprive the reader of any necessary information to conduct the activity in their own classroom.

Thirdly, the Procedure section was included in 63 (80.8%) of the articles surveyed. Of those, 55 (87.3% of Procedure sections and 70.5% of all the articles) were stepped as in the modern corpus. With only two exceptions, every inspected article from October, 2000 until 2010 contained a Procedure section. In a certain sense, the Procedure section would seem to be the most necessary of the sections, since, without it, there is no "activity" to "share." There are two reasons why it did not occur in some cases, and both point to how much the genre has changed over time. First, as discussed above, some articles did contain procedural information, but didn't include it in a separate, titled section. The movement away from this freedom over formatting is a very clear indication of the hardening of the genre in a structural sense. Second, there were a number of articles in the corpus prior to 2010 (and, especially, prior to 2003) that would not qualify as a My Share article in the modern

sense, in that they do not represent a "successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers," as the introduction to the My Share section of the journal currently states. A variety of other types of articles that are loosely related to the My Share idea were included in this section. Some examples are:

- A general introduction to a full semester long-curriculum related to novel reading, with only a few specific suggestions of actual in-class activities.
- An even more general set of instructions for how to use authentic English texts in class. It contains a variety of hints, both general and specific, but these are not encapsulated into a single, specific activity.
- A description of a full week's worth of activities at an English language *senmongakko* based around a particular theme. Rather than being a guide for readers to follow in their classrooms, it is more of a report on a thematic unit done at a school by many teachers across multiple subjects.
- A discussion of the benefits of using a particular piece of technology (cassette recorders) in the classroom, including what sorts of language skills this technology can and can't improve. There are some steps included for an actual class activity, but the author clarifies that this is just a summary of a more detailed description found in one of the references.

These articles shared with modern My Share the sense of being accounts of teacher lore, of describing some practical aspect of teaching that has been successful for the author in the past. However, they lack the specific details needed for a reader to replicate these activities in their own classes. This isn't necessarily a problem—this open framework might make it easier for a reader to take the ideas as inspiration and then fill in details that fit their specific circumstances. It is, however, different from most of the modern corpus.

However, it is worth noting that focusing on a single, specific activity is not actually a requirement according to the guidelines. The online guidelines state, "Previously published My Share articles have included such diverse write-ups as a whole term's syllabus on how to get students to raise their hands and participate actively in class and how to turn the contemporary obsession with mobile phones to an English teacher's advantage" (JALT, n.d.-a). And yet, there are less than ten articles

in the corpus that contain anything other than a single activity, with only three articles that span an entire semester (on of which is a short warm-up done daily). A look at a counter example will help demonstrate why this is likely the case. This article describes an activity with a variable length ranging from one class to a full semester. While it has the formatting of a modern My Share, it has very general descriptions of the actions teachers need to take, and involves the students learning a very large range of skills, including internet research techniques, reading and paraphrasing strategies, video comprehension, both written reports and spoken presentations, and peer feedback. None of the specific details are explained—for example, the research component is explained as: "Teach Internet research techniques followed by reading and paraphrasing strategies to assist in identifying history and background descriptions of their topics." While my goal in this project is not generally to criticize the quality of the explanations, my response to reading the previous sentence, and most of the rest of this article is, "If I knew how to do that, I wouldn't be looking to My Share for help." Having said that, the key point I want to make is this: I don't think that this lack of clarity is the fault of the author. Some of the points in the article strongly imply that the author has a clear and extensive plan to handle this and each of the other steps—but they could provide them because they were limited to only 700 words. In other words, even though the guidelines seem to encourage more general approaches to My Share like those found in the past, the length restrictions along with more stringent formatting (the need to have each of the obligatory sections, for example) make it nearly impossible to include articles covering anything other than a very focused activity.

The introduction section was the most stable and occurred as a distinct section in 72 (92.3%) of the 78 articles. The last article to not include an introduction section was in February, 2003. In 20 of the articles with introductions, the section was given a title, and this occurred as recently as 2010. Particularly odd is that there are issues where one article had an "Introduction" title, but the others did not. To me, this is indicative of a much laxer stance towards editing in earlier years. That is, not only were the editors accepting of a much wider variety of types of articles for the My Share section, they were not as concerned as the modern editors with having a section with a consistent look and format.

However, reading the history of the My Share genre in this way is to misread the role of editorial power, an error made because my focus is on the modern corpus, which I then used as a lens to interpret the older texts. Interpreting the earlier editors, especially the 1999–2003 editors as "laxer" and "more accepting" gives primacy to the contemporary form of the genre as the norm. Instead, if the genre is "read" diachronically, it shows movement from an open interpretation of what a My Share could be towards one in which the genre demands a rigid format and very particular content. This change occurred because the editors deliberately chose to make editing decisions (either altering or rejecting submissions out of the increasingly narrow restrictions) and/or because the authors adapted their submissions to trends that they saw, thus causing an organic evolution in form. However, the near complete shift in 2005 to an almost universal inclusion of the three obligatory sections and frequent inclusion of the semi-obligatory section seems to me to indicates editorial, not authorial, control. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to contact any editors who had direct contact with the My Share section of the journal dating that far back to confirm this hypothesis.

The contemporary highly rigid approach to My Share, which admits only a narrow range of articles (compared to what was allowed historically) is interesting to consider with reference to what several of the editors told me during interviews.[56] Outside of rejecting articles that were entirely outside of the guidelines (such as being far too long or not being a description of a specific classroom activity), they accepted almost all submissions. Furthermore, they generally said that such completely out of scope submissions were rare. The fact that the editors were able to accept a significant majority of submissions despite having fairly strict rules speaks to a panoptic disciplinary process (Foucault, 1995). That is, if most authors were submitting articles that already complied with the format (evidenced by the need to reject few of the submissions), then the authors were disciplining themselves to conform to the discursive policies of the journal and genre.

Finally, let me note that my reading here of strict editorial control is not meant to be a negative one. There are benefits to the rigid format that I've already noted—they enable a reader to more rapidly and clearly know if a particular activity

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[56] See section 11.3 for detailed discussion of the interviews.

will be of benefit to them. The rules also have benefits for the journal, in that since they serve to restrict the size of articles, thus minimizing printing costs for the section. And they may even have benefits for authors—if many of them are new to academic publishing, as the editors interviewed hypothesized, the formal structure might make the process of writing more straightforward. Nonetheless, there are necessarily tradeoffs—it is now very difficult for articles in the section to represent anything other than singular activities; even when activities span multiple class sessions, they must be strongly tied to a singular sequence of linked classroom practices. The problems shown with the one long, vague activity described above shows how activities that are larger in scope effectively don't work—the end result is a procedure that is so vague that it doesn't really give the reader enough information to implement the activity in the classroom. And it is now basically impossible for a My Share article to be a general introduction to a piece of technology or style of teaching, as happened in the past—or, to be more accurate, such articles (of which there are three or four, depending on how expansively this category is read) must be couched in the format of a specific activity. For example, one activity is purportedly about teaching students how to more efficiently use the internet for research in English, but the underlying purpose of the essay is to demonstrate one specific search engine that the author argues is better than others for English language learners.

## 5.6 Visual Analysis

It is common in critical discourse work to be concerned primarily with the words, sentences, grammar, etc. of the texts being considered. Discourse, though, is always embedded in particular media, and part of the meaning is always already carried by non-linguistic elements. And, as Jancsary, Höllerer, and Meyer (2016) pointed out, if meaning is thus transmitted through other semiotic modes, "Power, truth and interest are, then, also represented in these other modes" (p. 184). This is why the analysis of spoken discourse regularly includes attention to things like tone, speaking speech, pauses, etc. (for example, see the discussion of how to analyze intonation and pitch glide in Gee, 2014). However, the analysis of written text often ignores the equivalent in written texts: the visual components of discourse (Meyer, Höllerer, Jancsary, & van Leeuwen, 2013). In keeping with CDA principle 3 (see

section 3.1.1.4), I will attend to this concern here, and look to the visual elements of the My Share articles.

As I consider these issues, note that I am referring specifically to the texts as they were originally published in the print version. The html versions that are used in the online archives lack almost all the formatting of the print versions. To see an example of the difference, compare Figures 15 and 16 in Appendix B. Figure 16 shows how the article looks in the print version and the pdf download, while Figure 16 shows a screenshot of what the top part of the article looks like in the html version. However, I will make one point about the html versions—their very existence speaks to a willingness on the part of the JALT editorial staff to produce a version which will render differently depending on the computer system and browser they are viewed. This indicates that the editors/publishers perceive the linguistic content to be significantly more important that the visual content.

There are several interesting visual features, including the location of the articles in the journal, the formatting used, and how that formatting compares to formatting in the rest of the journal. Note that the semiosis of these features is a product of editorial, not authorial work, since layout and format are determined by the editors, publishers, and layout team.

**5.6.1 Journal organization**. The first issue to examine is holistic—the location of the My Share section in the journal. From 2011 to 2014, there were five sections in most Table of Contents, though issues with a special focus sometimes included an additional section to describe that focus.[57] The sections were as follows:

- Feature Articles (FA): each issue contains one or two Feature Articles. These are traditional research articles, though they are limited to a maximum of 3000 words.[58]

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[57] This is the Table of Contents that appears on page 1 of the journal, as opposed to the abbreviated Table of Contents that appears on the cover.

[58] This is the word limit as of 2017, found on the online submission guidelines (JALT, n.d.-a). Since this information is not printed in the journal itself, I am unable to determine if this word limit has changed over time in the same way that the My Share limit changed.

- Readers' Forum (RF): These are, per the guidelines, "thoughtful essays on topics related to language teaching and learning in Japan" (JALT, n.d.-c). They are each between 2000 and 2500 words, and, as with FA, there can be one or two per issue.

- Resources (R): There are three to five different sections within the Resources category, such as My Share, Book Reviews, Recently Received (lists of recently published academic books and textbooks), Outside the Box (short, unsigned articles about a specific teaching topic), and TLT Wired (a column in which they "explore the issue of teachers and technology"). In this and the next two categories, the exact sections included varied across issues.

- JALT Focus (JF): This category contains a variety of information about JALT and the activities of its members, including JALT Notices, Showcase (a 750 word or less article wherein the author "introduces" themselves to the community), and Grassroots/Outreach ("a place for essays and short reports that can motivate readers to take action and bring about positive change in our language teaching profession, here at home, as well as around the world").

- Columns (C): This section contains mostly organizational information, such as one paragraph descriptions by SIGs and Chapters (geographically based sub-groups of JALT) that report on their recent activities, Career Development, a Conference Calendar, and a humorous essay called "Old Grammarians."

In 2015, the C category was removed. Most of the sections were removed, although SIG information was retained (though retitled "SIG Focus") and moved into the JF category. In addition, a new category was added called "JALT Praxis," which contained The Writer's Workshop (suggestions for how to get published), Teaching Assistance (short articles from graduate students), Young Learners (information directed specifically at people who teach children and teenagers), Dear TLT (a pseudo-advice column), and JALT Membership Information.

In 2016, the sections were again reorganized. The Resources section was removed, and the sections it had contained were moved into the JALT Praxis section. Several of the sections became more irregular than before and others seem to have been dropped completely.

The first point, and this will be echoed by each of the details below, is that My Share is categorized as non-research article. In the time frame of my corpus, it fell in either the Resource or Praxis category. My Share articles do not have to "prove" the efficacy of their activities (like a research article would, by showing evidence from experimentation/formal analysis) and their position in the journal reflects this.

I want to address one additional organizational point, regarding a special insert included in selected issues of the journal. A four page (a single folded sheet of paper), glossy, full-color advertisement from a publisher talking about their textbook offerings that could be "pulled out" was inserted in the September 2012 issue. In 2015 and 2016, the May, July, and September issues also had pullout inserts, with the May and July pullouts talking about JALT's international conference held in fall, and the September issue being the publisher's advertisement.[59] These pullout supplements, as they were labeled, were always placed into the very center of the issue in order to make them easy to remove. Based on how the sections are laid out and the typical number of pages of each of the types of articles, these pullouts always fell in the Resources/Praxis section (never the FA or RF sections). In the September 2012, July 2015, and September 2015 issues, they occurred in the middle of the My Share section—in each case, literally splitting individual articles. While these are designed to be pulled out, this willingness to "disrupt" the My Share section and the rest of the Resources/Praxis category for promotional material subtly devalues this category.

**5.6.2 Visual differences between sections**. The differences between the FA/RF and the Resources go beyond the separation into two different sections of the journal—rather, there are significant differences in the layout between what one editor called the "peer-reviewed" section of the journal and the "non-peer-reviewed" section. The entire journal is printed with two columns per page. Both FA and RF

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[59] Note that I am not completely certain that other years and issues didn't also have pullouts, as it is possible that I removed them from my issues while reading them years ago. The pullouts are not mentioned in the Table of Contents, so there is no way to tell if they were included when looking at the online archives. However, I am fairly confident that they were not used for conference information in 2013 and 2014, since for those years a separate booklet of about 30 pages bound in its own cover called the "Conference Preview" was sent alongside *TLT* issues; since these contain the same type of information that were found in the pullouts, it seems doubtful that they would have printed both.

have page-spanning, large-sized titles. The font of the titles and other small layout details have changed over time; Appendix B has examples of various different version of FA in Figures 17, 18, and 19, along with RF in Figures 20 and 21. On the first page of most of these articles, the left-hand column (which is a little narrower than columns on other pages) contains two abstracts—in the top box, the abstract is in the language of the article (almost always English), with the bottom box having the abstract in the "other" language (almost always Japanese). The top of the right column is the author(s)' name, followed by their institutional affiliation and then the article itself. In cases where the Readers' Forum article is an interview, there is no abstract and the interview begins in the left column following a short biography of the person being interviewed. On the last page of both types of articles, following the references, a photograph of the author(s) is placed next to a biographical statement from the author(s), which usually includes a contact email address (see Figure 22 in Appendix B).

My Share articles are laid out differently, as shown in Figures 23 and 24 in Appendix B. The titles for My Share articles use a much smaller font than FA/RF. In addition, they span only a single column, and are followed by the author(s)' name, institutional affiliation, and email address—since there is no biographical statement at the end, the contact information is placed at the beginning. The article then runs down one column before moving into the next column, whether that is on the same page or the next. As soon as one My Share article finishes, the next begins.[60] Thus, it is common for parts of more than one My Share to appear on the same page. In addition, while FA/RF always start at the top of a page, occasionally the My Share section will start in the middle of the page, as shown in Figure 22. One final difference in layout has to do with the article's online representation: FA/RF are stored as pdf files, while My Share are converted to html. The reason the FA/RF are not converted to html is probably because they usually contain information (especially tables and figures) that could not be easily converted to text.

These differences in layout do several things. First, they serve to further reinforce the division between the "articles" in FA/RF and the "resources" in My

[60] There is an exception for small reminders from JALT and advertisements for JALT events; these appear at the end of all types of articles. They appear to mainly be a tool for filling space that would otherwise be blank.

Share and other sections of the Resources/Praxis categories. Meyer et al. (2013) argued that one of the major roles of visual distinctions is to categorize things, and, furthermore, they are "important means through which socially constructed categories are presented as 'facts' and experienced in our encounter with the material world" (p. 27). That is, the division between theory and praxis is a construction, not one of actual, material fact; however, the division in sections and means of display between the research articles and the practical resources in *The Language Teacher* is one of the countless ways in which the theory/practice divide is perpetuated and reinforced. Second, the differences in formatting seemed to reinforce the relative importance of research and teaching. It is well known that, at the university level, scholarship is usually more valued than teaching, as demonstrated by hiring practices, tenure decisions, and reviews (Green, 2008; Parker, 2008). The smaller size of My Share articles and less prominent formatting devalue them relative to the FA/RF. In addition, the lack of biographical statements and the way that My Share articles run from one to the next seems to de-emphasize the importance of each individual author, making this section instead a collective resource rather than the product of individuals.

This last point—the collectivization of the My Share section into a single entity is furthered by the introduction to the sections. The title for the section is page-spanning and is followed by a box containing information about the section along with photographs—not of the authors, but of the My Share section editors. In other words, while the authors of the FA and RF articles gain the status of having their photographs in the journal, it is the editors of the My Share section who gain this status marker. In addition, either before or after the informational box, the My Share editors provide a one to three paragraph introduction to the section. At a minimum, this introduction provides a one sentence description of each of the articles. In other words, where an FA/RF author is able to write their own article summary in the form of the article abstract, the author-ity (the power of the *auctor, the originator,* of a text—see Assis (2011)) to capture the essence of the My Share articles is given to the editors. In many issues, the editors also provide further introduction, which, at least in the several that I sampled, often seeks to tie the season of publication to the idea of teaching, such as one November/December introduction which says, "We hope putting these into practice will see you through

the heady, hectic holiday hullabaloo and into the new year." The main journal editors write a similar introduction and summary on the first few pages of the journal for the FA and RF, and it often contains a similar, casual tone.

## 5.7 Language of Publication

The last issue I want to discuss in this chapter is the language that the My Share articles are published in. This issue was so obvious that I didn't notice it until after working with the corpus for more than a year, but every single My Share article in the 2011 to 2016 time period was written in English. That they are published only in English might seem to be a fact not worth mentioning to the average JALT member—I can imagine such a person might say, "JALT is an organization for English teachers, and My Share articles are about teaching English." However, Gee (2014) recommends that one of the tools that discourse analysts need to employ is the "Making Strange Tool," where the researcher tries to discover things that, while they seem obvious to insiders, might be strange to an outsider (pp. 24–28). In this context, there are two key factors to consider. First, JALT is ostensibly a bilingual organization. For example, while English certainly dominates articles in *The Language Teacher*, during the 2011–2016 period, 5.8% of the Feature Articles and 2.7% of the Readers' Forum articles were written in Japanese. Furthermore, FA and RF articles written in English are always accompanied by a Japanese abstract. Also, during the same period, 17.4% of the main articles in JALT's more research-oriented publication (*JALT Journal*) were written in Japanese. Not only were none of the My Share articles in my corpus written in Japanese, during my search through the archives for the historical comparison above, I found only two Japanese My Share during the entire time frame that was preserved in the archives. Thus, out of the 837 articles that I could see between 1990 and 2016, only 0.2% were written in Japanese. In addition, it is important to note that while I've thus far couched the discussions solely in terms of English and Japanese, JALT is not actually an English-teaching organization—rather, it is supposed to be for people teaching any non-Japanese language in Japan (and there is also a small special interest group for teachers of Japanese as a Second Language), since the mission statement says only, "Our mission: JALT promotes excellence in language learning, teaching, and research by providing opportunities

for those involved in language education to meet, share, and collaborate" (JALT, n.d.-b). Yet, there are no examples of non-English, non-Japanese My Share either.

According to several of the editors I interviewed, they didn't deliberately exclude Japanese articles, and they said they would have considered one if they had received it. One editor who had also done work on the Conference Proceedings published after each annual international conference said that the editors of those proceedings have deliberately sought out non-English publications in the past. Additionally, one of the editors gave me samples of some of the files that the editors share as part of their behind-the-scenes processes, and one of those files contained guidelines in Japanese for how to write My Share articles. However, at least currently, those instructions are not on the website (even though there are Japanese instructions for FA, RF, and interviews). Thus, while I have no doubt that it is accurate that the editors didn't receive any Japanese language submissions, it appears that there hasn't been a significant public effort on the part of JALT to solicit any.[61]

Whatever the reason, there are several consequences to the corpus being in published in only a single language (English). First it seems to implicitly argue that, even if it is reasonable to do the academic part of the English teaching profession in Japanese (as evidenced by the inclusion of some research articles in Japanese), the actual business of doing English teaching "should" be done in English. That is, when the theoretical/practical division discussed above in the visual analysis is considered along with the monolingual nature of My Share, an additional consequence of the division is that only English is associated with practical side. Second, the monolingual nature has an exclusionary feel, as if other parts of *The Language Teacher* are open to both English and Japanese, but My Share is exclusively for English language use.

## 5.8 Summary and Discussion

This chapter provided a basic understanding of the larger features of the My Share, thus helping answer research question 1. During the time of my corpus (2011–2016), the My Share genre was mostly standardized. There are currently three obligatory

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[61] Though, to be fair, one of the editors indicated that, based on their experience, *The Language Teacher* is not evaluated particularly highly by Japanese scholars, meaning that there are professional reasons why they might not be interested in publishing here.

sections, one semi-obligatory section, and a small selection of optional sections (both text sections, such as Variations and Extensions, and list sections, such as References and Appendices). In addition, the length of the articles was mostly standardized, though there was a shift in 2015 to shorter articles due to a top-down change in the guidelines.

However, the genre was not always so stable. By looking at a selection of older My Share articles and sections, it could be seen that the number of articles per issue, length, and even what sections are included have all changed. It appears that the genre mostly stabilized between 2005 and 2008 to reach the more fixed state it is in today. This shift is apparent not only in the formatting, but also in the content, as older issues contained topics and styles that are no longer allowed under current genre conventions. However, the way that optional sections are handled (that is, they are allowed even in cases where the information could be included in other sections) indicates that there is still some flexibility in the genre.

Overall, both the fairly strict structural rules (the obligatory sections and the word limit) and the topical requirements significantly limit what sorts of information can be included in a contemporary My Share article. For example, I noted that large scale, multi-lesson activities are difficult and, when included, tend to be unhelpful because there isn't enough space to include a full description of all parts of the activity. Throughout this paper, I will note other cases where these genre limitations seem to be leading to other problems in the content of the My Share genre. In the Conclusion (Chapter 13), I will turn to some of the ideas found in the older My Share as inspiration for suggested changes to the genre.

Visually speaking, the genre has several key features, such as a lack of author biographies, the placement of multiple articles onto the same page, and a focus on editors rather than authors. These features have two major consequences: first, they serve to significantly differentiate the My Share from the journal's peer-reviewed articles. Second, they collectivize the My Share authors, which gives the pedagogical aspect of the professional teacher identity a collective nature (everyone working together to help improve education), while the research identity is solitary (or small group), worthy of individual recognition. This reinforces the belief that "research" is a higher level of professional work than teaching or talking about teaching.

Finally, it is important to note that this corpus was entirely written in English—and, going back historically, it appears that only 0.2% of all My Share articles were written in Japanese—this despite the official claim that JALT is a bilingual organization. This shows a division in identities within JALT and seems to argue that the pedagogical aspect of teaching should be done in English.

At this point, I need to address one point that I have been taking for granted—that My Share constitutes a distinct genre. As was established above, it has a fairly fixed format, style, and, on a broad level, content. The guidelines imply that the articles have a shared purpose, and, at least in recent times, authors have been mostly required to adhere closely to that purpose. Furthermore, the comparisons in structure and visual layout indicate that My Share is fundamentally distinct from the research article genre in format and content. It seems reasonable to at least tentatively conclude that linguistically My Share has enough shared and distinct features that it can be called a genre; however, CGA requires that attention is also paid to the role that the genre plays in the professional practices of the users (Bhatia, 2012, 2015). This will be covered in more detail in Chapters 7 and 11.

# Chapter 6
# Move Analysis

## 6.1 Introduction

As with the previous chapter, the present chapter focuses primarily on answering research question 1—providing a basic understanding of the My Share genre. The previous chapter examined the genre on a large-scale, looking at the overall structure as well as the common sections of the articles. This chapter, on the other hand, turns to a smaller unit of analysis, the "moves"—that is, the rhetorical gestures that provide the semantic structure of the articles.

While the title of this chapter means (as discussed in section 4.5), "the analysis of the moves in the My Share discourse," "move analysis" is also the term for the method used in this chapter. The method of move analysis arose out of genre studies and was traditionally linked with the work of Swales (1981, 1990). The principle is that texts can be broken down into a series of textual chunks that each have a singular communicative function. These semantically defined units are termed moves. Originally this analysis was conducted to make academic writing (academic journal articles, dissertations, etc.) more accessible to people seeking to become writers of those genres. The work was especially valued for helping researchers who were also English language learners adjust to writing in their specific disciplines. While the move analysis in this chapter does the work of defining the genre and establishing its rules, this is done not as an end goal but as a step towards developing a critical understanding of the genre and how it is used in practice (Bhatia, 2015)—that is, what the genre does in terms of defining the practices, beliefs, and identities of the discourse community it is produced by and for. Much of this critical analysis appears in future chapters, but is based on the results reported here.

## 6.2 Method

When undertaking a move analysis of a new genre, a part of a previous genre that has been under-researched, or a new field of a previously researched genre, researchers often attempt to fit one or more previous move analyses to the new data, and then adjust that model to fit the new setting (e.g., Peacock, 2002). Unfortunately,

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I did not have this luxury, since, as was established in the Structure Analysis (Chapter 5), the My Share don't doesn't closely resemble the sorts of academic articles that have previously been studied and have many distinct features in tone, structure, and purpose from other professional teacherly publications.

As a result, I had to develop the set of moves independently. The determination of move boundaries is up to the individual researcher(s)—that is, each analyst must decide which move each piece of text belongs to, and the number of moves within any given piece of text (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). This is a subjective judgment, based on cognitive factors rather than linguistic ones (Paltridge, 1994). One of the commonly used methods to help argue for the reliability of move analyses is conducting the analysis in teams, with each researcher coding independently, and then combining the analyses to measure inter-rater reliability. When there are major problems, the researchers discuss and adjust their coding schema and coding processes. Unfortunately, the solitary nature of dissertation research means that working in a team was not possible for this project. However, another recommendation is to have one or more of the coders be experts in the field (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). When language or linguistics researchers examine technical genres, this often mean enlisting a specialist from the relevant discipline (science, medicine, engineering, etc.) under investigation. In my case, as an English teacher working in the same professional context as the authors, I myself qualify as an "expert," insofar as anyone can be said to be an expert on this previously un-researched genre. Thus, many of my decisions when subdividing the text and then labelling those subdivisions relied on my familiarity with Japanese foreign language classrooms, including the ideas commonly expressed by language teachers in Japan.

I began the coding process after having done some initial surveys of the data (primarily the work on internationalization now found in section 10.3), and I had read all the data during the conversion and initial data preparation steps. This meant I had some expectations for the types of rhetorical gestures available to the authors prior to starting coding. I decided to code only the introduction and Conclusion sections.[62] The rationale for this is that the Preparation and Procedure sections

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[62] I also included one in-text "Appendix" section since it immediately followed a Conclusion section and contained similar information to what both that and other Conclusion sections include.

consist almost entirely of a single move, "describe what the reader should do to implement the activity." Because of the fairly strict formatting and organizational requirements, it is rare to find any other move in these sections. In addition, the introduction and Conclusion sections are the parts of the article where the authors justify the activity they have written about, and thus they are the parts most likely to have information related to the second through fourth research questions.

To code the corpus, I used QDA Miner Lite, free software for qualitative analysis of texts (Provalis Research, 2016). Since I had no prior basis for the codes other than my intuition about how the genre worked after having read it several times, I simply started coding the corpus by reading each paragraph, trying to make divisions between communicatively separate segments, and then labeling the segments by what I thought they were doing. Segments were allowed to vary in size, from a few words to several sentences. Over time, I grouped those codes into categories, sometimes rearranging and/or recoding them as I went. In many cases, I found it difficult to draw solid distinctions between similar codes. During this initial pass, I erred on the side of retaining multiple, similar codes, collapsing them only when two codes seemed to fully overlap.

After the initial pass, I had coded 1460 segments into 257 different codes, grouped into a three-level code tree with 9 top level categories. This was obviously too many codes to usefully analyze the corpus—for comparison, Bunton's widely cited CARS model for analyzing PhD thesis introductions contained only 9 moves. (Bunton, 2002). Furthermore, the categorization scheme didn't really capture the rhetorical function of the segments; for example, one category called "activity structure" included explicit value judgments of the activity (such as "simple/easy"), indirect evaluations of the activity (such as "interactive"), descriptions of the type of activity (such as "role-playing"), and descriptions of a specific thing that happened in the activity (such as "Teacher provides individual feedback"). I also had 249 instances that fell into 45 different codes which didn't fit into the categorization schema.

Rather than try to simplify the coding by moving the existing codes into a tighter categorization system, I decided to restart from the beginning. First, I mostly set aside the move analysis for several months while I worked on other parts of this project. However, I returned to the coding several times, trying to better understand

what I was really trying to accomplish with the different levels and categorization; in addition, simply working with the corpus more helped me better understand what the authors were trying to accomplish.

First, as per other move analyses, each code needed to describe what the author was *doing*, not what the segment said. Second, I realized that my initial coding scheme was trying to do too much, as far as the move analysis portion was concerned. For example, in the initial coding scheme, I had 25 separate codes for different emotions and emotion-like cognitive behaviors that the activities promoted or induced. While that information was useful for other parts of my analysis, it didn't help me understand the rhetorical structure of the articles. Thus, I decided to remove as many details as possible from the move coding and when needed for other work (as in Chapters 7 and 9), refine those codes in a separate process.

## 6.3 Move and Category Definitions

In the final coding, I identified 15 distinct moves, which I collected into eight categories. The full coding scheme and the frequency of each move and category are shown in Table 8. Before proceeding to further analysis, I will describe each of the moves and categories and provide examples.

The most frequent category is "Fact about the activity."[63] Three different types of "facts" were put into this code. The most common, "State a teaching target" refers to cases where the article explicitly states what the students will learn in the activity. Most refer to a specific language skill, such as "assists them to learn and reinforce vocabulary," though more general language skills are also included, such as, "In addition to building English language skills…." Furthermore, some of the targets are not language skills at all, as in, "This set of lessons provides students a framework to analyze and interpret photos rigorously." Teaching targets are discussed in detail in section 9.5. The other two types of "facts about the activity" are "State another fact about the activity" and "State what happens in the activity." The latter usually refers to a summary of the activity (or a part of the activity), such as "A text with words removed, rather like a cloze test, is projected onto a white board,

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[63] Note that while all the moves are phrased in the singular, each of them can be plural; for example, if an article has multiple "facts" in a row, that segment was coded as a single "Fact about the activity" move.

and students write directly into blanks on the whiteboard with colored markers, attempting to guess the correct words." The former refers to any fact about the activity that does not fall into the other moves, such as "Students only need a notebook to keep notes and an English dictionary." Segments which are evaluative (stating what is good about the activity) are excluded from this category—such statements are usually coded as a "Describe a benefit of the activity" move.

Table 8

*Move Frequencies in the Introduction and Conclusion Sections*

| Category | Move | Freq. of move | Move % | Freq. of cat. | Cat. % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fact about activity | State a teaching target | 150 | 11.9% | 404 | 32.1% |
| | State what happens in the activity | 131 | 10.4% | | |
| | State another fact about the activity | 127 | 10.0% | | |
| Benefit | Describe a benefit of the activity | 316 | 25.0% | 316 | 25.0% |
| Context/ background | Give background about teaching | 90 | 7.1% | 252 | 19.9% |
| | Give background about other things | 67 | 5.3% | | |
| | Give background about this activity | 49 | 3.9% | | |
| | Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese | 46 | 3.6% | | |
| Experience | Describe the author's experience | 103 | 8.1% | 103 | 8.1% |
| Negatives | Identify a difficulty for students | 33 | 2.6% | 86 | 6.8% |
| | Identify a problem of other activities | 28 | 2.2% | | |
| | Identify a difficulty for teachers | 25 | 2.0% | | |
| Authorize | Refer to an outside authority | 37 | 2.9% | 37 | 2.9% |
| Instructions | Give instructions | 38 | 3.0% | 38 | 3.0% |
| Direct | Directly address the reader | 25 | 2.0% | 25 | 2.0% |

The second most frequent category is "Benefit." In terms of individual moves, however, the only move in this category, "Describe a benefit of the activity" is by far the most frequent move, occurring 2.8 times more frequently than the next most common move. "Benefits" refers to any time an article makes a positive evaluation

of the activity or portion of the activity. Some are very general evaluations, such as "With practice, this game can become <u>a valuable asset</u> for teaching class content," but most identify a specific outcome or quality of the activity, such as, "meaningful" or "This cultural exchange demonstrates to students that <u>they can successfully communicate</u> and exchange similar interests despite language barriers." Sometimes the distinction between a benefit and a target was unclear during coding. For consistency, all language and other academic skills that are stated to be an outcome of the activity fall under "State a teaching target." Other outcomes, such as increased motivation, improved classroom relationships, etc. are coded as "Benefits," mainly because it was difficult to draw a bright line between cases where such other positive results are being put forward as the primary goal of the activity and where they are ancillary benefits to a language learning task. An extended discussion of "Benefits" is given in section 7.3.

The next category, "Context/background," contains four different moves in which the article makes a claim about something external to the activity itself. The first, "Give background about teaching," are cases where the article includes information about teachers, teaching, or classes. An example of "teaching background" about teaching in general is "Teaching poetry in the classroom can be a rewarding experience for both students and teachers." This move also includes claims about specific classroom settings, such as the following about Japanese university courses: "University courses often include a research project, or require students to use the Internet to find information for essays, presentations, or other purposes." The move "Give background about this activity" includes information about why the activity was created or who the original target for the activity was, as in "This activity was used in a preparation course for scholarship students preparing for a year abroad." The third move, "Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese" is for segments focused on learners (outside of the context of the specific activity), or for statements about the students' L1 or L2. Examples of each are "Noticing is a key part of learning" (context makes it clear they are speaking about language learning) and "In contrast to Japanese, whether or not a noun can be counted has a wide range of grammatical consequences in English." The final move in this category is for any claim external to the activity that didn't fit in one of the other moves in this category. For all four moves, note that these statements are more

accurately described not as "facts" but rather as disputable claims that represent specific beliefs. Some are likely to be mostly agreed upon by readers in the target discourse community, such as the statement about the grammatical consequences of countability. Others involve widely accepted TESOL or education tenets, such as the claim above about noticing, which while not universally held among language teachers, are commonplaces in academic writing about TESOL. Some, like the statement about poetry, are purely opinion, even though they are phrased as a statement of truth.

The next category is "Experience," and contains only the move "Describe the author's experiences." In almost all cases, these refer to the author's experience teaching the activity being described. They contain similar information to "Describe a benefit of the activity" or "State what happens in the activity" moves except that they are phrased in the past tense, as in "I have used it principally as a first-day activity at any level." This move also contains declarative statements containing information that could only be obtained from actual experience using the activity described, as in "This game is popular with students."

The "Negatives" category includes all segments where the article identifies something bad related to language teaching/learning. The most common move in this category are segments that "Identify a difficulty for students"—something that students regularly find to be a problem in relation to language learning. This includes both specific areas of language learning that students find challenging, as with "Students struggle with achieving high scores on tests of English proficiency for a variety of reasons," as well as negative emotions associated with language learning, such as "Students may be self-conscious about speaking English or nervous about making mistakes in front of their friends." The second move in this category is "Identify a problem of other activities," and includes any criticism of EFL classes or materials (like textbooks), such as "In EFL classes, reading is often a passive activity in which students practice skimming and scanning techniques before answering some questions to check their comprehension." The last move in this category is "Identify a difficulty for teachers." For example, one article says, "Teachers want to try to get students talking, but may struggle to find materials of suitable interest, level, and format."

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The three least frequent categories each contain only one move. The "Refer to an outside authority" move is mostly used for citations, and only cases where the citation is to a research article, not an outside resource. The "Give instructions" move is for segments where the reader is being given general information about how to conduct the activity, as in "If this kind of rote-memorization is overused, it can become boring and counterproductive for students," (where "this kind of rote-memorization" refers to the activity just described). This move does not include cases where a specific, individual step of the activity or preparation is described; those generally fall under the "State what happens in the activity" move. The least frequent move is "Directly address the reader." This move includes rhetorical questions ("Why not give it a try?") and very general exhortations ("Good luck!").

## 6.4 Analysis of Move Occurrences by Article

Table 9 shows the number of articles that contained each move. Note that these counts are lower than the total move counts shown in Table 8 because instances where the same move is used more than once per article are counted only a single time here. There are no mandatory moves in the genre. The closest is "Describe a benefit of the activity," which occurred in 160, or 90.4% of the articles. Taken as whole categories, the "Context/Background" category is slightly more frequent, appearing in 162 (91.5%) of the articles. Thus, the first conclusion that can be drawn from this data is that there is more variation in the genre at the move level than there is at the section level—that is, while there are several obligatory sections, there are no obligatory moves.

That being said, it is almost mandatory to state in either the introduction or Conclusion what is good about the activity. In addition, I noted earlier that the distinction between "Describe a benefit" and "State a teaching target" moves was sometimes unclear, and both could be said to be describing a positive outcome of the lesson. Looking at these two moves together, 98 (55.4%) had both moves, 70 (39.5%) had one of these moves, and only 9 (5.1%) had neither. Thus, the articles nearly universally provide some sort of description of the positive result or results of their activity.

Table 9

*Number and Percentage of Articles Containing Each Move and Category*

| Category | Move | # of articles | % of articles | # of articles (cat) | % of articles (cat) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Benefit | Benefit | 160 | 90.4% | 160 | 90.4% |
| Fact about activity | Teaching target | 107 | 60.5% | 162 | 91.5% |
| | What happens | 106 | 59.9% | | |
| | Another activity fact | 91 | 51.4% | | |
| Context/ background | Background, teaching | 71 | 40.1% | 140 | 79.1% |
| | Background, other | 54 | 30.5% | | |
| | Background, activity | 44 | 24.9% | | |
| | Background, English | 39 | 22.0% | | |
| Experience | Author's experience | 76 | 42.9% | 76 | 42.9% |
| Negatives | Difficulty, student | 27 | 15.3% | 65 | 36.7% |
| | Problem other activities | 28 | 15.8% | | |
| | Difficulty, teachers | 24 | 13.6% | | |
| Authorize | Authority | 24 | 13.6% | 24 | 13.6% |
| Instructions | Instructions | 32 | 18.1% | 32 | 18.1% |
| Direct | Address Readers | 22 | 12.4% | 22 | 12.4% |

## 6.5 Analysis of Move Occurrence by Section

The numbers reported above are for the combined introduction and Conclusion sections. However, the distribution of moves between the two sections is different, as shown in Table 10. There is no category for which the numbers are highly similar—the closest is the "Facts" category, which is 1.34 times more common in the introduction than in the Conclusion.[64] The most polarized categories are "Negatives," which is 3.82 more frequent in the introduction, and "Instructions," which is 2.7 times more frequent in the Conclusion section. The much higher occurrence of "Negatives" in the introduction occurs because these negatives don't stand alone; rather, negatives assert a problem (for students learning languages, for the teacher, or with other ways of teaching language) which is then "solved" by the activity being presented. Thus, they function more effectively in the introduction as a set-up for the activity described in the following sections. In a sense, "Negatives" serve a similar function to the "Indicating a gap in the research" move that is commonly found in

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[64] For this comparison and other comparisons in this section, this difference is based on normalized totals for the two sections—that is, since there are 1.35 times more total moves in the introduction than Conclusion sections, each Conclusion count is first increased by a factor of 1.35 before comparison. This is equivalent to comparing the percentages rather than the frequencies.

the introduction or literature review sections of research articles and dissertations (Kwan, 2006). This positioning is discussed further in section 6.6 where I look at move sequencing.

The use of "Instructions" much more often in the Conclusion section occurs because most of the instructions given are clarifications of the activity Procedures. For example, the penultimate move of one Conclusion section reads, "And finally, remember that your enthusiasm will set the tone and make a big difference in the success, or lack thereof, of the lesson." Here, the author is clarifying that the previously explained procedures should be performed by the teacher with a particular attitude; such an instruction would be much more difficult to understand if it were placed earlier in the text, and nearly nonsensical in the introduction.

The only individual move with nearly identical representation is the "State another fact about the activity," which is 1.03 times more common in the introduction. Given that both "Benefits" and "Experience" are significantly more common in the Conclusion it appears that the Conclusion has greater role in promoting the value of the activity than the introduction. The extremely high imbalance in "Identify a negative/difficulty for students" is further confirmation of the "set-up" function I identified for the "Negative" category above.

*Table 10*

*Move Frequencies Separated by Section*

| Category | Move | Introduction | | | | Conclusion | | | |
| | | Freq. of move | Move % | Freq. of cat. | Cat. % | Freq. of move | Move % | Freq. of cat. | Cat. % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Authorize | Refer to an outside authority | 28 | 3.9% | 28 | 3.9% | 9 | 1.7% | 9 | 1.7% |
| Benefit | Describe a benefit of the activity | 118 | 16.2% | 118 | 16.3% | 198 | 36.9% | 198 | 36.9% |
| Context/ background | Give background about this act. | 44 | 6.0% | | | 5 | 0.9% | | |
| | Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese | 35 | 4.9% | 197 | 27.1% | 11 | 2.0% | 55 | 10.2% |
| | Give background about other | 45 | 6.2% | | | 22 | 4.1% | | |
| | Give background about teaching | 73 | 10.0% | | | 17 | 3.2% | | |
| Direct | Directly address the reader | 10 | 1.4% | 10 | 1.4% | 15 | 2.8% | 15 | 2.8% |
| Experience | Describe the author's experience | 29 | 4.0% | 29 | 4.0% | 74 | 13.8% | 74 | 13.8% |
| Instructions | Give instructions | 10 | 1.4% | 10 | 1.4% | 28 | 5.2% | 28 | 5.2% |
| Fact about activity | State another fact about the act. | 63 | 8.7% | | | 64 | 11.9% | | |
| | State a teaching target | 87 | 12.0% | 264 | 36.03% | 63 | 11.7% | 144 | 26.8% |
| | State what happens in the activity | 114 | 15.7% | | | 17 | 3.2% | | |
| Negatives | Identify a difficulty for students | 25 | 3.4% | | | 8 | 1.5% | | |
| | Identify a difficulty for teachers | 23 | 3.2% | 72 | 9.9% | 2 | 0.4% | 14 | 2.6% |
| | Identify a problem of other activity | 24 | 3.3% | | | 4 | 0.7% | | |

Table 11 shows the breakdown of the number and percentage of times that each introduction or Conclusion section contained each move and category. The most consistently occurring category in the introduction is "Fact about the activity," which appeared in 84.2% of introductions; for Conclusions, the most frequently occurring category is "Benefits" at 83.5%. For individual moves, the most consistently occurring is "State what happens in the activity" for introductions (56.5% rate of occurrence) and ""Describe a benefit of the activity" for Conclusions (83.5% rate of occurrence). Thus, even when the two sections are considered separately, there are no obligatory moves. In fact, for the introduction section, only three of the eight categories had occurrence rates over 50%, and for Conclusions, only two of the eight categories are over 50%; for individual moves the over-50% mark is crossed only twice for introductions and once for Conclusions.

The differences between the percentage of sections which contain each move and category reinforces further verifies that the two sections have different functions. First, over 50% more Conclusion sections contained "Benefits" than introductions, strengthening the idea that a large part of the role of the Conclusion is to justify the value of the activity. Conversely, "Context/Background" is given 275% times more often in the introduction; this matches the "commonsense" idea that, in writing, background information is given before the main idea (the activity itself) is explained. Lastly, the almost 50% greater frequency of inclusion of the "Facts about the activity" category in the introduction is explained primarily by the fact that the move "State what happens in the activity" occurs more than 650% as often in the introduction. This is because this move is usually used in the introduction to give a broad explanation of the activity, presumably so that readers can both have a big picture before reading the details, and so that they can more rapidly gauge if the activity is potentially useful.

Table 11

*Number and Percentage of Sections Containing Each Move and Category*

| | | Introduction | | | | Conclusion | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Move | # of intros | % of intros | # of intros (cat) | % of intros (cat) | # of concs | % of concs | # of concs (cat) | % of concs (cat) |
| Authorize | Refer to an outside authority | 21 | 11.9% | 21 | 11.9% | 5 | 2.8% | 5 | 2.8% |
| Benefit | Describe a benefit of the activity | 96 | 54.2% | 96 | 54.2% | 147 | 83.5% | 147 | 83.5% |
| Context/ background | Give background about this act. | 40 | 22.6% | 130 | 73.4% | 5 | 2.8% | 47 | 26.7% |
| | Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese | 31 | 17.5% | | | 11 | 6.3% | | |
| | Give background about other | 43 | 24.3% | | | 21 | 11.9% | | |
| | Give background about teaching | 63 | 35.6% | | | 16 | 9.1% | | |
| Direct | Directly address the reader | 9 | 5.1% | 9 | 5.1% | 15 | 8.5% | 15 | 8.5% |
| Experience | Describe the author's experience | 28 | 15.8% | 28 | 15.8% | 66 | 37.5% | 66 | 37.5% |
| Instructions | Give instructions | 9 | 5.1% | 9 | 5.1% | 26 | 14.8% | 26 | 14.8% |
| Fact about activity | State another fact about the act. | 58 | 32.8% | 149 | 84.2% | 54 | 30.7% | 100 | 56.8% |
| | State a teaching target | 82 | 46.3% | | | 58 | 33.0% | | |
| | State what happens in the activity | 101 | 57.1% | | | 15 | 8.5% | | |
| Negatives | Identify a difficulty for students | 22 | 12.4% | 58 | 32.8% | 8 | 4.5% | 14 | 8.0% |
| | Identify a difficulty for teachers | 23 | 13.0% | | | 2 | 1.1% | | |
| | Identify a problem of other activity | 24 | 11.9% | | | 4 | 2.3% | | |

*Note.* All articles contained an introduction, but one article had no Conclusion; thus, the percentage for introductions = #/177, while percentage for conclusions = #/176.

## 6.6 Sequencing

The final issue to examine is whether there are any common sequences or positionings of moves or move categories—that is, to determine if there are common ways of organizing the information in the genre. Below I consider three types of organizational issues: section-initial moves, section-final moves, and sequences of categories.

**6.6.1 Section-initial moves.** 53.7% of the introduction sections begin with a move in the "Context/background" category. It is not surprising that the first move in the article proper is most often providing background, since this category allows the author to establish foundational claims on which to build their argument that they are presenting a valuable activity. This is similarly true for the second and third most frequent categories: "Fact about the activity" (19.8%) and "Negatives" (15.8%).

The most frequent individual first move in the introduction section is "Give background about teaching," occurring in that position 22% of the time—that is, more than one-fifth of the article bodies begin with a general statement about teaching. However, a more interesting measurement is to examine which moves occur in the initial position more often than they should be expected to by chance, which can be done by comparing the percentage of times a move appears in the first position to that move's percentage of the total number of moves in the introduction section. A move for which the former is larger than the latter can be said to be occurring more than it "should" in the section-initial. There are four moves that occur more than twice as often as they would if the moves were distributed randomly: "Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese," "Give background about teaching," "Give background about other things," and "Identify a difficulty for teachers." In fact, for each of these moves, more than half of the times that they appear in the introduction, they appear as the first move. Thus, there is an observable preference both for starting with background information and, when background information is included, starting with it. Note that the "difficulty for teachers" acts as a kind of background information—if I hadn't categorized negative statements separately from positive ones, these would have fallen in the "Give background about teaching" move.

In addition, there are a few moves which rarely appear in the initial position. None of the 28 occurrences of the "Refer to an outside authority" move appear in the initial position. In addition, "Describe a benefit of the activity" appears in the initial position only 4% of the time, even though that move accounts for 16.4% of all moves in the introduction section—in other words, they are four times less likely to appear there than they should by chance. "State another fact about the activity" is underrepresented in the initial position to almost the same degree, occupying that space only 2.8% of the time despite accounting for 8.6% of the moves in the introduction. Thus, each of these moves are designed to support, and thus appear after, other information.

As for the Conclusion section, the most frequent move and category in the initial position is "Benefits," representing 41.2% of all first moves. Even though this may seem like a very large portion of the initial sentences, it isn't actually that high, given that 36.8% of all moves in the conclusion are "Describe a benefit"—in other words, they're only occurring in this position about 12% more often than they would be expected to appear by chance. Only a few moves occur significantly more often in the initial position than if the moves were randomly ordered, with "Identify a difficulty for students," "Give background about the activity, and "Identify a difficulty for teachers" occurring at more than twice chance-level. However, this isn't a particularly revealing point, since these moves occurred only six, four, and two times in the conclusion, respectively. These small totals mean that the difference may just be due to variance rather than representing some sort of underlying rule about what moves "should" go in the first position more often.

On the reverse side, there are a few moves that seem to be biased against appearing in the initial position of the Conclusion section. "Directly address the reader" appears about four times less often than it should under a random distribution, appearing in only 0.6% of initial sentences while the move accounts for 2.8% of all moves in the conclusion. Two other moves are underrepresented by a factor of about 3, with "Give background about other things" appearing in the initial position only 1.7% of the time, despite accounting for 4.1% of the moves in the Conclusion, and "Refer to an outside authority" appearing in the initial position only 0.6% of the time despite accounting for 1.7% of the moves in the Conclusion. Unlike with the introduction section, there doesn't seem to be a clear connection between

these moves, and it could be that this is just a function of the overall low numbers for each of these moves.

**6.6.2 Section-final moves.** The most frequent final category in the introduction section is "Fact about the activity," accounting for 46.3% of all final moves. All three of the moves in this category appeared in the final position more than they should by chance, being overrepresented by 27.1–37.8%. However, the most frequent single move in the final position is "Describe a benefit," accounting for 31.6% of all final moves. This is nearly twice as often as expected by chance given that only 14.7% of the moves in the introduction section are "Benefits." In total, these two categories represent over three-fourths of all final moves in the introduction section. These moves act as a transition between the earlier background information and the specific details of the following Preparation/Procedure sections.

On the flip side, several moves are underrepresented as the final move of the introduction section. All the "Context/Background" moves appear less often than chance, with "Give background about teaching" being 2.5 times less frequent, "Give background about English, English learning, or Japanese" being 4.3 times less frequent, and "Give background about other" being 5.3 times less frequent. Again, this should not be surprising, since it would be odd for general background information to be left until the end of a section. However, a much more dramatic underrepresentation occurs with the "Negative" category: not a single introduction section ends with a "Negative" move. This fact helps very firmly establish that negatives are never used by themselves. Rather, they always serve as the "set-up" for a resolution—they are included so that they can be "solved" by the activity itself.

In the Conclusion section, the most frequent category and move in the final position is "Benefits," occurring 49.4% of the time (while representing on 36.8% of the moves). That is, almost half of the article bodies ended with the author explicitly stating what is good about the activity, thus finishing with a strong, direct argument supporting why it is a good, valuable activity. As a side note, part of the reason why "Benefits" is the most common initial and final move is that 18 (10.2%) of the Conclusion sections contain nothing other than a single Benefit move (often this is more than one actual benefit, but, as discussed earlier, sequential segments with the same function were coded as a single move). The only other moves which appear

alone in the Conclusion section are "Describe the author's experience," appearing alone five times (5.1%) and "Give instructions," appearing alone once (0.6%). As a contrast, for the introduction section, there are only six cases of solo moves, with four different moves represented.

As with the introduction section, "Context/Background" and "Negative" moves are significantly underrepresented in the last sentence position, with the former collectively appearing 1.8 times less frequently than expected by chance, and the latter never appearing in the last position. The explanation is also the same—it doesn't usually make sense to end this section (or, rather, the main body of the article) with background information, and negatives essentially can't go at the end because they have to be balanced out with a solution or mitigation.

**6.6.3 Move sequences.** Analyzing whether there are common patterns of moves is significantly more complicated than comparing expected versus actual frequencies of moves in specific positions. My intuition from visually inspecting the data was that the move sequences are extremely varied and unlikely to contain any patterns not attributable to chance. As such, I began my analysis at the most abstract level with the intent of arguing that if the most abstract level contained no common patterns, more refined ones would necessarily have even more variation and thus also be random. Thus, I began by looking at the sequences of categories—that is, treating the multi-move categories as being singular entities. In cases where two different moves in the same category are adjacent, these were combined into a single category-move. For example, a section originally coded as "State teaching target" - "State what happens in the activity" - "State a teaching target" – "Describe a benefit of the activity" was converted to "Fact" - "Benefit," since the first three moves are all part of the "Fact" category.

Table 12 shows the most frequent sequences of categories for the introduction section, with categories represented by their first initial for ease of reading. Only two sequences appeared in more than 5% of the articles: sequences CF and F. These sequences contained only "factual" claims, in that both "Context" and "Facts" move-categories purport to make true claims about either the world or the activity in question. More importantly, nearly half of the introductions had a unique

move sequence. This seems to indicate that, in terms of argument structure, introductions have no major fixed patterns in this genre.

Table 12

*Sequences of Categories in the Introduction Section*

| Sequence | Occurrences | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| CF | 13 | 7.3% |
| F | 12 | 6.8% |
| CFB | 8 | 4.5% |
| C | 5 | 2.8% |
| FB | 5 | 2.8% |
| CB | 4 | 2.3% |
| CFBF | 4 | 2.3% |
| CNFB | 4 | 2.3% |
| CAC | 3 | 1.7% |
| CEF | 3 | 1.7% |
| CNB | 3 | 1.7% |
| CNF | 3 | 1.7% |
| All sequences occurring exactly twice each | 26 | 14.7% |
| All sequences occurring exactly once each | 84 | 47.4% |

Table 13 shows the most frequent sequences of categories for the Conclusion section. There appears to be a slightly more restricted set of sequences than in the introduction section, with just under half of the move sequences occurring three or more times each. In part, this higher rigidity might be an artifact of the larger number of distinct categories in the introduction section (under this counting scheme, there are 626 category-moves across the introductions of the corpus, while there are only 517 category-moves in the Conclusions). Additionally, the seven most frequent category-move sequences, which together account for 36.9% of the articles, contain only three categories of moves: Benefits, Experiences, and Facts. This, however, still tells us more about the individual moves than the sequences themselves, because those three categories collectively account for 77.2% of the move-categories in the Conclusion section.

Table 13

*Sequences of Categories in the Conclusion Section*

| Sequence | Occurrences | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| B | 18 | 10.2% |
| BFB | 10 | 5.7% |
| EB | 10 | 5.7% |
| BF | 9 | 5.1% |
| FB | 8 | 4.5% |
| BE | 5 | 2.8% |
| BEB | 5 | 2.8% |
| CF | 5 | 2.8% |
| E | 5 | 2.8% |
| FBF | 5 | 2.8% |
| CBF | 4 | 2.3% |
| BC | 3 | 1.7% |
| All sequences occurring exactly twice each | 16 | 9.1% |
| All sequences occurring exactly once each | 74 | 42.1% |

In order to get a better understanding of how much the distribution of move sequences indicated a tendency for certain moves to be connected, I looked at sequential category pairs. For example, in a section with the sequence CNFB, there are three two-category pairs: CN, NF, and FB. The question asked was "which sequences occurred more often than they would if the moves were distributed randomly, and how much more frequently did they occur?" While almost by definition all category pairs will occur at a different rate than that predicted by chance, any close cases could easily be caused by variance in the relatively small sample size (there are a total of 449 two-category pairs in the introductions, and 353 in the Conclusions). Since I am unaware of any standards for what would be considered truly significant in this type of measurement, I chose to focus on those 2-category sequences which occurred over 50% more often than would be expected by chance. Those pairs are listed in Table 14.

Table 14

*Two-move Sequences Occurring 50% or More Often Than Predicted by Chance*

| Section | Sequence[a] | Observed frequency[b] | Predicted frequency[c] | Factor of over-occurrence |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AC | 45.8% | 28.6% | 2.3 |
| | BF | 73.0% | 38.6% | 1.9 |
| Introduction | CA | 16.0% | 6.2% | 2.6 |
| | EB | 37.5% | 19.8% | 1.9 |
| | FB | 62.3% | 27.4% | 2.3 |
| Conclusion | ED | 7.8% | 3.4% | |

*Notes.* [a] Does not include sequences starting with D and I in introductions or A, D, and N for conclusions because those categories are so infrequent that even cases with only one pair may falsely appear to be occurring much higher than chance. [b] Calculated by dividing the number of times the pair appeared by number of pairs started by the first category. [c] Calculated by dividing the number of times the second category in the pair appears by the total number of moves minus the number of times the first category appears, since the construction of the random pairs needs to match the observed pairs in the sense that two identical categories cannot appear sequentially.

This measurement deserves a little additional explanation. Take the case of AC in the introduction. 45.8% of the times that the category A appeared in a non-final position, it is followed by the category C. If the categories were distributed fully randomly, A should be followed by C only 28.5% of the time, since that is the percentage of the total non-A moves in the Introduction. The fact that C occurs much more often than it should by chance indicates that in this genre there is a pressure whenever an A move occurs for it to be followed by a C move; said another way, C is a preferred move following A. Having said that, note that there are no cases of compulsory following—that is, there is no move-category which is always followed by exactly one other move-category.

The two most common pairs in the introduction are BF and FB, both occurring around twice as often as predicted by chance as well as accounting for well more than half of the pairs headed by B and F. To examine this further, I counted the number times that each move does not appear next to the other. Only 24 (20.3%) of "Benefit" moves occurred without a "Fact" move either immediately before or immediately after, and 18 of those are cases where the B move is at the beginning or end of the section (where it had only one rather than two chances to co-occur with the F move). "Facts," on the other hand, occur without a "Benefit" 95 times (48.5%). In other words, there seems that the affinity runs from F to B—that a "Benefit" must

be closely accompanied by a "Fact" in a significant majority of cases, while "Facts" do not need to be accompanied by "Benefits." I tentatively interpret this as indicating that there is a compulsion to explain and support benefits with factual claims, while facts need not be directly converted into specific benefits. Rather, these facts might simply either imply an unstated benefit, or be directly connected to something other than a benefit like a teaching target that also serves as an argument in favor of the value of the activity.

Finally, note that there is only one move pair that appears over 50% more often than predicted by chance in the Conclusion sections: ED, and even that result may be statistically insignificant, since there are only 10 D moves across the Conclusions. This supports the theory proposed earlier that the common whole-section move sequences are not pointing to standard sequences, but are rather pointing to the dominance of the three most common move-categories in that section.

Given that even at the level of categories there are very few common patterns, any more refined analysis (such as looking for sequences of moves) would necessarily result in even fewer patterns. As such, it is safe to conclude that even though, as discussed in 6.4 and 6.5, there do seem to be unwritten rules governing what types of moves are preferred in each section, there do not seem to be any significant rules governing how said moves should be ordered, outside of the restrictions placed on the first and last move in each section as discussed in 6.6.1 and 6.6.2.


## 6.7 Summary and Discussion

This chapter provided answers to research question 1 (the conventions of the genre) that both complement and complicate those discussed in Chapter 5. The units of analysis here are "moves," which are segments of text that have a single pragmatic function in establishing and/or advancing the arguments of the article. Only the introduction and Conclusion sections underwent this move analysis, because the Preparation and Procedure sections generally contained only a single move, and the other sections were non-obligatory. In the analyzed sections, 15 moves which were organized into eight categories were defined.

While none of the moves or categories are entirely obligatory, nearly all the articles include one or more statements about the positive outcomes of using the activity, either in the form of a specific language skill that would be improved or a non-skill-based benefit. Over 90% of the articles contain factual descriptions of the activities in the introduction and conclusion sections, indicating that these sections are not strictly promotional but also serve to provide brief introductions to or summaries of the activities or portions of the activities (that is, while that information is mostly found in the Preparation and Procedure sections, it is not found there exclusively).

The distribution of moves indicates that the introduction and Conclusion sections have slightly different purposes. The introduction section is significantly more likely to provide background information which situates the forthcoming activity in the wider context of language learning and/or Japanese schooling (and, occasionally, Japanese society). The Conclusion section does more of the promotional work—while the linguistic goals of the activity are somewhat more commonly discussed in the introduction (though they are still referred to in over one-third of all Conclusions), benefits occur 50% more often in the Conclusion. Balancing that out, however, is the use of negative statements in the introductions to indirectly describe the benefits of the activity, since these negatives almost always acted as the pretext for the activity itself. That is, two common introduction patterns are, abstractly speaking, "A problem that students have with learning language is X, which this activity mitigates" and "Many other language learning activities suffer from problem Y, but this activity avoids and/or overcomes that problem." This function was further verified by the sequencing analysis, which showed that negatives never end sections.

Looking at the ways that the moves are arranged in the sections revealed information about the structure of the arguments. Regarding introduction sections, there was a strong bias to starting with background information, indicating a "general-to-specific" argument structure where the authors establish general foundations based on ideas that they believe will be shared by the readers, and then use those foundations as justifications for the activities that they later describe. On the other hand, authority-referencing and benefit moves do not start the section, indicating that they play a supporting role in the arguments. On the other hand,

benefits are over-represented as the final move of the introductions, and, along with "facts about the activity," appear to act as a bridge into the practical sections of the articles.

While Conclusion sections also have moves that are over- and underrepresented in the initial and final positions, few clear patterns were observed that could connect the results into a clear narrative. The most noteworthy finding was that almost half of all Conclusions (and, thus, half of all articles) end with a benefit, which can be seen as a strong, final push in the overall argument of the articles (which is "This is a good lesson to try in your [reader's] classes") by stating or even re-stating what is good about the activity.

By looking at which pairs of categories occur in sequence, it was demonstrated that there do not seem to be strong rules about what moves follow one another. The only exception is that there does seem to be a somewhat strong tendency for "give benefits" moves to occur adjacent to "state facts" moves, indicating that there is a preference for linking benefits to specific features of the activity. However, the lack of other strong correlations further emphasizes the earlier claim that while there is a lot of regularity in this genre in terms of which larger, structural units are included (or, even more generally, in terms of the language used), at the move level there are some common patterns but nothing mandatory and a large amount of "randomness" (that is, flexibility for individual authors to organize their articles according to their own preferences).

While this move analysis provides a lot of information about how the My Share genre is rhetorically structured in terms of what moves are used and how they are organized, both CDA and CGA require that we go farther and link these moves to the ideas and practices of the genre community (Bhatia, 2015; Fairclough, 2003). The following chapter will take up this aspect of the project in earnest.

## Chapter 7

## Argument Analysis

### 7.1 Introduction

The focus of the present chapter is on answering research question 2: uncovering the teacher beliefs embedded in the My Share corpus by examining the arguments that the articles make.[65] This is a key step in moving away from the more neutral genre analysis in the previous two chapters (though, even there, careful investigation revealed some hidden assumptions) towards a more critical approach. In Chapter 6, the moves in the articles were discussed in terms of how they constituted the structure of the articles; here, the question is how those same moves form the building blocks of the articles' arguments. These arguments both express and create beliefs about what it means to be a language teacher or language learner (this is akin to defining their identities), as well as other related beliefs.

The analysis in this chapter rests at the intersection of genre analysis, corpus-based analysis, and text analysis as shown in Figure 5 in Chapter 4. First, the article extends the move analysis, thus tying it to genre analysis. In addition, since I focus on broad trends in the data rather than a few hand-picked examples, it falls under a corpus-based approach as described by McEnery and Hardie (2012). Additionally, the more quantitative corpus-based approach is regularly supplemented with text analysis, because the goal is not just to count which claims regularly appear, but rather to understand how those claims build larger arguments and thus represent and construct beliefs and identities. Fairclough (2003) calls this component of texts the "identification" meaning (p. 27) because it is the component of meaning which identifies speakers and listeners (and writers and readers) in ways that are considered appropriate to a particular social community and context. Finally, since the analysis willingly demonstrates that the arguments are not monolithic (there are numerous voices from within this corpus and clear cases of disagreement), it also contains an element of critical genre analysis (Bhatia, 2015).

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[65] Note, again, that the "argument analysis" in the title of this chapter does not refer to a method, but rather to the idea that, in this chapter, I analyze the arguments in the My Share corpus. Thus, this chapter has no relationship to the method of breaking down arguments (often pursued in relationship to research on critical thinking) sometimes called "argument analysis" and often connected to Stephen Toulmin.

Most of the chapter is devoted to examining an argument which is implicit in all the articles: "This is a good, useful, activity that you (the reader) should use in your class." However, the exact way that this argument manifests—how it is supported and what is meant by "good" or "useful" varies from article to article. There are four main ways that this argument manifests in the corpus that are examined in this paper.

The first "good" aspect of the activities is a simple statement of the target/goal of the activity—the idea being, if a reader is trying to help students achieve that goal, then this activity will aid in that process. Teaching targets will be discussed in section 9.5. Second, authors occasionally make reference to outside authorities through the use of parenthetical citations. Referencing these authorities provides an implicit argument that the activity in question is part of a broader TESOL tradition or is justified by prior research. The use of references was discussed in section 5.3.4.

The third and most common manifestation of the "this activity is good" argument occurs when the article describes a benefit of the activity. As discussed in section 6.3, benefits are moves where the article makes a positive evaluation of the activity, listing its good qualities or outcomes (other than the specific academic outcomes that falls under "Teaching target"). The analysis of benefits takes up the largest part of the present chapter. While they are separate moves, in this chapter I will also discuss the "Negatives" category of moves, since these are always followed, explicitly or implicitly, with an explanation of how the activity in question addresses that potential negative. Fourth, authors occasionally write about their experiences with the activity. Like benefits, this move is used to describe the positive outcome of an activity, but is done from a first person, past-oriented view ("such and such has happened when I have used this activity") as opposed to the second or third-person, general statement of a benefit ("this activity is <positive evaluation>" or "if you use this activity, such and such will be the outcome"). In this section, I will pay special attention to the co-optation of student voices for authorial benefit.

In addition to these mechanisms for supporting the main argument, I will also attend to the miniature arguments that were coded in the "Context/Background" move category. In each of those statements, the author is declaring some sort of "fact" about English, English language teaching, Japanese students, Japanese schools, etc.

Thus, in each of these statements, the author is making an argument about how the world (usually with at least some reference to the language learning classroom) "is." These are perhaps the most direct statement of teacher beliefs in the corpus, and thus are worth examining even if they aren't always part of the main thrust of the authors' arguments.

## 7.2 Method

Methodologically, the "benefits," "negative claims," and "experiences" analyses below (sections 7.3 to 7.5) resemble those used in Chapter 6. For each of these categories, I went through each move and coded what that move is doing. While the distinctions between moves in Chapter 6 were defined mostly based upon what a given segment was doing rhetorically, the divisions here are based on the segment's semantic content. For each move, after an initial coding of all the segments (which always resulted in an excessive number of overlapping categories), I collected these codes into more streamlined categorization scheme, though some items remained outside of the scheme (that is, they were not sufficiently similar to other codes to be combined into a larger category, and they were not frequent enough to deserve a category of their own). Since the "benefits" was such a large category, several of the categories were further subdivided and categorized in a similar manner.

However, because the present analysis is semantically focused while the previous was rhetorically focused, adjustments to the segment boundaries also needed to be made. When I conducted the move analysis in Chapter 6, I followed the standard practice of coding any continuous stretch of text that was performing the same function as a single move. That is, in the coding reported in Chapter 6, it was impossible for there to be two consecutive moves of the same type. In the present analysis, however, it was necessary to distinguish between individual arguments, so there were times where what was previously marked as a single code had to be split into two or more codes when the author was expressing more than one idea. For example, the sentence "This is a break from the normal classroom routine and encourages student originality, creativity, as well as group collaboration (and compromise)" was marked in the move analysis as one "Describe a benefit of the activity" move, but here, I broke out each of the four different benefits into a separate code. Furthermore, in some cases, segments which belonged in a particular move

were counted in a different argument category. For example, some of the items coded as "States a fact about the activity" moves clearly imply specific benefits, as in the sentence, "However, any speech act is teachable using the activities provided." Even though the express function of this sentence is to state a neutral fact, this can be read as a positive value judgment of the activity, and thus is included in the benefit analysis. Note, however, that I did not re-code "Background" statements into benefits, in part because many of them count as "direct statements of teacher beliefs" and are thus discussed separately below in section 7.6, and in part because it wasn't always clear how much these general claims should be transferred over as being explicitly relevant to the instant activity.

For the final section in which I analyzed "direct statements of teacher beliefs," I did not assign every segment to a subcategory. This is because the goal of this portion of the analysis isn't to systematically count and organize each of the categories, but rather to focus on those moves that have particularly important and clear beliefs undergirding them. In addition, many of the segments are idiosyncratic, and others contain traces of more than one teacher belief.

## 7.3 Benefits

After re-segmenting and incorporating benefits originally in other codes, I identified 602 benefits moves, for an average of 3.4 benefits per article.[66] 556 of those benefits fell into seven broad categories, with the remaining 46, each of which individually occurred four or fewer times, remaining uncategorized. Table 15 lists the categorized benefits.

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[66] Note that in this and future chapters I will use the word "move" to refer to the units of the authors argument. This is not exactly the same as a "move" from move analysis, as used in the previous chapter, because of the re-segmenting. However, I am unaware of a common term to refer to "constituent components of an argument," and there should be no confusion between these two uses of move since there are no cases where I make comparisons across these two definitions.

Table 15

*Benefits in the Introduction and Conclusion Sections of the My Share Corpus*

| Category | Occurrences | % of benefits |
|---|---|---|
| Positive emotions | 178 | 29.6% |
| Teacher-linked | 102 | 16.9% |
| Active learning/autonomy/student-centered | 85 | 14.1% |
| Participation | 73 | 12.1% |
| Pedagogical (except language-learning) | 50 | 8.3% |
| Language-learning pedagogical | 43 | 7.1% |
| Vague positives | 25 | 4.2% |
| Other (uncategorized) | 46 | 7.8% |

The largest category, positive emotions, accounts for more than one-fourth of all benefits. I am using the term "emotions" in a commonplace sense, without reference to a specific psychological theory of emotions. The second-most frequent set of benefits collects the cases in which the articles describe a benefit for teachers. Active learning benefits are those which are linked to the concepts of active learning and autonomy as discussed in sections 2.2.3 and 2.4.4. Participation benefits are claims indicating that students will participate more or more deeply because of the activity. The next two categories are benefits containing moves that are specifically educational, separated between those linked to language learning and those that are more general. The last category, vague positives, refers to cases where the activity is generically described using a word like "good" without specifying what said term means.

In the following sections I will discuss five of the top six categories in detail.[67] The active learning benefits will be discussed in section 10.4 alongside other ways that this topic is covered in the corpus. Since the final category is for cases where the article makes a vague statement (for example, "This activity is useful"), there is little more to say. For completeness, Table 16 lists the moves in this category.

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[67] However, I will not discuss every move in these categories—only the most frequent and those most revealing of teacher beliefs.

Table 16

*Vague Positive Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| useful | 7 |
| effective | 4 |
| good | 3 |
| memorable | 3 |
| other (once each) | 8 |

**7.3.1 Positive emotions.** The moves in this category are those which describe a positive cognitive experience not directly linked to learning or intellectual endeavors that students will experience as a result of the activity. Items were placed in this category both when the explicit wording labeled the activity itself as having that attribute, as in "this activity can be a…interesting exercise that challenges students' initial perceptions…," and also when the benefit is ascribed to students' reactions to the activity, as in "the audience is genuinely interested…." 92 (52.0%) of the articles contain one or more of these moves. Table 17 summarizes the moves in this category, with examples occurring only once collected into the "other" move.

Table 17

*Positive Emotions Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences | % of positive emotions |
|---|---|---|
| fun | 42 | 23.6% |
| creative | 29 | 16.3% |
| enjoyable | 29 | 16.3% |
| confidence-generating | 21 | 11.8% |
| interesting | 11 | 6.2% |
| energizing | 8 | 4.5% |
| exciting | 6 | 3.4% |
| funny | 6 | 3.4% |
| stimulating | 5 | 2.8% |
| entertaining | 4 | 2.2% |
| involving | 4 | 2.2% |
| lively | 3 | 1.7% |
| enthusiasm-generating | 3 | 1.7% |
| comfortable | 2 | 1.1% |
| other (once each) | 5 | 2.8% |

Within this category, there are two clusters of related moves, plus several moves that stand alone. The first cluster is a set of words that all indicate that the

activity makes students happy, and is composed of the moves "fun," "enjoyable," "interesting," "funny," and "entertaining." In total there are 92 moves in this cluster—that is, nearly half of the positive emotions and over 13% of all the benefits. Furthermore, these moves occurred in 69 distinct articles,[68] meaning that nearly 40% of all articles include some form of the claim "language learning is better when students are happy." Finding these sorts of highly frequent ideas is the reason for conducting a broad analysis of a large body of texts when operating under the principle that these texts both reflect and construct attitudes in the discourse community that produces them. That is, the high frequency tells us that this reflects a widely held belief.[69] At the same time, someone reading these texts cannot help but pick up the subtle signal that "happiness" is a common goal of language teachers in Japan, and this, in part, will construct their future language teaching attitudes. Note that I am not claiming that this is a universally held belief; in fact, in the survey of authors discussed in section 11.4, several indicated that they believed language learning should be a serious endeavor and that language teachers shouldn't be concerned with students' feelings; neither am I claiming that reading this corpus would necessarily change the attitude of someone opposed to centralizing fun in the language classroom. But I am claiming that that discourse has potential consequences, especially when a particular idea, belief, or attitude is repeatedly expressed across that discourse.

One additional thing worth noting with regards to this set of benefits is that they rarely occur in isolation. Usually they appear as part of a list of benefits or other activity features, as in the sentence "Finally, being <u>fun</u> and interactive, the task is ideal as a warmer at the beginning of a class or as a change of pace partway through." This sentence promotes the "fun" of the activity, but also that it increases interaction (which is in the "Participation" benefit category), and finishes with a "fact about the activity" move. This may act as a mitigating factor in the promotion of happiness,

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[68] Some articles contained the same move in both introduction and Conclusion, while others contained two different moves in this cluster.

[69] Alternatively, it could mean that the authors believe that the claim is likely to be persuasive because the audience believes it; this duality is like the two different "belief" locations in the discourse-practice maps in Figures 3 and 4 in Chapter 4. And while these are "different" things, they are dialectically related (Fairclough, 2003), and can be treated similarly from a discourse analysis perspective.

since, unlike some of the other benefits to be discussed, it is often portrayed as not strong enough to stand on its own—that is, perhaps, that while promoting happiness is beneficial, it is not sufficient to result in a "good" language activity.

The second large cluster of positive emotions are those which are linked to energy. It is composed of the moves "energizing," "exciting," "stimulating," "lively," and "enthusiasm-generating." This cluster is about three times smaller than the "happiness" cluster, with only 25 moves. These moves occur in 20 distinct articles, or 11.3% of the corpus. Each of these moves promotes the idea that when an activity builds the energy-level of the classroom, students will be more successful. In many cases, the article provides an indication of what aspect of the activity is generating the energy. For example, seven of the activities in this cluster are games, and it is the competition that leads to energetic behavior. In six instances (these partially overlap with the competitions), the benefit is linked to physical activity, with the most comprehensive explanation being as follows: "Since it requires people to stand while completing quick word-action sequences, it encourages blood circulation, oxygenates the body, and is designed to leave participants energized." In fact, this article goes so far as to assert later that this energizing factor justifies the presentation of faulty science about the way the brain processes language (they call it "admittedly over-simplified," though it would be more accurate to call it pop science or pseudoscience). In still other cases the topic itself is stated to lead to positive energy, as in an activity which states, "Furthermore, with the subject of fashion being of interest to young adults, the activity's materials can contribute to discussion and enthusiasm within the classroom."

In addition to these two clusters, there are several other moves in the positive emotion category, with the two largest being "creative" and "confidence-generating." "Creative," in fact, is tied for the second largest number of moves in the "Positive emotion" category. Despite the somewhat high prevalence of this move (it occurs in 24 distinct articles, 13.6% of the corpus), the rationale for "creative" being marked as a benefit is almost never explained. For example, one article states, "This activity allows students to creatively express their own perspectives on their environment as well as choose their own pictures." The surrounding context makes it clear that this creative expression is supposed to be a benefit of this activity, but why that should be is not stated. A few articles link creativity to other benefits, as in one that

says, "At the same time, having students get their creative juices flowing makes studying more fun." The most extensive argument occurs in an article which uses a negative claim to contrast creativity with its "opposite." The article says,

> Japanese junior high school students do a lot of writing at school, but such writing tends to be mechanical rather than creative. Copying out vocabulary and grammatical forms for the purpose of rote memorisation may lead to the type of proficiency required to pass exams, but is unlikely in itself to spark an intrinsic interest in using English creatively.

Here, "creativity" seems to be aligned with the idea of productive language usage for communication, while the opposite, "mechanical" language learning, is only good for test taking. Such explanations, however, are the exception, rather than the rule. Interestingly, it is this lack of argument that helps make the underlying teacher belief clearer: one substantial voice in this corpus believes that creativity is inherently good in language learning and has so naturalized this belief that it can act as the foundation of the argument that the activity in question is "good" or "valuable."

"Confidence-generating" benefits are a little less frequent, with 21 moves occurring across 17 articles (9.6% of the corpus). The categorization of this move is one that I struggled with. For example, at times I have included this in the "energy" cluster discussed above. This is most clear segments such as "has a powerful effect on <u>learners' confidence</u> in speaking without a script," which I read as focusing on giving students a willingness (energy) to actively engage in communication. At other times I have had it organized in the "active learning related" category, since it has a connection to motivation and the building of autonomous language learning behaviors. For example, one article says, "The outcome is that students use English freely for the meaningful purpose of getting to know their classmates and thereby <u>gaining confidence</u> and improving fluency." In the context of the article it occurred in, I read this move as emphasizing that this activity gives students a wide amount of freedom in the construction of their language while placing a high importance on communication (the teacher is instructed to "tell [the students] not to worry too much about errors as long as they can understand the meaning"). This seems to be about simultaneously developing in students a willingness to communicate while

also fostering the idea that language use is about communication, not accuracy. At present, I have placed the move in the "positive emotion" category and not in a sub-category, because the variety of ways that it is used means it isn't well suited to fit in a more specific place, even though the idea is clearly positive. Overall, this move is a good representation of the highly subjective nature of this aspect of my project, and why all conclusions drawn are tentative and interested.

       **7.3.2 Teacher-linked benefits.** Most of the benefits relate directly or indirectly to students—that is, they describe aspects of the activity that will somehow lead to better student language ability, engagement, happiness, etc. The present category, however, collects benefits for the teacher. Neither the existence of this category nor the fact that it is the second most frequent category should be surprising, since the primary (perhaps, sole) audience for My Share are other teachers. While presumably teachers who are invested enough in in teaching to read these articles (implying that they either paid to be JALT members or that searched for these articles online or in school libraries) are likely to be teachers who are sincerely interested in successfully improving student learning outcomes, in my experience, all teachers have other, more personal concerns that also shape what they chose to do in the classroom. Table 18 lists the teacher-linked benefits.

Table 18

*Teacher-linked Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| flexible (level) | 28 |
| flexible (situation) | 11 |
| easy or less work to prepare | 10 |
| flexible (topic) | 7 |
| teacher learns about what students know | 8 |
| class management is improved | 5 |
| easy to explain | 4 |
| flexible (time) | 4 |
| repeatable | 4 |
| flexible (general) | 3 |
| teacher learns about students (knowledge and personality) | 3 |
| teacher learns about students' personalities | 3 |
| flexible (purpose) | 2 |
| other (once each) | 10 |

While the teacher-linked benefits broke down into 13 separate subcategories, 55 (53.5%) refer to the same general idea: flexibility. These moves occur across 39 separate articles (22.0% of the corpus). Each of these moves promotes the idea that the activity can be used in a variety of circumstances, such as with different levels of students, on different topics, etc. Some of these moves simply state that the activity is flexible, as in one that says the activity is "applicable to a range of student levels." In other cases, an activity was specifically designed for one level of student, but the author emphasizes that it could be adapted for other levels, as in one activity made for junior high school students where the author says, "I see no reason why more motivated and mature students might not also enjoy and benefit from this activity."

On the one hand, it is possible to read these flexibility-focused moves as simple arguments that promote the activity on the basis that it is useful for a wide variety of teachers. However, another way to read this as pointing to a teacher belief that teachers in Japan individually face a variety of teaching contexts, which means that having a collection of activities which can be applied to any course can be an easy way for teachers to save preparation time. For example, one article says, "The activity can be used in lesson types ranging from exam preparation to general English conversation...." While this may be a case where I am projecting my own experiences too strongly into the interpretation, most of the language teachers I know in Japan are routinely assigned a wide variety of classes, topics, and student levels, and thus would find activities that can be used across teaching circumstances beneficial.

This second interpretation is further supported by the second most frequent move in this category: the claim that the activity is easy to prepare or takes little time to prepare. For example, one author says, "Because this lesson requires zero prep time, it can be used any time a teacher needs an instant lesson plan that powerfully activates student talk and introspection." The idea that it is a good thing for an activity to require little set up time presupposes the idea that teachers are busy and/or have other things that they want to or need to spend time on outside of class. One article makes the connection explicit. It states that teachers of written English may have major time demands, stating, "Teachers preparing students for written examinations may be faced with an onerous marking load. This is particularly true for teachers with several large classes." This problem is "solved" by this activity

because it is "aimed at preempting the need for explanations of these errors after returning students' work." The entire intent of the activity is that the teacher "marks" (that is, indicates errors in) the students' writing samples in class (rather than outside of class, as the article implies is usually the case) while students are engaged in a second activity on their own. Thus, there seems to be a teacher belief manifested in some of the corpus that teachers in Japan have large demands on their time, and thus would benefit from activities that save them time. One might argue, in fact, that this is a major part of the purpose of all My Share activities, since the guidelines state, "My Share submissions are to be step-by-step procedural instructions that can be used 'right out of the box'" (JALT, n.d.-a). This is also the reason that so many of the activities come with downloadable handouts, since this alleviates the need for teachers to design their own.

As a contrast, I want to mention one article that points to a potential "loss" from this type of rapid, easy preparation. In this activity, students write their future wishes on paper in English similar to the Japanese cultural tradition of Tanabata. The article says that this can either be done normal paper (a prepared handout or in the students' own notebooks) or that the teacher can, "If desired, distribute colored strips of paper and ask each student to write his or her learning goals on one in as much detail as possible. When finished, students can hang the strips on real or artificial bamboo leaves, which can be affixed to the board with magnets." In the Conclusion, the article contrasts these two versions, saying, "In its most basic form, with no bamboo leaves or paper strips, this activity requires minimal preparation. If instructors choose to take some additional steps, they can create a festive atmosphere." This contrast implies that taking the "easier" route (the first sentence is coded as an "easy to prepare" move) results in a lower quality, less fun or enjoyable class. Note, however, that this is the only article in the corpus that expresses this contrasting view—the absence of others implies that this is the minority view.

**7.3.3 Participation benefits.** The third most frequent type of benefit in the corpus are those related to student participation; they are summarized in Table 19. The 73 moves in this category were distributed across 52 distinct articles, meaning that more than one-third of all articles indicated that one focus of the activity was to increase the amount of communication/interaction in the classroom.

Table 19

*Participation Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| interaction-generating | 36 |
| communication-generating | 26 |
| everyone can participate | 8 |
| other (once each) | 3 |

The moves are designed to distinguish between different types of participation. The most prevalent move, "interaction-generating," focuses on cases where interaction is promoted but is not specifically tied to the use of English. For example, one activity states that it will help students "develop their interpersonal and team-working skills." This comes from a creative writing activity, in which students first work together to brainstorm short answers to creative questions, and then later combine those ideas into an English text. However, while the students have to do the writing in English, the instructions do not require that the students talk to one another in English. Furthermore, since the activity explicitly makes the formal writing (the point at which students must produce a document which has "correct" grammar, vocabulary, and spelling) a second step, it almost seems to imply that the initial steps can be taken in either fragmented English or, perhaps, even in a mix of Japanese and English.[70] Thus, this move focuses more on the interpersonal aspects of team-building rather than on increased language use (though, in many cases, the two ideas co-exist).

The second move, on the other hand, specifically focuses on cases where the increased participation is focused on the actual use of English more than on the interpersonal interaction between students. Usually the distinction between the first and second categories was not immediately obvious from the move itself, and had to be inferred from the whole article, based on whether or not the activity or portion of the activity being described had to be done in English.[71] For example, one activity which says, "This activity is…communicative," involves students working in pairs, with one member describing, in English, a picture that they can see while the

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[70] Section 9.6 verifies that there is not a universal belief in "English only" classes in this corpus.
[71] Ambiguous cases were placed into the first subcategory.

other has to draw the picture from the description without being able to see the original image. Unlike some of the activities in the first move, students who are doing the activity per the rules must be speaking in English. In some cases, the first and second moves are paired, as in "Such an approach as this <u>increases camaraderie in the classroom</u>, provides an environment for <u>active socialization in the second language</u>, and promotes other communication skills such as active listening and appropriate body language and gestures to the conversation context." The first clause of this sentence focuses more on the social aspects of interaction, while the second focuses on the increased use of English for both speaking and listening in the class.

**7.3.4 Language-learning pedagogical benefits.**[72] This category contains moves specifically related to language learning, though not moves that simply state a specific language skill (which are categorized as "Teaching Targets" and discussed in detail in section 9.5). The moves are detailed in Table 20; note that a large portion of these benefits (10, or 23.3%) of these benefits are listed as "other" because they occurred only once each.

Table 20

*Language-learning Pedagogical Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| authentic | 12 |
| meaningful | 9 |
| students can express themselves | 4 |
| test taking skills | 3 |
| all four skills | 3 |
| vocabulary learning skills | 2 |
| other (once each) | 10 |

The first move, "authentic," includes cases where the article indicates that one benefit of the activity is that it either uses "authentic" material or that it promotes "authentic" language use by students. The former refers to the use of real-world materials such as TED Talks (as opposed to materials specifically designed for

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[72] While, as shown in Table 1, "non-language learning pedagogical benefits" outnumber those related to language learning, I have reversed these two sections to make the explanation clearer.

English language learners). The latter is more nebulous, but tends to be used as a contrast to mechanical, patterned communication, as in one article whose activity was explicitly designed to avoid being a "grammar drilling 'interview task' [in which] students begin to parrot the grammar [and] stray away from actively listening to their partner(s)."

The move of "meaningful" language use is similar to the first, in that it is used to tout the value of "real" communication, either explicitly or implicitly in comparison to textbook or drill based learning. One difference with the prior move is that in a majority of cases, the term "meaningful" was connected to a specific aspect of language, such as, "The vocabulary is, therefore, <u>meaningful and contextualized</u>, rather than a simple list of decontextualised items." In total, "authentic" and "meaningful" are listed as benefits in only 17 distinct articles (9.6%). This either indicates that the value of authenticity/meaningfulness is so naturalized for some authors that it doesn't qualify as a benefit or that authenticity is not generally considered to be beneficial. In support of the latter hypothesis, there is one article that explicitly mentions this as a negative aspect of other activities, saying, "The use of authentic material in the language classroom can be problematic, partly because the material is not simplified and sometimes demands that the learner has a large vocabulary." As with all negative claims (as will be discussed in section 7.4), the purpose of this claim is to show how this activity has overcome this problem through careful selection and even modification of those authentic materials. However, as this is only one example, it's not enough to soundly choose the latter interpretation over the former. More likely, the two ideas co-exist in this discourse community.

**7.3.5 Non-language-learning pedagogical benefits.** These benefits describe positive aspects of the activity that improve learning but aren't linked directly to language learning—rather, they could appear in activities on nearly any school subject. Table 21 summarizes these benefits. The three most common moves (representing just under half of the total moves in this category) are discussed in detail below.

Table 21

*Non-language-learning Pedagogical Benefits*

| Move | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| challenging | 10 |
| easy to do/understand | 7 |
| simple | 7 |
| contains assessment | 4 |
| recycling | 4 |
| review | 3 |
| competitive | 2 |
| increases interaction between students and teachers | 2 |
| quick | 2 |
| helps students retain information | 2 |
| other (one each) | 7 |

The two most frequent moves, "challenging" and "easy to do/understand" appear to be opposites. A closer examination shows that they share an underlying trait. First seven out of the ten times "challenging" is described as a benefit[73] it is paired with an additional benefit, such as, "a fun challenge," "challenging but enjoyable," and "challenging yet entertaining." Thus, the articles seem to set up a situation in which it is usually necessary to counterbalance something that is highly difficult with positive aspects. "Easy to do or understand," on the other hand, is usually employed to describe an unusual procedure or way of thinking about a concept that simplifies what the article represents as otherwise being difficult for students. For example, one article has students work collaboratively to compose an essay by writing concepts on sticky notes and then moving them around. This allows them to organize essays and build structure in a visually compelling way, essentially revising ideas collaboratively in real time. The intent is to teach "process writing," a writing technique that the article states is often quite challenging for students in that they don't understand what revision is supposed to entail. Thus, for both moves, the intent of the move seems to be to show how difficult topics can be handled by even lower level students if teachers utilize carefully designed activities—either ones that simplify the difficult topic or offset it with another benefit. This represents a teacher belief that what students can or can't learn is strongly governed by what a teacher

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[73] The word occurs in other cases, usually in statements of fact about the activity, as in an activity that is designed to help teach "challenging vocabulary."

does in class, perhaps at least as much as what students themselves do to learn the material. In other words, this centralizes the role of the teacher in the learning experience.

The "simple" move spans the difference between the first two moves. In two of the six moves, the "simple" is contrasted with a more difficult approach to a challenging topic. In four of the six articles using this move, there was a link between the "simple" move and a positive emotion move, as in "entertaining and simple warm-up activity" and "simple and fun game." In two of these cases, the appellation "simple" seems appropriate, though I personally question the use in two of the articles—one involves the students creating and then playing a board game, and the other involves a complicated dissembling by the teacher about forgetting a story and asking students to "imagine" the answers to reading comprehension questions. With the former, while a board game itself is fairly simple, it seems like it could be difficult to explain to students what types of questions they are supposed to write and how, as a team, they are supposed to decide on those questions. In the latter the activity would be much simpler if the teacher just said that students were writing a story together by asking and answering questions, rather than having to explain a complicated lie (that the teacher has both forgotten the story and that they can still do what is ostensibly a reading comprehension activity without the reading). I raise these points here to call attention to the fact that just because an activity uses a particular move or terminology does not make it so—these words may appear in the text because they are expected parts of the discourse.

## 7.4 Negative Claims

In the corpus, there were 65 instances occurring across 40 articles of descriptions of potential negatives related to language learning activities. In this category, I have combined two different types of "negative" claims. In the first type, the article explicitly says what their activity is not, as in "[This is an enjoyable] and non-anxiety producing activity." In the second type, the author makes a claim about a negative thing that they believe happens in other activities, such as "When understanding is minimal, teachers too often resort to verbal translation, or learners painstakingly take it upon themselves to translate the whole reading." In both cases, the article is stating (directly or indirectly) a potential problem that can occur in second language

classes (generally, or, as in the second example above, in a specific type of class, like a reading class using difficult texts). As discussed in Chapter 6, negative moves are always connected to an explanation of how the activity mitigates or avoids this problem. In the first type, the avoidance occurs in that move itself, while in the second type, the mitigation/avoidance tends to directly follow the "other" claim. For example, after the statement listed above about student and teacher tendency to switch to full translation, the article says,

> It is impossible to discredit the need for or reliance on the native language, but how it is incorporated into the classroom needs to be beneficial to the learner. By effectively applying the right tools and support with student-created dictionaries and peer-supported translations, students are able to gain confidence and meet the challenges of required readings.

Thus, the intent is never to simply state something negative (either potential or observed in other activities), but always to state the negative and then "solve" it via the activity itself. Table 22 summarizes the negative claims.

Table 22

*Negative Claims*

| Move | Occurrences |
|------|-------------|
| language-learning specific | 24 |
| negative emotions | 16 |
| de-energizing | 12 |
| pedagogical (except language-learning) | 11 |
| teacher-linked | 2 |

The most frequent kind of negative claims are those which relate to pedagogical issues that arise in language learning classrooms. These moves tend to be the most specific, such as the one raised above about excessive translation use in classes with difficult reading texts. Other examples include claims that other activities about the vocabulary of emotions are to unnatural and limited, that the use of paper maps limits vocabulary building, and that student writing suffers because of "teaching which over-emphasizes teaching conjunct/conjunctions such as however, therefore, and so on, as the only means to link texts together." Each of these

claims constructs an image of other language teachers doing something "wrong." They position the teacher-author as the hero/protagonist who either avoids or solves the problems of the stereotypical "other." This positioning is only successful, however, if the reader accepting the warrants that 1) this negative behavior represents a common "error," 2) that this behavior is actually negative, and 3) that this negative is important enough to be worth constructing a full activity to address it. Each of these warrants may be questionable; for instance, one article argues that typical vocabulary learning omits an important step, one that I personally consider to be somewhere between meaningless and harmful.[74] More interesting than my own opinion, though, is that in the author survey (see section 11.4) this author said that now, several years after publication, they no longer consider it to be a relevant part of language learning. Thus, I wonder if the construction of other teachers as deficient (or sometimes even harmful) is worthwhile if the argument is so tenuous.

The next two types of negative claims, negative emotions and de-energizing, correspond closely to the similarly named "positive emotions" category and "energizing" move, respectively. These moves are significantly more generic, and, as such, are less open to criticism. For example, in "negative emotions," one article says, "The activity gives students the freedom to choose and present topics in a non-intimidating and interactive way." It would be hard to argue in favor of an activity that deliberately intimidated students. However, these arguments are not always compelling. One "de-energizing" move states, "Best of all, this activity allows the instructor to bring students' attention to common grammatical and spelling mistakes without putting the class to sleep." The implicit argument (this activity is good because students don't become sleepy) could be rejected if the reader rejects the unstated premise (other activities talking about grammatical and spelling mistakes make students sleepy). Alternatively, other negative claim arguments might be questioned if the reader rejects the claim that these are actually negative. For example, three articles state that they avoid inducing anxiety, describing the activity as creating a "low-anxiety situation" or "non-anxiety producing situation." There is a contrasting approach to literacy education (which overlaps with though

[74] I don't identify the specific step here because it would uniquely identify the author, whose survey response I describe in Chapter 11.

is not identical to second language education) arising out of the multicultural, multilinguistic classrooms of U.S. universities at the end of the 20th century. For me, the best description comes from Pratt (1999), who talks about a course focusing on what they call "contact zones." Pratt describes the class as follows:

> The very nature of the course put ideas and identities on the line. All the students in the class had the experience, for example, of hearing their culture discussed and objectified in ways that horrified them; all the students saw their roots traced back to legacies of both glory and shame; <u>all the students experienced face-to-face the ignorance and incomprehension, and occasionally the hostility, of others</u>….Along with rage, incomprehension, and pain there were exhilarating moments of wonder and revelation, mutual understanding, and new wisdom—the joys of the contact zone. The sufferings and revelations were, at different moments to be sure, experienced by every student. No one was excluded, <u>and no one was safe</u>.

I provide this extended example of a text from outside of the corpus to demonstrate that even beliefs which appear universal within the corpus (that is, the sentiments are widely held and there are no articles that take an opposing stance) are not "natural" or "always true"—they are a construct of a particular discourse community in a particular space and time.

While the fourth type of negative claim, non-language learning pedagogical problems, contains 11 moves, this represents only four different articles. One article recommends substituting video projects for PowerPoint presentations. Three negative claims come in a single sentence, where the article says, "More teachers are requiring the use of PowerPoint presentations, but these presentations can <u>become overused</u>, <u>boring</u>, and <u>ineffective</u> for achieving classroom goals." Unlike the negative claim discussed in the previous paragraph that appears universal but is not when examined from outside of the corpus, this claim sees direct opposition from within the corpus, since there are three other activities that do include students making PowerPoint presentations. Thus, while some beliefs seem to be naturalized within this discourse community, others are openly in contention.

**7.5 Experiences**

As discussed in the Move Analysis (chapter 6), "Describe the author's experiences" moves are cases where the author talks about a time when they used this activity in the past. After re-segmenting and recoding, I identified 106 "experiences." Those segments were divided into five categories, as shown in Table 23.

Table 23

*Experiences Moves*

| Move | Occurrences |
| --- | --- |
| positive result, focusing on students | 62 |
| neutral description | 22 |
| positive result, focusing on activity | 16 |
| experiences other than the activity | 5 |
| negative experience | 1 |

The most common use for "experiences" is to state a positive result for the students—some way that the students changed because of the activity, as in "Using this format has enabled my JHS students to successfully produce far more complex responses than would normally be the case;" or some positive feedback that the students gave to the teacher about the activity, as in "Many students say this group work is the best in the course." These moves fulfill essentially the same rhetorical role as "Benefits," but are phrased "when I used this activity this positive result occurred" rather than the more general "if a teacher uses this activity then this positive result will generally occur" argument of a benefit move.

The second most common category are neutral statements made by the author about the process of using the activity. Many of these statements relate to when or how frequently the author has used the activity, as in "At the beginning of the semester, I put students into groups and I use this activity." These moves act similarly to "fact about the activity" moves.

Third, 16 of the "experiences" make a positive statement about the activity, but, unlike the most frequent type, phrase the positive evaluation solely with respect to the activity rather than the students' response to that activity. For example, one article says, "This activity has always flowed well because it provides a range of different skills practice—reading, grammar, speaking, and writing—combined in one activity." Note that some of these segments include cases where students are

mentioned, as in, "This activity has proven to be effective with different levels of L2 learners," but are placed into this category because the thing being evaluated is the activity, not the student.

Fourth, there were five cases of "experiences" that are related to the authors' experiences outside of the specific activity. Of those, three refer to the author observing a problem outside of class, and then devising an activity to be used in class to address that problem. These moves mimic the "Give background about this activity" move.

While there are not many major differences between each of the types of experiences and their counterparts among other moves, it is the case that some of the most extreme claims are described as "experiences" rather than "benefits," etc. For example, one reads, "My mature students commented that it is the most fun they have ever had in an English class!" Another says, "The Job Fair Project is consistently one of our program's most popular activities." These statements go beyond stating that the activities are fun and popular and situate them as the "most fun" and "most popular." Other similar terms found in these moves are "stunning," "invariably," and "overwhelmingly." I interpret this difference in tone as one of rhetorical necessity— while claiming that an activity is "fun" or "effective" can be believable when phrased as a general statement (as in a "Benefit" move), claiming that an activity is "the most fun" or that students "overwhelmingly enjoy" it requires reference to the past as evidence for the more extreme claim. Furthermore, the fact that most (though not all) of these extreme claims are often placed into the mouths of students is likely done to make the claims appear "more objective" and not just the opinion of the lone author.

**7.5.1 Student voices.** Besides the different perspective and tense of the "experience" moves, another thing that sets this move apart is that it is one of the main places where students' voices appear, both directly and indirectly. Note that I have not included any cases here where the students are speaking to fulfill an

assignment (as in, when the students do a dialogue or write an essay)—only cases where the students have the chance to speak freely.[75]

Student voices appear in the corpus in three ways. First, students are directly quoted in the corpus only four times. In two of those cases, the students directly say that the activity was good—in one case, the author quotes four different students, each with a different positive message about the assignment. In one case, the quotation from the student is essentially a summary of the main purpose of the activity, which indicates that the student has successfully learned what the teacher intended. The final case is neutral.

The second way that student voices appear in "experience" sentences is via indirect speech. To be included in this category, the sentence had to use a verb such as *state, comment*, or *say*. 13 of the "experience" moves fall into this category. Ten of those moves are praise for the teacher/activity. The reported praise is generally much stronger than the direct speech, using phrases like "overwhelmingly positive," "consistently favorable responses," "the best in the course," and, even "the most fun they have ever had in an English class." Two of the indirect speech acts by students are neutral, and one was highly negative. In this last example, the activity was about using poetry (first reading Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken," then writing poetry themselves), and it ends with the following: "I actually told my students that they would thank me years down the road for introducing the poem to them. They laughed at me. I'm waiting." Here, the author's absolute, smug certainty is surprising—while authors quite often express confidence that the activity they are describing is effective or useful, this example of the author-teacher asserting their certainty that they had not only taught the students English, but also made a life-changing event for the students is out of tone for the corpus in general (and, in truth, a bit worrisome).

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[75] I want to mention one example of "speaking for the assignment" because it is the single longest example of student speech in the corpus, at 77 words-12.5% of the entire article. It is an example of a speech given by a student. What strikes me every time I read this is that it clearly represents a significant investment in work by a student to successfully complete a difficult assignment. The quotation is unattributed and edited ("minor corrections added"), and there is no indication that the student gave permission for this quotation to be used. While attribution or permission may not be technically required, there is an ethical question of whether it is appropriate for the author to, almost certainly without asking, re-use these student's words for their own benefit.

Lastly, there are 19 instances where the author implies that students have given some sort of evaluative feedback without explicitly stating so. I have placed any sentence in this category where the author makes a claim about the internal mental states of students that cannot be measured directly by their performance on a task. So, for example, when an article says, "This activity helped students to realize that each sentence in a paragraph should answer a different question, and be placed according to a logical coherent order," I assume that the author can determine this by reading the students' assignments and judging the quality of their work. On the other hand, when an article says, "My students had a lot of fun with this activity," my assumption is that for the author to "read" that fun, the students must have spoken, laughed, or jumped, or otherwise semiotically indicated their internal mental state. All 19 cases in this category were positive evaluations of the students' mental state.

These insertions or implications of student voices are one of the three main forms of what Fairclough (2003) calls intertextuality in the corpus, with the others being the use of academic references (discussed in sections 5.3.4 and 6.3) and some of the context/background claims (discussed below in section 7.6). Unlike the academic references, however, these outside voices are never identified—the direct quotations and indirect speech are attributed to nameless students, and the implied speech doesn't even get that courtesy, with the teacher or activity implicitly getting the credit. In the footnote above, I raised the concern that the author was gaining benefit by including a particularly long quotation from the work of a nameless student—in Chapter 12, I discuss how the authors and editors I interviewed and editing regularly stated that one of the main reasons for writing and publishing My Share articles was so that the authors could gain a publication credit for their CV, thus making them more employable. This concern can be applied to a lesser degree to all the inclusions of student speech.

Beyond the concern about the appropriation of student voices for personal benefit there is a further concern about what it is that students are portrayed as saying. 31, or 83.8% of the use of student voices is praise for the activity. Since these articles are supposed to only represent successful activities, it's not surprising that there are few negative comments or reactions from students. Nonetheless, that means that this corpus is constructing an image of students as happy, satisfied, and, moreover, compliant. Dissent, disagreement, and indifference are silenced by the

corpus. I would argue that the inclusion of some student voices actually makes this worse—if the articles were written solely from the teacher-authors' perspectives, then this would feel less dominating. That is, the sentence, "This activity is fun" is less restrictive of student identities than "My students had a lot of fun with this activity." The former locates the "fun" within the activity, meaning that students may or may not internalize that "fun," but, in the latter, the article has defined the internal mental state of all the past participants in this activity.

## 7.6 Direct Statements of Teacher Beliefs

The final section of this chapter attends primarily though not exclusively to the statements coded in the "Context/Background" category (hereafter called "context" for brevity). Many of these statements give direct insight into the author's beliefs. While as discussed in section 7.2 I did not segregate these statements into distinct subcategories, I have grouped segments with broadly similar topics together to aid in the discussion below.

**7.6.1. Japanese students.** Most of this paper has focused on the identity and beliefs of teachers. This is because this genre speaks primarily to teacher beliefs/identities, since they are both the authors and the target audience. Other than the very limited set of student voices discussed above in section 7.5.1, all the claims are made from the teacher-authors' perspectives (and even the limited examples of student voices are necessarily mediated through the lens/voice of the teacher-authors' words). However, there are cases where the articles make claims about students, so it is possible to examine what identities the genre attempts to construct for students.

The corpus lists several things that students like and don't like. In the former category,[76] students supposedly like fashion, reading, playing bingo, "talking about themselves," making videos (more than PowerPoint presentations), "learning a few words in a new language," and incorporating their major field into English lessons (3 examples). On the other hand, students don't like English (except for English

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[76] Consider the remainder of this section to be phrased in terms of "according to the authors/corpus/genre."

majors), pair work, or talking about holidays. In terms of in-class and English learning/using behaviors, a few of the claims are neutral or positive, such as that students care about correct pronunciation, "expect to be tested rigorously on vocabulary," and prefer timely feedback on their written assignments. However, most of the statements about student learning or in-class behavior are negative, as shown in Table 24.

Table 24

*Negative Characterizations of Students' Language Learning Behaviors*

| Category | Specifics |
|---|---|
| Classroom behavior | • are sleepy in the morning and after lunch<br>• are hesitant to speak (especially at the beginning of the semester) |
| Conversations | • can only consistently use "me too" as a response<br>• find it boring<br>• naturally fall into a "mechanical seesaw rhythm"<br>• won't interrupt other students |
| Interaction with teacher | • are hesitant to tell the teacher problems they are having<br>• have difficulty asking questions<br>• won't tell the teacher if the teacher has made a mistake |
| Presentations/ Research projects | • are "apprehensive about speaking in front of the whole class"<br>• don't have practice doing self-directed research<br>• get overwhelmed by the numerous tasks required to create and give a presentation<br>• lack experience and confidence in presenting<br>• rely on scripts, which "often results in poor delivery"<br>• waste time because they don't make a research plan |
| Pronunciation | • locked into "katakana pronunciation" |
| Reading | • get demotivated by difficult reading<br>• find it difficult to "maintain their level of concentration and interest with regard to a reading text unless they are skilled readers or there are urgent reasons for them to study the text" |
| Standardized tests | • sometimes lack motivation to succeed<br>• sometime underprepare |
| Writing | • can't write formal citations<br>• find creative writing to be "daunting," and lose confidence when doing it<br>• "have problems forming logically ordered coherent texts" |
| Vocabulary | • have difficulty with numbers<br>• lack vocabulary for reading, speaking, or testing |

In their life outside of class, students "use their native language exclusively outside the classroom," use smartphones or computers (3 examples), have had fewer than five major life experiences, are more likely familiar with soccer than other

sports, are modest, don't talk about their achievements, lack computer literacy, are interested in environmental topics (especially that they were interested in the wake of the 3/11 earthquake and tsunami disaster) but lack some key knowledge about them, and worry about adapting to school (when they are first-year students).

My reason for providing these long lists of seemingly unrelated items is to show two things. First, judgments about student identities, behaviors, and abilities are varied, disconnected, disjointed, and sometimes even contradictory. While some of the claims are made with hedges, such as the statement that they "tend to be modest and avoid talking about their achievements," most are stated with declarative language and no hesitancy. This is the case even for the strongest claims—note, for example, the use of the word "exclusively" in the above phrase about the sole use of Japanese outside of class. In other words, the teacher-authors appear to be confident in their beliefs about students. Such a claim could easily be extended to other aspects of the corpus, such as the positive emotions discussed above in section 7.3.1. For example, if an article claims an activity is "fun," that can also be read as a claim by the author that students find the activity to be fun. In that sense, the teacher-author is making a judgment about what students like or don't like. In that case, of course, the author may have evidence, such as the physical and verbal responses of students. Similarly, at least some of the judgments in this section may be based on observation. But I have two concerns: first, for some of these claims, there's nearly no way that the teachers could know–for example, I doubt that the author who said that students don't have practice doing self-directed research has conducted an extensive examination of this through surveys, interviews, or examination of prior curricula. Second, the claims are both too strident and too universal. For example, it is simply nonsense to believe that students use Japanese exclusively outside of class—there are numerous students with non-Japanese friends or family or who engage in part-time jobs or hobbies where they use English. However, it seems to be a feature of this genre that claims are usually made boldly and with little qualification.

My second reason for providing these long lists of descriptions of students and student behavior is to emphasize that there is an imbalance between positive and negative descriptions of students. While the ambiguous nature of some statements and the fact that these descriptions are not concentrated in a single move

makes a clear quantification of this imbalance impossible, there is no doubt that student problems and problematic behaviors are highlighted more often than positive depictions of students (except, of course, the positive way that students supposedly respond to and learn from the activities being described).

**7.6.2 Activity sources**. One of the functions of the "give background about the activity" move was to explain why the author created or first used the activity being described. In some cases, this is as simple as saying that the author learned the activity from a colleague, or that they adapted it from an existing activity—for example, one article says, "This game is my creation, but the idea is based on arithmetic baseball, which my third grade teacher used to use to successfully motivate math-hating students in our elementary school." This taking/borrowing is explicitly declared seven times in the corpus, though there is no reason to believe that these are the only times that the activities are drawn closely from other pre-existing activities—except in a few cases where the article explicitly uses a phrase like "the activity I created," the providence of the activities is usually unclear. While it might be tempting to read statements like this as evidence that a subset of the authors approves of the idea of "borrowing" activities, it is probably more accurate to say that these statements just highlight a belief that is accepted by most of the community, since the whole point of the My Share section is to give teachers activities that they can adapt or even directly use. Both these specific instances and the broader concept of sharing points to an additional underlying teacher belief of the genre itself: teaching is, in some ways, a collective effort, in that teachers are not expected to be independent workers, but, rather, to develop classroom practices by looking at what others have done before.

In addition to looking at past activities, some authors seem to have looked to pedagogical, psychological, or second language learning theory to serve as the foundation for their activities. This belief is a bit harder to tease out, since it isn't always clear if the theory preceded the activity or if the author was using the activity and then looked for supporting theory when they wrote the article. As an example of the former case, one article says, "This activity is based on Find someone who… (Klippel, 1984) and the theory of multiple intelligences (MI; Gardner, 1999)." For the latter, another article first describes some theory, and then says, "It is in the spirit of

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this suggestion that the following activity is offered." However, for most of the 47 articles that contained references to research, it wasn't clear exactly what temporal relationship that research had to the genesis of the article.

The one other major source for activities that was discussed is popular culture. Four articles state that they are based on television shows, and one is based on a radio show. For example, one article says, "This activity is based on Bravo cable TV's *Inside the Actors Studio*," which consists of interviews of actors, and which has a portion with fixed questions. In the activity, students watch a clip from the show and then recreate the interview using the same questions with a partner. Other activities seem to be based more indirectly on other aspects of daily life, such as an activity focused on fashion which says, "Furthermore, with the subject of fashion being of interest to young adults the activity's materials can contribute to discussion and enthusiasm within the classroom." Whether or not that and similar claims should be called a source, though, could be debated.

There is another theme running through the statements about activity sources—the idea of customization to specific circumstances. At least eight articles explain that the activity was designed in response to a specific teaching situation. Sometimes, this was a broad condition, such as the article which says, "This activity is designed for non-English majors;" on the opposite end of the spectrum is an article which says, "This lesson was created as part of a Media English elective course in Fall 2013 with a small class of students ranging in level from low intermediate (roughly TOEIC 400) to near native returnees." In some cases, the article specifically responded to a problem, such as an activity created in response to the following situation: "I once had a class where one student did not answer when his name was called for attendance."

In addition to the cases where a "background about the activity" move explicitly states that the activity was designed to fit a problem or classroom setting that the author had encountered, several other moves in the corpus could also be read as indicating that the activity was designed to meet a specific situation. Of the 107 articles that explicitly state a teaching target, at least some of them must have been deliberately created to help students reach that goal. For example, it seems unlikely that the article that uses the website Upworthy to teach students about "strategies that arouse an audience's curiosity and appeal to their emotions" and

helps students "understand the key elements of an effective hook" wandered into this activity by chance and then afterwards thought about what goal it helped the students reach. Similarly, some of activities containing negative claims—especially those that talk about problems with other activities—must have been designed specifically to fix those problems, as in the article which says, "Unfortunately, the mundane act of calling the class roll not only wastes precious teaching time, but can also drain the energy and enthusiasm" and then goes on to provide an alternative way to handle class attendance.

The idea that activities would be customized stands somewhat in contrast to some of the other findings in this research. In section 9.3, I will show that almost 30% of the articles are designed for students of any English level, and section 7.3.2 showed that 22.0% of the articles include some type of "flexibility" as one of the benefits. It could be that some members of the discourse community value flexibility and repeatability, while others value activities that are carefully honed to meet specific classroom circumstances. Alternatively, it could be that the community simultaneously values both, believing that there are times for both generic activities (such as those activities that call themselves "time filler[s]" or "warm-up activit[ies]") and activities that seek to achieve a specific for a specific group of students.

**7.6.3 Other classes.** Most of the descriptions of other language learning classes were discussed in the "negative claims" section above (section 7.4) There are 18 cases in the "context" category that talk about other classes, but they are each unique—that is, there are no repeated claims across this subcategory. One type of claim that occurred a few times was for the article to claim what types of assignments commonly occur, such as the article that says, "More teachers are requiring the use of PowerPoint presentations." As with the claims about students discussed in the previous section, there is generally no evidence to support these claims. A few of the claims about other classes in this category are negative, such as one that says that students have had "years of ineffective English instruction." None of the claims about other classes describe foreign language instruction as effective, enjoyable, or generally positive. Thus, even though the number of negative statements about foreign language instruction in Japan (in this and the "negative

claims" category) is low they are not balanced by positive claims. Thus, while reading a few My Share articles might have no effect on a teachers' impression of Japanese foreign language education, sustained reading of the genre must necessarily leave a reader thinking that, on average, there are more bad points than good points in Japanese foreign language education.

**7.6.4 English language learning.** The articles make a number of claims about the English language, theories about how it should be learned, and examples of techniques that can be used to do that learning. Some of these claims are probably completely uncontroversial, in that they represent simple "facts" that are widely agreed upon. Many of these uncontroversial facts are simple descriptions of the rules of English, such as "Casual conversations in English often include the reduction of words." In addition, some of the claims about the use/learning of English are also likely to be widely accepted because they contain hedges or have limited scope, such as "The process of writing is <u>not necessarily</u> a silent and solitary act."

Many of the other claims about English, however, are far more expansive, absolute, and, frankly, grandiose. In my coding, I called these "keys to English" moves, and they represent about 40% of the claims about English learning. These claims are marked by words and phrases such as "central," "essential," "important," "key," "vital," "we all know." Many of them are commonplaces in TESOL (or even learning in general), such as, "Motivation is a <u>significant individual learner variable</u> in second language acquisition and plays a k<u>ey role</u> in sustaining long-term L2 learning." However, others seem much more open to disagreement. For instance, one article says, "The aim of building fluency has long been viewed as <u>an uncontroversial and vital component of the language learning program</u>." While this is a statement that many teachers do agree with, a simple perusal of most textbooks will show that cannot be said to be "uncontroversial and vital." And, as another article says, "Many ESL students at the university level are used to studying textbook units for a class or two." Furthermore, if each of these "key" claims is taken at face value, then there are a very large number of things that are critical for language learning, including vocabulary, emotions, prepositions, communicative strategies, fluency, interesting and relevant materials, motivation, and more. The reason for each of these dramatic statements, of course, is that each one serves as a justification for the activity—if the

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claim is true, then using the activity in the article that happens to work on that key/critical/important/etc. goal is clearly going to be a good idea for students' language improvement.

There aren't any specific topics or techniques that make up a large portion of either these claims (either extreme or tempered). Of the 51 articles with claims of this type, the single most frequent topic was vocabulary at 6 (only 11.8%), and 12 of the 25 different topics were mentioned only once each. The higher level of vocabulary-related claims is consistent with the findings in the analysis of teaching targets in section 9.5.

**7.6.5 The power of technology.** In section 9.4.2, I will discuss the use of technology to assist language learning/teaching in the corpus in detail. That section discusses what types of technology are required and how they are utilized in a pedagogical sense. Here I want to focus on the arguments connected with technology use—that is, how the 22 articles that discus technology in "context" moves use these moves to advance arguments about either their activities or the technology that is used in them.

Of the 22 articles with "context" moves directly related to a piece of technology, 16 of them don't just describe the technology—they also make value judgments about it. Some of this is minor praise—just an adjective or two—such as, "The website makes it <u>easy</u>." But some of the commentary is effusive, such as "Google Earth is user friendly and <u>limited only by one's imagination</u>." Looking beyond the "context" moves to the way the way that technology is treated in general, two particularly egregious cases are of note. In some of my early notes I described one of the authors as an "evangelist."[77] The entire article reads not as a language activity but as promotion of a website, and the author seems less a teacher than a marketer. Another author in the corpus wrote two articles, both of which use the same website—and each article praises that website extensively. While these articles, especially the most extreme ones, represent only a small portion of the corpus, there are clear beliefs running through them that 1) technology, especially computers and

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[77] "A technology evangelist serves as an ambassador of organizational technologies, interacting with prospects, partners, users, producers and other members of the organization." (Lucas-Conwell, 2006, December).

smartphones, have significant potential for language learning/teaching, and 2) an acceptable use of a quasi-academic paper is the promotion of specific piece of proprietary technology. Note that *The Language Teacher* has, at times, had a separate column called "Wired" which only reviews educational technology; however, that genre is fundamentally different, in the same way that it would be different for an author to promote a specific textbook in what is otherwise supposed to be a general article as compared to how that same textbook might be treated in a review section. There are only a few instances of the opposite position—that is, arguments recommending the use of less technology in the classroom. For example, one article promotes the use of paper notebooks for journaling over "message boards and blogs." Thus, even though the issue of the efficacy of incorporating technology in classes has been widely debated in the TESOL field, the corpus presents a discourse community that seems to be either neutral or generally supportive of such use.

## 7.7 Summary and Discussion

In this corpus, there are many arguments about language teaching/learning, Japanese schools and students, what it means to be a teacher or student, etc. The first key to understanding any of them is that there is always a core argument in each My Share article, based on the very principles of the genre as explained in the guidelines. This argument is, in short, "This activity is effective, and it will make your classes better if you use it." This argument is often clarified—the article may hold the activity to be effective for only a specific language learning goal, or with a certain kind of student, or under some other specific condition. But positing and centering this as a fundamental argument of all of the articles makes it possible to better interpret many of the more specific moves and arguments occurring throughout the corpus.

In this chapter, I have focused on the embedded arguments that point to teacher beliefs and depictions of student and teacher identity. The "Benefits" moves contain some of the strongest depictions of teacher beliefs in the corpus because there are several categories of benefits which occur across a large number of articles. For example, nearly 40% of the articles represent/construct a belief that language learning is improved when students are happy (expressed in terms like "fun," "enjoyable," etc.), over 13% of the articles represent/construct a belief that

creativity is a positive aspect of language learning, about 11% of the articles represent/construct a belief that language classes should take steps to raise student energy levels, and almost 10% of the articles represent/construct a belief that teachers should employ activities that build students' confidence. There are also a lot of "smaller" (more specific) beliefs represented/constructed, such as that technology is generally a valuable addition to the classroom; that language teaching in Japan is, on average, not particularly good; and that there is value in the use of authentic and meaningful English. I have repeated the phrase "represent/construct" because this analysis doesn't reveal what the individual authors believe, but, rather, what beliefs appear in the texts—beliefs which both represent some aspect of the current attitudes across the discourse community and also help construct future attitudes. Also, none of these beliefs are universally held—contradictory beliefs can be found both in and out of the corpus.

One of the aspects of teacher identity that is implicit in several different moves is that teachers do not make decisions based solely on what is optimal for student learning—they also consider issues such as their own time, comfort, and interests. Also, teachers are the "heroes" of these stories—when they "identify" problems for students in other language lessons or problems supposedly inherent in language learning, they solve these problems. Part of what a teacher is tasked with doing in this corpus is to motivate unmotivated students, simplify challenging topics, and relieve students' anxiety at learning a foreign language.

With respect to students, many of the articles act like the authors are very confident about what students do, think, and believe. The articles attribute a wide variety of interests and behaviors to students, some of which are inconsistent with other claims in the corpus, my own experience, or logical deductions. These bold statements effectively silence students, and the very limited use of student voices in the corpus—almost always used to praise the teacher or activity—further renders students into props designed to support the "use this lesson" argument. It is likely that the genre convention which requires authors to promote their activities (not an explicit rule, but one which is transmitted to writers through their exposure to the genre and their attempts, intentional or unintentional, to mimic what they have read so that their submission "fits" into My Share genre) is causing some authors to engage in this silencing and appropriation of students. Finally, one of the most

potentially pernicious embedded arguments is linked to the "teacher is a hero" argument: except for the active-learning linked benefits, which will be discussed in section 10.4, most of the argument-linked moves support the idea that a major determining factor in student success is what choices teachers make.

# Chapter 8
## Lexicogrammar Analysis

## 8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine several aspects of the lexicogrammar of this corpus. Most of the work was accomplished using corpus analysis tools, especially AntConc (Anthony, 2014) and KH Coder (Higuchi, 2015). This chapter contributes answers to research questions 1, 2, and 3. Question 1 is addressed primarily in the latter part of the chapter, where I look at how words and collocations are distributed differently across each of the sections. Question 2 is addressed in the examination of what actions teachers and students take in these activities, as shown by what verbs co-occur with each actor. Question 3 is addressed throughout the first half of the chapter, as I show fundamental differences between the way teachers and students are represented in the corpus. For each of these issues, in the same way that the work in Chapters 5–7 weren't solely interesting in defining the linguistic rules of the genre, this chapter should not be viewed as an abstract application of corpus linguistics to find facts about the lexicogrammar. Rather, the goal is to study the lexicogrammar through a CDA lens to find how it carries information about beliefs, power, and identity—as Mautner (2016) said, corpus linguistics can helpfully contribute to CDA, but "the analyst must, precisely, look *beyond* the text proper in order to unearth socially meaningful interpretations that can then be enlisted to do socially transformative work" (p. 157). Thus, this chapter also makes use of text analysis, especially in the analysis of actors and their actions, to contextualize the numerical results derived from the corpus software and make interpretations about what those results mean as a part of discursive work being done by these texts.

## 8.2 Method

The process utilized in this section arose organically and iteratively, in the way that Baker (2008) recommends for authors who utilize corpus linguistics tools to further the aims of discourse analysis. Only the first and last parts of this chapter (those focused on word and N-gram[78] frequency) were planned from the outset, while the

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[78] See section 8.7 for a definition and description of "N-gram."

rest arose during the research process as one set of results led to new questions and avenues of concern. The initial step I conducted was to use the corpus analysis software to determine the most frequent words in the corpus are, following Baker's (2008) claim that "Frequency is one of the most central concepts underpinning the analysis of corpora" (p. 47). When I made that initial search, my plan was that I would also look for common collocations, employing some of the lighter techniques of corpus analysis. While I did conduct this second step, the results of the initial frequency analysis were so surprising that my attention was first diverted towards better understanding the unusual result. This led me to focus on a two-part analysis at the intersection of the semantic, grammatical, and lexical levels, examining the two major actors (semantic agents) in the corpus in terms of how they are represented and in terms of what they do based on the verbs that they co-occur with. The former was done by identifying and counting all cases where an actor either appeared directly in the corpus (via a specific word) and cases where these actors were part of the underlying semantics of the sentence but were not lexically present. The latter was done by using the concordance tools found in KH Coder to count which verbs commonly appeared near each of the instances found in the former step. Each of these steps is explained in further detail below in the relevant sections, since some of the steps are better understood in the context of prior results.

After completing the actor analysis, I returned to the N-gram analysis as well as some additional work on individual word frequency broken down by section. Even though the analysis of frequent N-grams shares more in common with the initial word frequency search, I placed it after the other two analyses, both to reflect the process and because my analysis in that section was informed by the work I did in the prior two steps.

## 8.3 Word Frequency

The first thing I used the corpus analysis software to do was generate a list of the most frequent in the corpus. [79] Frequency, however, has little meaning in the abstract.

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[79] This section and the following two are based in part on an earlier paper (Hahn, 2018a). In some cases, the results presented here differ slightly from that analysis, due to refinements in the analysis. Major changes, such as a change to the way possessive pronouns are treated, are noted in the text.

Rather, frequency has to be examined in comparison to word frequencies in reference corpora (Mautner, 2016). I used two reference corpora:

1. The British National Corpus (BNC), which contains over 100 million words, composed of 90% written and 10% spoken data, including "extracts from regional and national newspapers, specialist periodicals and journals for all ages and interests, academic books and popular fiction, published and unpublished letters and memoranda, school and university essays, among many other kinds of text" (Burnard, 2009).
2. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which contains over 560 million words, evenly divided between spoken English, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals (Davies, n.d.).

Table 25 contains a compilation of the 20 most frequent words in the My Share corpus alongside the two reference corpora. The My Share data was compiled using Laurence Anthony's software called AntConc (Anthony, 2014) and the data on the two reference corpora were compiled from online resources (Davies, n.d.; Leech, Rayson and Wilson's, n.d.). This table shows a very surprising result for the My Share corpus: the fifth most common noun is *student*. Note that every other word in the table is a function word. In English, these words, also called grammatical words because they exist mainly to express grammatical relationships between words, primarily consist of prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, and pronouns. As Baker (2008) says, "With few exceptions, almost all forms of language have a high proportion of grammatical words."

Table 25

*Most Frequent Words in the My Share Corpus Compared to Two Reference Corpora as Counted by AntConc*

| | My Share | | BNC | | COCA | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Word | Frequency | Word | Frequency | Word | Frequency |
| 1 | the | 630 | the | 618 | the | 490 |
| 2 | to | 361 | of | 294 | be | 279 |
| 3 | and | 289 | and | 268 | and | 239 |
| 4 | a | 274 | a | 216 | of | 230 |
| 5 | students | 253 | in | 182 | a | 225 |
| 6 | of | 236 | to | 163 | in | 155 |
| 7 | in | 175 | it | 109 | to | 141 |
| 8 | for | 136 | is | 100 | have | 96 |
| 9 | their | 122 | to | 93 | to | 86 |
| 10 | is | 103 | was | 92 | it | 86 |
| 11 | on | 95 | I | 89 | I | 88 |
| 12 | or | 90 | for | 84 | that | 76 |
| 13 | that | 84 | that | 73 | for | 73 |
| 14 | they | 83 | you | 70 | you | 68 |
| 15 | this | 81 | he | 68 | he | 65 |
| 16 | as | 81 | be | 66 | with | 60 |
| 17 | have | 80 | with | 66 | on | 55 |
| 18 | with | 78 | on | 65 | do | 57 |
| 19 | be | 76 | by | 51 | say | 43 |
| 20 | can | 72 | at | 48 | this | 42 |

*Notes.* All frequencies are listed as number of occurrences per 10,000 words in the respective corpus. The frequency list for the BNC was downloaded from the companion website for Leech, Rayson and Wilson's (n.d.) book *Word frequencies in written and spoken English: Based on the British National Corpus,* and the COCA list comes from the "Word frequency data" page connected with the BYU corpus website (Davies, n.d.)

To find *student* not only in the top 20 but actually in the top 5 is surprising and points to the extraordinarily focused nature of this corpus. The first noun in both reference corpora is *time*, appearing at rank 79 on the BNC (frequency = 15) and rank 52 on the COCA (frequency =17). It is important, though, to be careful when comparing AntConc results with those of the reference corpora, because AntConc does not count words in the same way as the software used to tally the reference corpora. Specifically, AntConc does not combine words together based on their root form. For example, for nouns, the singular and plural noun are counted as two separate "words," and for verbs, each conjugation of the verb is counted separately. There are three words which have combined totals that alter the top twenty ranking and need to be adjusted: *student* (found in the forms *students* and *students*) had a

combined frequency of 291; *be* (found in the forms *is, be, are, were,* and *was*) had a combined frequency of 290; and *have* (found in the forms *have, has,* and *had*) had a combined frequency of 98. While all other words with multiple forms also change ranking, none have combined frequencies high enough to reach the top twenty. In this adjusted ranking, *student* is the third most frequent word, followed by *be*; also, *have* moves up to 11th place. In this adjusted ranking, *student* is 17 to 19 times more frequent than the most frequent noun in the reference corpora. Stuart and Botella (2009), speaking about the high frequency of specialized scientific terms in scientific articles (terms that are normally very low frequency in general texts), state, "These specialized terms help to define the communities that use them in the same way as these communities define their terms" (p. 3). Thus, I would argue that this extraordinary focus on *student* defines not only the My Share corpus, but the discourse community which produced it.

Because function words are almost always the most frequent words in any corpus, it is quite common to ignore them in discourse-focused corpus research (Baker, 2008; Mautner, 2016). To make this and future searches clearer, I switched from using AntConc to KH Coder, which ignores prepositions, conjunctions, articles, and some auxiliary verbs—though it doesn't distinguish between the use of *be* and *have* as regular verbs and auxiliary verbs (Higuchi, 2015). Note that the two programs calculate word frequencies slightly differently. Also, note that while KH Coder combines words of different forms together (*student* and *students* are already counted as a single word, without needing to adjust by hand as with AntConc), it does separate words by part of speech. That is, for the word that is spelled "answer," KH Coder counts the noun and verb meaning separately. It does this by using the Stanford POS tagger, which is reported to have an accuracy of about 97% (Stanford NLP Group, n.d.). However, for this corpus, KH Coder regularly miscategorized sentence-initial verbs (that is, the verb that begins an imperative sentence) as proper nouns. The only word this affected in the top 20 words is *have*. Where possible, I have adjusted for this throughout the chapter. Additionally, KH Coder was not accurate at distinguishing between *English* used as an adjective and *English* used as a noun, so those results are combined throughout this analysis. The adjusted list of the 25 most frequent words as counted by KH Coder is shown in Table 26.

Table 26

*Most Frequent Words in the My Share Corpus as Counted by KH Coder*

| Rank | Word | Frequency |
|------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | student | 288 |
| 2 | be | 267 |
| 3 | they | 255 |
| 4 | have | 105 |
| 5 | you | 68 |
| 6 | it | 65 |
| 7 | class | 63 |
| 8 | activity | 63 |
| 9 | use | 58 |
| 10 | group | 58 |
| 11 | write | 56 |
| 12 | question | 41 |
| 13 | word | 40 |
| 14 | not | 37 |
| 15 | give | 37 |
| 16 | ask | 35 |
| 17 | I | 34 |
| 18 | do | 34 |
| 19 | time | 33 |
| 20 | make | 32 |
| 21 | teacher | 30 |
| 22 | example | 26 |
| 23 | that | 26 |
| 24 | also | 25 |
| 25 | other | 24 |

I extended the KH Coder list from top 20 to top 25 specifically because I wanted to include the 21st most frequent word, *teacher*. While I was surprised to find *student* so high on the AntConc list (that is, so far above even most function words), my familiarity made me expect that *student* would be one of the most frequent content words. After all, the entire purpose of My Share articles is to give teachers suggestions for what to do with students in class. Seeing that high rank, however, made me want to see how much more frequently students are represented than teachers. Based solely on a lexical frequency search, *students* are 9.6 times more frequent than *teachers.* However, this simple measurement does not account for all the ways that students and teachers, as people, are represented in the corpus.

As I came to notice that there are a variety of ways that both students and teachers could be represented in the corpus, I then posed the question, "Are there any differences in the ways by which the authors represent students and teachers,

and, if so, are there any implications on the larger questions of my project (identity, power, etc.) for these differing representations?" The next section provides a detailed discussion of each of the different ways these agents are represented, along with my interpretations of these representations.

**8.4 Actor Analysis**

In the rest of this chapter, in order to distinguish between lexemes present in the text and the sememes that these words represent, I use square brackets when referring to sememes, and italicized words for the lexemes.[80] Thus, [student] refers to any place or mechanism in the text whereby the human beings whose primary role in the classroom is to learn something (and, in the case of formal schooling, to get credit for that learning); *student*, on the other hand, refers only to cases where the text uses the actual word "student" or "students."[81]

There are five distinct ways that the actors [student] and [teacher] are represented in the corpus: via the words themselves, via synonyms, via pronouns, and as omitted agents in passive and imperative sentences. The first case was discussed above, and each of the other the cases is treated below.

**8.4.1 Synonyms.** *Student* has three common synonyms in the corpus: *learner, partner,* and *classmate. Learner* had a frequency of 14.5. While *learner* and *student* clearly refer to the same actual humans, they are not used identically in the corpus. First, consider Table 27, which shows the frequency of each word broken down by section. In each section, *student* is more frequent by a large margin, but the distribution is not the same. *Students* occur mostly in the practical sections (about 65% total in Preparation and Procedure), while *learner* occurs mostly in the argumentative sections (about 75% total in introduction and Conclusion). Thus, when authors use the word *student,* they are most often using it to talk about actors actually doing something in the class. On the other hand, when the authors choose the word *learner*, they are most often advancing their arguments about the activity

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[80] This convention is only used in this chapter.
[81] Note that I use [student] and [students] (and [teacher]/[teachers]) interchangeably, mainly to fit the grammar of the sentence.

or explaining the activity in more general terms. Looking at co-occurrences,[82] the difference is less clear, mostly because student is so frequent that most of its co-occurrences are with high-frequency words like *be, have, ask, write,* etc. Two words that do frequently co-occur with *learner* that do not frequently co-occur with *student* are *language* and *level*, though it isn't clear if this reflects some connection between the words or just that those words are also more frequent in introduction and Conclusion sections. For *language,* at least, the co-occurrence appears to be fairly strong, because 60% of the co-occurrences are in the phrase "language learner." Despite these slight differences, since they do refer to the same actual people, I will group them together under the [student] sememe.

Table 27

*Occurrences of Student and Learner by Section*

|  | Student | | Learner | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Section | Occurrences | % | Occurrences | % |
| Introduction | 474 | 16.6% | 65 | 45.5% |
| Preparation | 330 | 11.6% | 11 | 7.7% |
| Procedure | 1524 | 53.4% | 19 | 13.3% |
| Conclusion | 425 | 14.9% | 42 | 29.4% |
| Other | 192 | 3.6% | 6 | 4.2% |

*Partner* and *classmate* occur at frequencies of 11.8 and 5.7, respectively, and have been grouped into the [student] sememe. While there are other words in the corpus that also sometimes refer to [students], such as *listener, speaker,* and *teammate,* I have not grouped them into the [student] sememe. First, their rate of occurrence is relatively low (all have frequencies below 5); more importantly, while the previously mentioned words always refer to [students], these occasionally refer to other entities, such as when *speaker* is used to refer to the person speaking on a CD or video in a student listening activity.

*Partner* and *classmate* also hint at the fact that in some cases, [students] are referred to not solely as individuals, but also according to the role they play within the larger collection of [students] in the classroom. The largest possible grouping

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[82] In this case, "co-occurrences" refers to all cases where the word is within 5 spaces to the left or right of the selected term; these co-occurrences are ranked by KH Coder based on a composite score of how close they are (that is, an occurrence one space to the left or right adds five points to the composite score while an occurrence five spaces to the left or right adds one point).

would be all the students together in the room, which is either referred to just by the simple plural *students*, or by the term *class*. However, I could not group *class* into the [student] sememes, because the same word is also used to refer to the event/unit of time that constitutes a single meeting (e.g., "One option to lessen the planning and teaching burden is to devote several <u>class</u> periods to the newsletter project"). In addition, sometimes *class* refers to only the [students], but in other cases refers to the collective [students] + [teacher]. Given this ambiguity, there was no clean way to separate out the various meanings, so *class* was excluded from the [student] sememe. On the other hand, the words *group*, *pair*, and *team* occurring at frequencies of 57, 18, and 13, respectively, always referred to groups of [students]. [83] Lastly, *member* is also used to refer to a subset of *team* or *group*. After excluding all cases where *member* occurred in the phrases *group member* and *team member* (to avoid double counting), *member* has a frequency of 6.6.

[Teachers], on the other hand, are referred to in the corpus by only two regular nouns—*teacher* itself, with a frequency of 30, and *instructor*, with a frequency of 3.7. This means that, counting regular nouns only, [teacher] appears with a frequency of 34—less than 11 times as often as [student], which has a combined regular noun frequency of 387.

**8.4.2 Pronouns**. Almost all the pronouns in the corpus refer to either [teachers] or [students], though each individual pronoun tended to be linked to primarily but not exclusively one or the other (not both). For example, a quick inspection showed that first person singular pronouns and relative pronouns *I, me,* and *myself* refer to [teachers] most of the time, but that, at least in reported speech, occasionally referred to [students] as well. Thus, in order to accurately understand the use of pronouns in the corpus, I had to create an "anaphora resolved" version of the corpus by replacing all the personal pronouns, possessive determiners, and reflexive pronouns with their antecedents. While full anaphora resolution requires resolving pronouns, noun phrases, and one-anaphora (Mitkov, 1999), the nature of this corpus as well as the targets of my inquiry required that I only resolve the

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[83] This counts only those cases where these words are used as nouns, not as verbs.

pronouns. Also, I didn't resolve *it*, since it never referred to people in this corpus. This resolution process was done by hand to ensure accuracy.

Table 28 summarizes the antecedents for all resolved words. The "Teacher" category mainly includes cases where the authors spoke of themselves with a first person singular pronoun or determiner, but also includes cases where another teacher is referred to (such as using "we" to refer collectively to a group of teachers at the author's school). The "Reader" category refers to cases in which the author refers to the person reading the My Share article, primarily through the use of second person pronouns/determiners, though occasionally with an inclusive "we" referring to "all language teachers." When first person plurals (*we* and *us*) referred collectively to both [teachers] and [students], it was counted once in each category. The "Other" category is for cases where some actor other than a [teacher] or [students] was referred to. Finally, note that possessive pronouns were converted to their antecedents for the anaphora resolved corpus but are not included in Table 28. In an earlier version of this analysis (Hahn, 2018a), I did include the possessive pronouns. However, after reconsidering what is occurring semantically in sentences with possessive pronouns, I felt that this was essentially double-counting sememes. For example, in the sentence, "Having students create their own TV advertisement as a group project can be a challenging and motivating activity," there is really only one instance of the sememe [student], even though in the anaphora resolved corpus the words *students* and *students'* both appear. By comparing the actual sentence to the equivalent hypothetical sentence without the possessive, "Having students create a TV advertisement as a group project can be a challenging and motivating activity," it is clear that the original version of the sentence can't really be said to contain more references to [students] than the second.

Table 28

*Antecedents for Pronouns in the My Share Corpus*

| Pronoun | Student | Groups of students | Teacher | Reader | Other |
|---------|---------|--------------------|---------|--------|-------|
| I | 28 | 0 | 235 | 0 | 10 |
| me | 9 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 3 |
| myself | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| you | 79 | 0 | 15 | 351 | 25 |
| yourself | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 1 |
| "he or she" [a] | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| "he" [b] | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| "she" [b] | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| "him or her" [b] | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| "him" [b] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| "her" [b] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| we | 1 | 5 | 6 | 13 | 17 |
| us | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| they | 731 | 31 | 10 | 0 | 50 |
| them | 366 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 122 |
| themselves | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 1312 | 73 | 301 | 380 | 256 |

*Notes.* [a] Also includes *he/she* and *s/he.* [b] Alone (not part of a hybrid phrase like *he/she*, etc.) [c] Also includes *him/her.* [d] Object pronoun.

After combining the "Teacher" and "Reader" categories into the [teacher] sememe, and the "Student" and "Groups of students" categories into the [student] sememe, there is a total frequency of 549 for [student] and 54 for [teacher]. Since the last two means of representation to be discussed below involve non-lexical methods, these frequency counts represent all the ways that [students] and [teachers] are represented by distinct lexical items in the corpus. Thus, about 5.5% of the lexical items in the corpus refer to [students] and 0.5% refer to [teachers].

**8.4.3 Passive voice.** In addition to direct lexical references, there are two ways in which the [student] and [teacher] actors are present in the text through grammatical structures which elide them lexically. The first of these are passive sentences. Passive sentences (or, more accurately, passive clauses) were identified in the corpus using the "Passive Voice Detector" created by Datayze (Tyler, n.d.). After using the automated software, the results had to be hand checked. The detector produced a number of false positives, since all textual patterns that could be passives (such as those which have the pattern "*be* + past participle") were marked as

passives without consideration of the underlying syntax or semantics. A sampling of sentences from the corpus didn't indicate any undercounts, though it is possible that a small number of complex passives were not detected. At the same time that I corrected the results, I also determined the agent of each sentence. In most cases, the agents were omitted and so had to be determined from context, though occasionally they were present in *by*-clauses.[84]

574 of the 5609 sentences in the corpus contained one or more passive clauses, for a total of 600 passive clauses. The agents of those clauses are shown in Table 29. There are about 1.8 times as many [teacher]-agent passives as there are [student]-agent passives. Note that while in the pronoun section I grouped the pronouns which referred to [authors] together with other references to [teachers], for passives, I consider them to be a separate category. This is because most passives taking the [author] as the agent talk about how the [author] created the activity, which is a very different action from those that [teachers] perform in class.

Table 29

*Agents of Passive Clauses*

| Agent | Occurrences | Percentage of passive clauses |
|---|---|---|
| Author | 50 | 8.2% |
| Teacher other than author | 271 | 45.8% |
| Student | 149 | 24.5% |
| Other | 130 | 21.4% |

*Note.* The "Other" category contains 16 cases where I could not determine the agent from context.

**8.4.4 Imperative mood.** The final way that these agents are represented in the corpus is via sentences in imperative mood. Since imperative sentences are used to give commands, they must involve the author speaking directly to the reader. Since the whole point of this corpus is one set of teachers (the authors) speaking to another set of [teachers] (the readers), the deleted agents in imperative sentences must always be [teachers].[85] There are 2276 sentences containing one or more verbs in imperative mood (40.1% of the total number of sentences). 1997 of those

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[84] There were 6 cases of [student] agents in *by*-clauses, and 5 cases of [teacher] agents in *by*-clauses. Those numbers are included in the total counts for the passive verbs, but were subtracted before the passive verb occurrences were added to the full sememe counts, since otherwise I would be double counting.

[85] There are nine exceptions in direct quotations that were not counted in the analysis.

sentences have exactly one imperative verb, 263 have two imperative verbs, and 16 have three imperative verbs, for a total of 2556 imperative verbs. These sentences were found by hand checking; in the majority of cases, imperatives could be found by checking whether or not the first word of the sentence was a verb, though sentences starting with a modifying phrase had to be scanned further.

The reason for this very high frequency was mentioned in section 5.3: it is part of the guidelines for the section. This rule is not strictly enforced, as only 60% of the sentences in Preparation and Procedure sections are written in imperative form. The rule seems to be applied most strictly to the first sentence of each step/paragraph, where 82% of all first sentences are in imperative form. I asked both editors that I interviewed who had worked on My Share why imperative mood is a requirement. Neither was the editor who initially made the rule, though both had a rationale for its existence: one thought it was because of length concerns (since an imperative sentence is literally omitting words), while the other judged the imperative form to be better writing because it's more concise ("less mushy").

As a brief aside, I want to show that the choice to require (or, at least, strongly recommend) the use of imperatives is, in fact, a choice—there is nothing inherent in the nature of an activity description that requires imperative form. This can be seen by looking at pairs of sentences from the corpus that describe similar actions in both imperative and declarative mood. Table 30 contains three such sample pairs. These are just examples that exist within the corpus itself; any imperative sentence could be similarly rewritten to be a declarative sentence.

Table 30

*Similar Sentences in the My Share Corpus in Imperative and Non-imperative Forms*

| Imperative example | Non-imperative example |
|---|---|
| After showing the video, have students form pairs and summarize the video while referring to their notes. | Students get into groups of two or three and exchange notebooks. |
| To decide which team bats first, have the two captains do *janken*[86] or a coin toss. | As a substitute for dice, they play rock-paper-scissors. |
| Have students search Google and explore how to find English songs and their lyrics. | Students must find and print an audio script from the Internet. |

**8.4.5 Summary of actor representations.** Table 31 contains a summary of the above sections, listing how frequent each of the different means of representation are. Taking into account both the visible, lexical references and the "hidden" grammatical references, [students] are about 1.63 times more frequent than [teachers]. It seems extremely likely that [student] is the most frequent sememe, and [teacher] is the second, given that the [teacher] sememe is more frequent than all the lexical tokens other than *the* and *to*, though certainty would require sorting the entirety of the corpus into semantic units.

Table 31

*Summary of All [Student] and [Teacher] Representations*

| Representation | Students | Teachers |
|---|---|---|
| *student(s) / teacher(s)* | 2867 | 299 |
| Synonyms | 1293 | 41 |
| Pronouns | 1312 | 301 |
| Lexical Total | 5472 | 641 |
| Passives | 143 | 256 |
| Imperatives | 0 | 2555 |
| Grammatical Total | 143 | 2811 |
| Total | 5615 | 3452 |

However, there is a very large difference in the representation of the two actors in terms of how visible they are in the corpus. The first useful comparison is

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[86] The Japanese word for Rock-Paper-Scissors.

between the first two categories, where the actors are explicitly mentioned using a regular content noun that clearly applies to only one of the two sememes. By that measurement, 74.0% of all the representations of [student] are visible and clear, while only 9.8% of the representations of [teacher] are visible and clear. Adding in the pronouns, which are still lexically present even if there is sometimes extra work required to determine what they refer to, 97.5% of all the [student] representations are visible, while only 18.6% of the [teacher] representations are visible. That means when [students] are present as agents in sentences in this corpus, they are almost always lexically represented, whereas more than 80% of the time that [teachers] are agents in sentences, they are lexically elided. In short, [students] are highly frequent and almost always visible, while [teachers] are still highly semantically frequent but are mostly lexically hidden.

## 8.5 The Consequences of Hiding

It has been argued that since passive constructions erase the agent of a sentence, they may also hide or mystify the power relationships of the actors in discourse (Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 2001). While the exact effect of passive versus active sentences on cognition is unclear, there is some evidence that there are underlying cognitive processes which make this proposed mystification believable (Hart, 2011). Imperative sentences are discussed less commonly in CDA literature, and when they are, the focus is usually on the way imperatives elevate the status of the speaker to the "role of one giving commands" (Wang, 2010). This does not consider if there is an effect, as I hypothesize in this corpus, to hiding the implied [teacher] actor.

In order to consider what consequences these representations have on the identities of [teachers] and [students] and the relationship between them, this section examines these grammatical structures in more detail by looking at common usage patterns, paying particular attention to what verbs are used in these patterns.

**8.5.1 Passive voice: The details matter.** The first step to better understanding how passive sentences work in this corpus is to examine what kinds of verbs tend to be used in passive sentences. Table 32 shows all the verbs used in more than 1% of the passive sentences for each agent.

Table 32

*Most Frequent Verbs Used in Passive Sentences, Divided by Agent*

| Rank | [teacher] Word | Occurrences | [student] Word | Occurrences |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | use | 45 | do | 27 |
| 2 | adapt | 19 | use | 23 |
| 3 | give | 15 | write | 9 |
| 4 | ask | 9 | complete | 5 |
| 5 | assign | 6 | finish | 5 |
| 6 | do | 6 | perform | 4 |
| 7 | expect | 6 | play | 3 |
| 8 | adjust | 5 | add | 2 |
| 9 | extend | 5 | discuss | 2 |
| 10 | prepare | 5 | improve | 2 |
| 11 | require | 5 | place | 2 |
| 12 | allow | 4 | take | 2 |
| 13 | award | 4 | | |
| 14 | mark | 4 | | |
| 15 | call | 3 | | |
| 16 | consider | 3 | | |
| 17 | encourage | 3 | | |
| 18 | grade | 3 | | |
| 19 | incorporate | 3 | | |
| 20 | introduce | 3 | | |
| 21 | modify | 3 | | |
| 22 | present | 3 | | |
| 23 | teach | 3 | | |
| 24 | write | 3 | | |

For [teacher]-agent passives, by far the most frequent verb is *use*, appearing in 16.7% of the total. *Use* seems to be a vague word without significant connotations. However, looking at the direct objects it takes, 25 of the 45 sentences with *use* take the activity, the lesson, or a portion thereof as the direct object. The 19 *adapt* sentences have the same function and structure, and all focus on ways that the reader can alter the activity to meet the needs of their particular teaching situation. Thus, 34 (12.2%) of the [teacher]-agent passive sentences hide a "teacherly" authority—the right to decide what activities are used in class. The only other verb to account for more than 5% of the [teacher]-agent passives is *give*, which has more varied meanings. In some cases, as in the three cases where [teachers] are giving grades to [students], the power differential is highly marked. In most cases, the sentences are more neutral, as when papers are given to [students] by the [teacher].

Next, I want to consider a cluster of verbs that are individually less frequent but which share a common component. Those verbs are *assign* (6 occurrences), *expect* (6), *require* (5), *allow* (4), *mark* (4), *encourage* (3), and *grade* (3), and they collectively account for 11% of all [teacher]-agent passives. Each of these sentences directly allocates power to the teacher, since they are the actor able to directly judge the other party (*grade* and *mark*), to set the standards by which the other party will be judged (*expect* and *require*), or to determine or state what will be done in class (*assign*, *allow*, and *encourage*). Adding in the sentences from the first paragraph, at least 24% of the passive sentences perpetuate a classroom hierarchy in which [teachers] have authority and decision-making power and [students] do not.

By itself, this doesn't inherently mean that passives privilege [teachers] in the corpus. To determine if that is the case, it is also necessary to also look at how passives are used when [students] are the agents. Two of the verbs, *do* and *use*, collectively account for 33.6% of the [student] passives. Every instance of *do* is used to mean for either "do the activity" or "do a particular portion of the activity." None of these sentences give the [students] any sense of choice or authority; rather, they are simply the consequence of their existence—that is, this naturalizes the belief that being [students] in a formal education setting requires those [students] to perform whatever activities the teacher chooses. For *use*, turning to the direct object as I did for [teacher]-agent passives can help show what these sentences are doing. First, 15 of the 23 [student]-passives with *use* (65.2%) take a physical object such as a worksheet, dictionary, or notes as the direct object. The other eight all take a unit of language such as a word or sentence as the direct object. In both cases, these passive sentences merely describe the action that students will take in the activity. In most cases, these sentences are simply setting out the rules for the activity, which preserves the [teacher's] power to determine what happens in the classroom, though there are three cases (13% of the [student]-agent passive with the verb *use*, 2.1% of all [student]-agent passives) where the passive verb is accompanied by an auxiliary verb that gives the students an actual choice, as in the sentence "Dictionaries <u>can be used</u>." While there are no other verbs that individually account for a large percentage of the [student]-agent passives, going by the top two, which represent 32.1% of all passives, the [student]-agent passives give [students] choice and agency much less frequently than [teacher]-agent passives do.

In the previous paragraph, I noted that the special cases that ascribed choice to [students] used auxiliary verbs. In fact, the co-occurrence of auxiliary verbs with passives was quite high: 63% of all passive clauses included an auxiliary verb, with 77% of [teacher]-agent and 54% of [student]-agent passives having them. Table 33 shows the number of occurrences of each auxiliary verb for each agent and combined.

Table 33

*Frequency of Auxiliary Verbs Used in Passive Sentences*

| Aux. | [Teacher]-as-agent | | [Student]-as-agent | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Occur. | Percentage of [teacher] passives | Occur. | Percentage of [student] passives | Occur. | Percentage of total passives |
| be | 4 | 1% | 3 | 2% | 7 | 2% |
| can[a] | 112 | 41% | 36 | 24% | 148 | 35% |
| could | 27 | 10% | 10 | 7% | 37 | 9% |
| have | 4 | 1% | 8 | 5% | 12 | 3% |
| may | 5 | 2% | 8 | 5% | 13 | 3% |
| might | 1 | <1% | 0 | 0% | 1 | <1% |
| must | 3 | 1% | 3 | 2% | 6 | 1% |
| should[a] | 15 | 6% | 10 | 7% | 25 | 6% |
| will | 14 | 5% | 1 | 1% | 15 | 4% |
| would | 1 | <1% | 1 | 1% | 2 | <1% |
| TOTAL | 186 | 68% | 80 | 54% | 266 | 63% |

*Note*: [a] There is one instance of the phrase "can and should," in a [teacher]-agent passive. I coded it as "should" because the focus of the sentence was on what ought to be done, not what it is possible to do.

I want to focus on the auxiliary verbs *can, could,* and *may*, because they are used for similar purposes, and because a careful examination will demonstrate a subtle difference between the way [students] and [teachers] are treated. These auxiliary verbs can each be used to express two different meanings. The first is to give (someone, not necessarily the agent of the verb) a choice, as in the sentence "This can be done individually, in pairs, or as a group." In this example, the [teacher] can choose to organize *this* (which refers to one step of the activity) as a solo or group activity. The second meaning is to state factually what is or isn't possible, as in the sentence "This set of activities can be used to enhance students' use of hesitation devices (e.g., um, ah) and pause fillers (e.g., like, you know)." Here, the auxiliary *can* shows something that this activity does. The main distinction between these two

sentences, and these two uses for *can,* is whether or not there is a set of alternatives—in the first sentence, there are three different possibilities, and the [teacher] *can* choose, but in the second, if the activity is used, the improvement in hesitation devices and pause fillers is a possibility, with no alternative choice. The same distinction also exists for *could* and *may*.

83 (57.6%) of the 144 [teacher]-agent passives with these verbs are of the first type, and 61 (42.3%) are of the second type. The ratio among [student]-agent passives using these verbs is similar, with 32 (59.3%) of the first type and 22 (40.7%) of the second type. Looking only at this measure, it seems like [students] and [teachers] are treated similarly. However, this fails to account for the fact that in the first type, the choice is not necessarily given to the agent of the passive verb. Rather, all 83 of the [teacher]-agent passives in the first category give the choice to the teacher, but this is not true for [student]-agent sentences, since those often give the choice to the teacher. The following pair of sentences demonstrates this:

(1) Talk through the guide, explaining that <u>it can be used</u> as a framework to construct sentences, but that they can also add their own ideas and opinions.

(2) <u>Games can be played</u> for nine innings, but two to three innings may be enough for many classes.

In both sentences, a real choice is being offered, in that in (1), it is optional to use the guide, and in (2) the length of the game can be varied. Also, in both cases, [students] are the agent, as [student]s use (or don't use) the guide, and [students] play the game. The choice, however, is not allocated equally, because in (1), [students] can decide individually or in groups whether to start from the guide or to focus on their own ideas. In (2), the length of the game is decided by the [teacher]. Looking at all 32 of the [student]-agent passive sentences with *can, could*, or *may* auxiliaries, 7 of them describe choices that students can make and 25 are cases where the teacher makes the choice. If all the *can/could/may* passive sentences are combined together, and then separate them into three categories based on who, if anyone, can make a choice, then 54.5% give [teachers] the ability to exercise agency, 41.9% give no one agency, and 3.5% give [students] agency.

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**8.5.2 Imperative mood: Both hidden and visible teacher power.** Earlier I noted that, except for nine special cases of direct quotation, all the imperative verbs take [teachers] as the subject. Thus, in this case, it isn't possible to compare [teacher] and [student] usage patterns. Instead, the following discussion focuses on the most frequently used imperative verbs, how they are used, and what those usage patterns imply about the identity and power relationships of [students] and [teachers].

Table 34 lists the most common verbs that appear in imperative mood in the corpus; the list is limited to those which account for more than 1% of the total. Note that phrasal verbs were separated when they represented very different concepts; so, for example, the 49 occurrences of *make* do not include the 19 separate occurrences of *make sure*. The following discussion focuses on the five most frequent verbs, which each account for more than 3% of the imperative verbs, and collectively account for over 32% of the imperative verbs.

Table 34

*Most Frequently Used in Imperative Mood Verbs*

| Rank | Verb | Occurrences |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | have | 287 |
| 2 | ask | 159 |
| 3 | give | 130 |
| 4 | tell | 87 |
| 5 | explain | 83 |
| 6 | prepare | 77 |
| 7 | write | 69 |
| 8 | encourage | 60 |
| 9 | instruct | 55 |
| 10 | make | 49 |
| 11 | distribute | 46 |
| 12 | put | 38 |
| 13 | show | 33 |
| 14 | divide | 33 |
| 15 | repeat | 32 |
| 16 | print | 32 |
| 17 | create | 32 |
| 18 | choose | 31 |
| 19 | allow | 31 |
| 20 | check | 30 |
| 21 | play | 26 |
| 22 | collect | 26 |

I begin from the least frequent verbs in this set, and combine the discussion of *tell* and *examine* since they are used in similar ways. In the most basic sense, these verbs are used to instruct the readers to speak to students. However, in many cases, this speaking is not merely an act of providing information, but also commanding the students—as Gee (2014) would put it, they are doing something, not just saying something. For *explain* commands usually occur in sentences using *must* or *need to*, such as "Explain that they must do exactly as you say" and "Explain that when preparing students need to think of ways to move smoothly between stories." *Tell*, on the other hand, usually expresses commands via infinitives, as in "Tell them to be careful to choose pictures that are suitably large enough to fill a whole slide" (*them* are [students]). There are also a number of cases where a *tell* or *explain* sentence isn't a direct command but does have the [teacher] set out rules, instructions, or restrictions that act as indirect commands, usually using the auxiliary verbs *can, may*, or *will*. For example, in "Tell students that they will transcribe the narrative in full," the [teacher] has to *tell* [students] the breadth of the activity that they are about to begin. The breakdown for the functions of these sentences is shown in Table 35. Half of the *tell* imperatives and a significant majority of *explain* imperatives place the teacher in a position of power, even though the verbs might seem at first glance to be neutral.

Table 35

*Uses for Explain and Tell Imperatives*

|  | *Tell* | | *Explain* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use | Occur. | Percentage | Occur. | Percentage |
| Provide information | 41 | 50.0% | 23 | 26.7% |
| Give direct command | 15 | 18.3% | 41 | 47.7% |
| Give indirect command | 26 | 31.7% | 22 | 25.6% |

*Give* imperatives represent a variety of different actions; rather than the differences being linked mostly to auxiliary verbs as with *tell* and *explain*, the primary differences revolve around the direct objects of the verb (the indirect object is [students] in 97.7% of cases). The direct objects are listed in Table 36, grouped into categories. The most frequent direct object is some kind of "physical object," such as *cards*, *a question sheet*, and *handouts*. Most of the objects are some kind of paper, and while this may seem neutral, many of them are objects of control

such as worksheets which define what [students] must do in the activity. Similarly, the "information" category can also imply higher status for the [teacher], just as it does with *tell* and *explain*, since nine (37.5%) of the information given is *advice* or a *hint*, and five (20.8%) are the topic of the activity to be done. Since "time" (which means setting a time limit for the activity), "commands," "feedback," and "reward" are all also founded on the idea that the [teacher] is in control, can direct the lesson, and can judge the lesson, they also emphasize [teacher] control. While it is very subjective to determine, especially in the case of the physical objects, exactly how often these sentences are fundamentally tied up with an elevated status for the [teacher], it is at least a majority of the cases.

Table 36

*Direct Objects of Give Imperatives*

| Direct object | Occurrences | Example |
|---|---|---|
| physical object | 59 | Give students an <u>overview sheet</u> of the next two days. |
| information | 24 | Give some <u>pointers</u> on making presentations. |
| time | 19 | Give the students <u>a few minutes </u>to prepare their own answers to the questions. |
| feedback | 6 | Give your own <u>comments and criticisms</u>. |
| command | 7 | Give students <u>this assignment: Each student will give an introduction to personal hobbies or interests in English</u>. |
| example | 5 | Give an <u>example demonstration</u> with a poster (Appendix G) about America. |
| opportunity | 4 | Give the other teams <u>the opportunity</u> to participate. |
| reward | 3 | To make it more competitive, give the group that successfully guesses your occupation <u>bonus points</u>. |

*Ask* imperatives have approximately the same division of meanings as *tell* and *explain*. That is, *ask* can be used with the "normal" meaning of "to pose a question," as in, "<u>Ask</u> the students if <u>they have ever had an interview before</u>," and can be used as a way to issue a command, as in "Then, <u>ask</u> the students who first told the story <u>to stand up and tell the original version</u>." The difference with *ask* is that it is the

command form that dominates the usages: 112 (70%) of the *ask* imperatives are commands, 44 (28%) are information-requesting questions, and three (1.9%) are neither. Thus, even more than *tell* and *explain, ask* imperatives are hiding [teacher] power behind words that have a "normal" or "common-sense" neutral meaning.

*Have* is not only the most frequent verb used in imperative form, it occurs almost twice as often as the second most frequent imperative *ask*. Over 5% of all sentences in the corpus use a *have* imperative. In addition, as will be shown below, the N-gram *have students* is the 11th most frequent 2-gram, and *have the students* is the ninth most frequent 3-gram. Because these phrases usually stand in the sentence-initial position, they are a very noticeable when reading through the corpus, even in a non-critical way.

*Have* imperatives are almost universally (97%) used to tell the [teacher] to give a command to the [students]. While each of the second through fifth most common imperative verbs were sometimes or often used to give commands in a hidden way, *have* operates differently. That is, *have* imperatives are fairly obvious in treating the [teacher] as the powerful unit of the [teacher]/[student] binary. To step back a little and consider the context in which these commands (especially *have* imperatives, but any of the others as well), one of the ways that [teacher] authority is naturalized is through [student] acquiescence. Almost all these activities proceed smoothly from beginning to end, with [students] both successfully and willingly completing each step. [Students] neither resist the directions from the [teacher], nor fail to follow them through a lack of ability. Thus, the *have* imperatives can be said to elevate the role of the [teacher] in the classroom in two ways: by making the [teacher] relatively more active participants than the [students], and by suppressing [student] independence and agency.

## 8.6 Verb Co-occurrences

During the analysis of passives and imperatives, one of the tools I turned to in order to better understand how those grammatical patterns were working was to look at which verbs were used in these forms. The next step I undertook was to expand that technique to the more general question of which verbs co-occur, in any grammatical form, with [students] and [teachers].

**8.6.1 Method.** Because I did not have software capable of automatically determining which verbs were the predicates of the two actors, and a full hand count would have been too time-consuming, I had to approximate the count by using KH Coder to identify verbs that occurred within five spaces to the right of [student] or [teacher] in the anaphora-resolved corpus.[87] My hypothesis was that if a verb appeared within five spaces after of one of these words, there was a high chance that that word was the subject of that verb (except for passives). Then, to this total, I added the results from the passive and imperative analysis, as well as subtracted out passives, since a subject followed by a passive verb is the patient, not the agent, of that verb. In addition, since KH Coder by default reads co-occurrences across sentence boundaries,[88] I reformatted the corpus so that there was ample space between sentences (blank cells in the Excel document) such that KH Coder would never connect words that occurred in two different sentences.

Having done those steps, I knew that using co-occurrences was just an approximation. In order to measure the error rate of the KH Coder co-occurrence derived counts, I hand-counted a randomly chosen 5% (280) of the sentences. This re-count showed that approximately 44% of the sentences would likely have been misanalysed KH Coder, with an estimated 34 over-counts (cases where a verb appeared within five spaces to the right of the noun but the noun was not actually the subject of that verb) and 80 undercounts (cases where the subject of a verb was not located within five spaces to the left of that verb). However, this does not actually mean that 44% of the agent-verb pairs in the corpus were misanalysed using the simple co-occurrence data because the number of miscounts was measured per sentence, and many sentences contained more than one verb. In addition, since it seems reasonable to assume that, on average, a verb is as likely to be undercounted as it is to be overcounted,[89] then the net difference between the two types of errors is more important than the total number of errors. For [students], there were 25 overcounts and 51 undercounts, for a net undercount of 26 verbs in the sentences

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[87] The example sentences below use the original wording (not the anaphora-resolved wording) for clarity.

[88] Consider the hypothetical pair of sentences: "Pass out the papers to the students. Give them five minutes to read." KH Coder would count *give* as co-occurring one space to the right of *student*.

[89] Note that while I don't have any way to calculate if this is actually the case, during my hand-check, I didn't notice any words occurring significantly more often in one type of error than the other.

that I hand-checked. This equates to an undercount of 520 verbs for the entire corpus. Since the software found 5536 verbs co-occurring to the right of [student], this implies an error rate of about 8.6%. For [teacher], there was a net undercount of 25 in my hand-check, and thus a likely total undercount of 500 verbs. The software found 3445 verbs co-occurring to the right of [teacher], resulting in an error rate of about 12.7%.

The reason for doing this co-occurrence analysis was not to make very fine distinctions between individual words, but, rather, to look for broad patterns of similarity and difference in verb usage between the two agents. Thus, even though there are certainly errors in the counts, if those errors are distributed at least approximately equally across the verbs in the corpus, the general patterns I discuss below should hold. Additionally, in cases where the data was particularly surprising or I spotted an error while doing detailed work, I adjusted the counts accordingly.

**8.6.2 Verb co-occurrence clusters.** To search for these patterns, I compiled a list of all verbs which each account for more than .1% of the total number of verbs co-occurring with each sememe.[90] For [students], this means 150 words occurring six or more times each, and for [teachers] this means 143 words occurring four or more times each. Table 37 groups those words based on whether they co-occur with both or only one of the sememes. 71 verbs co-occurred only with [student], 64 co-occurred only with [teacher], and 79 co-occurred with both. Thus, the first noticeable point is that the two actors are slightly more similar than different. In part this is due to the nature of the shared verbs like *use, get, go, look,* and *make* which are very generic verbs used with a variety of different meanings. There are, however, a number of words with more specialized meaning in all three sections. I have chosen to discuss three major clusters of verbs—that is, sets of verbs that share common, though not identical, meanings—and will briefly discuss how those clusters are utilized differently between the two types of agents.

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[90] For the [teacher] sememe, I didn't include cases where the agent was [author], because most of the actions that the authors take are related to the design and creation of the lessons, which is a fundamentally different type of professional work than that undertaken by the hypothetical teachers who may use these lessons. This was reflected in the data itself, since the verbs that commonly co-occurred with [author] were quite different from those that co-occurred with other instances of [teacher].

Table 37

*All Verbs Which Co-occur with One or Both of the Agents More than 0.1% of the Total Verb Co-occurrences*

| Co-occurring only with [student] | Co-occurring with both [student] and [teacher] | Co-occurring only with [teacher] |
|---|---|---|
| acquire, agree, attach, base, become, build, change, come, communicate, compare, compete, complete, construct, deliver, describe, discover, encounter, engage, enjoy, exchange, express, face, fill, finish, follow, form, gain, guess, hear, help, identify, improve, interact, interview, involve, join, learn, leave, match, meet, memorize, mingle, negotiate, notice, participate, pay, perform, plan, produce, raise, realize, recognize, reflect, rehearse, relate, remain, report, respond, score, search, seem, sing, speak, stand, struggle, study, summarize, turn, understand, worry, watch | add, allow, answer, ask, be, begin, brainstorm, bring, check, choose, consider, continue, copy, correct, create, decide, develop, discuss, do, draw, expect, explain, feel, find, focus, get, give, go, have, include, introduce, keep, know, like, listen, look, make, move, need, offer, pass, place, play, practice, prepare, present, print, provide, put, read, receive, record, remember, repeat, return, review, say, see, select, send, set, share, show, sit, spend, start, take, talk, teach, tell, think, try, use, visit, walk, want, wish, work, write | adapt, adjust, announce, appoint, arrange, assess, assign, assist, avoid, award, call, circulate, click, collect, compile, conduct, count, cover, cross, customize, cut, demonstrate, determine, direct, display, distribute, divide, download, elicit, eliminate, emphasize, encourage, ensure, extend, familiarize, grade, hand, help, highlight, hold, increase, inform, instruct, label, lead, let, mark, model, modify, monitor, note, pause, pair, point, project, prompt, refer, remind, remove, require, rotate, stop, stress, upload, |

The first cluster involves verbs that are related to internal mental states. For this category, the verbs *compare, enjoy, guess, identify, learn, memorize, notice, realize, recognize, reflect, study, understand,* and *worry* co-occur only with [student], *assess* and *determine* co-occur only with [teacher], and *brainstorm, choose, consider, decide, feel, focus, know, like, need, remember, think, want,* and *wish* co-occur with both. While this initial division shows that the corpus includes both [student] and [teacher] mental processes, there is a bit of difference in the details. First, both verbs associated only with [teachers] involve an act of judgment in determining what is important or best, while the [student]-only verbs do not (except for possibly *compare*). Thus, [teachers] are given more agency to exercise judgment. Second, four of the verbs seem to be related more to emotions than to non-emotional thought— *enjoy* and *worry* used only with [student], and *feel* and *like* used with both. However, looking more closely at the actual usage, when *feel* and *like* are used with [teachers],

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the words are not used in an emotional sense, but rather with the meaning of exercising judgment, as in the sentences "Continue the activity until <u>the teacher</u> <u>feels</u> the activity goals have been achieved" and "Teachers can adjust the worksheets according to the criteria <u>they</u> <u>would like</u> students to focus on." Students, on the other hand, are characterized as having emotional responses to English language learning, as in, "However, after trying it myself, I found that the simplicity allows <u>students</u> to express themselves <u>without worrying</u> about difficult English structures." Two additional points about *worry*: first, as in this sample, the verb is always used in the negative—that the activity allows students to *not worry*, implying that they normally do; second, the only two negatively charged words in this compilation of top 0.1% verbs are *worry* and *struggle*, and both co-occur only with students, not teachers. The final point to note with respect to these verbs of mental processes is that while both agents think in various forms, almost all the mental processes that involve acquiring new information are associated strictly with students—verbs such as *learn, memorize, study*, and *understand* co-occur only with [student]. The verb *remember* co-occurs with both, but, in the case of [teacher], it is usually used as a directive from the author to the reader, as in "And finally, <u>remember</u> that your enthusiasm will set the tone and make a big difference in the success, or lack thereof, of the lesson." In only two instances are [teachers] tasked with remembering new information—specifically, student names and "something about each learner."

The second semantic cluster of verbs are related to productive. Most of these are verbs of speaking—shared speaking verbs are *ask, discuss, explain, introduce, present, say, teach, tell* and *share*. In addition, *draw* and *write* are both shared. However, looking at the words that differ between the two still points to a hierarchical distinction. Only [students] co-occur with the verbs *communicate, describe, express, interview, report, respond, sing* and *speak*, while only [teachers] co-occur with the verbs *announce, call, emphasize, encourage, familiarize, highlight, inform, instruct, note, point, prompt, refer, remind,* and *stress*.[91] The key difference between these two is that a significant number of the verbs that co-occur with only [teachers] contain the meaning of "deciding what is important and speaking that"—

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[91] There are several other verbs which could possibly be included as being involved in semiotic production, including *guess, interact, negotiate, perform,* and *produce* for [students], *grade* and *mark* for [teachers], and *brainstorm, offer, repeat,* and *show* for both.

that is, *announce, emphasize, encourage, highlight, point, refer*, and *stress*. The only word similarly indicating a position of power for [students] is *interview*, and when students interview each other, they are usually doing so in the context of a fictional construct (a role-play, as discussed in section 9.8.1.1). In the teacher verbs, the teacher is consistently the one who gets to choose what is important (about a text, a linguistic rule, or the instructions for a class activity) and *announce, emphasize*, etc. that to students. Another verb giving teachers power is *call*, where the act of calling means that the [teacher] is determining which student has both the right and obligation to speak. Finally, I'd like to note that one word which seems to buck this trend is the word *teach*, which normally would be expected to co-occur only with [teachers]. The only reason it also appears on the [student] list is because of two specific articles in the corpus which use the word to describe activities in which students temporarily take on the role of teacher in the class (these articles are discussed in detail in section 9.8.1.2). This is a remarkable reversal of the standard class hierarchy (that is, remarkable in the context of this corpus where students often have very little control over class activities or how they are run). One of the two activities, however, was specifically designed for education majors (i.e., future teachers) and was thus an attempt to help [students] in their future roles, while the other explicitly states that each student will act like a teacher for only four to five minutes. Thus, while these two articles do use this verb for [students] often enough to make this co-occurrence reach the 0.1% level, the situations are very special or short, and not representative of articles or language use across the corpus.

The third semantic cluster contains verbs related specifically to the acts of teaching and learning. Note that I mean teaching and learning in a general sense, not specifically a language learning one (so, even though *present*, as in the act of giving a presentation, is a common component of ESL/EFL classes, it is not included here as presentations aren't a standard component of generic class-based learning). My choice of which verbs fit into this cluster is a bit more subjective than the previous two, so others may prefer to add or subtract some from my lists. For [students], the co-occurring verbs in this category are *discover, improve, learn, memorize, participate,* and *understand*, though it is probably reasonable to also include *become*, since it is usually used as either a synonym for *learn*, as in "students become familiar with the names of occupations," or in the sense of changing positively in their

orientation towards language learning, such as "students <u>become</u> very confident." The verbs in this category that co-occur with [teachers] are *assign, demonstrate, instruct,* and *monitor*, along with a special subset of *assess, award,* and *grade* which are linked with teaching/learning in formal setting as this genre is intended for. The teaching/learning verbs that co-occur with both actors are *remember* and *teach.* However, earlier I showed that *remember* is not usually used for learning information for [teachers] and *teach* is used for [students] in limited ways in only two articles. Thus, the two actors share no significant semantic concepts related to the learning process. In a certain sense this is unsurprising—after all, it is only natural to think that [teachers] teach, while [students] learn. And yet, the fact that there are exceptions—that is, that it is possible for [students] to teach and for [teachers] to learn [92]—indicates that this is not an inherent aspect of language learning classes, and only becomes "natural" through as a consequence of discursive disciplinary procedures. That is, the idea that [students] are the ones who will learn and change, and that [teachers]' knowledge is already complete and will remain unchanged is a teacher belief embedded and reinforced by this corpus.

There is one way, however, in which students do take on a more active, powerful role in the classroom, in the sense of exercising judgment of their performance and the performance of other students, and that is via assessment. The reason it doesn't appear on this list of verbs is because when [students] are the ones doing the assessing, this is usually lexically represented by the phrases *self-assessment* (appearing nine times in the corpus) and *peer-assessment* (appearing seven times in the corpus). As Fairclough (2003) explains, nominalization "often entails excluding social agents in the representation of events" (p. 220).

## 8.7 N-gram Analysis

I want to return to the initial question of overall frequency in the corpus and combine this with the idea of collocations raised in the previous section. Baker (2008) suggests that when trying to understand how words are being used in a corpus, analysts need to look beyond individual words towards what they call

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[92] Also, there are a few examples of [students] and [teachers] co-constructing knowledge, as in the "ecological footprint" activity discussed in section 10.3.2.1.

"clusters"—that is, sequences of words that occur together in a corpus. For my analysis, I prefer the term *N-gram*, which is most commonly used in computational linguistics, since it allows me to specify the length of the cluster in the word itself (that is, a 2-gram, or bigram, is a sequence of two words, 3-grams, or trigram, is a sequence of three words, etc.).

To pull N-grams, I had to turn back to AntConc (KH Coder does not include this function), so this means that the results will include function words. In addition, KH Coder does not combine like words together (for example, the 2-gram *students give* is counted separately from *student give*). In other words, the following searches show what exact phrases are most common in the corpus, not what ideas or semantically linked phrases are common. Also, since the point of this analysis is to find out what actual word sequences were used in the text, this analysis was performed only on the original text, not the anaphora resolved text.

The results are presented in three sections: first, an analysis of the most common 2-, 3-, 4-, and 5- grams in the whole corpus; second, an analysis of the 2-, 3-, and 4-grams (there weren't enough frequent 5-grams to analyze) in each section; and, finally, an analysis of the most common individual words in each section.

**8.7.1 Whole corpus N-grams analysis.** There are 6167 distinct 2-grams, 2761 3-grams, 673 4-grams, and 154 5-grams with three or more occurrences (the arbitrary cut-off point I chose). Tables 38 and 39 list the most frequent of each of the N-grams for the whole corpus. The list ends on different rankings for each N-gram because I wanted to include only as many as I could fit on a single page without having the list end in the middle of a tie (for example, there are four different 2-grams that have 81 occurrences, so cutting at 44 made more sense than 45, and 48 wouldn't have fit on one page.

Table 38

*Most Frequent 2-grams and 3-grams in the Whole Corpus*

| Rank | 2-gram | Occur. | 3-gram | Occur. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | of the | 653 | on the board | 105 |
| 2 | on the | 417 | the students to | 59 |
| 3 | students to | 412 | this activity is | 57 |
| 4 | in the | 407 | ask students to | 56 |
| 5 | the students | 364 | for students to | 56 |
| 6 | to the | 358 | of the class | 45 |
| 7 | can be | 247 | the end of | 42 |
| 8 | this activity | 233 | can be used | 41 |
| 9 | for the | 198 | have the students | 41 |
| 10 | the class | 195 | this is a | 40 |
| 11 | have students | 178 | front of the | 38 |
| 12 | the teacher | 174 | encourage students to | 35 |
| 13 | with the | 168 | the use of | 35 |
| 14 | it is | 167 | to the class | 35 |
| 15 | is a | 156 | in front of | 33 |
| 16 | from the | 151 | as well as | 32 |
| 17 | as a | 146 | this activity can | 31 |
| 18 | such as | 137 | in order to | 29 |
| 19 | them to | 131 | into groups of | 29 |
| 20 | the board | 129 | the number of | 29 |
| 21 | their own | 126 | ask them to | 28 |
| 22 | in a | 125 | at the end | 28 |
| 23 | the activity | 124 | end of the | 28 |
| 24 | of a | 118 | instruct students to | 28 |
| 25 | that they | 116 | one of the | 28 |
| 26 | each student | 115 | part of the | 28 |
| 27 | each group | 110 | for the students | 27 |
| 28 | at the | 108 | students that they | 27 |
| 29 | and the | 107 | students to write | 27 |
| 30 | for example | 107 | activity can be | 26 |
| 31 | for each | 101 | in the classroom | 26 |
| 32 | students are | 101 | it is a | 26 |
| 33 | see appendix | 99 | see appendix a | 26 |
| 34 | students can | 98 | students into groups | 26 |
| 35 | this is | 93 | tell students that | 26 |
| 36 | the first | 92 | and have students | 25 |
| 37 | activity is | 91 | of this activity | 25 |
| 38 | they are | 91 | a list of | 24 |
| 39 | to be | 91 | of the lesson | 24 |
| 40 | to write | 90 | for each student | 23 |
| 41 | that the | 88 | that they will | 23 |
| 42 | each other | 84 | based on the | 22 |
| 43 | to their | 84 | be used to | 22 |
| 44 | with a | 83 | it can be | 22 |
| | | | on the blackboard | 22 |

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Table 39

*Most Frequent 4-grams and 5-grams in the Whole Corpus*

| Rank | 4-gram | Occur. | 5-gram | Occur. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | the end of the | 27 | at the end of the | 17 |
| 2 | at the end of | 26 | in front of the class | 12 |
| 3 | in front of the | 23 | of this activity is to | 10 |
| 4 | students into groups of | 21 | the rest of the class | 10 |
| 5 | front of the class | 19 | divide students into groups of | 8 |
| 6 | this activity can be | 16 | students into groups of three | 8 |
| 7 | ask the students to | 15 | it is a good idea | 7 |
| 8 | at the beginning of | 15 | that they are going to | 7 |
| 9 | can be used to | 15 | the front of the class | 7 |
| 10 | the front of the | 15 | to the front of the | 7 |
| 11 | divide the class into | 14 | at the beginning of the | 6 |
| 12 | of this activity is | 14 | at the front of the | 6 |
| 13 | for the students to | 13 | can be used as a | 6 |
| 14 | the rest of the | 13 | explain to the students that | 6 |
| 15 | a good idea to | 11 | is a good idea to | 6 |
| 16 | for lower level students | 11 | put students into groups of | 6 |
| 17 | they are going to | 11 | tell students that they will | 6 |
| 18 | this activity is to | 11 | the students into groups of | 6 |
| 19 | be used as a | 10 | write them on the board | 6 |
| 20 | it is a good | 10 | and write them on the | 5 |
| 21 | it is important to | 10 | groups of three or four | 5 |
| 22 | put students into groups | 10 | groups of three to four | 5 |
| 23 | rest of the class | 10 | groups of two or three | 5 |
| 24 | this can be done | 10 | in pairs or small groups | 5 |
| 25 | groups of three to | 9 | into groups of two or | 5 |
| 26 | I have found that | 9 | is a great way to | 5 |
| 27 | into groups of three | 9 | the end of the semester | 5 |
| 28 | is a good idea | 9 | the front of the classroom | 5 |
| 29 | students that they will | 9 | this activity can also be | 5 |
| 30 | tell students that they | 9 | this activity can be adapted | 5 |
| 31 | this activity is a | 9 | write these on the board | 5 |

**8.7.1.1 Whole corpus 2-grams.** The 2-grams don't provide very much information. With only three exceptions, each 2-gram is composed of either two function words (such as *of the* and *on the*), or one content word plus one function word (such as *students to* or *this activity*). The three exceptions are *students are, see appendix*, and *have students*. The first likely arises solely because of the high incidence of the individual words *students* and *are* in the corpus. The second, on the other hand, is a set phrase, often found in parenthesis, as in "They will have 10 minutes to produce a 10-line conversation between two people (see Appendix for an example.)" The high frequency of this phrase suggests that the authors see the

handouts as integral parts of what they are offering to the readers. Also, note that this phrase is self-referential. That is, it refers back to the article itself, rather than referring to the activity described in the article. Three other 2-grams that are similarly self-referential are *this activity, the activity,* and *activity is*. The third double-content word 2-gram, *have students*, is, as discussed in the analysis of imperatives, used to have the [teacher] issue a command to students, and its high incidence speaks to how critical a component of these articles the giving of orders is.

One other 2-gram is worth considering: *to write*. This phrase stands out because it is the only frequent 2-gram containing a word that specifically linked to language learning. My guess is that this is because there are a larger variety of words that can be used for spoken conversation, and because reading plays such a small explicit part in this corpus (see section 9.5 for more information). After checking a sample (one-third) of the results, it seems that more than half of the occurrences of *to write* are in commands, as in "Instruct students <u>to write</u> a final copy of the composition with the corrections they discovered in Steps 2–4," with an additional 20% being implied commands, as in "Tell the students they have all the answers on the back, and all they have to do is <u>to write</u> the correct word under the correct picture."

*8.7.1.2 Whole corpus 3-grams.* The 3-grams have more content words and are more specific, such that even in when the collocations consist of one content word and two function words, the patterns of usage allowed make inferences about the standard functions of these 3-grams. I organized the 3-grams into five categories with similar meaning that contained three or more 3-grams; they are listed in Table 40. Note that when placing an N-gram into a category, doesn't mean that every instance of that N-gram in the corpus falls within that category, but rather that the majority of them do; while there are many idiosyncratic uses of these phrases, they are not discussed here. If an N-gram didn't seem to have a dominant meaning, I did not place it into a category.

Table 40

*Common Functions for 3-grams in the Whole Corpus*

| Category | # in category | 3-grams (with rank) |
|---|---|---|
| Command | 10 | 2. *the students to* |
| | | 4. *ask students to* |
| | | 9. *have the students* |
| | | 12. *encourage students to* |
| | | 21. *ask them to* |
| | | 24. *instruct students to* |
| | | 28. *students that they* |
| | | 29. *students to write* |
| | | 35. *tell students that* |
| | | 36. *and have students* |
| | | 41. *that they will* |
| Organization | 6 | 19. *into groups of* |
| | | 20. *the number of* |
| | | 26. *part of the* |
| | | 27. *for the students* |
| | | 28. *students to write* |
| | | 34. *students into groups* |
| Location | 4 | 1. *on the board* |
| | | 11. *front of the* |
| | | 15. *in front of* |
| | | 45. *on the blackboard* |
| Situation | 3 | 8. *can be used* |
| | | 17. *this activity can* |
| | | 30. *activity can be* |
| Time | 3 | 7. *the end of* |
| | | 22. *at the end* |
| | | 23. *end of the* |

The category with the most different 3-grams is "Command," and includes any 3-gram which is primarily used in commands or implied commands. The list includes three different imperative verbs, *ask* (twice)*, have* (twice)*, encourage, instruct,* and *tell*. Note that while *encourage* may sound like it is designed to have [teachers] try to motivate students or improve their mood, that usage is rare, and the more common usage is as an indirect command, as in "Encourage students to guess what the words are and the topic they relate to." The "guessing" here is the required task which students must undertake; despite the use of *encourage*, in the context of the activity, this sentence could just as well have said, "Have the students

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guess what the words are and the topic they relate to." The "Command" 3-grams that don't have one of the imperatives tend to follow imperatives in the corpus; for example, *the students to* appears in phrases such as "Ask <u>the students to</u>," "tell <u>the students to</u>," and "Direct <u>the students to</u>."

The "Organization" category contains the next largest number of different 3-grams. These are 3-grams which are closely linked to the managerial aspects of teaching, such as how to distribute students and how to move from one part of the activity to the next—the practical aspects of teaching that aren't strictly linked to the subject being taught. Also, it would not be unreasonable to consider the "Location" and "Time" to be subcategories of "Organization," since they also deal with the practical aspects of running the activities, but in a more specific way. "Location" refers to "where" in the classroom activities take place. The first and last focus on things being done on the board/blackboard, and while they mainly refer to the action of [teachers] writing on the board, some of the activities also have students write on the board as well. The two 3-grams containing *front* are linked mostly to the action of having students come to the front of the classroom. The "Time" category refers to the pacing of the activity. Each contains the word *end*; this most often refers to the end of the activity, but occasionally refers to when the activity should be done in the time frame of the entire course, such as "at the end of the semester."

This rarer meaning for some of the "Time" 3-grams would actually place those sentences into the final category, "Situation." These are 3-grams that are used in sentences that define the circumstances under which the activity could or should be used, as in "The <u>activity can be used</u> in lesson types ranging from exam preparation to general English conversation, and students often enjoy the deductive side of the first stage." These phrases are thus linked to both the targets and benefits of the activity.

*8.7.1.3 Whole corpus 4-grams.* For the 4-grams, the most common functions of the phrases shift. Table 41 categorizes the most frequent 4-grams. At the 4-gram level, the most populated category is "Organization," and all the 4-grams in this category refer to placing the students into groups. The importance of group activities in this corpus will be discussed in detail in section 9.7.

Table 41

*Common Functions for 4-grams in the Whole Corpus*

| Category | # in category | 3-grams (with rank) |
|---|---|---|
| Organization | 5 | 4. *students into groups of*<br>11. *divide the class into*<br>22. *put students into groups*<br>25. *groups of three to*<br>27. *into groups of three* |
| Time | 4 | 1. *the end of the*<br>2. *at the end of*<br>8. *at the beginning of*<br>14. *the rest of the* |
| Situation | 4 | 6. *this activity can*<br>9. *can be used to*<br>16. *for lower level students*<br>19. *be used as a* |
| Command | 4 | 7. *ask the students to*<br>17. *they are going to*<br>29. *students that they will*<br>30. *tell students that they* |
| Suggestion | 4 | 15. *a good idea to*<br>20. *it is a good*<br>21. *it is important to*<br>28. *is a good idea to* |
| Location | 3 | 3. *in front of the*<br>5. *front of the class*<br>15. *the front of the* |

The "Time," "Situation," "Command," and "Location" categories are mostly the same as at the 3-gram level. In "Time," one *beginning* 4-gram is added to those using *end*. In "Situation," in addition to three general phrases linked to the conditions under which the activity can be conducted, there is one more specific phrase, *for lower level students*. Also, note that the "Organization" 4-grams could be considered to be a subset of the "Command" category, since they are usually implied commands, as in "Put the <u>students into groups of</u> four." While the [teacher] is explicitly taking the action, the [students] are being required to form and then later interact in groups.

The one new category is "Suggestion." This refers to 4-grams which occur in sentences where the [author] gives a hint to the [reader]. These can be general, like the "Situation" category, but more often are about a specific aspect of the activity. For example, in an activity in which the [teacher] makes cards for a special game the students will play, the author writes, "It's a good idea to laminate these." These 4-grams represent an interdiscursivity (Fairclough, 2003), in that they mix the My Share genre with its imaginary "predecessor"—the fictional conversation with a co-worker described in the guidelines. However, note that they do so indirectly: none of these 4-grams are used in conjunction with a word such as *I* that directly brings in the voice of the [author].

*8.7.1.4 Whole corpus 5-grams.* For the 5-grams, I haven't created another table for the categories because, as a of perusal Table 39 shows, the 5-grams have roughly the same set of functions as the 4-grams. There are nine "Organization," eight "Location," four "Time," and three each of "Command," "Situation," and "Suggestion." The 5-gram also see the near completion of the trend begun with the transition from 2-gram to 3-gram: only one of the 5-grams doesn't fit into one of these main categories, and none of the 5-grams have highly varied meanings. This is likely a function of the significantly lower number of repeated 5-grams.

**8.7.2 Section-by-section N-grams analysis.** In this section I examine the most frequent N-grams in each of the four obligatory/semi-obligatory sections plus an extra "section" that collects the optional sections (Alternative, Extension, Notes, Resources, Materials, and Assessment) together into a single unit.

*8.7.2.1 Section-by-section 2-grams.* Table 42 has the most frequent 2-grams in each section. As with the whole corpus numbers, the reason for cutting-off each ranking at different numbers was so that I didn't list only some numbers at a particular frequency where there were ties.

Table 42

*Most Frequent 2-grams in Each Section of the Corpus*

| Rank | Introduction 2-gram | Occ. | Preparation 2-gram | Occ. | Procedure 2-gram | Occ. | Conclusion 2-gram | Occ. | Other 2-gram | Occ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | of the | 95 | of the | 120 | of the | 359 | this activity | 107 | can be | 24 |
| 2 | this activity | 90 | on the | 67 | on the | 271 | can be | 63 | in the | 21 |
| 3 | students to | 76 | in the | 56 | the students | 243 | of the | 59 | of the | 20 |
| 4 | can be | 71 | for each | 55 | to the | 238 | in the | 55 | to the | 18 |
| 5 | in the | 70 | for the | 49 | students to | 223 | students to | 50 | have students | 17 |
| 6 | is a | 54 | students to | 47 | in the | 205 | the students | 50 | students to | 15 |
| 7 | activity is | 46 | prepare a | 46 | have students | 138 | is a | 47 | this activity | 15 |
| 8 | on the | 42 | see appendix | 42 | the class | 127 | it is | 43 | on the | 13 |
| 9 | it is | 38 | from the | 38 | the board | 104 | to be | 33 | the students | 12 |
| 10 | such as | 37 | to the | 35 | with the | 95 | for the | 32 | could be | 11 |
| 11 | of a | 36 | the class | 34 | the teacher | 89 | the teacher | 31 | the activity | 10 |
| 12 | to the | 36 | appendix A | 32 | each group | 86 | to the | 31 | you can | 10 |
| 13 | as a | 35 | each student | 30 | from the | 83 | activity is | 30 | be used | 9 |
| 14 | in a | 35 | the students | 30 | them to | 83 | in a | 30 | can also | 9 |
| 15 | for the | 33 | can be | 29 | that they | 82 | as a | 28 | activity can | 8 |
| 16 | the activity | 32 | with the | 27 | each student | 77 | students are | 27 | also be | 8 |
| 17 | the teacher | 32 | such as | 26 | for the | 77 | this is | 27 | for example | 8 |
| 18 | the students | 29 | on a | 25 | on their | 70 | students can | 26 | see appendix | 8 |
| 19 | their own | 28 | for example | 24 | ask students | 65 | their own | 26 | students can | 8 |
| 20 | is to | 27 | for students | 24 | to write | 65 | on the | 24 | students write | 8 |
| 21 | in English | 26 | e g | 23 | for example | 64 | I have | 21 | such as | 8 |
| 22 | with the | 26 | will be | 22 | it is | 61 | the activity | 21 | their own | 8 |
| 23 | the following | 24 | you can | 22 | can be | 60 | with a | 20 | as a | 7 |
| 24 | at the | 23 | create a | 21 | to their | 60 | activity can | 19 | at the | 7 |
| 25 | use of | 23 | of a | 21 | as a | 59 | not only | 19 | for the | 7 |
| 26 | be used | 22 | and a | 20 | at the | 58 | way to | 19 | with the | 7 |
| 27 | and the | 21 | it is | 20 | have the | 58 | and the | 18 | | |
| 28 | it can | 21 | your students | 20 | they can | 57 | in their | 18 | | |
| 29 | | | | | and the | 56 | | | | |
| 30 | | | | | their own | 56 | | | | |

There are both similarities and differences between the individual section 2-gram lists and those for the whole corpus. The most obvious similarity is in the 2-gram list for the Procedure section: 24 of the top 30 2-grams in the Procedure section are also in the top 30 of the whole corpus. This is unsurprising given that almost half of the words in the corpus are found in the Procedure section. Second, when discussing the 2-grams for the whole corpus, I noted three 2-grams that have two content words. The first was *students are*, and the fact that the only section where it appears in the top 30 is the Conclusion section means that it may be necessary to reconsider the earlier simplistic explanation that the high frequency was only due to the high frequency of the individual words. In the Conclusion, there are three main uses for this 2-gram. More than half (14 out of 27) of the uses are to describe the result of the activity—that is, describing the positive change in the students that occurs as a result of the activity, such as "Also, <u>students are</u> motivated to communicate with their own group to help each other get bonus points or rewards." The rest of the uses either describe what students do in the activity (seven instances) or what students already know or can do prior to starting the activity. This helps point to the primary purpose of the Conclusion section: in part, to say what was done in the activity, sometimes in the context of student prior knowledge, but mostly to emphasize the benefits of the activity.

*See appendix*, on the other hand, appears only in the top 30 lists for the Preparation and Other sections. The similar *appendix A* also appears in the top 30 list of the Preparation section. The purpose of this 2-gram is always to point the reader to an appendix that contains a handout that is to be printed prior to conducting the activity. It is worth noting that *see appendix* appears an equal number of times (42) in the Procedure section, making it tied for 51st place in the Procedure 2-gram ranking. Thus, the appendices can be classified as part of the actual activity, not the argument made to justify the activities. However, the other self-referential phrases (those involving the word *activity*) appear in the Introduction, Conclusion, and Other lists. This makes sense given that during the actual activity description (Preparation/Procedure) it isn't as necessary to refer to the activity as a whole; rather, these 2-grams are more often used to describe the broad qualities of the activities.

The last double content 2-gram from the whole corpus, *have students*, unsurprisingly only appears in the Procedure list, since I have noted before that its purpose is to tell the reader to tell the authors to do something. In the Procedure 2-gram list, the very direct command *have students* is joined by hidden command *ask students*. Other than *ask students*, there are no new double-content 2-grams introduced in any of the lists.

*8.7.2.2 Section-by section 3-grams.* Table 43 contains the top 3-grams for each of the sections. At this level, there are even more significant differences between the different sections. In the Introduction, all the 3-grams except for *part of the* are used to describe the overall purpose of the activity, the benefits of the activity, or a broad description of what happens in it. Note that in the latter case, these are not details about how to perform the activity, but general summaries of the activity, as in, "This activity is a review/scaffolding activity that helps to develop numerous skills, such as using a dictionary, independent learning, use of metalanguage, cooperation, supportive/interpersonal communication, and so forth."

Table 43

*Most Frequent 3-grams in Each Section of the Corpus*

| Rank | Introduction 3-gram | Occ. | Preparation 3-gram | Occ. | Procedure 3-gram | Occ. | Conclusion 3-gram | Occ. | Other 3-gram | Occ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | this activity is | 32 | for each student | 19 | on the board | 85 | this activity is | 20 | can also be | 6 |
| 2 | can be used | 16 | for students to | 18 | ask students to | 45 | this activity can | 15 | the number of | 5 |
| 3 | the following activity | 14 | a list of | 13 | have the students | 37 | this is a | 15 | this activity can | 5 |
| 4 | it can be | 13 | for each group | 13 | the students to | 37 | as well as | 13 | activity can be | 4 |
| 5 | activity can be | 12 | on the board | 13 | the end of | 31 | I have found | 12 | and have students | 4 |
| 6 | for students to | 11 | see appendix A | 13 | front of the | 30 | allows students to | 10 | at the end | 4 |
| 7 | this is a | 11 | tell students that | 10 | of the class | 28 | for the students | 10 | be used to | 4 |
| 8 | in this activity | 10 | a set of | 9 | ask them to | 27 | activity can be | 9 | can be used | 4 |
| 9 | of this activity | 10 | in the class | 8 | instruct students to | 27 | can be used | 9 | for students to | 4 |
| 10 | the use of | 10 | of the class | 8 | into groups of | 27 | in order to | 9 | activity could be | 3 |
| 11 | activity is to | 9 | ask students to | 7 | encourage students to | 26 | it is a | 9 | also be used | 3 |
| 12 | this activity can | 9 | based on the | 7 | to the class | 24 | the students to | 9 | ask students to | 3 |
| 13 | to get students | 9 | copies of the | 7 | students into groups | 23 | have found that | 8 | be used for | 3 |
| 14 | activity is a | 8 | in the classroom | 7 | students to write | 22 | of this activity | 8 | can be done | 3 |
| 15 | allows students to | 8 | one of the | 7 | at the end | 21 | the use of | 8 | can easily be | 3 |
| 16 | at the beginning | 8 | see appendix b | 7 | in front of | 21 | a lot of | 7 | choose pictures that | 3 |
| 17 | part of the | 8 | the students to | 7 | students that they | 21 | activity to be | 7 | have students write | 3 |
| 18 | to help students | 8 | at least one | 6 | end of the | 20 | this activity and | 7 | in the classroom | 3 |
| 19 | activity is designed | 7 | class prepare a | 6 | for students to | 19 | a good way | 6 | next to the | 3 |
| 20 | of the activity | 7 | create a worksheet | 6 | and have students | 18 | and can be | 6 | see appendix C | 3 |
| 21 | of the lesson | 7 | for the students | 6 | on the blackboard | 18 | be adapted for | 6 | the end of | 3 |
| 22 | the opportunity to | 7 | from the internet | 6 | part of the | 18 | can be a | 6 | the students to | 3 |
| 23 | | | of the words | 6 | the number of | 18 | is a fun | 6 | | |
| 24 | | | one for each | 6 | a copy of | 16 | this activity allows | 6 | | |
| 25 | | | one set of | 6 | and have them | 16 | this activity has | 6 | | |
| 26 | | | that they will | 6 | ask the students | 16 | this activity to | 6 | | |
| 27 | | | | | encourage them to | 16 | | | | |
| 28 | | | | | groups of three | 16 | | | | |
| 29 | | | | | that they will | 16 | | | | |
| 30 | | | | | the use of | 16 | | | | |

In the Preparation section, 19 of the 26 most frequent 3-grams occur in sentences that primarily refer to the preparation of materials for the class. This is self-evident when the 3-grams contain words like *appendix, worksheet*, and *copies*. In addition, the phrases that are linked to counting, such as *for each student* and *a set of* each link to sentences telling readers to prepare something for each group/[student] in the class. Furthermore, a closer examination shows that even some of the seemingly ambiguous 3-grams such as *for student to* are also linked to materials preparation, as in "For peer-feedback, create handouts <u>for students to</u> fill with information and comments (See Appendix D)." Also, note that while in each of these 19 3-grams a majority of the materials preparation referred to is the creation of physical objects such as handouts (or, at least, printing and copying the materials that the author has provided), a not insignificant minority of these sentences were about selection—that is, choosing some sort of English input (texts, audio recordings, videos, etc.) for students to encounter during the class. For example, one pair of sentences using the *for students to* 3-gram reads, "Choose easy, short, and well-known songs under 4 minutes. Ballads and movie themes work well, but be sure they are not too difficult <u>for students to</u> sing." The concern about level expressed in this passage is common in both material selection and creation sentences, but it does not appear in most other cases.

As I showed in the 2-grams, there is a significant overlap between the most frequent Procedure 3-grams and those across the whole corpus. 18 of the 30 most frequent 3-grams in the Procedure section are also found on the top 30 list for the whole corpus. The most common function for Procedure 3-grams are "Commands," with 12 of the top 30 3-grams falling into this category. The imperative verbs in these 3-grams are *ask* (3), *encourage* (2), *have* (3), and instruct (1). As with the whole corpus 3-gram list, there are also examples of the "Organization" (6), "Location" (4), and "Time" (3) categories. However, "Situation" 3-grams do not appear in the Procedure 3-gram list—rather, those are found in the Introduction, Conclusion, and Other sections.

When I searched for those "Situation" 3-grams and found them in both the introduction and Conclusion sections, it led me to first check if the two sections in general shared the same 3-grams. Comparing all 3-grams with six or more occurrences (that is, the top 38 from the introduction and the top 26 from the

Conclusion), the two sections share only ten 3-grams in common. This is consistent with the finding in section 6.5 that while the introduction and Conclusion sections have similarities, they seem to have somewhat different purposes.

In addition, I want to call attention to two frequent 3-grams in the Conclusion section that have features that don't appear in the top lists for the other sections or the whole corpus. The first, *I have found*, is a very rare direct lexical reference to [teachers]. In the section-by-section 2-grams, *you* appeared twice, but in all the whole corpus N-grams, only *I* appears, and only once in the 4-gram *I have found that*. [Students], on the other hand, appear frequently as both the noun *student* and as the pronouns *they* and *them*. This aligns exactly with the findings from the agent analysis above, including the fact that [teachers] do appear, but in the lexically elided imperatives found in the Procedure section. The other unusual 3-gram is *is a fun*. While the word *good* appeared in several of the whole corpus 4- and 5-grams, this is the first specific evaluative adjective to be found in any N-gram. While there are only six occurrences of this N-gram, *a good way* also appears six times, and looking a little further down the ranking past what appears in Table 45 there are two 3-grams using *good* with five occurrences each: *good way to* and *is a good*. This points, slightly, to one key role of the Conclusion—to not only summarize the activity (as shown by the six 3-grams using the word *activity*) but also evaluating/promoting it. This matches the findings of the Move Analysis (Chapter 5), which showed significantly more "Benefit" and "Experience" moves in the Conclusion than in the introduction section.

Lastly, the most frequent 3-grams for the Other sections serve mainly to complicate descriptions of them from earlier analyses. In section 5.3.3, I argued that those sections are mostly written in a format similar to Procedure sections, in that they mostly describe additional or alternative things that readers can do with the activities. 11 of the 22 3-grams which occur three or more times fall into categories that are found in the Procedure or Preparation sections—there are four "Command," two "Organization," two "Time," and one materials preparation 3-grams. The other 11 3-grams, however, match those found in the Introduction and Conclusion sections, with ten of them being "Situation" 3-grams, and the last one describing a benefit of the activity (or an optional component of it). Thus, it may be more accurate to consider the non-obligatory text sections a hybrid of the Introduction/Conclusion and the Preparation/Procedure styles. While it would be questionable to draw too

certain conclusions from this data, since more than half of these 3-grams occurred only three times, this hybridism does make sense given that most of these sections need to both justify/contextualize the additional/alternative steps and explain how to do them.

*8.7.2.3 Section-by-section 4-grams.* For Table 44, which contains the top 4-grams in each section, I had to omit a number of 4-grams that would normally appear for space reasons. The "Other" section was removed, as there were only three 4-grams that occurred three times each: *at the end, can also be used*, and *this activity can be*. For the Introduction, Preparation, and Conclusion sections, I had to cut each list off at four occurrences, because there were many "ties" at three occurrences and including them would have made the table awkwardly extend to two pages. Additionally, drawing conclusions about these low-frequency clusters would probably be unwarranted.

All but five of the 4-grams on the whole corpus list appear on one or more of the section-by-section lists, with three appearing in the Introduction list, one in Preparation, 18 in Procedure, 2 in Conclusion, and one in both Introduction and Conclusion. Most of the trends remain the same: the Introduction and Conclusion sections focus on a broad picture of the activities and evaluations/promotions of them, and the Procedure section focuses on specific organizational terms linked to performing the activities.

There are a few changes worth noting. In the Introduction section, there are more phrases that relate specifically to the goal of the activity, including *this activity is designed, the goal of this,* and *the purpose of this.* In addition, there are also see several 4-grams that focus on one of the types of teacher-linked benefits (see section 7.3.2), flexibility, appearing in the 4-grams *a wide range of, activity can be done, be done in any* and *can be done in*. Note that the last two are parts of the same 5-gram, which occurs three times, *can be done in any*.

Table 44

*Most Frequent 4-grams in Each Section of the Corpus*

| | Introduction | | Preparation | | Procedure | | Conclusion | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | 4-gram | Occ. | 4-gram | Occ. | 4-gram | Occ. | 4-gram | Occ. |
| 1 | of this activity is | 10 | a good idea to | 4 | at the end of | 20 | I have found that | 8 |
| 2 | this activity is to | 8 | a handout with the | 4 | the end of the | 20 | this activity can be | 6 |
| 3 | this activity can be | 7 | for each group of | 4 | students into groups of | 19 | a good way to | 5 |
| 4 | at the beginning of | 6 | on the board for | 4 | in front of the | 15 | this activity to be | 5 |
| 5 | can be used to | 6 | | | the front of the | 15 | this is a fun | 5 |
| 6 | the following activity is | 6 | | | front of the class | 14 | a great way to | 4 |
| 7 | this activity is designed | 6 | | | ask the students to | 13 | activity allows students to | 4 |
| 8 | this activity is a | 5 | | | divide the class into | 12 | at the same time | 4 |
| 9 | a wide range of | 4 | | | put students into groups | 9 | can be adapted for | 4 |
| 10 | activity can be done | 4 | | | the rest of the | 9 | for the students to | 4 |
| 11 | activity can be used | 4 | | | they are going to | 9 | is a fun activity | 4 |
| 12 | activity is designed to | 4 | | | a copy of the | 8 | is a good way | 4 |
| 13 | be done in any | 4 | | | and ask them to | 8 | of this lesson is | 4 |
| 14 | can be done in | 4 | | | into groups of three | 8 | this activity is a | 4 |
| 15 | goal of this activity | 4 | | | rest of the class | 8 | | |
| 16 | in a way that | 4 | | | groups of three to | 7 | | |
| 17 | in front of the | 4 | | | into groups of two | 7 | | |
| 18 | is to have students | 4 | | | is a good idea | 7 | | |
| 19 | students the opportunity to | 4 | | | on the board and | 7 | | |
| 20 | the goal of this | 4 | | | on the board if | 7 | | |
| 21 | the purpose of this | 4 | | | on the board the | 7 | | |
| 22 | | | | | students that they will | 7 | | |
| 23 | | | | | students to write down | 7 | | |
| 24 | | | | | tell students that they | 7 | | |
| 25 | | | | | them on the board | 7 | | |
| 26 | | | | | this can be done | 7 | | |
| 27 | | | | | to listen to the | 7 | | |
| 28 | | | | | to the front of | 7 | | |

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As with the whole corpus 4-grams, the Procedure 4-grams focus specifically on organizational aspects of the class, including "Location" (7), and "Grouping" (6), and "Time" (3). There are seven "Command" 4-grams, though, as discussed in the whole corpus section, the "Grouping" 4-grams could arguably be called "Commands" as well.

In the "Conclusion" section, there is an increase in the number of evaluative statements, with two 4-grams using the word *good*, two using *fun,* and one using *great*. In addition, as in the Introduction section, there are two 4-grams that focus on flexibility. In the Conclusion, this is put in terms of "adaptability," as in the 4-grams *this activity can be* and *can be adapted for*.

I have not included another table for the 5-grams, because there aren't enough in most of the sections to warrant discussion. There are 15 5-grams with three or more occurrences in the Introduction, but only four with four or more and only one with more than four. There are two 5-grams with three occurrences each in Preparation, and none with more. The Procedure section does have 74 5-grams with a frequency of 3 or higher, but only 31 with four or higher. There are 31 5-grams with a frequency of 3 or higher in the Conclusion section, but only 14 with four or more. There are no 5-grams with frequency three or higher in the Other sections. As such, I don't believe that it is possible to draw meaningful conclusions from this little data.

*8.7.2.4 1-grams in each section.* Finally, I want to turn full circle to the question of 1-grams—that is, to the issue of word frequency. Section 8.3 discussed the most frequent words of the whole corpus, but did not break down the most frequent words by section. Table 45 lists the top 20 words in each of the sections as calculated by both AntConc (including function words and separating different forms of the same root word) and KH Coder (excluding many function words and combining different forms of the same root word together). As in the rest of this section, I have combined all the optional text sections into a single "Other" section. Also, I placed Introduction and Conclusion side by side, and Preparation and Procedure side by side, due to their similarities as established above and in Chapter 5.

Table 45

*Most Frequent Words by Section*

| | Introduction | | | | Conclusion | | | |
| | AntConc | | KHCoder | | AntConc | | KHCoder | |
| Rank | Word | Occ. | Word | Occ. | Word | Occ. | Word | Occ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | the | 879 | be | 629 | the | 682 | be | 537 |
| 2 | to | 704 | student | 474 | to | 575 | student | 425 |
| 3 | and | 568 | they | 338 | and | 492 | they | 336 |
| 4 | a | 537 | activity | 240 | students | 396 | activity | 195 |
| 5 | of | 518 | it | 149 | a | 359 | it | 179 |
| 6 | students | 440 | use | 146 | of | 359 | have | 146 |
| 7 | in | 425 | English | 145 | in | 300 | I | 98 |
| 8 | is | 291 | have | 129 | this | 239 | class | 87 |
| 9 | for | 226 | class | 114 | is | 208 | use | 86 |
| 10 | this | 220 | language | 100 | for | 194 | also | 79 |
| 11 | activity | 206 | that | 78 | it | 179 | English | 75 |
| 12 | can | 170 | teacher | 77 | their | 172 | teacher | 74 |
| 13 | their | 169 | write | 74 | activity | 169 | not | 72 |
| 14 | as | 159 | not | 70 | be | 163 | language | 65 |
| 15 | on | 157 | learner | 65 | can | 162 | way | 55 |
| 16 | with | 157 | which | 61 | as | 137 | lesson | 54 |
| 17 | it | 149 | make | 60 | that | 132 | help | 53 |
| 18 | that | 149 | I | 59 | with | 129 | more | 50 |
| 19 | be | 140 | do | 57 | they | 106 | time | 49 |
| 20 | are | 137 | lesson | 57 | are | 97 | other | 46 |
| 21 | English | 121 | such | 56 | I | 92 | that | 44 |
| 22 | or | 120 | often | 55 | have | 89 | write | 44 |
| 23 | an | 116 | also | 53 | on | 87 | learner | 42 |
| 24 | they | 110 | help | 51 | an | 83 | make | 42 |
| 25 | language | 103 | word | 51 | also | 79 | skill | 42 |
| 26 | class | 92 | time | 48 | English | 79 | you | 42 |
| 27 | have | 74 | question | 47 | more | 77 | allow | 40 |
| 28 | use | 74 | what | 45 | class | 75 | do | 38 |
| 29 | from | 70 | group | 43 | language | 67 | fun | 38 |
| 30 | vocabulary/writing[a] | 69 | how/Japanese[a] | 42 | or | 67 | learn | 37 |

Table 45 (continued)

| Rank | Preparation AntConc Word | Occ. | Preparation KHCoder Word | Occ. | Procedure AntConc Word | Occ. | Procedure KHCoder Word | Occ. | Other AntConc Word | Occ. | Other KHCoder Word | Occ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | the | 889 | be | 332 | the | 3604 | they | 1617 | the | 215 | be | 123 |
| 2 | a | 549 | student | 330 | to | 1763 | student | 1524 | to | 147 | student | 102 |
| 3 | of | 411 | you | 192 | students | 1321 | be | 1032 | and | 111 | they | 75 |
| 4 | to | 394 | they | 154 | and | 1308 | have | 634 | a | 102 | activity | 39 |
| 5 | and | 379 | class | 111 | a | 1176 | group | 416 | students | 96 | you | 32 |
| 6 | for | 296 | use | 95 | of | 972 | you | 376 | of | 79 | have | 39 |
| 7 | students | 271 | prepare | 94 | their | 755 | write | 336 | for | 76 | use | 30 |
| 8 | in | 222 | have | 94 | in | 723 | class | 294 | be | 70 | write | 30 |
| 9 | or | 185 | question | 82 | for | 558 | ask | 281 | in | 63 | class | 22 |
| 10 | on | 160 | Appendix | 78 | they | 535 | question | 254 | can | 56 | it | 22 |
| 11 | that | 143 | word | 77 | have | 527 | give | 236 | or | 54 | also | 21 |
| 12 | each | 133 | write | 76 | on | 512 | use | 233 | their | 45 | I | 20 |
| 13 | be | 120 | example | 73 | or | 464 | it | 231 | this | 38 | make | 18 |
| 14 | you | 115 | it | 68 | each | 424 | word | 216 | activity | 35 | word | 17 |
| 15 | is | 113 | group | 66 | that | 402 | do | 192 | with | 35 | example | 16 |
| 16 | class | 104 | see | 57 | is | 387 | time | 190 | have | 32 | do | 15 |
| 17 | as | 101 | make | 49 | as | 373 | not | 180 | as | 31 | give | 15 |
| 18 | with | 99 | choose | 47 | with | 351 | make | 161 | on | 30 | group | 15 |
| 19 | one | 96 | that | 47 | them | 327 | example | 144 | more | 29 | more | 15 |
| 20 | appendix | 90 | find | 46 | class | 286 | pair | 140 | is | 25 | sentence | 15 |
| 21 | from | 88 | card | 44 | you | 272 | then | 135 | you | 25 | more | 14 |
| 22 | prepare | 88 | copy | 44 | be | 265 | minute | 130 | it | 22 | not | 14 |
| 23 | will | 85 | I | 43 | are | 264 | what | 130 | also | 21 | ask | 13 |
| 24 | can | 83 | create | 43 | can | 247 | answer | 123 | each | 20 | other | 13 |
| 25 | an | 80 | give | 43 | this | 247 | activity | 120 | about | 19 | create | 11 |
| 26 | your | 78 | picture | 42 | group | 235 | other | 120 | are | 19 | lesson | 10 |
| 27 | are | 73 | worksheet | 42 | ask | 234 | Appendix | 117 | I | 19 | team | 10 |
| 28 | have | 73 | handout | 37 | write | 232 | I | 117 | they | 19 | b | 9 |
| 29 | it | 68 | which | 37 | it | 231 | card | 116 | write | 18 | | |
| 30 | make | 64 | list/topic[a] | 36 | student | 231 | explain | 115 | could | 17 | | |

*Note*: [a] This represents a two-way tie for 30th place. [b] KH Coder had an eight-way tie for 28th–35th place for Other, so those were omitted.

Among the AntConc results, there are 16 words that appear in all top 30 lists: *a, and, are, as, be, can, have, in, is, it, of, on, or, students, the, to*; in addition, *class, for,* and *that* appear in all the obligatory/semi-obligatory sections. Of those words, most also appear in the top 30 of both the BNC and COCA, with only *as, can, class, or,* and *students* not appearing.[93] While it is clear why *class* and *students* are significantly more frequent in the My Share corpus than BNC and COCA, it's not clear why *as, can*, and *or* are more frequent here.

There are 16 words that appear in the top 30 in only one of the sections; those words are listed in Table 46. The unique inclusion of *vocabulary* and *writing* in the Introduction probably points to one of the main purposes of that section: to tell the reader the main language focus of the activity. Seeing vocabulary here is unsurprising, but seeing writing (and none of the other "four skills") is unexpected; compare this to the discussion of teaching targets in section 9.5. Seeing the verbs *make* and *prepare* uniquely in the Preparation section points to the key focus of this section: to tell the reader what things to create to be able to do the activity. *Student*, in singular form, is unique to the Procedure section; this is because in the other sections, students are almost always referred to collectively, but in the Procedure section, it is necessary to provide instructions to individual students, such as, "Have one student pick a question card and read aloud."

Table 46

*Words Appearing in Exactly One of AntConc's Top 30 Most Frequent Lists per Section*

| Word | Section | Word | Section |
|------|---------|------|---------|
| use | Introduction | your | Preparation |
| vocabulary | Introduction | ask | Procedure |
| writing | Introduction | group | Procedure |
| appendix | Preparation | student | Procedure |
| make | Preparation | them | Procedure |
| one | Preparation | write | Procedure |
| prepare | Preparation | language | Conclusion |
| will | Preparation | could | Other |

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[93] Note that COCA groups verbs together by base form, so while I don't actually know the separate frequency for *is* and *are*, *be* is the second most frequent word, so it seems likely that if *is* and *are* were separated, each would appear in the top 30.

For KH Coder, there are seven words which appear in the top 30 lists of all sections: *be, have, I, it, make, they,* and *use*. Of those, all but *make* and *use* appear in the top 30 of both BNC and COCA. There are 26 words that appear in only one of the top 30 lists; those are summarized in Table 47. For the Introduction section, I note the word *Japanese*; looking at the corpus for usage patterns, a majority of the time it occurs in collocations that focus on learning in Japan such as *Japanese student* and *Japanese university*. The unique words in Preparation clarify that much of the action of preparing is making papers to give to students: there are not only two separate words for these objects—*handout* and *worksheet*—but one of the two unique verbs is *copy*. The importance of making handouts in this corpus is discussed again in section 9.4.1. In the Procedure section, the occurrences of the words *minute* and *pair* indicate a focus on careful organization, which was also seen in the 3-grams and 4-grams discussed above. In the Conclusion section, both *fun* and *learn* again show that a focus of this section is to explain what is good about the activity. Interestingly, *allow* serves the same function, since it is usually used in sentences such as "Therein lies the value of this activity: It allows students to express their own feelings and experiences as well as be innovative in their use of English, something they aren't normally permitted to do." And lastly, while the Other section contains a few words that I can't explain, the fact that *variation* appears is unsurprising since that is the purpose of over half of the optional text sections.

Table 47

*Words Appearing in Exactly One of KH Coder's Top 30 Most Frequent Lists per Section*

| Word | Section | Word | Section |
|---|---|---|---|
| how | Introduction | explain | Procedure |
| Japanese | Introduction | minute | Procedure |
| often | Introduction | pair | Procedure |
| choose | Preparation | then | Procedure |
| copy | Preparation | allow | Conclusion |
| find | Preparation | fun | Conclusion |
| handout | Preparation | learn | Conclusion |
| list | Preparation | skill | Conclusion |
| picture | Preparation | way | Conclusion |
| prepare | Preparation | own | Other |
| topic | Preparation | sentence | Other |
| worksheet | Preparation | team | Other |
| answer | Procedure | variation | Other |

## 8.8 Summary and Discussion

This chapter combined the tools of corpus analysis with critical discourse analysis. As Baker (2008) explained, corpus analysis helps make critical discourse claims more robust and persuasive by showing how claims about a body of texts are based not on cherry-picking, but on trends that occur across the corpus—in this case, trends that are too subtle and dispersed to be observed without computational tools.

The analysis began with the finding that the word *student* is the third most frequent word in the My Share corpus, while *teacher* is the 21st. This is surprising, given that the most frequent words in most corpora are function words, and pointed to the very specific focus of the My Share genre. It's almost as if the entire purpose of this genre is to create a space wherein teachers and students interact. In addition to this broad finding, there were also specific findings about each of the sections of the genre that help answer research question 1. By looking at the N-grams for each section, it was possible to both complement and add depth to the understandings of these sections that were shown in Chapters 5 and 6. The introduction section most commonly provides a broad description of the activity along with some sort of bigger picture outcome of the activity, such as what will be learned (the teaching target) or the benefit(s) of the lesson. In the Preparation section, what teachers must due to get ready for the class is described, and there was a very strong emphasis on creating physical items—especially paper items like handouts and worksheets—for the class. In addition, there was also indication that many activities (though not a majority of them) require that teachers make judgments about what specific things to do/use in class, such as what music or video to play. While, of course, the Procedure section defines what actually happens in the lesson, several more specific details could be seen. First, there is a strong emphasis on managerial issues, such as placing students into groups, controlling movement, and keeping track of time. Interestingly, there are few regularly repeated instances of students, as active agents, doing things. This likely speaks to a combination of two things: first, that what students are expected to do across the corpus varies greatly, and second, that there is a sense in the corpus that, in the classroom, language learning happens to the students, rather than is done by them. The most salient feature of the Conclusion section is its evaluative role—making clear what benefits result from conducting the lesson.

In addition, this chapter demonstrated key things about what identities the corpus attempts to assign to students and teachers (research question 2), particularly through the agent-verb co-occurrence analysis. Students are expected to change and grow—they are associated with verbs of learning and improving; in addition, students are agents of verbs linked to emotions. On the other hand, teachers do not change, and do not feel—they are static agents, fully formed prior to entering the classroom, without feelings or opportunities for growth. Looking at the verbs of speaking/semiosis, it is possible to go even further and say that the major roles of the teacher are judgment and exercising of control. Students, on the other hand, are rarely associated with verbs of choice (or are associated with them in ways that don't actually allow choice). In a sense, the corpus dehumanizes both students and teachers—students are stripped of agency and the opportunity to make decisions, while teachers are stripped of emotions and the ability to grow.

This analysis also applies to research question 3—the power relationship between the teachers and the students. Not only do teachers get access to verbs of judgment and control while the students do not, the very structure of how teachers and students are represented reinforces a power disparity between students and teachers. When [students] are semantically present in the text, they are almost always also present lexically, represented mostly by content nouns and pronouns. [Teachers], on the other hand, tend to be lexically elided when they are semantically present, appearing much more often as the erased agents of passive and imperative sentences than as nouns or pronouns. This erasure furthers the loss of human identity for teachers as described in the previous sentences. It is almost as if teachers have become emotionless, unchanging forces that simply exist—an extension of the rules of the activity rather than co-participants in the learning process. This same process, though, also hides the stripping of agency from the students. The use of passives, particularly when they are coupled with auxiliary verbs, often results in sentences where, on the surface, students seem to have choices, but those choices actually belong to the teacher. Imperatives are more mixed—some hide teacher power through the use of verbs that seem to have neutral meanings like *ask* and *give* but really are being used for teachers to *ask* students to do things and *give* them orders—that is, to command the students. Others, particularly *have*, openly demonstrate that the teacher has the power in the classroom.

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Finally, I would like to put forward three summarizing ideas. The first is that, when viewed at the lexicogrammatical level, this genre doesn't treat the participants—either students or teachers—as fully participating humans with the ability to make decisions that have positive impacts on their lives. Rather, each party is a vector for completing a set of tasks. In theory, the outcome of performing these tasks is that students get better at English, but this is not due to active efforts on the part of the students themselves, and only occurs when the teachers carefully manage the activities. Second, this corpus does not promote "student-centered learning." Per Taylor (1983) student-centered education doesn't require that teachers cede full control in teaching, but it does require that students be able to take initiative. Furthermore, students should be involved in setting goals and objectives, thus sharing in the responsibility for determining how best to achieve those goals (Tudor, 1993). However, the agent representations and agent-verb collocations don't indicate that these are roles that students can take in this corpus. As a contrasting term, I would like to propose that the corpus is promoting "student-focused learning." Based on their heavy lexical frequency, there is little doubt that students are the focus of these activities and the texts that represent them, and that teachers exist in the background. But students are much more acted upon than acting, and, as such, can't be said to be the "center." Third, the problems that exist in the genre are not necessarily the fault of the individual authors. This is especially evident in the power differential caused by the heavy use of imperative verbs, since this is an explicit rule of the genre written into the submission guidelines. For that matter, the other conventions that were noted in this chapter may have an equal or greater constraining force on new authors. For example, just because the use of passives to regularly hide a lack of student agency isn't a rule written into the submission guidelines, it may nonetheless be acting as an "informal" rule that influences the discourse community as it continues adding to the genre over time—even if the authors aren't aware that choices are being made for them by the conventions of the genre.

# Chapter 9
## Activity Analysis

## 9.1 Introduction

The previous four chapters focused on the My Share articles foremost as texts—that is, as units of discourse to be analyzed based on their linguistic characteristics. In this chapter, I intend to look at the activities that the articles are describing and promoting in order to understand what the articles are saying about what can and should go on in the language learning classroom.

This chapter contains many different "levels" of analysis. The first five sections are mostly quantitative in nature, in that they look at how prevalent various specific details are in the corpus. Of those, the first three focus on information found partially but not entirely, in the Quick Guide section. The first section looks at the basic "facts" of the activities (student level and maturity, and preparation and activity time). The second section examines materials that the authors either specify or imply are necessary to conduct or prepare the activities. Third, I consider the targets of the activities—that is, I discuss what linguistic (or other) skills the authors indicate that their activities are designed to help students improve at; this issue is examined by looking at the targets listed in keywords and in the "State a teaching target" moves.

The fourth and fifth sections move away from the specific details of the activities towards more holistic issues. The fourth examines whether the activities allow, forbid, or do not mention the use of the students' L1 (Japanese) in the foreign language learning classroom. The fifth looks at how frequently the activities involve group work or individual work, as well as whether the group work is collaborative or competitive in nature. These five sections fall under the text analysis and genre analysis lenses from section 4.4. For the former, while these sections are primarily quantitative, what I am quantifying are not the linguistic features of the text, but rather the ideas encapsulated in those texts, which requires the interpretive work of text analysis. For the latter, the purpose is to set out further descriptions of the genre, but, more importantly, it is to show the links between the genre and actual social practice of teaching; this is an important part of how both CDA and CGA treat genre

and discourse (Bhatia, 2015; Fairclough, 2003). In addition, half of the analysis of teaching targets is based upon the findings of the move analysis.

The final section of this chapter is significantly more qualitative. It looks at several sets of activities that share a common factor and analyzes them in detail to understand how the activities function. The goal is to look at what teacher beliefs are revealed by looking at key differences and similarities between activities that share topics or archetypal structures. While this section operates mostly at the level of discourse analysis (understanding what the texts do, rather than what they say) I continue to use finer-level tools, including corpus-based tools in some places (such as the use of word frequency counts to understand what words are more or less commonly used in these each explicitly examined type of activity).

Because this chapter touches on such a wide variety of topics, it helps produce answers to the three of the four research questions. By systematically analyzing the basic facts of the activities, it helps define what types of activities are considered acceptable under the current rules of the genre (research question 1). This same information helps explain teacher beliefs (research question 2) about both language learning and about students, including how the discourse attempts to shape and constrain the identities of students. Teacher beliefs and identities are also evident in what types of learning goals are most (and least) common, how the classes handle the use of Japanese, and what types of materials are valued or taken for granted. The final qualitative section digs especially deeply into specific beliefs, showing the multiple, often contradictory voices that make up this corpus. This section also touches on issues of power (research question 3), especially in the way that similar activities sometimes involve very different power relationship between students and teacher. Power-related issues were also revealed in the discussion of classroom materials and in the descriptions of how teachers and students will occupy and/or move through the physical space of the classroom.

## 9.2 Method

The first five sections of this chapter (basic facts, materials, teaching targets, language of instruction, and activity structures) are primarily quantitative. In each case, I examined each article (or, in the first three sections, a portion of each article) and listed or categorized the specific topic being studied. In all cases, these

categorizations required some amount of interpretation, because the My Share genre does not have standardized terms or categories for article content.[94] Where possible, I have attempted in each section to explain how I arrived at these categorization schemes. In addition, several of the specific analyses used idiosyncratic methods which are discussed below (for example, the "teaching target" analysis combines a word frequency analysis of the keywords, a categorization of the keywords, and an analysis of "Teaching Targets" moves identified in Chapter 6). However, while the analysis is based on quantitative data, I refer back to examples from the texts to provide discursive context to the numerical results.

The last analysis section ("Archetypes and paired activities"), while also containing a mix of quantitative and qualitative data, leans much more heavily towards the latter. For the "archetype" analysis, I categorized each of the articles based on the major types of activities which the articles describe (section 9.8.1 explains in more detail what I mean by the term *archetype*). Then, these archetypes were examined to see if they have any outstanding lexical, move, or topical features. This was done by looking for moves or terms which are significantly more or less frequent in that archetype than in the rest of the corpus. The purpose of this analysis is to both provide a better understanding of some of the more common activities in the corpus, as well as to look for connections between beliefs, actions within the classroom, and constructions of student and teacher identities. The "paired activities" analysis looks at four pairs of activities that were chosen because the activities cover a very similar topic. Each pair is discussed in detail, both in terms of how the activities are taught and in terms of the language used to describe that activity. These points were analyzed to look for connections between the discourse, pedagogical actions, and underlying beliefs. This final part is fully qualitative, and also contains the most in-depth analysis of individual activities in this paper.

## 9.3 Basic Facts

As discussed in 5.3.1, the Quick Guide appears at the beginning of every My Share article, and usually consists of six points: "Keywords," "Learner English Level,"

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[94] Below and again in Chapters 12 and 13 I discuss how this lack of consistency is a problematic aspect of the genre.

"Learner maturity," "Preparation time," "Activity time," and "Materials." "Materials" and "Keywords" cannot be understood without also looking at related ideas from outside of the Quick Guide, and so will be covered in separate sections below (9.3 and 9.4, respectively). The other four are summarized and analyzed here.

**9.3.1 Learner English level.** This bullet point summarizes in one to five words the level of student English competence that the article claims the activity is best suited for. Looking at all the different terms used, the first thing that can be easily observed is that there is no standardization whatsoever in the terminology used. For example, the section contains the phrases, "Elementary to advanced," "Beginner and above," "Beginner to advanced," and "Beginners and up." Ultimately, all these can be understood to mean "any level." There are no references to formal standards or (such as CEFR/CEFR-J, TOEIC, or TOEFL). This wide variety of terms is consistent with the information received from the editors, who said that they did not engage in content editing (see section 11.3.2). Also, unlike with the general panoptic adherence to a strict format as discussed in section 5.5, a standardized set of terms has not accreted in the genre conventions for learner English level. The same point will hold for most of the rest of this section. Table 48 is my compilation of the terms offered for "learner English level." Because my concern here is with the underlying idea, not the terminology, I have collapsed together terms which seem to refer to the same level. They are arranged roughly in order from the lowest proficiency to the highest.

The last two items on the list are strange anomalies: in both cases, the same information was included in "Learner English Level" and "Learner Maturity." I don't know if this is an error (that is, if the information was mistakenly duplicated during processing), or if the authors actually considered those terms to refer to both level and maturity.

Table 48

*Compilation of "Learner English Level" in the Quick Guide*

| Learner English level | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| Beginner | 2 |
| Elementary to false beginner | 1 |
| False-beginner + | 5 |
| False-beginner to intermediate | 1 |
| High beginner to intermediate | 3 |
| High beginner + | 18 |
| Beginner to low intermediate | 2 |
| Beginner to intermediate | 7 |
| Beginner to upper intermediate | 1 |
| Pre-intermediate + | 15 |
| Low intermediate | 1 |
| Low intermediate + | 13 |
| Pre-intermediate to intermediate | 1 |
| Intermediate | 10 |
| Intermediate + | 42 |
| Advanced | 1 |
| Any | 52 |
| Junior high school | 1 |
| Junior high school to university | 1 |

*Notes.* The levels marked with a plus (+) are levels where the authors specified some version of "and above," so "Intermediate +" was usually written as "Intermediate and above."

There are several things that can be interpreted from this data. First, 52 (29.4%) of the activities are designed for "Any" level. These activities are, at least according to the authors' evaluation, usable for any level of student. While some of the activities could be used by very high-level students, none of them could be used with true beginners—that is someone below CEFR A1. For that matter, most of these activities wouldn't even work for someone at the A1 level, because A1 users wouldn't have the vocabulary to do conversation or writing activities about any but the most basic of subjects. Given that, of the respondents to the author questionnaire, more than 83% worked at least part time at the post-secondary level, I suspect that many of the authors were thinking of "beginner" as meaning "an average 1st year Japanese college student"—that is, someone who may be a "beginner" in terms of communication, but who also has a fairly extensive vocabulary, along with experience reading and translating English, but who is not a true beginner being exposed to English for the first time (sometimes these are called "false beginners").

All the levels except for "Any" (125, or 70.6%) are bounded at the bottom—that is, there are no activities that are described as, for example, "Intermediate or lower." This represents a teacher belief that a defining factor in the appropriateness of a lesson is if students have the minimal capability of doing it. On the other hand, only 32 (18.1%) are bounded at the top (in the table, the entries that don't have a +). This means that, in over 80% of the cases, the authors don't believe that there is any upper limit on student level that would make the activity unusable. This seems to point to one of two teacher beliefs: either that even a very simple activity will be both of interest to and lead to language improvement for even very high-level students, or that the authors simply haven't encountered truly high-level students. The first belief is predicated upon the dubious idea that high level students can learn even from relatively simple, narrowly focused activities. On the other hand, the latter presumes that the teachers have never encountered highly competent Japanese speakers of English at the university level; I'm not sure how that would possible, either. I want to emphasize this point: the way that the levels are sorted seems to imply an impossible set of teacher beliefs. I don't think that any of the teachers actually hold either of these beliefs—but I do believe that the collective argument of the corpus is that one of these two things must be true. Since the latter seems to be practically implausible (I don't know how someone living and teaching in Japan could have never encountered a highly proficient speaker of English from Japan), then the likely interpretation someone reading this corpus would be compelled to take is that teachers don't need to concern themselves with the highest level of students.

This is not the only potentially problematic aspect of this bullet point. In addition, there are many examples of two or more articles that have the same listed level that expect wildly different things of the students. For example, consider two activities marked as "Beginner and above." The first activity requires students to watch an English movie (Japanese subtitles allowed) every week, write a 10 line summary of the movie, have a discussion in groups in English about the movie (keeping in mind that the students have all watched different movies), and, at the end of the semester, choose one scene from one movie that they (in groups) make a poster about and then re-enact a scene from (both in English). The second activity is used with a reading textbook and requires students to find the meaning of selected

vocabulary from the reading in Japanese and write new sample English sentences with that vocabulary, translate a single sentence of the story into Japanese, and then, as a whole class, put the sentences together into a full translation of the reading. At each step of the process, the instructions state that the teacher should correct and clarify any errors for students. The first activity requires students to be able to have conversations in English about topics that they may have little familiarity with, while the second is focused on moving back and forth from L1 to L2, and never requires students to deal with a unit of English larger than a sentence. I would argue that neither of these activities could possibly be done by a beginner, and also that the first activity requires a much higher level of English competency than the second.

**9.3.2 Learner maturity.** "Learner maturity" is the term used by the Quick Guide to refer to the target age/grade level of the students. Table 49 contains a summary of the suggested ages in the corpus.

Table 49

*Compilation of "Learner Maturity"*

| Learner maturity level | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| Elementary to university | 2 |
| Junior to senior high school | 1 |
| Junior high school to university | 4 |
| Junior high school + | 35 |
| 1st year technical high school + | 1 |
| Senior high school to university | 17 |
| Senior high school + | 40 |
| University or motivated senior high school | 1 |
| 1st year university | 1 |
| University | 48 |
| University + | 12 |
| Young adults + | 1 |
| Any | 14 |

*Notes.* The levels marked with a plus (+) are levels where the authors specified some version of "and above," so "JHS +" was usually written as "Junior high school and above."

As with "Learner English level," the vast majority of activities (163, or 92.1%) are bounded on the bottom, with only "Any" activities having no bottom level—there are, for instance, no activities that can be used for "University or younger." A greater number of activities are bounded on the top than were so bounded for "Learner

English level," with 84 (47.5%) having an upper bound, and 93 (52.5%) having no upper bound (that is, being represented with a + in Table 51). Also, it is worth noting that the 17 articles that I excluded based on not including university students (see section 4.2.3) are all bounded on the top—including those means a majority (52.1%) of the articles in this time frame have a "maximum" age. Comparing these figures with those from the "Learner English level," there seems to be a belief that age/grade level is more of a limiting factor for the applicability of activities than students' English ability. Alternatively, it may be that teachers are used to having a wider range of English abilities in a single class, and thus are less hesitant about having a wider range of skill levels (since, if they've followed the instructions of the genre, they've already done these activities and had them succeed, even in the often mixed-level classes characteristic of Japanese English classes).

Another parallel with "Learner English level" is that I have concerns that the categorization of activities by "Learner maturity" may contain inaccuracies. There seem to me to be errors on both sides of the range. On the one hand are activities that allow for younger ages than I believe would be practical. One activity, designed for "High school and above" has the students use their smartphones to record video in class. Perhaps the Japanese high schools with which I am familiar are particularly outdated, but it was my understanding that most high schools ban the use of smartphones during school hours. As such, it is unclear to me how this could be done at the high school level. Conversely, one activity listed as being for "Junior high school and up" seems like it would be difficult to do at a university, since it requires the teacher to hide clues (codes, scrambled sentences, etc.) around the "school or campus" that students have to find in sequence (like a treasure hunt). First, on a university campus, I can't imagine there being places where things could be safely hidden that the teacher would be certain wouldn't be removed (by cleaning staff, other students, etc.). Furthermore, a teacher who had multiple classes would need to reset the course (which needs at least 10 to 12 hiding places) multiple times over the course of a day, often with little to no time between them. Perhaps the rule requiring this line in the Quick Guide is the problem: teachers with experience only at one level may lack the knowledge to evaluate how the classes would run at other types of educational institutions.

Given that both the "Learner English level" and the "Learner maturity level" seem to be wholly subjective and inconsistent across the corpus, I worry that these lines may be more harmful than helpful. A reader who is scanning through these articles looking for activities to use in their class might overlook an activity because the author indicated that it was for a level not matching the reader's students, or, alternatively, they may invest time reading and trying to understand an activity only to realize that the details indicate that it won't match their students at all.

**9.3.3 Preparation time.** As with the first two Quick Guide points, there was no standardization in the terminology of "Preparation Time." 118 articles (66.7%) gave a specific time, another 42 (23.7%) used a range (e.g., "15–20 minutes"), and the remaining 17 (14.4%) used a description. Table 50 lists all the preparation times that contained either a specific time, a range of times, or a phrase that closely correlated with one of those two. Looking only at these items, many of the activities are designed to have a fairly short preparation time: 57 (32%) take 10 or fewer minutes to prepare, 97 (54.8%) take 20 or fewer minutes, and 131 (74.0%) take 30 or fewer minutes. While there are some activities for which the listed preparation time would need to be used for every class a reader wanted to use the activity with, many of the activities could be extended to multiple classes just by making an extra set of photocopies. On a related note, ten of the articles listed low or no preparation time as a benefit of their activity (see section 7.3.2).

Table 50

*Preparation Times Grouped into Ranges*

| Range | Specific phrasings | Occ. | Range | Specific phrasings | Occ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 8 | | 30 to 60 | 6 |
| | 1 | 1 | | 35 | 1 |
| | 1–2 | 1 | 30–60 | 40 | 1 |
| | 3 | 1 | | 45 | 1 |
| | Less than 5 | 2 | | 60 | 13 |
| 1–5 | 5 | 13 | | TOTAL | 22 |
| | A few minutes | 1 | | 60 to 120 | 3 |
| | Little to none | 2 | | 120 | 1 |
| | Minimal | 3 | 60–180 | 120 to 180 | 2 |
| | TOTAL | 24 | | 180 | 1 |
| | 5 to 10 | 2 | | TOTAL | 7 |
| 5–10 | 10 | 23 | | 20 or less | 1 |
| | TOTAL | 25 | | 30 or less | 2 |
| | 10 to 15 | 3 | | 60 or less | 1 |
| 10–15 | 15 | 12 | | 5 to 10 per class | 1 |
| | TOTAL | 15 | | 5–15 | 1 |
| | 15 to 20 | 3 | Other ranges | 10 to 20 | 3 |
| 15–20 | 20 | 18 | | 10 to 30 | 1 |
| | TOTAL | 21 | | 10 + | 1 |
| | 20 to 30 | 6 | | 30 + | 1 |
| | 25 | 2 | | 60 + | 1 |
| 20–30 | 30 | 22 | | 180 + | 1 |
| | TOTAL | 30 | | TOTAL | 14 |

*Notes.* All times are listed in minutes. This table only includes preparation times that could be easily converted into times or ranges of times; others are listed in Table 51.

Table 51 collects the qualitative descriptions of Preparation Time without clear numerical equivalents. A few of these entries point to is another inconsistency in the genre. Almost all the "Preparation time" entries seem to refer to time spent by the teacher outside of the classroom to select and prepare materials. However, a few of these (such as "1 class") seem to treat "preparation" as something done by students—as if there were a "pre-activity" lesson. This issue was raised earlier in section 5.3.2 regarding the information in Preparation sections.

Table 51

*Preparation Times with Verbal Descriptions*

| Description | Occur. |
|---|---|
| The time it takes to copy the handouts and practice a few basic signs | 1 |
| Up to you | 1 |
| Varies | 6 |
| 1 class | 1 |
| 1 class for research or use previous contents | 1 |
| 60 (or 5 if you use the attached materials) | 1 |
| TOTAL | 11 |

**9.3.4 Activity time.** The descriptions given for the activity time vary even more than the other three sections—there are more than 70 different ways that the authors describe their activity times. Four don't give a time (or write "varied"). Of the remaining 173 activities, 147 (85.0%) of the activities are designed to be completed within a single 90-minute lesson, while the remaining 27 (15.0%) require part or all of multiple lessons. Of the first set, 68 (39.3% of the whole) can be completed in less than half of a standard-length university class, leaving 79 (45.7%) that take more than half of the lesson. Among the 26 multi-lesson activities, two take more than 45 minutes per lesson. Thus, 99 (57.2%) of the activities take the majority of the class session or sessions in which they are used. Note that all of this is based on a presumption of standard university length (90 minute) classes. If the class sessions were only 50 minutes (as at typical junior and senior high schools), then all but 35 of the activities would take more than half of the lesson, and many of the activities would be unusable or would have to be substantially altered by shortening or splitting into multiple lessons. Either way, the use of most of the activities in the corpus will require a teacher to effectively devote all or most of a lesson to the activity.

While most of the activities take up the majority of a single class, almost none are designed to take up a significant portion of a semester. Among the multi-lesson activities, 12 take only two lessons. Only four are designed to be repeated throughout the semester, and, of those two are meant to be used only 5–10 minutes per session. Thus, the corpus can be said to construct the teacher belief that a curriculum can be built from a collection of smaller components, and that it isn't necessary to repeat the same activities on a weekly (or other) basis throughout a curriculum to be effective.

## 9.4 Materials

Even though "Materials" is listed in the Quick Guide section, I have placed it into a separate section here because my analysis examines not only the materials explicitly listed in the Quick Guide, but also those that are discussed in the articles themselves, including those which are implied even when not explicitly listed. After identifying the various materials, I organized them into six categories: basics, technology, textbooks, other physical materials, classroom set up, and specialized knowledge (see the latter two sections for why I included non-physical items in this section).

**9.4.1 The basics.** There are three major pieces of equipment that many of the authors seen to assume that all teachers have access to: a device for making copies of handouts (photocopier, risograph, etc.), a board (chalkboard or whiteboard), and writing instruments for the students (pen/pencil).

No authors explicitly use the term "photocopier," "risograph," etc. Rather, the need for a photocopier is indicated in the materials section by the need for "handouts" or mention in the body of the article of the need to "copy" or "make copies" of something to be distributed to students. In total, 109 (61.6%) of the activities require that the teacher be able to make copies of handouts for students. Since most of the My Share activities are designed to take no longer than one class session, the overall impression is that it should be possible for teachers to regularly and easily make copies.

That I call attention to this might seem surprising—after all, many people might assume that the ability to make handouts for students would be universally available in Japan. First, that last qualifier is key: this is a corpus designed for Japan, and one could easily imagine circumstances in other countries where access to photocopiers is either limited or non-existent. However, this can also be a concern only in Japan. One of the case studies in Nagatomo (2016) is of a teacher who had transitioned from *eikaiwa* teaching to university teaching. This teacher noted some universities they taught at didn't give part-time teachers unfettered access to photocopiers. At one of this teachers' universities, part-time teachers were allowed to make only a limited number of copies; at another, full-time teachers could use photocopiers, but part-time teachers could use only an *insastu-ki* machine which the teacher said "produces poor quality handouts and is prone to breaking

down" (p. 222). While I have personally been able to make unlimited copies at all full-time and part-time university positions I've held, one part-time school only has *insatsu-ki* machines for part-timers, and all the universities required part-time teachers to record how many copies they were making (presumably with the possibility that overuse could be limited). I've also heard of schools who implored teachers to cut back or cut off the use of copying because of budget problems.

There are several possible explanations for this potential discrepancy between what the authors think is available and what is actually available. It may be that Nagatomo's report and my anecdotes are actually rare, and most Japanese university teachers can readily make copies. Alternatively, it may be that the authors themselves are mostly full-time teachers who don't experience these difficulties. That is, there may be a "class" bias wherein the authors may have privileges that they take for granted based on their employment status. Lastly, it may be that there is an actual disconnect here—that these activities construct the identity of a teacher as "having access to a copier" even though that doesn't match reality.

28 (15.8%) of the activities explicitly mention either a "whiteboard" or a "chalkboard" in the materials section. However, this significantly undercounts the number of activities that require a board—a further 47 (26.6%) explicitly mention writing something on a board in the body without mentioning it in the materials section. In total, less than half of the activities require the use of a chalkboard or whiteboard. What is most interesting to me here, though, is the fact that 62% of the time that the activity requires a board it is not listed in the materials section. That seems to imply that boards are not considered to be unusual enough by the majority of authors to require mention as a necessary "material." Furthermore, the times when a board is explicitly listed in the Material section, it tends to be found in activities where the use of the board plays a large role in the activity and thus perhaps it is being mentioned not so much to tell readers that they need to make sure that they have or can access this "material" but simply to highlight the importance of the board to the activity.

This last point seems to apply similarly to the last "basic" material—pens and pencils. This is not referring to cases where teachers need to provide some special type of pen, but rather to cases where the author explicitly mentions that students need a pen or pencil to write something for the activity. Over 90% of activities

require students to do some sort of writing, but only six articles list "pen" or "pencil" is listed in the materials section. Of those six cases, three of them require only paper and pencils/pens, so it may be that by calling attention to what is clearly a necessary tool for nearly all the activities, the author is trying to draw attention to these being the *only* materials—that is, by explicitly saying pencils are needed, the author is trying to say, "One benefit of this lesson is that the only thing students need to have is a pencil and paper."

**9.4.2 Technology.** The next category I wish to examine is the use of computational devices to in either preparation or conducting of the activities. There are four main ways that computers are linked to the activities: computer prepared (when a teacher needs a computer outside of the classroom to prepare the lesson), computer presented (when a teacher, but not the students, needs a computer during the class to do the activity), CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning, where a computer lab is needed so that each student can use a computer during class), and MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning, where students need to use their own smartphones during class).[95] Note that these categories are overlapping—some, for example, require both computers to prepare and computers in the classroom. Table 52 provides a count of the number of activities that fall into each of these categories, broken down by year.

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[95] Other technological tools are also mentioned, such as DVDs, cameras, video recorders, etc., but each individual device appears rarely, so they are not discussed here.

Table 52

*Activities Requiring the Use of Computational Devices Sorted by Publication Year*

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Computers (for teacher, out of class) | 3 | 5 | 5(2)[a] | 3 | 11 | 8(1)[a] | 35 |
| Computers (for teacher, in class) | 2(2)[a] | 4(3)[a] | 3(1) | 3(1)[a] | 9(3)[a] | 6(3)[a] | 18 |
| Computers (for students; i.e., CALL) | 1 | 3(1)[a] | 7(3)[a] | 4(1)[a,b] | 2[c] | 2(1)[a] | 17 |
| Smartphones (for students, i.e., MALL) | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5(1)[a] | 5[d] | 13 |

*Notes.* [a] Where there is one number followed by another in parentheses, the first number is the total number of activities that indicate that the technology must be used, with the number in parentheses being cases where that technology is listed as optional. The totals include only cases where the devices are mandatory. [b] One of these activities lists a computer with projector in the Materials bullet point, but doesn't refer to the computer being used in the body of the article. [c] One of the 2015 activities says that it can either be done in a CALL classroom or on students' cellphones. [d] While all the other activities in the Smartphones category refer to the students having smartphones, one activity here only requires the teacher to have a smartphone.

Before looking at each of the categories in detail, it is first insightful to look at the general trend over time. While a year by year analysis is less clear, grouping the data into two-year chunks shows several key trends, as demonstrated in Figure 9, which shows that three of the categories, Computer prepared, Computer presented, and MALL activities show a distinct increase in the final two years of the corpus. CALL activities, on the other hand, peak in the middle two years of the corpus. It is unclear why there are almost no CALL activities in the 2015–2016 period, though it is possible CALL has been "replaced" with MALL—that is, those authors who would previously have been interested in activities using a CALL classroom may have shifted towards activities using MALL.
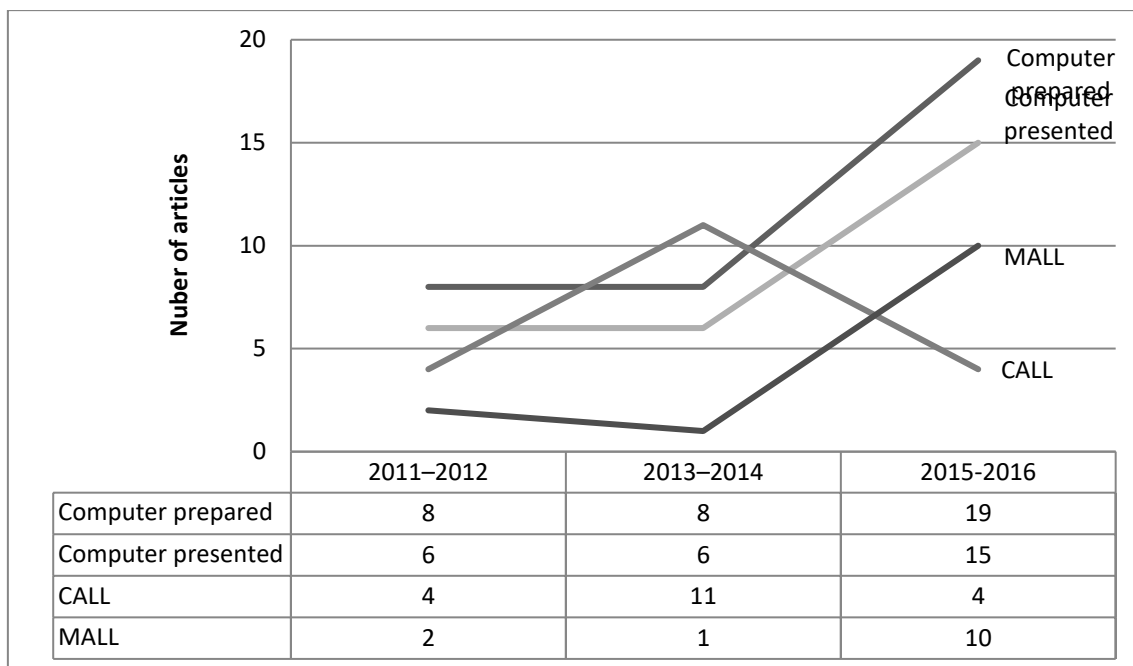
| | 2011–2012 | 2013–2014 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Computer prepared | 8 | 8 | 19 |
| Computer presented | 6 | 6 | 15 |
| CALL | 4 | 11 | 4 |
| MALL | 2 | 1 | 10 |

*Figure 9.* Computational devices in the classroom, grouped biennially. This total includes all cases where the given technology was described within the article, whether it was optional or mandatory.

***9.4.2.1 Computer prepared classes.*** This category of activities is the most frequent of the technologically assisted activities in the corpus. In fact, it is more frequent even than indicated in Table 52, because 96 (54.2%) of the articles have Appendices, most of which are handouts that are necessary for the activity.[96] These Appendices have to be downloaded from the JALT website, meaning that more than half of all activities actually require computer/internet access.

Of those activities that require computers for other reasons, this is usually because the teacher is required to acquire texts, images, videos, or other materials. While the articles don't always specify that this has to be from the internet, in most cases gathering these items from print sources would be difficult and much more time consuming. In other cases, the internet is explicitly required, as in activities which require specific audio from the BBC website or English *senryu* from an online *senryu* journal.

The use of supplemental materials in the English language classroom is often explicitly linked to a specific benefit. In the *senryu* activity, the author says, "Writing senryu in English can enable students to see writing as a meaningful and enjoyable

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[96] Occasionally appendices are optional aids for the teacher, but this is a small minority.

endeavor." Sometimes, the value of the external materials is linked to TESOL research, as with one author that recommends bringing in real world surveys (vox populi) as a way to make an activity meaningful by "exposing the student to culturally relevant, real life situations, or issues (Vosniadaou, 2001)." Still others recommend the use of additional materials for emotional reasons, as in an activity where the teacher has to find images to link to vocabulary words, which the author describes as "useful (and fun!) when that vocabulary is related to everyday objects or activities that can be clearly identified by a picture." Thus, the need for a teacher to have access to a computer (and, by implication, internet access) is generally included because the author is advocating that this additional material provides value to the students that they cannot achieve with just "normally" available materials like textbooks or teacher/student-generated texts.

*9.4.2.2 Computer presented activities.* In these activities, computers are used for a variety of purposes. The most basic is as a means of displaying a video, playing an audio file, or projecting textual data on a screen—in other words, to somehow present material to the students. As with the computer prepared classes, the computer-as-delivery-mechanism is sometimes listed as one of two alternatives, as in an activity where students watch a segment from the television show *Inside the Actors Studio,* where the teacher can present the segment either from YouTube clips or from a DVD.

Some activities, on the other hand, do not allow the teacher to easily substitute other tools or means of delivering input. This occurs mainly when the computer is being used to connect to the internet. For example, one activity involves the teacher making a Google Earth tour (a digital tour where a user can make "placemarks" on the Google Earth map then have the computer automatically move through them), show it to students, and have them answer questions and interact with the virtual map. These tours cannot be downloaded or otherwise used offline, and thus a computer with internet access is necessary in the classroom to make this activity work.

*9.4.2.3 Activities utilizing CALL.* With the exception of the two or three activities that involve student presentations accompanied by slideshows, the

computer needed in the "computer presented" activities is used solely by the teacher. CALL activities, on the other hand, require a classroom where each student (or, sometimes, a small group of students) has access to a computer in a specialized classroom.[97] Of the 18 activities in the corpus that use CALL classrooms (5 of which were for optional or extension uses), 16 of them require that the computers be connected to the internet. It might be tempting to think of these activities not as "computer assisted" activities but, rather, "internet-based" activities, though many of the activities also require the use of capabilities specific to personal computers (like large screens, certain kinds of software, and/or the ability to edit long documents), such that other means of internet access (like mobile devices) wouldn't work as a substitute.

One belief held in common by most of the CALL activities is that teachers are generally comfortable using the internet, and either already have substantial computing knowledge or are willing to invest the time to learn that (which is generally not covered in preparation time). These activities require teachers to use new software, install it (which may raise additional issues with school technical staff), and teach students how to use it.

The last point I want to make about these activities is that, unlike other activities, they may function only for a limited period of time. For example, one of the activities talks about having students use YouTube Video Editor to edit their video presentations. The problem is that YouTube Video Editor was taken offline in September, 2017, about 20 months after this activity was published. There could be similar consequences for any activity that relies on one specific website or piece of software.

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[97] An alternative would be a school in which all students are were given a laptop by their schools, something that is occurring with increasing frequency in the United States and other countries, especially at the primary and secondary levels (Zheng, Warschauer, Lin, & Chang, 2016). However, I am unaware of any Japanese universities that have such programs, nor was I able to find evidence of any in prior research—in fact, a 2012 OECD study found that on average there was only one computer per four students in Japanese high schools, and less than 60% used computers at school in any capacity (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012).

*9.4.2.4 Activities utilizing MALL*. MALL activities first appeared in the corpus in 2012.[98] One of the 2012 articles recommends polling the students in the activity prior to the activity to make sure that at least half of them (one per pair) have smartphones, though none of the other MALL activities mention this. It appears that by late 2012, authors came to presume that all or almost all students had smartphones; this is not surprising since surveys of university students have found extremely high smartphone usage rates, with one studying finding 85% ownership rates among one group of Japanese undergraduates in 2012 (White and Mills, 2014) and a more recent study finding 100% ownership among other Japanese university students (Son, Park, & Park, 2017). However, early adoption of MALL activities was rare, with a sudden increase occurring in 2015. Of the 13 MALL activities in the corpus, 10 of them require only students to have smartphones, one requires only the teacher to have a smartphone, and two require both students and the teacher to have one.

MALL activities can be divided based on what the students are required to do with their phones:

- Four activities (including the one where only the teacher needs the phone) utilize the smartphones as digital audio recorders.
- Three activities have students record videos from their phone and then upload them to a website. Two of those activities also require students to have access to computers to edit those videos.
- Two activities have students use their phones to take pictures. One requires that they also email those photos, while the other doesn't, and allows the use of digital cameras as an alternative to smart phones.
- Two activities require students to use a social networking service. One uses it to communicate with the teacher, while the other uses it to trade audio recordings with another student (this activity is also counted above in the audio recording section).

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[98] There were none in 2011, and a quick scan through 2009 and 2010 didn't show any there, so 2012 is almost certainly the beginning.

- One activity has students do internet research with their smartphones in preparation for a short report to other students.
- One activity has students listen to audio that the teacher has recorded. The activity says that students can do this on their smartphones or at computers in a CALL classroom. Each student receives a different audio file (a recording of the teacher reading a speech they have written), so each student needs their own individual "player."
- One activity has students use a translation application on their smartphones.

The biggest divide within these activities is between those for which a smartphone is truly necessary to the activity and those which could be done with other tools. Eight of the MALL activities take advantage of the near universal ownership of smartphones among university students to allow for activities which could otherwise be done in theory but would require the teacher to provide substantial equipment to the students. For example, three of the activities have students use mobile phone as audio recorders; making use of the (probably) universal ownership of smartphones among students alleviates the need for teachers to provide special audio recorders to students in class. The other five effectively require a smartphone, since the work that students do (especially audio and video recording) has to be sent to other students or the teachers. These activities fully take advantage of features that MALL offers that would be difficult or impossible to replicate otherwise.

*9.4.2.5 CALL and MALL: student familiarity.* Son, Park, and Park (2017) found that the Japanese university students they surveyed reported being mostly comfortable with computer and smartphone use, and that the majority felt they had at least acceptable ability to do tasks such as word processing, making presentations (e.g., PowerPoint), and using the internet for communication and research. Nonetheless, I have personally heard teachers say that while their students may have extensive experience using mobile applications, they aren't proficient at the use of non-mobile computers, or even non-app aspects of mobile computing. Thus, one question that can be asked is how these CALL/MALL activities account for students' digital literacy. On a negative note, one MALL activity which used the smartphones

as audio recorders says, "Some students may have never used the voice memo function or even have an appropriate app and need a little guidance;" even more extremely, another article claims that students "often lack computer literacy." On the opposite side, one of the authors specifically chose to incorporate the usage of the smartphone application LINE in classes because "Students frequently use LINE to communicate with their peers on a daily basis." Some of the activities include specific Procedure steps where the teacher explains how to use the technology, as in "Lead students through the simple installation process found at [website address]," while others expect students to be able to use computers to do things like write and print essays and then make blog posts to a class website. Thus, while the issue is not extensively discussed in the corpus, there appear to be mixed beliefs about what students are capable of.

**9.4.3 Textbooks.** Most of the articles in the corpus make no reference to a textbook, and none include it as a required material in the Quick Guide. The topic arises in only 25 (14.1%) of the articles, and a textbook is incorporated into the activity in only 10 of those cases (plus an additional 5 cases where its use is optional). When textbooks are mentioned, the phrasing implies that having textbooks is the norm, most often through the use of a determiner with *textbook*. For example, two activities state "While students are often taught CSs [communication strategies] in their textbooks" and "students in my classes carefully select five words from the textbook and complete a worksheet (see Appendix B) for homework each week." The use of *their* and *the* with no prior mention of that noun means that the articles take it for granted that the reader will not be surprised by the implication that the students have a textbook.

Seven of the times that textbooks are mentioned, they are specifically described as bad or incomplete, either unable to fulfill students' language learning needs or being actively harmful (that is, they appear in "Negative" moves, as discussed in section 7.4). Another six activities are designed to accompany a section of a textbook (such as an activity designed to review a textbook chapter) without making negative claims about those books. In only two cases are positive things explicitly said about textbooks, and both of those are qualified. One describes a typical textbook approach as "pedagogically sound," but that it "can gradually affect

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student engagement if followed in every class;" the other notes that "The benefits of process writing are widely accepted in English language teaching and it is an approach that underpins many writing textbooks available in Japan," but goes on to argue that these textbook activities alone don't actually get students to "make significant changes to a piece of work once they have finished a first draft."

In summary, the corpus often puts forth the idea that textbooks are and will be a standard component of a language class in Japan, but that these textbooks aren't good or aren't enough by themselves.

**9.4.4 Other physical materials**. 47 of the articles require some other kind of specialized equipment not mentioned above. All 71 items are categorized in Table 53. The majority of the items could be bought in a stationery or office supply store—different kinds of paper, glue, markers or other drawing tools, etc.—or they may be available from university offices. Others would need to be sourced from special stores such as toy stores (Rika-chan dolls, dice) or specialty suppliers like a technical equipment shop (for an activity where STEM students learn how to do experiments in their field in English). A few of the items might be "free" or reusable, such as the cooking props. The presumption of ready availability may be another example of a hidden class bias, as it may be that those who require the use of office supplies are full-time employees who are able to procure them without even thinking (especially the office supplies). But some of these items will certainly not be available for free, even for full-time employees, and thus these materials requirements speak to a hidden belief: that teachers are both able and willing to spend their own money to create activities for their classes.[99]

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[99] Note that the most extreme example of cost is the science project activity, and that activity specifically says that when choosing the specific project, "Important criteria are group level/size, available budget, available time, and students' specialisations." I don't know if *budget* here refers to the reader's personal budget, or if they happen to work at a school where they get a budget for school supplies. I am personally unaware of universities where English teachers get budgets for classroom supplies, though the article says that this activity is "based on several years of practical experience developing and implementing such projects at a Japanese technical high school and a college of engineering," so perhaps this was a special case.

Table 53

*Other Required Physical Materials*

| Materials | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| Paper (6 x stiff/heavy, 4 x large, 1 x color, 1 x stationary) | 12 |
| Glue/tape | 9 |
| Magnets | 7 |
| Timer | 7 |
| Scissors | 4 |
| Bag/box to draw from | 2 |
| Copies (1 x enlarged, 1 x enlarged color) | 2 |
| Decorations | 2 |
| Photos (physical) | 2 |
| Plastic chips/coins | 2 |
| String/yarn/ribbon | 2 |
| Apples (ideally, or pictures) | 1 |
| Ball & basket | 1 |
| Blocks (Lego bricks, etc.) | 1 |
| Dice | 1 |
| Drawing materials | 1 |
| Envelopes | 1 |
| Extensive technical/engineering materials based on student major | 1 |
| Highlighter | 1 |
| Hole punch | 1 |
| Laminator | 1 |
| Large colored map | 1 |
| Meter sticks | 1 |
| Newspaper/magazines | 1 |
| Paper (sticky notes) | 1 |
| Plastic dolls (Rika-chan) | 1 |
| Play money | 1 |
| Props for cooking demo | 1 |
| Rubber bands | 1 |
| Stiff cardboard screens | 1 |

**9.4.5 Classroom layout**. Classroom space is the first of two "materials" that isn't actually a physical thing. The reason I have chosen to discuss it (and specialized knowledge covered next) under the "Materials" section is because, just like physical materials, they represent a precondition to doing the activities—if a teacher doesn't have access to the required layout or space they will be unable to do the activity, or, perhaps, have to do the activity in a modified or suboptimal way. As I discuss the

various space requirements, I will mention why these set-ups may require specialized classrooms that not all teachers may have access to.[100]

*9.4.5.1 Grouping.* In section 9.7 I will discuss the pedagogical implications of having students work in groups, but here I consider only the impact that group activities have on the needed classroom space. In some cases, working in groups won't really affect the layout, especially for pair work where the only requirement is that two students talk together. However, for other tasks and/or larger groups, having groups may mean that certain layouts become difficult. Specifically, I'm thinking of classes held in large lecture rooms[101] where both the chairs and tables are fixed, and where up to three to four students can share a table. In these rooms, even requiring a group of three can lead to slightly awkward conversations, because while a person in the middle of a triad can easily talk to the people on their left and right, the two students on the ends may find it difficult to talk to one another. When the number in the group goes over four, as it does in at least 24 to 41 of the activities,[102] even a conversation can become challenging in these classrooms. Fixed tables and chairs can make it very difficult for students to turn around, and students who do may have to twist their necks or otherwise be seated uncomfortably. This situation could easily be troublesome enough that it effectively discourages students from fully participating.

Grouping can become even more challenging if the activity requires the whole group to share some sort of material. In 24 of the group activities (13.6% of the whole corpus, 17.3% of the group activities), students need to be able to work together at the same desk. Sometimes this is simply to all look at the same picture together; in other cases, students may need to all be able to reach and manipulate pieces in a board or card game (and some of those, like the two *karuta* game activities, require high-speed play). At best, these activities would be uncomfortable in the wrong room; at worst, they would make language learning via these activities impossible.

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[100] Note that CALL activities also require a special set-up; I do not discuss those further in this section.
[101] I've personally had even relatively normal sized (20-40 students) conversation-focused classes held in lecture halls that could accommodate several hundred students.
[102] See section 9.7 for an explanation of the ambiguity of group sizes.

***9.4.5.2 Movement***. 40 of the activities (22.6%) require that the students stand up and move around the room for at least part of the activity. The least impactful are activities in which students move at only one or two fixed times. These include activities in which students form pairs and then change partners once or twice over the course of the activity, or in which students start in one size of group and then later re-form into a different size. At the opposite extreme are activities which are conducted mostly or completely while standing and moving. It is obviously possible in every class for students to move around to some degree, as students are able to enter and exit the classroom. However, this doesn't mean classrooms are designed to have students walking around them for extended periods of time. For example, three of the activities are "walk and talks," where students have to walk around and talk to many students, such as when students have to survey the class; similarly, in three "mingle" activities, students have to walk around and keep talking until they achieve a task, such as finding a partner or group that matches them in some way. These activities may require students to all remain standing, and even though a classroom may have space for all students to sit, that doesn't actually mean that the aisles can comfortably accommodate that many students simultaneously, especially not when they are moving in multiple directions. At least in my own experience, this is often compounded by the institutional desire to minimize classroom waste—to fit as many desks in a room as possible. When this happens, students often have no place to put their belongings (bags, jackets, sports equipment, etc.) other than in the aisles. In a "normal" teacher-fronted class, this wouldn't be an issue, since students would remain seated throughout the activity and the teacher would remain at the front. But if students are expected to move throughout the class, it can be challenging to do so easily and safely.

Another type of activity with a lot of movement are what I call "pair rotations." These are activities in which students form into pairs, have a short conversation, and then change partners. The activity is repeated until the students have rotated through many partners. These activities are nearly impossible to do in a fixed lecture hall, and never with a full rotation—usually, as written, the presumption is that students are split into two groups and they will pair up with everyone in the other group. These activities can be equally problematic in small classrooms, for the same reason that walk and talks are—at least half of the class has to move at the same

time; though, since the movement is a little more controlled (according to a pattern set by the teacher), they can be a little bit easier to manage.

Lastly, even in cases where students aren't moving, the teacher may be asked to move throughout the classroom. How often this is a component of the activities is unclear. Some articles explicitly specify this role for the teacher, as in one which says, "Teachers should circulate around the room monitoring students and intervening when conversations have clearly stalled." Other articles may take it for granted that a teacher should always be actively involved in classroom work, monitoring and/or providing assistance, and thus expect teachers will do so even when this is not explicitly written in the article. In either case, the teacher may have difficulty moving through the class, if, as mentioned above, the total space is narrow, and/or aisles are blocked by student possessions. Alternatively, if the teacher needs to look closely at student work it may be difficult for a teacher to see some students from the aisle if the tables are long or are accessible only from one side.

*9.4.5.3 Standing.* Another category, which is partially overlapping with the "walk-able" category, are those activities which require students to stand. Standing can be difficult in a lecture hall, as the desks may be constructed for students to get in and sit quickly, but not have enough space to remain comfortably standing. Sometimes standing is used in conjunction with the pair rotations described above—as one such activity says, "Having students stand keeps the activity flowing smoothly."

However, there is one type of activity, which, when I'm being charitable, I call "Sitting Rewards," and when I'm not, I call "Torture Standing." There are three activities in the corpus which have all students stand at the beginning of the activity. Students then have to engage in some sort of language performance, and when they do so correctly, they are allowed to sit. While justifications are offered for this practice (it makes sure a few students don't dominate the class, it is an easy form of scoring, etc.), at their foundation, these activities rely upon the idea that sitting down is more comfortable for students, and thus they will perform at a high level in order to earn the right to sit down. That is, the reward for performance in these activities is neither points nor prizes, but, rather, a cessation of physical discomfort.

***9.4.5.4 Highly specialized layouts.*** 21 of the activities require a particularly flexible classroom or otherwise highly specialized layout. The most common trait is a need for movable desks and the space to rearrange the classroom. For example, several activities need "stations" which students can move between, as in a pair of activities where students make a mock company and interview other students as prospective employees. In others, students have to be arranged in long rows, either in separated teams, or in pairs with the person across for them.

The next most common "special" setting involves simultaneous presentations. There are four activities where students are stationed around the room or in corners and give presentations. The audience either stands or sits in groups in front of the presenters, and, after each presentation, rotates around the classroom to the next presenter. In two of these cases, each presenter needs wall space to display a poster.

There are several other special classroom requirements. Six of the activities require a large enough blackboard/whiteboard that every student or group can have a section to write on. In two activities, half of the desks need to be reversed (so that one person in a pair can see the board while the other cannot). Two of the activities don't take place in the classroom at all—rather, students travel through the campus, on a hunt for clues in one, and on a photo hunt for the other.

One final point that applies to both the activities in this category, and the "movement" and "standing" categories—they all assume that everyone in the class is physically able to move freely throughout the class. Many of them would either be challenging for students in wheelchairs (or who otherwise find it difficult to move), or would at least make them feel singled out. I've had students temporarily unable to move easily because of broken legs, and for them, it's no significant problem to say "OK, you sit and others will come to you." But placing that kind of psychological burden on a student is in a wheelchair to move about, especially if the classroom were not particularly conducive to wheelchair movement, would be ethically and pedagogically questionable.

***9.4.5.5 Consequences of requiring specialized layouts.*** None of the categories described above amount to even 25% of the corpus, and thus it could be easy to dismiss them. Collectively, however, depending on where one draws the line,

upwards of 73% of the activities have a component which could be affected by the classroom in which the class is held.

It is useful to look at these activities through three lenses: the teacher, the students, and the institution. For teachers, most of these activities will take time for either set-up and/or student movement. This necessarily means that part of the class time will be spent doing and managing that movement, and thus their use would be predicated on a teacher belief that the activity's benefits outweigh the "loss" of time actually using English. Furthermore, because these layouts distribute students in ways where they are not directly engaged with the teacher, they also represent the teacher relinquishing direct control over the students on a moment by moment basis. In some cases, this is more of a feature of the use of pair and group work than it is of the specialized layout, but the layout may exacerbate the "loss of control" implicit in group activities.

From the students' perspective, there are two main points I wish to consider. The first is, in all fairness, my purely anecdotal evidence being laid against the claims of the authors, but one of the claims that is often given specifically for those activities which involve students standing and/or moving is that they raise the energy level of students. For example, one article says, "I always make my students walk around to get their blood flowing." In my experience, though, students are sometimes quite uninterested in moving around—in most of their classes, after all, they are only required to be physically present, not physically active. This can lead students to focus on finishing the activity quickly rather than practicing the language skill as extensively as the teacher had planned.

From the institutions' perspective, these specialized classrooms may seem somewhere between troublesome and actively unacceptable. In all the universities where I have worked, it was possible to request a CALL or multimedia classroom, but only one of them allowed teachers to specify the type of desks they wanted (and that request was not always fulfilled). There is an inherent tension between a teacher who may want to move around a classroom or have the students move, and the institution's desire to use space efficiently. Finally, institutions might find the use of activities with lots of movement and/or unusually loud activities to be disruptive to other classes.

## 9.5 Teaching Targets

In this section, I analyze the explicitly stated goals of the activities, where those goals are stated in either the Keywords part of the Quick Guide or the article body. This is not an evaluation of what the activities actually teach, because judging that would be too subjective on my part to be useful or persuasive. As such, in the same way that the English and maturity level discussions above relied on the authors judgments, so too does this section focus on the information that the authors have chosen to provide themselves.

**9.5.1 Keywords.** The last item included in the Quick Guide not yet discussed is the "Keywords" bullet point. Each article contains between one and seven keywords, with a distribution as shown in Table 54. There is an average of 3.6 keywords per article. However, the term "keyword" may be misleading, since each keyword can contain from one to five actual words. In total, there were 968 words across the 635 keywords (an average of 1.5 words per keyword).

Table 54

*Articles Sorted by Number of Keywords*

| Number of keywords | Number of articles |
|---|---|
| 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 25 |
| 3 | 67 |
| 4 | 47 |
| 5 | 28 |
| 6 | 5 |
| 7 | 3 |

Because the keywords represent a microcosm of the whole corpus, I believe that looking at them in detail can provide what Hodge (2012) calls a "fractalized" understanding of what is most important to this corpus, and thus, indirectly, to the collective My Share author, in much the same way that Hodge used the titles of presentations at a CDA conference as a way of creating insight about the whole CDA field. I will present the data in three separate ways: by individual word, by keyword, and by an abstracted categorization of the keywords.

*9.5.1.1 Individual words.* To examine the individual words, the keywords were separated by word, and then words that shared the same root were changed to the form of the most frequent individual word (for example, all instances of *creative* and *creativity* were changed to *creative*), except in cases where the inflected forms had a significantly different meaning, especially in a TESOL context. In addition, I used my best judgment to normalize the use of hyphenated forms, such that, for example, *student centered* and *student-centered* were counted the same. Using this sorting, there are 436 different words among the keywords. Table 55 shows all the individual words that occur five or more times in the keyword section (that is, represent more than 0.5% of all the words in the keyword section). Unlike in the frequency counts discussed in the analysis of the lexicogrammar (Chapter 8), it is unsurprising that most of these words are content words, because the keywords are in list format, not sentence format, and thus the English need for many function words is significantly decreased.

Table 55

*Most Frequent Words in the Keyword Section*

| Word | Occurrences | Word | Occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| writing | 34 | game | 7 |
| vocabulary | 28 | language | 7 |
| speaking | 23 | of | 7 |
| group | 19 | peer | 7 |
| listening | 17 | speech | 7 |
| learning | 16 | building | 6 |
| work | 15 | description | 6 |
| fluency | 13 | feedback | 6 |
| creative | 12 | reading | 6 |
| presentation | 12 | classroom | 5 |
| communication | 11 | context | 5 |
| question | 11 | conversation | 5 |
| skills | 11 | dictation | 5 |
| motivation | 10 | interaction | 5 |
| collaborative | 9 | meaning | 5 |
| English | 9 | picture | 5 |
| activity | 8 | review | 5 |
| and | 7 | technology | 5 |
| autonomy | 7 | warm-up | 5 |
| discussion | 7 | word | 5 |

First, note that many of these words aren't related to the target of the activity. For example, the word *group*, which usually occurs in phrases such as *group work* and *group discussion*, is linked to the structure of the class—how the activity will be carried about, not what the students are going to learn. Of the words in Table 8, the following are most closely related to learning goals: *writing, vocabulary, speaking, listening, fluency, presentation, communication, question, language, description,* and *conversation.*

Several observations can be made about these words. First, three of the five most frequent words are *writing, speaking,* and *listening*—three of the so-called "four skills" that are commonly used to divide language learning classes, lessons, and activities—with the missing skill being reading. The high prevalence of these specific three words suggests two things. First, it suggests that the four skills paradigm is highly accepted among the authorship. That is, the idea that it is reasonable to differentiate language activities into four distinct skills and then focus on a single skill in the absence of the other four seems to be a widely held teacher belief. The power of this belief is further heightened by the fact that across the corpus, there are only 11 articles which have two or more of the "four skills" listed in the keywords (1 listening-writing, 1 reading-listening, 7 speaking-listening, 1 writing-speaking-listening, and 1 4-skills). Second, the fact that *reading* is not just absent from the top of the list, but is almost three times less frequent than the next closest (*listening*), indicates that this skill is significantly de-valued in My Share activities. It is not clear if this is because the discourse community doesn't value reading, or if there are just fewer "new" or "original" high-impact activities that could be converted into articles. But the consequence of having fewer reading activities (to readers of My Share) is either to devalue reading as an activity for in-class work, or to make it seem that there are no interesting or new ways to do reading.

In a similar hierarchy, note that the second most frequent word is *vocabulary*, and that its usual "partner," *grammar*, is not on this top list (there were only four instances of *grammar* in the keywords). This matches the finding from section 5.3.4 that the most frequently cited author in the corpus is Paul Nation, whose work focuses on vocabulary and vocabulary acquisition. This seems to represent a strong collective belief that grammar is much less important than vocabulary learning.

Two common keywords represent specific ways of using language: *presentation* and *discussion*. The latter is closely aligned with communication and communicative language teaching. The former, however, surprises me, since presentations are, at their base, incompatible with several of the other keywords, like *communicative, creative, discussion, conversation, interaction,* etc. The use of presentations in the corpus will be discussed further in section 9.8.1.2.

*9.5.1.2 Whole keywords.* There were 434 distinct keywords.[103] Of those, only 81 were used more than once, and only 28 occurred three or more times; this latter collection is listed in Table 56. As with the individual words, not all of these relate to teaching targets. In fact, there aren't many differences in rank between this table and the previous one, primarily because only five of the top 28 key words contain more than one word. Of the top multi-word keywords, only *question and answer* and *vocabulary building* are related to teaching targets. The latter is another piece of data pointing to the importance of vocabulary to the collective author. The former, however, points to a language function, disconnected from any particular language mode, medium, or topic. This is especially evident when the four activities are examined, since two involve pair conversations, one is a teacher led quiz game, and the last is a written interview (containing no speaking at all). Many of the lower frequency keywords have similarly diverse meanings. This might point to a tension in the Keyword item itself—one would assume that the goal of keywords is to help either someone searching for a particular item to find it easily, or for a reader to rapidly identify if a particular activity is worth reading, but the ambiguity and bespoke nature of many of the keywords would seem to work against this. Examples of the latter are almost always unique to an individual article, such as *core meaning, English in Japanese script, famous stories, Penny Ur,* and *basketball*. Perhaps these keywords are serving an opposite purpose—by being deliberately opaque and/or rare, they may act as "hooks" to draw a potential reader into an article ("What does basketball have to do with teaching language?").

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[103] For this section, I did not normalize similar terms by root word forms as in the individual word search above, though I did adjust terms so that hyphenation was consistent.

Table 56

*Most Frequent Keywords*

| Keyword | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| vocabulary | 18 |
| speaking | 17 |
| writing | 16 |
| listening | 13 |
| group work | 11 |
| fluency | 10 |
| motivation | 9 |
| presentation | 8 |
| creative writing | 7 |
| autonomy | 5 |
| collaborative learning | 5 |
| discussion | 5 |
| pronunciation | 4 |
| question and answer | 4 |
| reading | 4 |
| adjectives | 3 |
| assessment | 3 |
| communication | 3 |
| creativity | 3 |
| drama | 3 |
| game | 3 |
| grammar | 3 |
| interaction | 3 |
| peer-teaching | 3 |
| performance | 3 |
| review | 3 |
| vocabulary building | 3 |

*9.5.1.3 Keyword categorization.* Lastly, I coded the keywords by the general type of information that they included. The majority of the keywords fit into 38 categories, with 31 of the keywords not fitting into any category. The categories are listed in Table 57. Some of the categories need explanation. "Topic" refers to keywords that state what types of things will be discussed (read about, etc.) in the activity, such as *digital photography*, *environment*, and *hotel English*. "Task" refers to keywords that describe the kind of activity, such as *photo hunt*, *cloze exercise activity*, and *game*. "Structure," on the other hand, refers to broader descriptions of the activity, such as *content-based*, *multiple skills*, and *warm-up*. "Function" is for keywords that define a pragmatic function, such as *follow-up questions*, *requests*, and

*interrupting*. "Modality" are keywords which describe the medium of English to be discussed or used, such as *song*, *drama*, and *letters*. "Management" are keywords that talk about organizing and running the class, such as *classroom management*, *policy*, and *tired students*.

Table 57

*Categories of Keywords*

| Category | No. of keywords | Category | No. of keywords |
|---|---|---|---|
| Topic | 56 | Reading | 8 |
| Vocabulary | 56 | Autonomy | 7 |
| Collaboration | 41 | Feedback | 7 |
| Communication | 36 | Pronunciation | 7 |
| Task | 35 | Student-centered | 5 |
| Speaking | 31 | Tool | 5 |
| Structure | 28 | Assessment | 3 |
| Technology | 29 | Performance | 3 |
| Grammar | 25 | Test | 3 |
| Aspect | 23 | Error correction | 2 |
| Listening | 22 | L3 | 2 |
| Function | 20 | Quality | 2 |
| Modality | 18 | Real world | 2 |
| Motivation | 15 | Relationships | 2 |
| Fluency | 11 | Repetition | 2 |
| Management | 11 | Speed | 2 |
| Presentation | 11 | Strategy | 2 |
| Awareness | 9 | Translation | 2 |
| English | 9 | Other (once each) | 31 |

One point that stands out is that, when different keywords are placed into categories, "grammar" does rise in frequency to the top ten. This is because many of the grammar-focused keywords mention one specific grammatical point, such as *prepositions, passive form,* and *conditional language*. In fact, there are 21 different specific grammar topics listed as keywords. Compare this to the keywords in the "vocabulary" category: 24 are general (*vocabulary, vocabulary building,* and *vocabulary learning*), 12 refer a specific type of vocabulary (for example, *Academic Word List*, *furniture*, and *numbers*), 7 refer to a technique for learning vocabulary (for example, *guessing from context*, *spaced repetition*, and *word association*), 7 are parts of speech (*adjectives, adverbs of frequency, nouns,* and *verbs*), and 6 refer to a broad idea (for example, *core meaning, register*, and *usage*). Thus, 42.8% of the "Vocabulary"

keywords refer to the general idea of vocabulary, while only 16% of the "grammar" keywords are similarly general. Thus, I need to complicate my earlier claims about the relative importance of these two linguistic domains. With grammar, it seems that the authors believe that grammar is not a singular topic, but rather that each individual grammar topic needs to be approached with separate techniques and activities. Vocabulary, on the other hand, seems (to the authors) to be amenable to more generic approaches. Some of the activities even specifically state that they can be used for any vocabulary items, as in "Any vocabulary topic can be used for this game depending on your needs." This leads to two conclusions: vocabulary is still treated significantly more often in this corpus (there are still more than twice as many keywords in the "vocabulary" category than in the "grammar" category). Second, the authors seem to believe that vocabulary can be treated as a more monolithic topic with generic treatments, while grammar usually requires more specific, customized treatments.

**9.5.2 In-text targets.** In addition to the keywords, in some cases, teachers additionally or alternatively gave a goal for the activity in the text itself. While most of these come from the segments in the articles that were coded as a "State the teaching target" moves, as in Chapter 7, some of the moves had to be split and some moves of other types also had goal information.

Under this revised counting, I identified 240 teaching targets in the corpus. These targets were organized into 23 categories; counts are shown in Table 58. First, I will discuss the topics that were included in the keyword analysis. With regards to the "four skills," the ranking is the same, but the distribution is somewhat different than in the keywords. The ranks are Speaking: 3rd; Writing: 4th; Listening: 9th; Reading: 14th. However, several of the targets that I placed into "communication" could also be considered to have a strong "speaking" and "listening" component, such as a segment that reads, "This activity helps students to understand and practice appropriate communication in preparation for, or in review of, presentation assignments." Similarly, "presentations" are primarily speaking activities. But, under the stricter categorization, much more emphasis is placed on productive than receptive skills.

Table 58

*Teaching Targets in the Article Bodies*

| Category | Number of occurrences |
| --- | --- |
| Vocabulary | 32 |
| Non-English | 28 |
| Speaking | 25 |
| Grammar | 23 |
| Function | 20 |
| Writing | 13 |
| Communication | 11 |
| Communication strategies | 9 |
| Listening | 9 |
| General | 8 |
| Fluency | 7 |
| Pragmatics | 7 |
| Presentations | 6 |
| Reading | 6 |
| Learning strategy | 6 |
| Pronunciation | 5 |
| Classroom | 5 |
| Test preparation | 5 |
| Discussion | 4 |
| Grammar | 4 |
| Discourse | 3 |
| Listening and speaking | 2 |
| Spelling | 2 |

Regarding the vocabulary/grammar imbalance, within the text, "vocabulary" targets are still more frequent, but they are only 1.4 times more frequent than "grammar" targets. Thus, even though it is still reasonable to argue that vocabulary is more important to the collective author than grammar, the difference may not be quite as extreme as it previously appeared.

This list also includes several aspects of language and language learning that were not discussed before (and were sometimes completely absent from the keywords). "Function" segments are those which focus on language being used for a specific purpose. For example, one segment says, "practicing English information structures commonly used in science/engineering reports," while another one says, "to practice giving clear instructions." This focuses on language not as a set of skills (the four skills) or sets of linguistic categories (vocabulary/grammar), but rather as

a tool for communication, which may require different ways of communicating depending on the goal of the communication. Speaking of the ways of dividing language into linguistic categories, previous rankings only showed vocabulary, which corresponds roughly to the linguistics field of semantics, and grammar, which corresponds roughly to syntax. Above that (in terms of the amount of language being analyzed) lie the fields of pragmatics and discourse, both of which appear in Table 58, albeit not particularly frequently (though it is possible to argue that there is an overlap between "Function" and "Pragmatics"). However, at the other end of the spectrum (going to the linguistic level below that of word meaning) are the categories of "Pronunciation" and "Spelling." That these two targets appear only 5 and 2 times respectively each speak to a belief that these topics are considered fairly unimportant by the collective author.

Lastly, I want to turn to the second most frequent teaching target discussed in the article bodies: "Non-English" targets. This category refers to cases where the article directly states that the activity teaches some topic or skill that is not directly related to English language learning. A wide variety of non-English targets are discussed among these 28 segments, such as critical thinking, concepts of love, cross-cultural awareness, research skills, layout techniques (for documents like newsletters), technical skills (such as PowerPoint), etc. While it would be going too far to call these examples English Medium Instruction (EMI), especially since most of the additional skills aren't other academic skills, which is what EMI usually attends to, there is a definite belief by some of the authors that it is acceptable in English classes to place a major focus on a non-English skill. While these 28 segments represent only 20 different articles (due to duplications within individual articles), that means over 11% of the articles went beyond teaching only English.


## 9.6 Language of Instruction

One of the things that I will discuss in the analysis of internationalization discussed in section 10.3 (which was completed prior to the present analysis) is that English and Japanese make up over 97% of the languages mentioned in the corpus. The inclusion of Japanese (17% of languages mentioned) made me wonder whether the authors commonly expressed a preference for either encouraging or excluding Japanese from the classroom.

25 of the articles (14.1%) positively mention the use of Japanese in the classroom. Of those 25, six require that only the students be able to communicate in Japanese, since it is used for note-taking or for conversation between group members. The other 19 require that the teacher have some level of Japanese proficiency. This ranges from activities where the teachers need to know just a few Japanese words (which they could prepare ahead of time) to activities where teachers need to be able to give grammatical explanations in Japanese, to a few activities that require the teacher to conduct real-time translation of students' writing into spoken Japanese. This is particularly interesting given that Yonezawa (2009) found that 42% of foreign part-time English instructors had only "fair, basic, or no Japanese language skills" and only 32% considered themselves to be fluent (conference presentation cited in Hayes, 2013).

For several of the activities, the inclusion of Japanese was a major part of the activity's implied appeal. For example, one author states that a key to getting their students to produce "more complex, spoken responses was to employ L1 prompts." In that activity, the idea is that while students would still have to produce a speech in English, the initial preparation can be done in Japanese, meaning Japanese was acting "to support spoken production." In another activity, Japanese is optional, but is specifically used if student attention is flagging. After students have composed stories in groups in English, the teacher reads the stories. Then, "If concentration begins to lapse, consider extending the activity by continuing to read out the stories in Japanese." Japanese is also used in several activities to aid in the acquisition of new vocabulary or to develop deeper understandings of previously learned vocabulary.

On the opposite side, only eight articles contained a specific injunction against the students using Japanese in the classroom. Four of those activities mention the need to prevent students from using Japanese in student-student conversations, as in "Walk around and help students who are slipping back into Japanese, but do not stop the activity." The others don't include such direct instruction for teachers to push students back into English, but instead imply that English is the language that students are supposed to use at all times.

Overall, what isn't present in the corpus is a major, sustained sense of "English-only"—despite this being such a major focus of the current Course of Study

for high school (Hashimoto, 2013b). There are, however, two competing interpretations of this lack of "English-only." One, which I personally hope is true, is that the collective author is not opposed to the carefully planned use of L1 in English classes in Japan. The other is that the idea that English classes should be conducted entirely in English is so "obvious" to the majority of the authors that it goes without mention. I think the second interpretation is slightly more likely because in many of the cases discussed above where Japanese is allowed that use often becomes a significant feature of the activity. This makes me think that those authors recognize that the use of Japanese in English classes is unusual and/or transgressive, and thus worthy of mention and even highlighting.

## 9.7 Activity Structure

In this section, I will discuss two fundamental issues about how the activities are structured. The first question is, are the activities done by students individually or in groups? While this seems like a simple question, it's complicated by two factors. The first is that many activities have multiple separate parts, such that they are solitaire during part of the activity and grouped during another part (a simple example is an activity where students prepare some sort of text such as a presentation or essay, and then get into groups to share that text). Second, saying that an activity or part of an activity is "group" or "solitaire" doesn't quite capture the idea of whether or not that individual/group is acting alone and independent of the rest of the class, or if each individual/group is somehow interacting with others in the class. For example, an activity where students get into groups and, for the whole activity, stay in that group (for example, a small-group discussion) seems to me to be different from an activity where students first work in groups to prepare some sort of text, and then later the groups take turns presenting to the class. As such, I decided to measure this on two axes—solitaire/group/both, and whole class component or no whole class component. Table 59 summarizes the results for this measurement for the corpus. Note that the sum of the article counts is only 176, because one activity is done entirely as a whole class, with neither solitaire nor group components—students all stand and compete to answer random questions (one of the "Sitting reward" activities discussed above).

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Table 59

*Structure of My Share Activities*

|  | Solo (S) | Group (G) | Both (B) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Whole-class component (W) | 21, 11.9% | 35, 19.8% | 33, 18.6% |
| No whole-class component (N) | 9, 5.1% | 58, 32.8% | 21, 11.9% |

*Note.* The first number in each cell is the number of articles, while the second is the percentage of the total articles in the corpus.

Only 30, or 16.9% of the activities, are done without group interaction, and, of those, only nine are done entirely solitaire—that is, with no interaction whatsoever with other classmates (the other 21 have portions where the whole class works together). Keep in mind that a traditional, teacher-fronted lecture would fall into the SN category. There are only two activities in the corpus which come close to being a pure lecture, though both fall into the GN category because they include a part near the end where students check answers to practice work with other nearby students. Interestingly, these activities are both on very focused, microlinguistic issues—one is on the use of definite versus indefinite articles, and the other is on the unimportance of the variation between [t], [d], and [-id] sounds at the end of English past tense verbs. Of the nine activities that do fall into SN, six are writing activities (of which, one is a CALL and one is a MALL activity), one teaches students how to use a vocabulary flashcard mobile application, one has students make a bookmark for an extensive reading book they've read outside of class (which is, effectively, a light writing activity), and one is less of an activity and more of a classroom management technique for taking attendance. Thus, one belief being lightly expressed here is that the one domain of language that is can be considered more "solitaire" is writing. Note that even among those activities, three involve authentic, offline communication with the teacher (the other three involve only teacher correction/evaluation).

On the other hand, 147 of the activities (83.1%) have the students work together for at least part of the time. This indicates that overwhelmingly this genre puts forth the belief that language learning requires some communication. There are two important observations here. One is a strange disconnect between the keywords and the activities themselves. In the "Teaching Targets" section above, *group* was found to be the 3rd most common word in the keywords (19 occurrences), and *group work* was found to be the 5th most common keyword (11 occurrences). The

disconnect comes from the fact that so many authors explicitly highlighted the fact that their activity involved group work, even though it is nearly universal in the corpus. This implies that one of the beliefs of the collective author is "Group work is unusual in language learning in Japan, so this activity will be valuable because it will let people see a way to successfully do group work in language classes." This is further amplified by the fact that are no instances of any keywords like *alone*, *solo*, or *individual* in the keywords. The second issue that arises is in relation to research done in Japan on the use of group work and/or communicative approaches to language teaching. Matsuura, et al. (2001) found that university students generally preferred direct instruction, and Geluso (2013) found that, at the secondary level, students tended to treat communicative classes as strictly "fun" and not a space for the "serious" work of learning English (that is, *juken eigo*). Thus, there may be a disconnect between student and teacher expectations, one that is not addressed in the corpus.[104]

With regards to group activities, there were a variety of group sizes. Some articles listed exact groups sizes, others gave a range of sizes, while others only used qualitative descriptions. Tables 60 and 61 summarize that information. Table 60 includes all the activities where students get into more than one group over the course of the activity, while Table 61 contains all the activities where only a single group is made during the activity.

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[104] Also, I want to mention that there is a potential parallel here to the issue raised in section 9.4.5.4 regarding wheelchairs—there may be students in the class who, for psychological reasons, are uncomfortable engaging in group activities. However, I am unable to provide more detailed discussion of this point, as I am unfamiliar with what psychologists or educational theorists suggest be done with regards to interactive learning and such issues. Thus, I note the issue, but recognize that serious investigation of it would require additional research and analysis.

Table 60

*Group Sizes for Activities Where Students Change Groups*

| Group size | Number of articles |
|---|---|
| 2, 2 groups | 1 |
| 2, 3 | 1 |
| 2, 4 | 1 |
| 2, 4, 2 | 1 |
| 2, small groups | 4 |
| 4–5, 4–5 groups | 1 |
| small groups, 2 | 2 |
| 2 or small groups, 4 | 1 |
| 4,2 | 1 |

*Note.* The comma indicates where students shift groups; so, the second line means "first groups of two, then later groups of three."

*Table 61*

Groups Sizes for Activities Where Students Don't Change Groups

| Group size | Number of articles |
|---|---|
| 2 | 50 |
| 2–3 | 6 |
| 2–4 | 3 |
| 2–5 | 1 |
| 2 or small groups | 9 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 3–4 | 9 |
| 3–5 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 |
| 4–5 | 2 |
| 4–6 | 6 |
| 5 | 1 |
| 5 or less | 1 |
| 5–6 | 2 |
| 6 or less | 1 |
| 6 or more | 1 |
| 6–7 | 1 |
| about 5 | 1 |
| alone, pairs, or small groups | 1 |
| small groups | 7 |
| groups | 7 |
| groups or whole class | 1 |
| 2 groups | 4 |
| 3 groups | 1 |
| 5 groups | 1 |
| by column | 1 |

60 (41.7%) of the group activities have at least one component that must be done in pairs, and an additional 21 (14.6%) can optionally be done in pairs (the activities with a range including 2, or which are described as "pairs or small groups"). This makes a slight majority of the group work dyadic. For larger groups, with only a few exceptions, the maximum size was capped at six students. Those exceptions (6 or more, 6–7, and those where the whole class is divided into 2, 3, or 5 groups) are for competitive team games where the key factor is to limit the total number of teams competing to make the game function.

The second fundamental question regarding activity structure is whether the activities are cooperative or competitive. Most articles don't use a word to explicitly define the activities as falling into one of these categories. My main mechanism for deciding was that I classified as competitive any activity which used terms such as *win* or *lose*, had points, or had other game-like aspects. As an example of the latter, one activity involves students forming imaginary companies; then the students take turns doing mock job interviews at these "companies." This activity was classified as competitive since each company has to choose one and only one candidate to "hire" out of everyone they interviewed. The chosen person from each company is announced to the class and explicitly called a "winner." On the other hand, a different activity has students do most of the same steps, but choosing winners is optional and, if done, is only done in a private meeting with the teacher. Thus, since there is no "winner," this was marked as a collaborative activity. As a side note, the former activity is a good example of an activity that actually fell in both categories—the initial company formation is cooperative, while the mock interviews are competitive.

Of the 30 non-group activities, only three (10.0%) include competition. Two of these are a race-type game, where students are competing as individuals to be the first to finish an activity, while in the other one student is given a prize for writing the most (or having the largest improvement) on a timed writing practice. Among the 143 activities that include a group component, 22 (15.4%) have inter-group competition (usually team vs. team, but also activities which start with a cooperative competent but later switch to solo competition), and seven (4.9%) had intra-group competition (cases where students competed as individuals against other people in their group, such as in a board game activity). Thus, a total of 32 activities, or 18.1% of the activities in the corpus have a competitive element. On the other side, 125

activities (70.6%) have a collaborative side. It seems reasonable to conclude that the collective My Share opinion about the use of competitive and collaborative activities is not unified, but that collaborative activities are preferred to competitive activities.

There is one additional point to discuss regarding the competitive activities. While, by definition, a competitive activity is one in which there are winners and losers, in most cases, the "winners" don't receive anything. Only 12 of the 32 competitive activities (37.5%) specifically state that students should receive anything for winning. A variety of prizes are listed, such as bonus points, candy, "the chance to leave early," or just the generic word "prize." Some articles make the prizes optional, and others give a list of several different prizes. Conversely, several of the activities have penalties for failure. First, the "Torture Standing" activities are essentially penalizing students for failing to answer correctly and/or quickly, though the activities are designed that, eventually, everyone will be allowed to sit. One activity, on the other hand, involves a competition in rapidly writing down dictated English numbers. Students who are fastest can raise their hands, and, if correct, are declared "winners." Then, the author says, "Give the 'losers' some research homework which requires them to search for comparable figures on the same topic. Have them type these up and submit them in a subsequent class." The rational for this is given at the end of the conclusion, where the author says, "The pressure of research homework also creates a highly competitive atmosphere and adds variety to the classroom." The structure of the games seems to be that about five or six students will be "winners" and the rest will be "losers." First, I cannot help but be subjective here and say that it seems hurtful and potentially damaging to label the majority of students in a class "losers" (even if the author/reader never uses this actual word to students). Second, the idea of penalizing students who weren't the very best at English with more English work seems nearly certain to decrease motivation to learn English, and to increase the likelihood that some students will come to label themselves as "bad at English" or to believe that "they don't like English."

## 9.8 Archetypes and Paired Activities: Exploring Similarities and Differences

The corpus contains a very diverse set of activities, many of which claim to have a new or unusual methodology, goal, or topic. Having said that, there are similarities

across some of the activities, and by looking at articles that have commonalities, it is possible to find underlying similarities and differences, many of which point to teacher beliefs. Looking at these loosely connected collections of articles also provides a way of structuring a deeper analysis of the discourse, allowing me to examine specific points in context in a detailed way that the more holistic, corpus-driven work of the previous chapters could not. This is done in two ways. First, I look at groups of articles that fit within a class of activities, such as "games" and "presentations." Second, I explore several sets of paired activities that are nearly identical in both topic and content, and yet which have subtle differences which speak to key differences in the underlying teacher beliefs.[105]

**9.8.1 Activity archetypes.** By *archetype*, I mean the abstract type of action that each activity can be said to be a variant of. That is, in the case of many, though not all, of the activities, asking the question "In one or two words, what <u>kind</u> of activity is this?" would produce an answer of a generic type of language learning activity that would be recognizable to nearly all language teachers or learners. For lack of a better word, I have called these "archetypes," and the three that I explore in this section are role-plays, presentations, and games. These discussions are not exhaustive—for example, I do not discuss all the activities which include presentations. Rather, I focus on those which both get to the core of these archetypes (that help explain why teacher do them) as well as those on the boundaries—those that have a certain "twist" that either reveal hidden assumptions about the core archetype or show alternatives to them. In addition, in some cases I use corpus based tools and/or data from the move analysis to look for systematic features of these archetypes.

*9.8.1.1 Role-plays.* By role-play, I mean activities in which students communicate aloud in English, but do so while pretending to be someone else (as opposed to a "normal" conversation activity, where students are speaking as themselves). There are 16 role-play activities in the corpus, falling into two main

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[105] Chapter 10 (Special Topics Analysis) is also a qualitative analysis of collections of similar articles; in that case, articles are grouped by topic, organized around three issues of major importance in Japanese educational policy.

categories. The first, of which there are only four, are role-play activities which are done without scripts. In these activities, students take on the role of characters and then improvise dialogue as that character. For example, in one of these activities, two students play the role of travel agents and another two students play the role of a couple looking for a hotel to honeymoon at. Another thing these activities share is that they are not performed for the rest of the class—rather, each group is independently doing the activity, and there is no final portion in which students get to watch the performance of other groups. Each of these role-plays has a specific, limited topic: looking for and recommending a hotel, making restaurant reservations by phone, looking for local entertainment sites for international business clients, and speaking about emotions. Despite being varied topics, they share something in common: almost by definition, they can't be the topic of a productive (as opposed to purely receptive) activity except through role-play. That is, while it is possible for students to discuss "things I like" without becoming another character, they can't practice making restaurant reservations "for real." While emotions might seem like it could be done without role-play, the article explains how the point of this activity is to push beyond what is "normally" done in classes with emotions. It says,

> When teaching lexical items such as adjectives, it can often be difficult to provide students with opportunities to use this newly-encountered vocabulary. Activities for practicing vocabulary to describe emotions and feelings are often limited to gap-fill exercises or activities, such as sentence writing, in which students contrive situations in which to use the language. The activity described here gives students the opportunity to use the language in a creative way, taking on the character of a person in a particular situation and expressing that character's thoughts and feelings.

Each of these "live" role-plays gives students the chance to practice a domain of language that wouldn't normally come up in the classroom while still doing the practice communicatively.

For the other 12 activities, students are performing a script. In all but one of those cases, the scripts are written by the students, with the exception being an activity where students reenact a scene from a movie. The level of constraint on the

writing varies between these activities. The freest role-plays are those where students are given a topic or choice of topics and then allowed to write the scripts entirely on their own. The most constrained are cases where students are transforming an already existing story (coming from a class reader or a famous story known to all the students) into a play. Sometimes that transformation is direct, in that the students are supposed to follow the original story exactly; in other cases, students have more freedom, as in one role-play where students transform a fairy tale into a courtroom scene. This variety demonstrates that even though it might be tempting to think of role-play activities as being primarily about speaking aloud with convincing emotions and clear pronunciation so that an audience can respond, the articles are actually putting this archetype to a variety of other uses. For example, when the role play topic is less constrained, students are given more freedom to use language creatively and generate a narrative. On the other hand, when students have to transform a narrative from one medium (a written story) to another (a drama), they are required to apply their comprehension skills so that they capture everything important from the story but recreate it in a different format. And in still other cases, where the students make the narrative but have specific rules, teachers can force students to notice and generate language using specific grammar patterns or vocabulary.

While most of the scripted role-plays have students present their final drama in a live performance to other members of the class, three of them have the students record themselves on video and then show that video to the class. The rationale for doing so differs between the three articles. In the first, students make a television advertisement for a common product. At the end of the conclusion, the article says, "If students have the time and know-how, videos can be made to look very professional, especially if students have access to computers and software such as PowerPoint." Thus, in this activity, the benefit of using a video recording is that it allows student the chance to produce a more complicated performance then they could live. In the second article, the students make a video using puppets. They are not, however, allowed to edit the video: it must be done in only "one take, so even if something goes wrong, they will have to keep going." The video is shared with the rest of the class, but this is done so that everyone can "have a good laugh." In the third article, however, the purpose of the recording seems to be to allow the teacher

to criticize the performance in more detail. First, it should be noted that this activity is "Reader's Theatre," which means that the script is read dramatically (with appropriate emotion, intonation, and timing), but there is no movement and students do not have to memorize the performance. Thus, students aren't trying to produce a highly polished video like in the previous activity. Second, the article says, "Play back the recording and encourage students to comment on their peers' performances. You should also take the opportunity to stress the importance of good articulation, voice projection, and flexibility for effective communication in English." The point of play back seems to make criticism both easier for the teacher and peers to do and easier for the performers to observe what they are being criticized about. What stands out to me here is how unreasonable two of the topics of criticism seem to be: voice projection isn't needed if you're sitting around a table reading and the activity is being recorded, and I have no idea what "flexibility" means in reading a script. Thus, these three activities contain three very different attitudes towards the incorporation of technology into presentation activities: the first article introduces extra technology into an activity to allow students to produce a more complex, interesting product, the second just lets everyone (including the performers) experience the "fun" of the video, while the third uses the same technology as a way to criticize student English usage. Thus, it is possible to infer that the use of technology does not seem to carry with it any particular attitude towards students or to the relationship between students and teacher—rather, technology is just a tool for implementing the teacher's underlying intentions and beliefs about students and language learning.

One additional difference between the role-play activities is the role given to the audience in the eleven activities that involve giving a performance (live or recorded) to the rest of the class. In six of those cases, the audience is given no task at all—they are just watching the performance (or not, since nothing compels them to). In the other five, the audience is given a task to perform. In two cases, the audience takes on the role of peer assessors, judging the quality of the actual performance. More interestingly, the other three cases have the other students involved in the actual content of the presentation. In the fairy tale mock trial, the audience becomes the jury, and has to judge, for example, whether or not Goldilocks should be considered guilty for stealing from the three bears. The students who are

not presenting become a part of the live drama itself. In the other two cases, the commercial video and an activity where students perform a cooking demonstration, the audience is asked to judge the advertising pitch and the food, respectively. In these cases, the students are carrying out a conversation about the topic without judging their peers. That makes these last three activities much more aligned with a fully "active learning" methodology—even though all of the role-plays fall under active learning since students are actively solving problems and/or making new knowledge, these three activities don't end with the final creative product. Rather, this product is still seen as part of an ongoing learning experience for everyone, not just the performers themselves.

*9.8.1.1.1 Moves in the role-play archetype.* One tool available to see if there is anything special about the language used to describe role-play activities is to compare the frequencies of moves in this archetype to the total frequency across the corpus. One move has an unusual distribution: the benefit "creativity" is overrepresented in the role-play activities, being included in six (37.5%) of these articles, which is almost triple the corpus-wide frequency (13.6%). To calculate if this is a significant different, a chi-squared test was used, to compare the frequency that role-play activities were marked as creative to the frequency that non-role-play activity were marked as creative. For this comparison, $\chi^2 = 8.602$ and $p = .003$, indicating the difference is likely statistically significant.[106] Thus, there is a strong correlation between the use of role-play activities and considering creativity to be a benefit worth using in a language lesson; however, there's no clear way to tell if that means that teachers who think creativity is good tend to use role-plays, or if the belief is that role-plays are strongly or inherently creativity boosting activities. On the other hand, there were no moves that were statistically significantly underrepresented in the role-play activities.

**9.8.1.2 Presentations**. For this section, by presentations, I mean the 21 activities where students make a speech (a sustained monologue at least a minute

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[106] All chi-squared tests in this chapter were calculated with the tools on the Social Science Statistics website (Stangroom, n.d.).

long) to other students on a topic which they have prepared in advance. This includes cases where the presentation is only part of the activity and when it is only an optional component. Also, it includes both solo (15, 71.4%) and group (8, 38.1%) presentations. [107] In most (18, 85.7%) of these activities, students give their presentation directly to other students, though in 3 cases (14.3%) the presentations are recorded and shared with other students by video. 12 of the presentations (57.1%) require the use of visual aids, with six (28.6%) using posters, two (9.5%) using presentation software (PowerPoint), two (9.5%) using handouts, one (4.8%) using notes on a board, and one (4.8%) using either the board or presentation software. This section does not include drama or other activities where students are taking on a character (those fall in the role-play archetype discussed above), but rather only cases where the student is still "herself" while giving the speech. It also does not count activities where students are engaged in unprepared, multidirectional speech (conversations); not all the presentations are fully scripted, but all allow the students to do at least some preparation prior to presenting.

While the focus of these articles is on what the speakers are doing during or in preparation for their presentation, some of these activities also specify a role for the audience. Five of the activities involve real interaction between audience and presenter (plus one more with optional interaction); usually this is through some form of question and answer segment, as in "allow some time for questions and comments between each presentation." In four cases, students give some sort of peer feedback; this can be a full evaluation, or something more specific, such as one where the audience members have the singular task of counting the number of times the speaker makes eye contact with them. In five of the activities, the audience has an assignment, but that assignment involves no feedback for the speaker. For example, one poster presentation activity requires audience members to "complete their listening task sheets (see Appendix) by recording the presenter's name, topic and one extra detail." Finally, six of the activities give no role to the audience—they are required to do nothing other than be physically present. Taking the last two categories together, that means that more than half of the presentations do not involve bidirectional communication. For that matter, the activities with feedback

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[107] The total here is 23 because one presentation can be done individually or in pairs.

don't really involve a conversation—they are more accurately viewed as two unidirectional speech acts in sequence, first from presenter to audience, and second from audience to presenter. Under this categorization only 23.9% of the presentation activities include interaction as part of the presentation itself.[108] Thus, there is a belief that presentations are an important enough skill to learn that it is worth giving up opportunities for interaction in the language classroom.

In a similar vein, one article says, "While the ability to give short spoken presentations is an important language skill, many students are apprehensive about speaking in front of the whole class." That is, this article is promoting an activity that may be linked with negative emotions like apprehension. Of course, as was discussed in section 7.4 on negative claims, the article introduces a particular way of doing presentations that it claims will reduce this apprehension. Nonetheless, looking at this archetype helps reveal the belief that language teaching may involve competing desires—the desire to teach presentation skills versus the desire to decrease apprehension or the desire to increase interaction. These examples imply that teachers may be making trade-offs as they choose various activities, and that this is an acceptable approach (i.e., there isn't a need to find the "perfect" activity that, individually, solves all potential language learning problems).

This archetype contains the two special activities mentioned in section 8.6.2 where the student/teacher roles are partially reversed, and the students get a chance to lead the class. In one activity, students do this alone, and teach about their L3 (the article claims that "most university students in Japan study English (L2) and one more foreign language (L3).") for 4–5 minutes. In addition to choosing and teaching about a specific point, such as a grammar point, pronunciation of the L3, or interesting idioms, these student-teachers have to prepare a handout containing a short activity such as "gap fills, crosswords, matching exercises, etc."

The other student-teacher activity is specifically designed for future teachers. In it, the students work in groups of four to teach 60 minutes out of a 90-minute lesson. While in the former activity the presenters get to choose any interesting topic

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[108] As mentioned, for some of these articles, the presentation is only one component of the activity, and the other parts may involve interaction. For example, one activity has students work in groups to discuss news items, and at the end has the groups give a presentation about their predictions for the future. The first part is interactive, but the presentation itself is not.

in their L3, in this activity, each group teaches one of the textbook chapters, going through the different activities already created by the textbook authors, with the addition of one presenter created practice worksheet. In many ways, this activity goes beyond a speech, because the student-teachers are required to check for comprehension, to assist students in completing the worksheet, and are even responsible for correcting the rest of the students' weekly homework if answer keys are available. This is also by far the longest of the presentations, with the second longest[109] being a twenty-minute group presentation (which actually shares many features with this activity, in that the group is leading a discussion about a TED talk which the other students have watched for homework). In other words, this activity is very specifically tailored to the students it was designed for, in that the presumption is that those students will be required to do similar tasks as part of their future work. Nevertheless, the two student-teacher activities provide a key contrast to most of the corpus, because they reverse, at least in part, the usual dynamic between students and teacher. This helps show that the strong power differential shown in Chapter 8 is not "natural," but, rather, a constructed feature of the genre.

*9.8.1.2.1 Moves in the presentation archetype.* As with the role-play activities, only a few moves are unusually frequent or infrequent compared to the rest of the corpus. One move which was significantly overrepresented was "challenging." In the whole corpus, only 10 activities, or 5.7% of the activities were explicitly labelled as "challenging," but 4 presentations, or 19.0%, were so labelled ($\chi^2$ = 8.023, *p* = .00461). The four activities described as challenging don't seem to share any qualities that differentiate them from the rest of the presentations. In one case, the "challenging" aspect is making semantic connections between different topics. In another, the "challenge" is responding with personal opinions and predictions about news stories. In the third case, the challenging aspect is having to speak under strictly timed conditions without a script (though the article mitigates this by using

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[109] Of those with a specified length; 8 of the activities give no indication of the length of the presentation, and two define it in terms of number of words ("at least 3 things" per student in one activity with 3-person groups, and a "one page" speech for the other). However, I would estimate that none of the activities with unspecified lengths would have presentations longer than about five minutes, based on the content students are required to speak about.

audio recordings, so students can record their speech multiple time to get a good result). With the fourth activity (the "endangered species" speech, which is discussed in detail in connection to internationalization in section 10.3.2.1) it isn't clear what makes the article label it as challenging, since it describes a standard "students research and give a poster presentation" activity. In fact, it might even be easier than normal since the information that students can use is highly restricted and they don't have to answer audience questions. The most that can be said is that "challenging" is not a monolithic idea, and teachers assign it to activities for various reasons.

In addition, one of the benefit types is significantly underrepresented: the energy-related cluster from the positive emotions benefit category. 22 (12.4%) of the activities in the corpus contained this move one or more times. In the presentation archetype, there were zero—not a single article describes giving a presentation as "exciting," "lively," or anything else similar. The odds of randomly getting zero is 2.0%,[110] indicating that this complete omission likely points to the belief that giving and/or watching presentations does not bring the energy level of a class up.

*9.8.1.2.2 Word frequency in the presentation archetype.* Another tool that can be used to see if there is anything special about this archetype is whether individual words occur more or less frequently than in the rest of the corpus.[111] Words directly linked to the archetype such as *poster, present, presentation,* and *video* are unsurprisingly more frequent in this archetype than they are in the corpus as a whole. However, a few other words stand out as well. For example, *English, lesson, minute, skill, and discussion* represent 0.34%, 0.34%, 0.26%, 0.22%, and 0.20% of the presentation archetype words, respectively, while they represent 0.20%, 0.20%, 0.16%, 0.10%, and 0.11% of the whole corpus. In each case, these terms are over 50% more common in the presentation activities than they are in the whole corpus.

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[110] Calculated by hypergeometric distribution, using the Stat Trek Hypergeometric Calculator (Stattrek.com, 2018)

[111] I did not include a similar discussion in the role-play archetype section because there were no particularly interesting results. For example, overrepresented words were either role-play specific words like *performance* and *character,* or words playing oversized roles in individual activities in the archetype such as *hotel* and *reservation.*

While the numbers of occurrences are, in absolute terms, fairly small (there are, for example, only 24 instances of *discussion* in the archetype), so the difference may due to random chance. This is likely the case for *English*, *skill*, and *discussion* since there are individual articles in this archetype that use these words an exceptionally large number of times (for example, in the activity where students teach an L3, the term *English* occurs often to clarify the role of the three different languages). In the case of *lesson* and *minute*, however, there appear to be specific explanations. For *lesson* there are two factors: one is that the two "student-teacher" activities described above both use *lesson* a lot, as in "This project gives them the opportunity to present a <u>lesson</u> from their textbook to the entire class in a structured way." In addition, seven of the 21 presentation activities take place over the course of multiple class periods, which often involves using *lesson*, as in "This <u>set of lessons</u> provides students a framework to analyze and interpret photos rigorously." As for *minute*, 11 of the articles specify the time length of the presentation itself, with 9 of those specifications involving *minute*, as in, "Have students prepare a <u>3-minute</u> poster presentation on a given topic."

In addition, several words are underrepresented in the presentation archetype. *Write, word, ask, card, picture, answer,* and *sentence* are each in the top 50 most frequent words in the whole corpus, but occur at least 50% less often in the presentation archetype. There are two teacher beliefs here: the first is that these articles position the level of language being practiced in presentations as at the discursive level and thus tend to focus less on the *word* and *sentence* level. In addition, since these presentations are mostly unidirectional, there is little chance to *ask* or *answer* questions (and *question* appears about 30% less often in the presentation archetype). This is connected with the discussion above about the role of the audience.

*9.8.1.3 Games*. Games are a subset of the competitive activities discussed in the section 9.7. To qualify as a game, an activity had to have a goal, a winner (or group of winners), specific actions that the players could take to increase their chances of winning, and also not be done as part of another imaginary situation (so, for example, the company and job interview activity discussed in the section 9.7 is competitive,

but not a game).[112] There are 28 games in the corpus (though only 27 game articles, since one article contains two different games). There are an additional two activities which very briefly mention that the activity or a portion of the activity could be made into a competitive game, but those were not included in the following analysis.

Before I discuss the games, I want to briefly mention eight activities whose articles contain the word *game*, but do not qualify as a game under the definition I laid out above. Three of these activities were excluded because, while they may have resembled a game, they did not have a goal or winner. The best example of this is an article containing what is called a "board game" but that explicitly states, "there is no GOAL box since the aim is simply to facilitate the conversation." This activity simply continues until the teacher feels that the class has practiced enough. Two activities, both of which look like board games, were excluded because nothing the students did affected whether or not the won or lost. In both games, students moved around a board, moving a random number of spaces each turn (by rolling dice or flipping coins), and then answering questions. But there was no consequence for answering a question correctly or incorrectly, and the winner would be decided solely based on the random element. The final three were excluded because there was not enough information to determine if all the criteria were met. For example, one activity has students working in pairs, one of whom is trying to finish reading a story aloud in two minutes and the other of whom is trying to interrupt by asking questions. The article talks about a "champion," but they don't define what winning is, which is quite unclear since the two roles are asymmetrical. To be clear, I'm not judging any of these activities as deficient, merely as not being a "game" in the stricter sense of the word.

11 of the games are played as individuals. Of those, four are done with the whole class (generally in some sort of a race), while the other seven are played in small groups (for example, a board game where each table has 3–4 players and there will be one winner at each table). Several of the games can have more than one winner (such as, the first X people to complete a task all win). The remaining 17

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[112] This is a slightly modified version of the definition of a game given by Mark Rosewater, the head designer of the world's most popular collectible card game and an industry-recognized authority on games (Rosewater, 2018).

games are played in teams, where the team size is specified by number of people (as in, "Have students form groups of 4–6.") or by some portion of the class, with the most common of these being some version of "Divide the class into two teams." Thus, the collective author seems to find value in both group games which encourage interaction and team building, as well as games where students are individually responsible for their winning and losing.

While eleven of the games are idiosyncratic to one article, there are several sets of related games. The most common game type, accounting for five of the games, were question and answer games. The purest were two games where the teacher compiled a list of questions, and then had students answer them—one in teams, and one as individuals. Both activities promoted the fact that since the questions were fast and random, they made students focus on listening carefully. One difference between them, however, is in the sample questions given. One set were "normal" trivia about capitals of countries, science facts, pop culture, etc. The other included some questions like that, but also included questions which were about student opinions, such as "Would you like to play tennis tomorrow?" or "Do you like swimming?" In other words, the teacher will judge the answers not based on their factual accuracy, but rather on their grammatical accuracy. For me, there's something deceptive about this activity, because it subverts the way a quiz game is supposed to work from a student's perspective, and I can imagine students may easily be confused if they're trying to think of the right answer. As a side note, these are two of the three "Torture Standing" games discussed in section 9.4.5.3, where "winning" means a student can sit. The other three quiz games add a "sports" element to the activity. Two use soccer and baseball as a scheme for scoring the activity, though actual success or failure in the game is based entirely on students' ability to answer English quiz questions. The final one incorporates basketball—not as a concept, but as a literal activity, in that answering a question correctly earns a team not only points, but, also a "basket-shooting chance." If they successfully make the basket, they earn additional points. It is unclear why the article does this, though perhaps it is implied by the final sentence which says, "I believe this game will enable teachers to get a lively student response." However, this is the only game that requires this sort of physical skill (the next closest would be the scavenger/treasure hunts described in sections 9.3.2 and 9.3.5.4, but in those activities students just

need to be able to walk around campus), so it seems that most teachers do not value the idea of integrating athletic skill with language learning.

The next most common type of game comes in four activities related to describing the contents of pictures. Two activities are nearly identical in terms of the actual language act, which is looking at pictures and identifying nouns in them. In the third, students have to describe pictures aloud in sentences, and are given a lot of flexibility in how they describe them. In the final one, students work in teams of four. Two students in each team go to the front of the room to look at a floor plan of a house, and then have to return to the other team members and describe that floor plan; the non-moving students have to recreate the floor plan from the description of the first two. While these activities focus on different language skills (identifying everyday objects, making grammatically correct sentences, and using furniture vocabulary and prepositions of location), all focus on the general skill of describing the world visually.

Other than these eight activities, the rest of the games are unique or share features with just one other game. For example, there are two *karuta* games, two scavenger/treasure hunts, two games where students get random words and have to make grammatically correct sentences, two games involving logical deduction, etc. While each of these games (and the articles describing them) have interesting features, time and space do not permit a detailed examination of them all.

In terms of the language skill being focused on (or, arguably, being tested, since students are being measured and judged to be winning or losing based on their performance), there is significant variety across the games. The most common was vocabulary with 11 examples. Following vocabulary, there are four games with a functional focus (such as describing pictures or giving directions), three on grammar, two on discourse, and two that were explicitly stated to be usable with any topic linked to the rest of the curriculum.


*9.8.1.3.1 Benefits in the game archetype.* Before I checked the numbers, I hypothesized that the happiness cluster (see section 7.3.1) from the positive emotion benefit category would be significantly overrepresented in the game archetype. This turned out to not be the case: 13 of 27 games articles (48.1%) of these articles had one or more happiness cluster moves, while 38.9% of all the

articles in the corpus had such a move. This is not a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2$ = .043, $p$ = .837). Thus, there is no evidence of a collective belief associating fun, entertainment, etc., with games to a greater degree than with other activities. In fact, only one major set of moves stood out as being differentially represented in the game archetype: the "energizing" cluster. eight of the games (25.9%) contain energizing moves, while only 12.4% of all articles do, a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2$ = 8.660, $p$ = .003). Thus, games seem to be more strongly correlated with increasing classroom energy than non-game activities.

*9.8.1.2.2 Word frequency in the game archetype.* Most of the word under- and overrepresentations are unsurprising. For example, *team, game, card, member, first,* and *point* are all overrepresented in this archetype, since they are core terms for games. The largest discrepancy is with the word *team*: the word occurs 115 times in this archetype, and only 134 times in the entire corpus, meaning 85.8% of the uses of this word are in this archetype. That indicates that the word *team* is not usually used as a generic term for *group*, and instead has a primarily competitive, game-oriented meaning. Another word that also occurs more frequently in this archetype is *take*, accounting for 0.24% of the words in the archetype but only 0.16% of the whole corpus, primarily because games add the phrase *take a turn* to the normal, physical uses for *take*. More interesting are the underrepresented words. The following are among the top 50 most common words in the whole corpus, but each occur at least 33% less frequently in the game archetype: *language, topic, pair, presentation, create,* and *read. Presentation* and *create* are linked more strongly with other activity types, so the underrepresentation is unsurprising. I was unable to identify any reason for the underrepresentation of *language* and topic. For *pair*, the underrepresentation is because most of the games are played in larger groups, probably because intragroup competition doesn't make as much sense in a pair, and for intergroup competition, a number of groups equal to half of the class size might be unwieldy. The low frequency of *read* points to the belief that reading is not particularly compatible with games. Almost by definition, games are focused on output, since it can be measured and thus scored and a winner determined. Nonetheless, many of the games do involve reading—students have to read questions in the board games, they have to read what their team and other teams

wrote in the sentence building games, they have to read the clues in the scavenger/treasure hunts. But the reading is deemphasized. This may be reading too much into a small discrepancy in frequency, but perhaps this serves as a pointer to why reading is overall less frequently the focus of activities, as discussed in section 9.5—it may be that reading tends to form more of a background language action than other aspects of language learning.

**9.8.2 Paired activities.** In addition to the wide archetypal categories discussed in the previous subsection, I also want to look at 4 pairs of activities that have a very high degree of similarity, such that, in my early notes about the corpus, I called these "paired activities." I'm not suggesting that one of these articles was in any way written in response to the other. In many cases, the publication dates would indicate that they were almost certainly both submitted before either was published. Furthermore, I have not chosen any pairs of activities sharing an author. Rather, these pairs represent two teacher-authors working on the same basic idea, and sometimes producing very similar resulting activities, but with enough difference that, when carefully examined, help demonstrate differences in teacher beliefs. The four pairs are on the following topics: TED talks, job interviews, "vox pops," and interruptions.[113]

*9.8.2.1 TED Talks pair.* The first pair involves two activities that make use of TED Talks. In the first activity students work in groups of four. Each group selects a TED Talk, and then prepares two things: a summary of the video, and "three questions designed to stimulate discussion. They should attempt to raise controversial issues and provoke differing opinions." Before each class, all students watch the same video, for which the teacher will make a quiz (to ensure students have done the listening homework). Then one group, called the "presenting group," leads a discussion with the whole class. The presenting group is given the responsibility for "self-managing the discussion" and "The teacher does NOT participate" (capitalization in original). After a 20-minute discussion, students

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[113] Note that there is at least one more close pair in the text, which I discuss in the section 10.3.2.2—two activities that bring non-Japanese students into Japanese university English classes.

evaluate the quality of the discussion and give feedback to the presenter. The teacher does as well, then "After calculating scores, grades can be distributed in a subsequent lesson." In the other TED Talks activity, the teacher chooses a single TED Talk. In class, the teacher first "activate[s] students' schemata" by introducing the video and having students talk in groups about "what they know about the topic." The teacher then introduces "key vocabulary." Students watch the video three times, taking notes as they watch, focusing on the main idea the first time, supporting ideas the second time, and more details the last time. Students talk together in pairs and summarize the video. Then the teacher asks the students for a few ideas on the content, such as "If you chose a video rated persuasive, ask students to think about possible opposing views."

The roles of the teachers and students in these two activities are wildly different. The first gives students the majority of the responsibility for creating and managing the class activity—they select the topics/media (though they are constrained by the teacher to choose only from within the TED Talk genre), lead and conduct an extended discussion, and provide peer-feedback. And, as noted above, the article is adamant that the teacher is NOT a participant. Rather, the article emphasizes that "For discussions to work well, teachers should explain that everyone's contribution is important, that mistakes are acceptable, as are different opinions." In the second activity, on the other hand, the teacher chooses the topic and scaffolds the watching by triggering students' schema and pre-teaching difficult vocabulary words. The students, on the other hand, are tasked primarily with taking notes, summarizing those notes/the video, and with answering a few questions that the teacher has created. Note that even though students give opinions in this second activity, the students don't actually discuss those opinions—they merely write them on the board. The only discussion is on a final point, where the article says, "As a class, discuss if the idea is worth spreading or not and why."[114] Thus, while the responsibility for most of the first activity lies with students, almost all that responsibility falls on the teacher in the second activity. The former activity falls squarely within the framework of *active learning*; the latter activity touches on active

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[114] And while I'm now going to insert my own judgment, I have to say that I can't imagine that being a very long or complex discussion, because TED and the teacher have already told the students that these ideas are, by definition, "worth spreading."

learning in the final "discussion" portion, but is mostly a surface learning activity where students are trying to pick out the main ideas of the video and summarize it while not deeply engaging with the content (issues of *active learning* are discussed in section 10.4 in more detail).

Note that this difference is not coincidental—it is built into the very goals of the activity. The first article says,

> This activity, when repeated (and varied) over time, has been used successfully in university EAP speaking and listening programmes to scaffold learners into confident large group discussions using explicitly taught conversation strategies, stimulating learner selected themes and resources, and self-managed presentations, participation and reflection."

The second, on the other hand is designed to "improve students' listening and note-taking skills." The goals of the former are much more expansive and focused on students' discursive and pragmatic skills, while the latter focuses on the more basic, bottom-up skills of listening and note-taking.

The mention of EAP students in the first activity and no particular audience in the second may indicate that the former is designed for higher level students than the latter. The question to be asked is this: is this division "natural?" That is, is the former activity only possible once students have already achieved more "basic" English language skills? I want to posit that the former article actually points to a way that the activity can be used even by students with intermediate English skills, because the author explicitly allows, during the discussion, for students to help each other express difficult ideas, including allowing them to shift into L1 (as long as they then also collectively create an English approximation). Furthermore, TED Talks are often subtitled in Japanese, so students can, if they want, prepare for the class using L1 support. Conversely, the second activity points to the possibility of discussion, but falls short because the teacher sets forth a question where their institutional authority (plus the social capital of the TED organization) strongly limits the subject positions students can take in the discussion. While a 20-minute discussion on the sorts of issues that TED Talks raise may well be beyond the ability (or interest) of

lower/intermediate students, I wonder if something smaller would be possible that would help activate student learning in the second activity.

Rhetorically, both activities position themselves as working against a particular problem. In the first, the article says, "Encouraging students to use English in large group settings is a challenge." Thus, the activity is supposedly designed to scaffold the activity through the use of several practice sessions that the teacher leads in class sessions prior to the main activity, based on TED Talks chosen by the teacher that gradually increase in difficulty. During these practice sessions, the teacher introduces, models, and has students practice "a range of strategies/functions, one by one." A few of these strategies/functions are shown in the online Appendix, including things like "Ask a question," "Agree or disagree," and "Make a connection." For me, this activity highlights one of the biggest problems with the My Share articles like this one that try to tackle long (multi-session) activities on complex topics: the article itself provides a skeleton for the overall project, but, for me, misses the actual difficult part: how to teach, model, and practice the intermediate steps, which I believe are the parts that students are likely to find challenging.

The second activity, on the other hand, positions itself as different from normal activities using videos, about which the article says, "Many English classes conducted with a video clip have students complete worksheets emphasizing vocabulary and grammar. This type of activity can divert attention from the content and turn the activity into a structural drill." This is then described as a "pitfall." My question is, in what way is this activity not a structural drill? The article seems to put forth the belief that note-taking and summarizing are not "structural drills"—that they are somehow fundamentally different, and that "structural drills" are bad while note-taking and summarizing are good. This claim is underwritten by the unspoken warrant that these activities don't "divert attention away from the content." This warrant thus represents an unspoken teacher belief.

Finally, I want to return to the issue of the teachers' roles in these activities, and the attendant question of teacher and student power. It would seem that, in the first activity, because students are exercising significant amounts of autonomy and the teacher is deliberately neither leading nor participating, that the students are able to take on a more equitable role with the teacher. In the second activity, it is

clear that the teacher is leading, though they share some of the "authority" with the TED Talks themselves. However, only the former activity mentions grading—the ultimate exercise of teacher authority. That is, students give each other peer-feedback, but the teacher gives the final feedback, and, ultimately, gives the students grades when they take on their role as both presenters and discussants, as well as on their listening and homework preparation via the quiz grades. The students lead, but this "leading" must always be understood (by both students and teacher) as a performance that is being judged—and that this judgment ultimately has consequences. This brings to the forefront one of the contradictions inherent in the use of active teaching in a formal schooling context—that, at the end of the day, teachers are required by the school to judge students and sort them into categories ("pass," "fail," etc.), and that, whatever goals the teacher may have in terms of active learning must always be understood alongside the students' goal of passing the course.

*9.8.2.2 Job interview pair.* The second pair, job interviews, was mentioned in section 9.8.1.1. There, I pointed out that one major difference between the two activities (where students form a fictional company, make a job posting, and then both interview prospective clients and also take on the role of prospective clients at their classmates' companies) is that one of them has a much stronger sense of competition than the other, because that activity requires that each "company" choose one and only one "applicant" to hire, while the other makes that an optional part of post-activity assessment. The former is done with the whole class, while the latter is done only between the teacher and each group.

The groups sizes are different, though it's not exactly clear by how much. The cooperative activity has students work in pairs to create the company and job description, then during the interviews, one person stays as the company interviewer, while the other travels around as an interviewee. The competitive activity must involve more larger groups, because, "during the actual interview, students will leave temporarily to interview for another position, while their other group members remain interviewers."

Even though the activities are very similar, the articles list very different benefits and goals. The cooperative interview article describes the activity as a

"creative, practical project," lets students "use English for authentic communication" and "is consistently one of our program's most popular activities." The only similar benefit in the competitive activity is that it also promotes English use in an "interactive" and "meaningful and communicative way," which can be read as mostly similar to "authentic communication." Turning to learning goals, the cooperative activity offers two separate sets: those related to English ("a significant amount of spoken English practice, increase confidence") and those related more generally to job seeking ("develop a greater awareness of what they can offer prospective employers, and get valuable insights into the job-hunting process" and "learn how to market themselves"). The competitive activity, on the other hand, focuses solely on learning the "target grammar structures," which must have been previously studied since "this activity focuses on reviewing a grammar lesson…." Furthermore, this focus on grammar is so critical to this article that it occupies the title itself, which is "Reviewing grammar through round-robin interviews."

Rhetorically speaking, the two articles are quite different, in that the competitive article is much vaguer than the cooperative one. The "target grammar or focus" of the competitive activity is never specified, with one example given in a parenthetical aside reading "(e.g., modals)." Furthermore, unlike many of the other activities in the corpus which seem genuinely flexible (see section 7.3.2), it is unclear to me how a mock job interview could allow for focused practice on a specific grammar pattern, since interview questions range from past experiences to present attitudes to future goals to hypothetical situations, all of which involve fundamentally different types of questions and answers. This is not the only vague part of this article. For example, the article offers no specific guidelines about how the students should imagine their company, what kinds of questions should be asked, the number of students in the group, etc. This lack of specificity extends to the actual activity itself: while the cooperative activity provides a very detailed handout (over 500 words) for students to use in brainstorming their company, open position, résumé, and interview questions, the competitive activity provides nothing. Furthermore, since the article lists many other materials which the teacher has to prepare, and a handout of this type is not specified, it is clear the competitive article

does not intend for teachers to provide one.[115] Even the timing is vaguer, with the competitive activity being a "a 2- to 3-day project," while the cooperative activity takes precisely 4 days plus the optional assessment.

The length is linked together with the goals of the activity. In the cooperative activity, the breakdown is, in summary:

- Day 1: design the company and job posting and begin preparing a résumé
- Day 2: Give a PowerPoint presentation about the company and sign up for interviews
- Day 3: Prepare interview questions and do practice interview with partner
- Day 4: Do the interviews

For the competitive outline, the activity is both more compressed and less clear. First, while activity is described as having variable length, the outline strictly defines the activity timeline as:

- Day 1: Talk generally about classified ads and interviews, review the grammar, make the job postings, post the wanted ads, assign students to companies to be interviewed, and prepare 10 interview questions (with this last being completed as homework if needed)
- Day 2: Discuss interviews in general, and "consider showing a video" of interviews and discuss them, do the interviews, have students choose who to hire (with reasons) and announce the winners to the class

So, part of the discrepancy in time is explained by the competitive activity lacking a résumé component, with this likely being due to the cooperative activity having half of its focus on giving students actual practice for their future as company applicants, while the competitive activity is using the job interview as a random creative shell for language practice. But the shortened time and precision involved in preparing the company and job posting also must make the whole activity much more difficult

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115 The article does talk about a handout, but it contains the "grading criteria, class procedure each day, homework, and discussion questions."

for students, since they will be both interviewing and being interviewed with much less context. Seeing this difference, however, points out a very subtle teacher belief present not only here but throughout the corpus: it is possible, perhaps even desirable, to learn/practice grammatical topics in decontextualized activities. For example, imagine that the teacher did pick modals as the focus. The instructions require that students use modals on both the poster and during the interviews. This fails to consider whether or not modals would actually be appropriate for any given speech act, and may lead to students overusing them, and furthermore making it impossible for the teacher to really criticize or discuss this overuse, since the students have been tasked with doing this very thing.

Another difference between the approaches in these activities comes from how students are assigned to interviews. In the cooperative activity, students get to choose which companies to submit résumés to following the PowerPoint presentations. Note that the author chooses to allow this despite noting how difficult it might be (since the timing of the interviews themselves will require precision), saying,

> Note: Each student will participate in six interviews on interview day, three in the role of job seeker and three as company president; this is the most logistically challenging part of the project. Because each interview takes place during a specific time slot, ensure that students pay close attention to their interview times to prevent double booking.

Presumably, the author must consider this freedom (what might even be called *autonomy*) to be important enough to warrant doing it despite the logistical difficulties. In the competitive activity, on the other hand, "students are selected (either by the teacher ahead of time, randomly, or by some other method) for an interview for a different position; they can get up and observe the wanted poster." In other words, students have no agency in determining where they will interview, and the job postings exist to tell students after this decision is made what job they are applying for. This adds an extra layer of disconnect between intention and communication during the interview, since students may have to interview for a job which they have no interest in or knowledge about. This distinction helps

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demonstrate that there are multiple dimensions to agency and autonomy. In the cooperative activity, students are given a lot more specific direction and their time is much more strictly controlled, but they get to make more decisions and put more depth into thinking about how to solve the problems given; in the competitive activity, the students are given much less direction, but key decisions are not allowed to them, and the work is decontextualized such that language production will be much more closely linked to the grammatical focus than to accomplishing the task of communication and getting hired.

Finally, I want to return to the exact sequence of activities and the associated timeline for day 2 of the competitive activity. In that activity, students do only three interviews: two as interviewer, and one as interviewee. Furthermore, the interviews are only three minutes long (plus one minute after the interview for the interviewers to confer about the applicant). At ten questions per interview, this means each response can probably only be one or two sentences, since there are only 18 seconds per question/answer pair. This short time, along with the manner of assigning interviewees to companies, indicates that there won't be a significant amount of "communication" or "interaction," since students will have to move quickly from question to question without the opportunity for follow-ups, clarifications, or even lengthy answers. This timing contrasts with the six 12-minute interviews (3 in each role) that each student does in the cooperative activity. This means that students in the cooperative activity are engaging in up to eight times more English interaction for the interviews than in the competitive activity (the exact factor will depend on the group size). In the cooperative activity, all that time is shifted to the pre-interview discussion (and optional video) done with the entire class, which must necessarily mean far less language production for each individual student. It is possible that the difference is due to a difference in the target student level, since the cooperative activity was designed for a "semi-intensive academic English course" while the competitive activity is listed as being for "beginner to advanced." If, in fact, the competitive activity author designed the activity more toward the "beginner" end of the scale, the smaller amount of English production in the interviews might be more appropriate. But if that is true, then the whole group discussions almost certainly won't be discussions as much as they will be teacher-led semi-lectures. From a bigger perspective, what is happening here is that despite these activities

sharing the goal of having a large amount of authentic communication/interaction, what that means is significantly different between the two articles. In other words, even in cases where there appears to be agreement across the corpus about language learning principles, goals, and methodologies, what those things mean varies across the corpus and thus across the discourse community as well.

        ***9.8.2.3 Vox pops pair.*** Vox pops is a journalism term for when an interviewer asks random people on the street their opinion about a topic currently in the news. Two activities use the idea of vox pops interviews, but do so with completely different goals and very different methods. The first activity follows the vox pops format directly. Students learn about the format from a set of text vox pops answers drawn from the *Japan Times*. Students then use a set of three questions provided by the teacher (or, in a variant, make their own) and interview three students. While doing so, they also sketch the people they are interviewing.

        The second activity uses the vox pops format in a more tangential way, with the main purpose being to teach hesitation devices and pause fillers. The activity starts with two warm-up activities. First, the teacher introduces the concept of hesitation devices and has students generate examples in both English and Japanese. Then they watch a vox pops video clip and attempt to identify the use of hesitation devices in the responses. The main activity involves students rapidly asking and answering questions in a competition, where two randomly paired students ask and answer a vox pops question and the class votes on which gave a better answer, based on their ability to use hesitation devices and pause fillers as discussed in the warm-up. Note that this activity is discussed several other times in this paper: in section 9.4.5.3 as one of the "Torture Standing" activities, in section 9.8.1.3 as one of the games, and in section 10.3.2.3 based on its links to internationalization and online media.

        The only benefits listed in the second activity (from here called the hesitation pops activity) are that it is repeatable and it builds communication (specifically, the ability to ask questions about a wide variety of topics), along with the implied benefit/goal of helping students improve their ability to use hesitation devices. The first activity (from here called the sketch pops activity), on the other hand, lists seven different benefits: the activity is easy to prepare, easy to explain, flexible, repeatable,

fun, motivating, and it generates enthusiasm. Thus, the hesitation pops activity is much more focused on improving a specific language skill, while the sketch pops activity is designed to be more generally positive, engaging, and fun.

It is on this last point that I want to focus: the idea of having fun. As explained, in addition to doing a six three-question *vox pops* interviews, the sketch pops activity also has students sketch their six interviewees. The relevant question is, why? What is the benefit of having students sketch their partners? The article doesn't give a specific reason—there is no pedagogical justification within the article, the sketches aren't inherently connected to the English practice, and there isn't even anything in the article to imply that the sketches are shared with anyone (there is no reference to teacher or peer assessment). In a sense, the sketches are included because this mimics the way vox pops (including the samples shown to students during the warm-up) often include a photograph. But that doesn't justify doing the sketching in the context of an English class. This implies that the sketches must be linked to one of the benefits; of those, the only that make sense are the last three: fun, motivating, and enthusiasm-generating. So, it can be inferred that the article includes sketching because it promotes positive feelings in students. Further insight about the author's beliefs by found in the following explanation from the Procedure section: "Beware: remind students that this is an English lesson, not an art lesson. Some students can get carried away and spend too much time sketching and not enough time talking." First, note that while other activities include cases where the author gives advice to authors about potential difficulties, this is the only instance of the word "beware" in the entire corpus. The article portrays a belief that this problem is both so likely and potentially harmful that it deserves an idiosyncratic, unique warning. Note, also, that there is no plan for how to overcome this problem other than to tell the students not to do it. This phrasing implies a particularly strong teacher belief in this: having fun and generating enthusiasm are so important to language teaching that it is acceptable to spend most of an activity not using English (it's hard to imagine how doing even a very brief sketch would take less time than asking and answering three questions) even when the teacher is aware that this is taking away from English practice time.

As mentioned above, the hesitation pops activity is instead focused much more clearly on a specific language goal. Not only are students told to focus on being

able to speak without pausing (in part, by using hesitation devices) while speaking, it is the thing the audience is supposed to focus on while listening and judging their classmates. The specific instructions are "everyone else votes who gave the better response, based on length of response, use of devices, and lack of pauses." Thus, the activities represent/construct differing beliefs about how much activities should focus on specific, planned language skills and how much they should be more holistically about developing a positive language learning attitude.

Another contrast between these activities is how much actual communication is occurring at any given moment. During the hesitation pops activity, there is never more than one person speaking at a time, since other students have to listen to the responses in order to judge them. Each full round takes place with four communicators: two interviewers and two interviewees. Thus, not only is only one person speaking at a time, only 2 pairs of people are actively communicating something to one another. Contrast this with the sketch pops activity, in which the entire class is simultaneously communicating (half speaking, and half listening) other than when they are sketching (and there are similar activities in the corpus where students do interviews but don't draw pictures). Thus, even though both activities are clearly active and communicative, the amount of communication is involved is quite different.

Finally, I want to turn to one sentence in the hesitation pops article, which stands out because it is, simply put, wrong. I haven't discussed this issue thus far, even though this is certainly not the only case where articles make logically or factually incorrect statements. Note that this is different from cases where authors make assertions about what students can do or are like in Japanese classes that don't match my own experiences —in those cases, it is very plausible that the differences are "real," and that different students and different schools will have different classroom behavior. In this case, though, the author makes a claim about the difficulty level which simply cannot be true. First, to clarify, in the main part of the activity, two students are in the middle of a circle, with the other students standing around the circle. The two in the middle are reporters, and they each choose a student from the circle to answer a question. After the answers, the class votes, and the "better" answerer will take the place of the reporter who has been asking questions the longest, and that reporter will be allowed sit down. Thus, once a

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student is voted in, they have "won" and will be able to sit after 2 more rounds. The article states, "As the numbers dwindle and more students exit the game, it becomes a growing challenge for those remaining." This is factually incorrect, because, as the game goes on, in theory, the average level of students will go down (since better students are continually being voted out). This means that the game has to get easier as the game goes on, as each student will be, on average, competing with a lower level opponent. It's not clear how sentences like this are most persuasively interpreted. One way would be to argue that the precise details of the article aren't important—that the two things that matter are the broad message (what is good about the activity) and the specific procedures for conducting the activity. But this statement borders on being a part of the procedure (it falls in that portion of the article), in that it says something about how the activity will develop over time. Another way to read it is that teachers themselves aren't always particularly good at analyzing their own teaching—for example, the author who decided "this activity is good enough to deserve submission to My Share" may have simply made suppositions about what was happening that don't play out in fact. In a sense, the existence of actual errors means that, in general, the My Share "stories" should be read as being told by "unreliable narrators." This means that when I said earlier that when I read descriptions of students or classes that don't match my own experience, my normal tendency is to say, "Maybe our experiences are just different," it may also be correct to say, "Or, on the other hand, maybe this author is just be wrong."

   *9.8.2.4 Interruptions*. For the fourth set of article pairs, I will look at two activities that share a language function, rather than sharing the same non-English topic, as with those above. Both activities are designed to get students to use interruptions more. Both articles explicitly state that their learners don't interrupt. One says they created the activity because of "a lack of willingness on the part of learners in corporate language training classes to engage in interrupting speakers to clarify information." The other states this as a fact, saying, "Typically, language learners in Japan hesitate to interrupt others during small group topic discussions." Thus, both articles promote the dual-part belief that 1) interruption is a normal and desirable part of English communications (including those conducted in language learning classes) and 2) Japanese students usually don't want to or choose not to or

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are unable to interrupt. On the second point, the second article is a little clearer—that article thinks that students may know how but choose not to, by saying, "Even when familiar with phrases and strategies for actively participating in or leading a discussion…." In fact, that quotation implies a second belief: that a conversation where people take turns answering questions without interruption is not one in which people are "actively participating." That is, this article has gone beyond claiming that interruptions are a normal part of authentic conversations to a much more judgmental claim that speaking in turns and not interrupting means that the students are not actively participating. This is followed by further negative judgments, describing such conversations as "devolv[ing] in to a mechanical seesaw rhythm" and being "politely monotonous."[116] Not only does the first article not make such negative judgments, they actually see the source of the reluctance to interrupt as having a cross-cultural cause, as they say "it has helped my students overcome their reluctance to contravene Japanese turn-taking rules."

In order to accomplish their goals of having students become "better" at interrupting, the two activities follow a significantly different set of steps. In the first activity, which is done in pairs, one student reads a story that is deliberately lacking in details. Their partner is supposed to interrupt at any time to ask clarifying questions. In the second activity, the article has the students play a game in groups of up to six. The groups have a discussion on a text that they read outside of class as homework. During the discussion, any time a student interrupts another student, they can take a card from a pile of ten in the middle of the table. Once that pile is depleted, further interruptions allow students to steal from each other.

I want to argue that the key difference in the way the two authors approach getting students to actively participate in this activity and thus "learn" to interrupt more often is intrinsically linked with their attitude towards the students' initial reluctance to do so. In the first activity, the teacher models the activity with a volunteer, demonstrating what they are looking for (by first having the student "interrupt" the teacher, which they are unlikely to do, and then by having the teacher

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[116] Personally, I'm inclined to be suspicious of any claim that transitions from identifying language skills students might want/need to learn to negatively, emotionally, even morally questioning these students. Speaking self-reflexively, this suspicion is one of the reasons I wanted to highlight this activity.

interrupt the volunteer mercilessly). Then, students are given the task of interrupting as much as possible with a partner, with the teacher relying on student willingness to ensure that they actually do attempt to interrupt. For the other activity, the teacher uses the motivation of a competitive game to get students to comply with the activity. For me, seeing these activities side by side, it's almost as if the first teacher trusts their students to actively engage in the conversation-interruption practice more than the second, since the second feels the need to add an additional reward function (I don't mean an actual reward, but the more generic reward of "winning") to compel student participation. This makes sense in the context of the original positions the authors took with reference to the students' reluctance to interrupt. Since the first article presumes it's a cross-cultural issue, the idea is that giving students not only the license to try a new form of communication but also putting it in a forced but interesting situation is enough for them to try out this alternative discursive practice. But since the second teacher negatively judges the students and considers their default approach to conversation to be inactive and mechanical, they are perforce required to use a game-like structure to get students to do something that they believe the students don't want to do. Having said that, I must mention that the first author also uses the framework of "competition." As discussed in section 9.7, I am unable to classify this as a true game since enough information isn't given to tell how one might "win." This pseudo-game is directly connected with the activity goal (being able to continue speaking and being able to interrupt). In the second game, while there is a point total, the method of scoring is perpendicular to the theoretical goal of the conversation—to discuss the readings and the subjects contained in them.

Now, I need to return to something that I omitted from the description of each activity. In the first activity, the author talks briefly a few times about something which they call "abbreviate[d] question forms in informal speech" and "short question forms." While the author doesn't give examples, I assume that these are questions such as, "What city?" to follow a sentence in the story that said, "a man…lived in a big city." Thus, the author is providing help to students in the process of interrupting, by alleviating one of the students' implied concerns—that an interruption imposes on the speaker's time. The second author instead does the opposite, recommending the use of phrases such as "Absolutely! I completely agree!

And if I can add to that…" or "I'm not sure what you mean. Are you trying to say…?" While I'm not saying that the latter phrases aren't useful (although I would question if they should be used for interruptions rather than responses—and the game only allows students to score points when the engage in cross-talk, not when they make a statement after another speaker, even if they use these forms), I am asserting that the first article has provided a tool that directly helps address the lack of interruptions, while the second possibly makes it worse.

The omitted part of the second activity occurs at the very beginning of the activity. First, the teacher shows a video (or plays the audio) of a student conversation that they have previously recorded. Then the teacher will "Point out how each speaker is politely allowed to finish their thought, no matter how long it takes. Stress that this is unnatural in the real world and that learning to interrupt and dealing with interruptions are important skills they should acquire." In other words, the teacher starts this whole activity by showing the students a video of people just like them, engaging in the language learning process (possibly even students from the same class, or other students at the school that they may know), and then the teacher tells everyone how bad ("unnatural") their speech is. The activity starts with criticism. Only *after* that point does the teacher distribute the handout giving examples of interruptions. So, to reiterate, the teacher starts the activity by criticizing a video of language learners for something that they presumably don't even know how to do (or, at the very least, don't know how important their conversational tactics are in the teachers' opinion).

Given all these issues, it is very hard not to read the first article as presenting a teacher identity as someone whose job is to help students learn things, especially things that they don't even know are an issue because they are deeply embedded in cultural discourse practices. The second article, on the other hand, presents the image of a teacher whose job is to criticize students and correct their supposed faults.

## 9.9 Summary and Discussion

This chapter has covered a wide range of topics, organized around the premise of examining the activities that the articles represent—who the lessons are designed for, what kinds of topics are covered, how the activities are organized and taught,

and what students and teachers do in them. By looking at these and other issues, this chapter has helped provide insights into three of the four research questions.

Regarding research question 1, two major issues showed that, despite the relatively stable picture of the genre found in the overall structure (as discussed in Chapter 5), at a content level the genre is far from stabilized. First, the Quick Guide section has a very high level of variability—there appear to be no restrictions on how authors describe "Learner English level" or "Learner Maturity." This is a case where there is no need for variability—the genre gains nothing by having some authors write "Junior high school to adult" and others write "Junior high school and up." These terms could very easily be standardized by the editors, but, as mentioned here and discussed further in Chapter 11, the editors generally don't do content editing. At a more fundamental level, there even seems to be disagreement about what "Preparation" means, both in terms of the "Preparation Time" Quick Guide point and the "Preparation" section. Most articles treat "preparation" as things that the teacher does alone prior to the lesson while a minority include some of the student activities as part of the "preparation," separating out the early parts of an activity into one class and calling the actual "activity" only the final day or portion of a day.

In addition, this chapter also provided important information about what topics are most commonly taught in the genre. While all so-called "four skills" are found across the corpus, reading is significantly less common than the other three. By most measurements, vocabulary is significantly more common of a topic in the genre than grammar, though the exact amount varies based on which measurement is used. Furthermore, the "higher" order (in a linguistics sense) skill of pragmatics is present, but infrequent, though it is still more frequent than the linguistically finer levels of pronunciation and morphology. Finally, there are a substantial number of activities that include pseudo-EMI, in that the explicit goal is to teach skills and knowledge not directly related to English language teaching.

The answers to the second question overlap with the first; for example, I could rephrase the finding about grammar and vocabulary to read "The corpus expresses the belief that teachers tend to value vocabulary is more highly than grammar," or "The corpus expresses the belief that vocabulary learning is more matching to the sort of short, one-off activities that populate My Share." There are a

wide variety of "specific" findings that I won't reiterate here (such as "Teachers on average are expected to be comfortable using computers and the internet"), but there are also larger picture issues. First, several findings show that the discourse community does not agree on the meaning of key TESOL ideas or lesson descriptors. On the former, one pair of lessons on a similar topic (the job interview activities) both describe their lessons as offering meaningful/authentic communication, but one focuses much more on achieving a pragmatic goal while the other requires students to focus closely on a specific grammar pattern. On the latter, words like "challenging" are used not only used to cover cognitive, pragmatic, and linguistic challenges, but are even used for relatively easy activities. While not discussed in detail here, many of the other very common words and phrases like "engaging," "motivating," and "energizing" mentioned in Chapter 7 likewise lack a clear definition. Finally, the lack of precision mentioned in the Quick Guide descriptions demonstrates a similar issue in that lessons requiring radically different skill sets are given the same "English learner level." This indicates a lack of clarity among the discourse community about what it means to be a beginner, intermediate, etc. user of English.

One additional aspect of teacher belief/identity demonstrated here, particularly via the analysis of the interruption activities, is that the beliefs that teachers hold about students and/or language learning strongly shape how they craft activities. One article expresses a teacher belief that student behavior in class is due to laziness and resulted in conversations that are "politely monotonous," and that activity involves strong control and the use of a "game" to compel students to change their behavior. The other interruption activity is much more open and communicative, likely because that article presents the teacher belief that student behavior is due to a mismatch between Japanese and "English" culture. Interestingly, both articles are premised upon a belief about English language use (that interruptions are both normal and desirable) that itself is a highly biased way of speaking, particularly linked to one English-using culture (the United States), and likely also gender biased.

This chapter also provided important information about the power relationships between students and teachers in the classroom. Throughout all the analyses in the last four chapters, students were found to be portrayed, by and large,

as cooperative and deferent to an extremely wide variety of activities, teacher management styles, ways of organizing the class, and topics of learning. There are a few exceptions where students have difficulty with something or are actively resistant, as with the negative descriptions of student conversation behavior in one of the interruption activities, but these are rare, and are always overcome by the activity they are mentioned in. In other words, this corpus naturalizes the idea that students both will and should follow teacher instructions so long as the teacher has chosen an appropriate activity and materials. This corpus erases the possibility of serious student concerns about or disagreement with the activities they are being told to engage in or the material they are being told to learn. While it seems likely that this is in part a reaction to the "common" image of Japanese students as disciplined and deferent to authority (as discussed in Chapter 2), I would be remiss to not also criticize the corpus as complicit in the act of constructing students in this identity, and the consequent creation of activities that take advantage of the resultant power relationships that naturalize teacher domination over the classroom. This domination is especially evident in the activities requiring physical movement (at over 20% of the corpus, this is a non-negligible portion), in which the students must submit not only their cognition, but also their physical bodies to the demands of the teacher-authority. And within this set, the most extreme are the "Torture Standing" activities, wherein the teacher feels justified in telling students "Stand. You don't like it. You will sit only when I decide you have performed well enough."[117]

Perhaps equally important to understanding the corpus is the examination of the two student-teacher activities, wherein there is something of a reversal of the normal teacher-student power relationship. The reason I again call attention to the existence of these activities, even though they are far from the norm, is to point out that the norm is itself a construction—there is no reason why more of the activities

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[117] This demands self-reflexivity. I have used the Torture Standing activity, because, from my (a teacher's) perspective, it is possibly the easiest way to ensure that every student does the activity successfully once each while still allowing students to answer at their own pace (that is, rather than going through the class and calling each student). That is, I've chosen my own convenience over the comfort of the students. I don't do this anymore, now that I've thought about the inherent problem in greater detail. But this sort of problem is part of while I will advocate in Chapter 13 that the editors need to play a stronger role in the content side of the genre.

couldn't involve more student control, more student choices. And to be fair, there are other activities where students get to make real choices for at least part of the work; for example, the fairy tale mock trial gives all students involved a fairly wide latitude about how to build their scripts and form their arguments. Of course, that action takes place within the context of a teacher chosen activity; students can't, for example, choose to write an essay instead of putting on a performance, or choose something other than a fairy tale as source material for their performance. For that matter, even the student-teacher activities are still, ultimately, governed by the teacher. But the very fact that there is some shift away from teacher-controlled activities means that the dominance of the "student-focused by not student-centered" ideology of these lesson plans is a construct of the genre, not an inherent, natural part of foreign language teaching.

# Chapter 10
## Special Topics Analysis

### 10.1 Introduction

In Chapters 5 through 9, I utilized a diverse set of approaches on many different aspects to the corpus to seek answers to this study's research questions. Yet, these chapters are all the same in one respect: they began "inside" the corpus, by looking for repeated and/or salient features in the articles and then interpreting those features to make hypotheses about the beliefs and attitudes of the discourse community that constructed and is constructed by the corpus. The present chapter takes a fundamentally different approach in that the analysis begins "outside" of the corpus, by considering three topics—internationalization, autonomy/active learning, and neoliberalism—that have, over the past several decades, played an important role in Japanese educational, language, and other policies. The corpus was examined to see if there are aspects of these topics within the articles. Thus, this chapter primarily seeks to answer research question 4, since it explores the links between the corpus and the wider sociocultural setting, though there are also connections to research questions 2 and 3. Each topic is covered in a separate section; in each section, prior to describing the analysis and results, I will provide a short review of the role these ideas have played in Japanese education.

### 10.2 Method

For each of the three topics, this analysis used a combination of lexical searches and text analysis to identify places in which the topics are manifested in the corpus. To do this, I made guesses (informed by my prior readings of the corpus along with my knowledge of how these terms are used in other places such as government documents and other TESOL publications) about what sorts of words would be connected to these topics. In some cases, these searches pointed me to similar terms that were likewise examined. In addition, after most of the rest of the analyses for this project were completed and I had a fairly good broad understanding of what was in each article, I coded the corpus for cases where I thought these topics were being raised, and then examined those cases in further detail to draw out more data. Finally, with regards to the active learning/autonomy topic, I was also able to use the

related moves identified in Chapter 7 (meaning there is a light element of genre analysis in part of this chapter in addition to the main focus on text analysis and corpus-based analysis). Finally, several of the searches led me to additional analytical steps unique to each topic, which are detailed below.

## 10.3 Internationalization in My Share Articles

In Japanese, the term which is most commonly used to refer to internationalization is *kokusaika*. Literally, *kokusaika* (国際化) is country (*koku,* 国) + edge/border (*sai*, 際) + [nominalizing suffix] (*ka*, 化). However, Hashimoto (2000, 2011, 2013b) argued that a better translation of *kokusaika* is "Japanisation." Usually, internationalization implies the idea of countries, cultures, and peoples coming together into some sort of global whole—of transnational and transcultural blending. Hashimoto showed, through close analysis of Japanese government documents, that the government wants to improve Japan's ability to interact with the world (one portion of which is the push for increased ability to use English for practical, communicative purposes), but at the same time wants Japanese people to maintain a strong sense of Japanese identity. Kubota (1998, 2002) connected this ideology to the *nihonjinron* philosophy, which posits that Japanese people and the Japanese culture are fundamentally different from every other people and culture in the world. Thus, much of the implementation of *kokusaika* is designed to strengthen the Japanese identity, by showing how it is different from others.

A corollary of dividing the world between "Japan" and "not-Japan" is the monolithic treatment of the "other"—that is, there is Japan, and there is the "not-us, outside, strange—*mukou* or 'over there'" (Law, 1995, p. 216). This erasure of external differences is furthered by the equation in education policy of foreign languages with English, and even further the strong emphasis on the English of North America (especially the United States) and the United Kingdom. Researchers have shown that Japanese textbooks are heavily limited in which English variants are portrayed (Matsuda, 2002) and which cultures are represented (Yamanaka, 2006). Additionally, surveys of Japanese students (Chiba, Matsuura, & Yamamoto, 1995; Matsuda, 2003) and Japanese teachers (Kubota, 1998) have demonstrated a preference for the English of North America and the United Kingdom. Lastly, it is

important to understand that *kokusaika* is closely tied up with neoliberalism (discussed in more detail in section 10.5), with Hashimoto (2009) having argued that a key component of the "Japanese with English ability" motto that appears in language education policy documents is the attempt to converge the economic interests of the state with the interests of individual learners.

In order to search for traces of the *kokusaika* ideology in the My Share corpus, I began by looking at the frequency of key terms. Following that, I examined the articles in which those terms appeared in detail with qualitative text analysis; in the discussion of that analysis below, I have also incorporated related articles that do not contain these terms. Several issues that arose during that analysis led to other questions about how international locations, cultural artifacts, and languages were represented in the corpus.[118]

**10.3.1 Frequency of *kokusaika*-related terms.** The present analysis represents the first in-depth work that I conducted on this corpus, outside of some of the basic statistical information found in the Structure Analysis (Chapter 5). I began here because internationalization has played and continues to play such a large role in the rhetoric surrounding not only language education in Japan, but education in general, economics, and politics. Because of this, I hypothesized that internationalization would be directly referenced in the corpus, and perhaps might play a significant role in the arguments justifying the importance of English and/or the approaches to English language learning used. As an initial measurement, I looked for the number of times that the terms *international* (and the related terms *internationalize* and *internationalization*) and *global* (plus *globalize* and *globalization*) appeared in the corpus. The word *international* appears three times, *internationalize* once, and *global* eight times; the other forms do not appear in the corpus. While this seems small, as discussed in section 8.3, the real question for understanding frequency counts isn't whether they are "high" or "low" in an absolute sense, but, rather, whether the frequencies relative to the frequencies of those words in "average" English (that is, in reference corpora). As in Chapter 7, I

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[118] An earlier version of this analysis appeared in Hahn (2018b), though substantial changes have been made in both the analysis and narrative.

used the BNC and COCA as reference corpora, and added the News on the Web corpus as a third reference corpus because of the especial importance of the terms and concepts in contemporary media. Table 62 compares the My Share frequencies to those in the reference corpora.

Table 62

*Frequencies of* international, global, *and Related Terms in the My Share and Three Reference Corpora*

| Term | My Share | COCA | BNC | NOW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *international* | 30.2 | 200 | 217 | 404 |
| *internationalize* | 10.1 | .17 | .01 | .08 |
| *internationalization* | 0 | .66 | .62 | .24 |
| *international\** | 40.3 | 201 | 218 | 404 |
| | | | | |
| *global* | 80.6 | 98 | 35 | 276 |
| *globalize* | 0 | .088 | 0 | .06 |
| *globalization* | 0 | 8.8 | .4 | 3.5 |
| *global\** | 80.6 | 107 | 35 | 279 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 121 | 308 | 253 | 683 |

*Note.* All frequencies are listed as instances per million tokens. *international\** refers to the combined frequency of "*international, internationalize* (and inflected forms) and *internationalization* (and similarly for *global\**) Frequencies for the reference corpora were gathered from the online corpus search tools found on the BYU corpora website (Davies, n.d.).


Both *international* and *global* appear significantly more often in the reference corpora than in the My Share corpus, except for the lower appearance of *global* in the BNC (perhaps this is due to differing usage patterns in British English). While *internationalize* has a much higher frequency in the My Share Corpus than in the reference corpora, it would be wrong to make too much of this, since it is only a single occurrence in a relatively small corpus; a larger sample of the My Share genre would be necessary to confidently assert that this is actually a significant difference. Looking at the total, these terms are significantly underrepresented compared to the reference corpora, despite the very high importance that the Ministry of Education and other branches of the Japanese government have placed on *kokusaika*.

Simply the presence of one of these terms does not necessarily mean that the article deals closely with a *kokusaika*-related topic.[119] One instance of *global* is in the sentence, "And look to <u>global</u> references within the text which might provide less direct indications of the words' meaning." This is the use of *global* as a linguistics term, unrelated to *kokusaika*. In another case, the word *global* is used as part of the phrase *global warming*—but not because the article is about that topic, but because it is one of four vocabulary words that students practice. The article says, "Select items of vocabulary that you think will be useful for discussing the day's topic but may be new to students. For example, before an activity on the environment, you could choose <u>global</u> warming, fossil fuels, ozone, and eco-friendly." Here, "global warming" is just a vocabulary word, and internationalization is neither the topic of nor a justification for the activity.

**10.3.2 Close text analysis of articles containing internationalization-related themes.** The following sections contain a close examination of articles which contain themes related to internationalization, as well as several articles without such themes for comparison.[120] In some cases, these international themes are consistent with the *kokusaika* ideology, while others stand in opposition to it. The discussion is organized by the main topic of the activities.

*10.3.2.1 Articles on internationalization and the environment.* Three articles in the corpus use "the environment" as the primary topic for the activity, with two of those including one of the *kokusaika*-related words.[121] In the first activity, students have to research and make a poster presentation about an endangered species; one of the benefits in the article is that the activity can "raise awareness of <u>global</u> issues." In the second activity, students take an online "Ecological Footprint Calculator quiz" that measures personal resource consumption; the term *global* appears in the phrase "global hectares," given as an example of an unusual

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[119] Nor, as I will demonstrate below, does the absence of one of these terms mean that an article has no connection to *kokusaika*.

[120] Note that this is just a selection, though I have tried to select the most important for building a broad picture of how *kokusaika* works in the corpus.

[121] As mentioned above, another article talks about teaching environmental vocabulary, but this is just an example and the activity is made to work independently of the topic.

vocabulary word that may need to be pre-taught. The article also repeatedly uses the word "Earth," since the quiz measures resource consumption in terms of number of "Earths."[122] The third activity, on the other hand, does not use *global* or *international*, because it is focused on local issues. The article says, "This activity can be a great way to help teachers become aware of students' prior knowledge about the environment in their own localized setting, while introducing some content-related vocabulary." In the activity, students walk around their campus and take photographs of things that are "eco-friendly" and "not eco-friendly." They also discuss the photographs and their local environment.

These three articles not only orient towards the environment differently, but also express a fundamentally different student-teacher relationship, and I would like to argue that there is a connection between these two issues. In the first activity, the teacher is in near complete control over the activity, performing a separate and hierarchically higher role from the students. The teacher assigns each of the students a different endangered species—the students get no choice. Also, the teacher gives an example presentation, providing specific details that students are supposed to cover in their presentation, and, by implication, limiting what things they can cover. An important note is that one thing that is not covered is a detailed discussion of why the species is endangered, and there is no connection at all between the endangered status and the behaviors of people in first world countries (i.e., the students and teacher). During the presentation itself, students are required to speak for three minutes without notes. Other students watch, but there is no time for questions. The teacher acts only as a manager, controlling the time, and later evaluating a follow-up essay that the students write. There is a parallel here: the teacher is completely "walled-off" from the students, and the students are completely "walled-off" from the topic at hand. The activity supposedly is designed to "raise global awareness," but this awareness exists on only the most superficial of levels. Assuming they fulfilled the assignment in its entirety—both preparing their own and listening to other students' presentations—they wouldn't gain any insight

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[122] In other words, a result of "2.3 Earths" means "If everyone on Earth used the same amount of resources as you do, then we would need to have the equivalent of 2.3 Earth's worth of resources to satisfy that amount of consumption." In theory, any number over 1 indicates an unsustainably excessive consumption of resources.

into the actual causes of animal endangerment, much of which can be traced back to the behaviors embedded in consumerism. In a sense, this is an excellent *kokusaika* activity, because students are gaining a set of English skills that allow them to discuss international topics, but they are not obligated to change any of their own behaviors or identity. In the same way that "internationalization" is usually portrayed as fact, as an inevitable facet of modern life (Steger, 2005), in this activity the endangerment of animals also seems to be a fact of life—something to learn about, but not something that individuals can choose to change. Another parallel can be read in the benefits: while one of the benefits for students is raising "awareness of global issues" this is only one of four goals in an enumerated list. This whole list, however, is followed by a teacher-linked benefit, which says, "As a teacher, I found my students' essays to be much more interesting to read than what they produce for most other writing tasks." In other words, the student benefits, of which raising global awareness is but one, are balanced out by a benefit to the teacher. This resembles much of the rhetoric of *kokusaika*—while there may be benefits listed for individuals, these are always, at best, equivalent to the benefits to the state.

Next, I will turn to the photo-hunt activity. As mentioned, this is a strictly local activity—students are not asked to connect their understanding of local environmental issues to international issues. Students are given a list of environmentally related issues that they must find and take pictures of (the examples given are "'a place where you can fill up your water bottle' and 'someone wearing Coolbiz'"). While the photo hunt itself is mostly teacher directed (in that the teacher chooses the items to find), the students have some autonomy in two places. First, prior to the photo hunt, "student pairs brainstorm ways that their school is environmentally friendly, and ways that it is not." This information is then shared with the whole class. Second, during the photo hunt, there are several blank spaces on the paper for students to find additional items that the teacher has not thought of. Furthermore, the role of the teacher is different: during the photo-hunt, the teacher should "feel free to wander around with the students and help clarify any items on the list," and during the post-hunt discussion, "the teacher should walk around, answer any questions, and help encourage deeper analysis of the questions." In other words, the teacher still retains a higher status than the students, since the teacher doesn't do the photo hunt with them, but the teacher is closer to an

educational facilitator than to a lecturing or evaluating teacher. In the same way, students could be active components of the environmental behaviors at their school, in that some of the things they find may be under their control, though, in this activity, students aren't asked to directly address this issue (though the article several times mentions that this activity could be the beginning of a larger curricular component focusing on environmental issues). This article, in part, transforms the global topic of environmentalism into one of local concern. This is an inversion of the normal *kokusaika* ideology, which usually focuses on making the local (Japanese products and culture) desirable outside of Japan.

In the final activity, however, both the power relationship between teacher and students and the relationship between the local and the international are fully transformed into one of near harmony. The activity begins with a discussion about resource usage, and students generate questions about environmentally linked behaviors (for example, "Do you turn off the lights when you leave a room?") that they ask each other. Then, either as homework or in a CALL classroom, students take an online Ecological Footprint Calculator quiz and discuss the results together. The key inversion is clear only from the final two sentences of the Conclusion, which say, "My ecological footprint? Sadly, it's 3.6 earths (because of a long commute by car), and students love to tell me how to reduce it." This portion makes it clear that the teacher isn't just participating in the discussion, but is opening their own life up for scrutiny and becoming not just a co-discussant, but an equal partner in the question of environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the entire point of the environmental aspect of the activity itself is to make the international equivalent to the local—that is, to show how global environmental issues are always linked to local decisions. Students are specifically required to discuss and come up with advice on "how to improve their eco-friendliness."

*10.3.2.2 Education and internationalization.* Four articles discuss issues linking internationalization and education. The first discusses an activity where students who are going to embark on a Study Abroad Programme (which the article abbreviates as "SAP") have a discussion with students who have already completed their SAP. The article specifically situates SAPs within a *kokusaika* context, saying "As MEXT aims to make Japanese students more internationalized, Study Abroad

Programmes (SAP) are becoming increasingly common in universities and high schools." The first thing to note is that the author is absolute in claiming that these programs are successful, saying that "the benefits of such programmes are clear...after returning to Japan, almost all students express satisfaction with the experience and show a marked increase in English fluency and confidence." This claim is not backed up with a citation or other evidence; perhaps it is accurate, but the absolute declaration seems to position the benefit as unquestionable and natural—part of the *kokusaika* playbook. In the activity, both pre- and post-SAP students prepare topics, with the pre-SAP topics being "concerns or questions" and the post-SAP topics being "something they particularly liked or disliked during their stay, or something they believe the pre-SAP students ought to know." The author reports that the activity has been very successful in an extended "experience" move, with both groups reporting benefits from the encounter.

Another key *kokusaika* feature is also on display in this activity: the equation of "international" and "English." As shown above, the benefits of SAP are not listed as "an increase in foreign language fluency and confidence," but, rather, "an increase in English fluency and confidence." The activity itself requires that students use English, since part of the point is to let the pre-SAP students speak English and see the "positive language model" of the "English fluency" of the post-SAP students. But all of this begs the question—what of students who do a SAP in a non-English speaking country? It may be that at the author's university, all such programs are to English speaking countries. But the article doesn't seem to even consider other languages as a possibility. This issue of "non-Japanese languages = English" will be discussed in more detail below in section 10.3.3.3.

The SAP activity is designed only for students who have completed or have already decided to enroll in a SAP. That is, they don't promote internationalization to the general school population. The next two activities, on the other hand, are focused on increasing international contact among average Japanese universities students. They do this by bringing non-Japanese students studying in Japan into compulsory English classes (rather than working with Japanese students planning to study abroad). In both activities, those foreign students are invited to English conversation classes to talk to the Japanese students in English. There are several key differences between the two activities.

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The first major difference is in the way that the non-Japanese students are described. The first article (which also happens to use the word *international* when it has the teacher download information from a document called "International Students in Japan" from a Japanese quasi-government organization [123] ) says "Arrange for some <u>foreign students</u> on the campus to attend the second class meeting on this topic." The only caveat is that the foreign students "have a level of English proficiency within the range of the Japanese students." The other article says, "This activity involves a cross-cultural exchange set up between Japanese university students and <u>U.S. study abroad students visiting Japan</u>." Later, the article slightly expands the target foreign students to include those on "study abroad trips from other universities in any English-speaking country." However, if those students are not available, it is not an option to do this activity with students from other countries; instead, the suggestion is to use the lesser (lesser because the article says it is better if students "meet in person") option of "Skype or some other online communication system for the interviews." On a practical note, to fulfill the requirement of using students from "English-speaking countries" will almost certainly require the use of Skype, since, as of 2016, the U.S. is the ninth-ranked country in terms of foreign students studying in Japan, accounting for only 1.5% such students, and there are no other "English-speaking countries" in the top ten (JASSO, 2017). Practical concerns aside, the latter activity promotes the discriminatory idea that there is something especially beneficial about contact with "native speakers," a distinction which is not only present in the teacher-directed My Share article, but also in the student-directed Appendix, which contains the phrase "native English/English-as-a-Second-Language speaker." The first article, on the other hand, doesn't just "allow" students from other countries—it directly encourages including them, saying, "The greater the variety of nationalities, the more stimulating the lesson will be." In other words, the first article promotes a pluralizing internationalization, while the second promotes a binary *kokusaika* with the Japanese students in the lower, deficient, "non-native" position.

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[123] Per their website, "Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) is an independent administrative institution established under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Monbukagakusho)." (Japan Student Services Organization, n.d.)

There is a second major difference between the two articles. In the first activity, the discussion between the Japanese and foreign students is based upon questions and discussion points decided by the teacher. The Japanese students get a chance to discuss them together in a first class meeting without the foreign students, while the foreign students have to be able to simultaneously do the transcultural conversation and address a new topic; this presumes a greater level of comfort and/or ability on the part of the foreign students to engage in what the author calls "student-centered, interactive oral discourse conducted entirely in English." The second activity, on the other hand, is an interview with student-generated questions. The article is not clear whether the interviews are uni- or bidirectional. One of the pre-interview questionnaire questions says, "Have you ever interviewed a native English/English-as-a-Second-Language speaker before," which implies that each side will conduct an interview of the other. However, all the sample interview questions are written from the perspective of the U.S. students interviewing Japanese students to learn about Japanese culture. Also, the expressed goals for the two groups are different. U.S. students are getting the chance to have a "meaningful cultural interaction," while the Japanese students are getting "structured experience communicating with native English speakers in a way that ensures reflection." This makes me slightly more inclined to think that the interview is strictly U.S. students asking Japanese students questions. If this is the case, it places the Japanese students in a subordinate position, serving as cultural informants without any agency to lead the exchange. Even if both groups are meant to interview the other, this still makes the activity a sequence of questions and answers, rather than cooperative conversations as in the first activity, wherein everyone works together to discuss a topic.

Finally, one article positions students as "Global English student writers." Usually, "Global English" is associated with English as a Lingua Franca (the use of English across national and linguistic boundaries as a common shared language, though often the first language of none of the participants) and World Englishes (the study of national English variants, usually underwritten by the idea that all variants have equal value and claim to the term "English") (Galloway, 2013). None of this is present in this article. Rather, the article is distinctly national in scope, because the activity requires students to write first essays for the teacher and then letters to

disaster victims in Tohoku (of the 3/11 earthquake and tsunami). Not only does this ask students to turn their English usage inward (English for the benefit of Japan, not English for the benefit of building an interconnected world), but it does so in a very strange way—it is never made clear why these disaster victims would want to receive letters in English or how this would help them. They are described as "letters of encouragement," but why would a disaster victim, possibly living in a shelter, with dead friends and/or family, be encouraged by a letter written by another Japanese person in a foreign language? A second proposed benefit is that the assignments will "help students process what happened in the Tohoku earthquake disaster," but if that is true, it sounds terribly selfish for those not directly affected by the disaster to place a burden on the immediate victims. The activity would make much more sense if the students were writing to someone in another country—someone with whom they had no choice but to use English with in order to communicate.

If, on the surface, this article simply doesn't make sense, what is going on? There are several potential readings. One is that the author has just latched on to a current topic and used it to drive an English activity—though given the choice of topic, this is not a very kind reading for the author. That reading would also help clarify the use of "Global English student writers," in that said phrase is also just acting as a buzzword with no attention to the principles underlying it. If I am more charitable, I could say that the author genuinely believes these "letters of encouragement" will be beneficial to both senders and receivers. This reading evokes the intersection of *kokusaika* and English language policy, since English has been transformed into a tool for internal, national interests, and students aren't actually required to use it for communication (a true Global English perspective would actually place communication ease and accuracy at the forefront, and thus would recommend *not* using English in this instance). An alternative reading, also from a *kokusaika/*neoliberal perspective would be that everyone in the nation, no matter what their circumstance, must continue with the national project of building English language skills—and if that means that disaster victims must give their time

and emotional energy to support those in other regions, then that is nonetheless their duty.[124]

### 10.3.2.3 Online media and internationalization

*10.3.2.3 Online media and internationalization*. Section 9.4 discusses the topic of technology in the corpus, including activities using the internet. In this section, I will focus on two activities that use online media in connection with international themes. Both contain one of the *kokusaika*-linked words discussed above, and both utilize YouTube videos, though in different ways.

The first activity contains the word "global" twice. In the introduction the article says,

> YouTube and other social media sites have created an unprecedented communication revolution in only a few years' time. Distance is no longer the barrier that it once was and access to not only authentic language materials, but also real people on a global scale is a fact of life.

Later, in an Extension section, the article talks about discussion topics that the students can engage in related to international media literacy. One of those topics is "global English as it related to online content creation." Throughout the article, there is an interest in YouTube not just as a video sharing site, but rather as means for building transnational and transcultural connections. Students watch a video by Ochikeron, a Japanese YouTuber who makes videos spoken in English and subtitled in Japanese. Most of them are cooking videos where she shows the audience (the series is targeted mainly at non-Japanese viewers) how to make Japanese food. After watching Ochikeron's example, students work in groups to make their own food preparation video and upload it to YouTube. In the optional extension which is targeted at intermediate to higher level students in an elective course on Media English, the activity has students engage in deeper discussions related to the international reach of YouTube. In terms of the nature of the project and the discussions the students have, this activity shares a lot in common with the

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[124] If this were an activity promoted by the government, one could also say that it helps distract from the very real and documented failings of the government prior to and following the disaster; this article certainly supports that perspective, though it seems unlikely that this was the author's intent.

ecological footprint activity discussed in section 10.3.2.1, because students are encouraged to see themselves as part of the world. They are positioned not just as consumers of international media, but as creators with an equal right and ability to take part in international culture through an international language. As with the ecological footprint activity, English is the medium that the learning occurs in, not the end goal of the activity. The only specific English that the article suggests reviewing are "negotiation phrases" that students can use while planning their videos. This approach is predicated upon the belief, explained in the final sentence of the Conclusion, that this activity nonetheless builds English skills because it encourages "lifelong language learning through content creation." Finally, it is important to note that these benefits are highly personal. This is not the *kokusaika* ideology of students learning English to benefit Japan—rather, students engage with English, both receptively and productively, to become a part of an international community.

Another article that uses YouTube videos contains the word international in the Preparation section. It states, "Use YouTube to locate a video of vox pops. A search for vox pops international produces many class-friendly videos with questions like "What is your favourite TV show?" The pedagogical implications of this activity were discussed in section 9.8.2.3 (where it was called the hesitation pops activity). Here, I want to focus only on how the YouTube video itself is used. Unlike in the previous activity, students only watch a YouTube video—they don't make one themselves. That is, this activity positions students as consumers of international media, not producers of it. They recreate a simple version of the vox pops interview, but only in the classroom, and in an activity wherein students are constantly being judged by their peers based upon a specific English skill. This activity positions students as still in training, not yet ready to be members of the international community. To be fair, however, this article was published in late 2013, while the Ochikeron activity above was published in early 2016. It may well be that acceptance of YouTube, comfort with students working online, or even students possessing smartphones capable of taking and editing video had increased in those intervening two years. That is, it is possible that the 2013 article doesn't have students make videos, not because of a belief about what they are capable of or how they should interact with international culture, but rather because the author didn't

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believe such an action was technically possible at the time. Having said that, there is no indication that this article is directly preparing students for future transnational communication, other than that it is building English language skills.

*10.3.2.4 Cultural issues.* This final topic has the most diffuse definition; here, I mean to collect activities which gesture to the idea of students being a part of or learning about cultural issues originating outside of Japan. The first article claims that the "activity is meant to get students thinking critically about the world and about their feelings." Examples include "global climate change, the war in Iraq, or immigration in Japan." Despite that introduction, the actual activity does none of these things. In the activity, students watch either *Good Morning Vietnam* or *Bowling for Columbine*, and discuss how the directors have chosen to display scenes of violence alongside the seemingly happy Louis Armstrong song "What a Wonderful World." The conclusion comes closer to accurately defining the activity, saying that "this activity can be a useful and interesting exercise that challenges students' initial perceptions and interpretations of movies and music. Activities of this kind seek to foster critical inquiry of the commonplace, everyday media that surrounds students' lives." This makes the activity much more focused on cultural analysis than on the types of political and social issues listed in the introduction.

However, whether the focus of the activity is interpreted to be critical media literacy or current issues, the activity is very much non-international—it only includes discussion and analysis of the media and sociopolitical issues of the United States. The two movies for discussion and the song are both cultural products of the United States. More importantly, the issues that they discuss are of importance primarily to Americans and the United States. *Bowling for Columbine* is a documentary about the 1999 school shooting that occurred at Columbine High School in the United States. Not only was this particular mass murder at a school located in the United States, the whole issue of school shootings is a "uniquely American crisis" (Cox & Rich, 2018). *Good Morning, Vietnam*, on the other hand, is an American comedy-drama movie about the Vietnam War (based only loosely on real events). The U.S. experience in what the U.S. calls the "Vietnam War" but is called the "American War" in Vietnam is not quite as unique as that of the school shooting epidemic in the U.S., but the deployment of a nation's military forces to another

faraway country under the doctrine of combatting an alleged international threat (communism) to the detriment of both the local people and the invaders is something few countries other than the U.S. have undertaken on a large scale in the post-WWII era. With either movie, the activity wouldn't necessarily have students explore either of the underlying topics, since it seems to focus more on the basic idea of the contrast between "violence" and "beauty." Nonetheless, this activity, which begins with a gesture towards international issues, instead is focused on primarily American ones.

In contrast, consider a different activity using American culture. This activity uses paintings by Norman Rockwell, which the author says have "a unique insight into American culture through his sentimental and idealistic portrayal of everyday life scenarios." In other words, this activity is unabashedly focused on American culture, and doesn't purport to be international in scope. The article does link this activity to "cross-cultural studies," indicating a recognition that talking about Rockwell means introducing students in Japan to a non-Japanese culture. But there is no worry that students (or readers) might mistake "international culture" with "American culture" as in the previously discussed article.

Other articles that bring in non-Japanese cultural topics are mixed in terms of how international they are. One activity supposedly helps raise students' "cross-cultural awareness," but the activity only involves students taking dictation of the populations of the five most populated U.S. states. This activity both fails to deal with culture, and also focuses solely on the United States. Several others, including one where students study television commercials and another where students engage with English music, don't specify any country of origin, requiring only that the commercial/song be in English. Only two articles include comparisons of two different locations or cultures. In one, the activity requires students to conduct internet research to determine which city is better to live in, New York or Sydney. Because that activity is focused on teaching students internet research skills, there is no explanation for why those two specific cities were chosen—that is, why the research is conducted on only two so-called "Inner Circle" countries. The other article describes an activity where students have to make a presentation summarizing a variety of news stories into a single continuous whole. The teacher is instructed to tell student that they must use a BBC reporting style, where reporters

use segues to bridge between different news segments, and not the NHK style, "in which separate pieces of news are clearly demarcated." While this explicit declaration is done because the author wants the students to practice transition phrases like "I want to move on to…," the result is to elevate the BBC style over the NHK style. It seems like there is a missed opportunity here for students to discuss the relative merits of these two systems, and possibly engage in some simple cross-cultural analysis.

### 10.3.3 Holistic internationalization issues in the corpus.
While conducting the above analysis on specific articles, several concerns arose that made me question whether they were idiosyncratic to only those articles or whether they were systematically occurring across the corpus. Thus, I will now turn back to a holistic approach, and look at four specific issues: representations of "native" or "non-native" English, locations and nationalities used, cultural artifacts, and languages.

*10.3.3.1 "Native English" and "Natives."* The "U.S. students" article discussed in section 10.3.2.2 placed a high degree of value on Japanese students getting the chance to interact with so-called "native speakers." This is an example of "native speakerism," long recognized as a problem in the TESOL field. Holliday (2013) called it a "tacitly held cultural chauvinism" (p.17) that "makes it possible for 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker to continue as a basic currency not only for labelling teachers but also for judging them through forms of chauvinism of which we are largely unaware and easily put aside" (p. 18). The question was whether this attitude was as prevalent across the corpus as it was in the "U.S. students" article. In total, the word "native" appears only 15 times in the corpus. Five of those occurrences referred to Japanese, as in, "Students use smartphones to conduct daily research in their native language." Two of the uses were neutral, with one saying it was adapted from an activity for "native English speakers," while the other stated that doing a demanding language task like researching and presenting "can be overwhelming in one's native language, not only in English." One strangely describes the goal of the activity as helping students have a telephone conversation with a "native English speaker." This is problematic in that it positions the goal of English

language learning as being the ability to communicate with natives, an odd goal especially in Japan when most English speakers students are likely to encounter will be non-native. The other seven instances each use the word "native" to mean "better." However, five of those were from the U.S. students article. The only other articles with discriminatory phrases were as follows. One instructed the teacher to read something at "native speed," rather than using a neutral term like "fluent speed" or "not using textbook-like speed." The other describes the continuum of English ability in a class that they taught as "ranging in level from low intermediate (roughly TOEIC 400) to near native returnees." That is, rather than describing the top end of the continuum as "highly proficient" or "conversationally fluent," the "best" level is to be "like a native." Overall, though, there is a relatively small amount of native-speakerism in the corpus. From reports on hiring and employment practices in Japan (an overview on the contemporary state of this problem can be found in Houghton and Rivers' (2013) book *Native-Speakerism in Japan*), it is certainly not the case that native-speakerism itself is absent from professional practices in Japan, but perhaps this particular discourse community does not, at least in their formal writing, regularly perpetuate this problem.

*10.3.3.2 Nationality and locations in the corpus.* Several of the articles discussed above seemed to equate the "foreign" with the "U.S." This is highly consistent with *kokusaika* and the complementary ideology of *nihonjinron* which divides the world between "Japan" and "not-Japan." Thus, I examined the corpus to see what locations and nationalities appear in the corpus. This was done mainly with the part of speech tagger in KH Coder, which was able to mostly accurately identify proper nouns, with some additional hand checking to catch errors. It was necessary to distinguish between demonyms (*Japanese* used to refer to "people from Japan") and languages (*Japanese* used to refer to "the national language of Japan"), since the latter is treated separately in section 10.3.3.3. Table 63 summarizes the results of all locations, grouped together by country (i.e., "U.S." includes *U.S., American, California, Los Angeles,* etc.).

Table 63

*Location and Nationality Terms*

| Country/Nationality | Occurrences | % of total | % of non-Japanese locations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Japan/Japanese | 101 | 60.8% | |
| U.S./American | 42 | 25.3% | 64.6% |
| Australia/Australian | 6 | 3.6% | 9.2% |
| U.K./British | 5 | 3.0% | 7.7% |
| Vietnam/Vietnamese | 4 | 2.4% | 6.2% |
| Other (occurring one time each) | 8 | 4.8% | 12.3% |

The first point of note is that 61% of all location/nationality references are to Japan. This helps confirm a point which has been discussed throughout this paper—that the My Share genre is primarily targeted at language teaching professionals in Japan. For instance, a sentence such as "In any Japanese university, English language teachers are responsible for the regular recording of attendance" wouldn't make sense if it were included in an activity plan addressed at a primarily international audience. Given that the primary membership of JALT are teachers in Japan and its role as a professional organization is geared towards language teaching in Japan, this target is neither surprising nor problematic. With regards to the non-Japanese locations, however, the U.S. accounts for a disproportionate number of the location and nationality references. Furthermore, when the non-U.S. locations are looked at closely, the representation appears even more troublesome. For example, all the references to Vietnam come from the movie/music/violence activity described in 10.3.2.4—that is, they are actually references to an American movie and the experiences of Americans fighting in Vietnam, not Vietnam or Vietnamese itself/themselves. Similarly, all the references to Australia are to Sydney, and come from the activity where students have to compare Sydney and New York—thus, Sydney is not of interest in and of itself, but as a point of comparison to a U.S. city. This strong orientation towards the United States should not be surprising—recall that Kubota and McKay (2009) described *kokusaika* as "Westernization, or, more specifically, Americanization" (p. 602). Additionally, prior studies have found a preference among Japanese students, teachers, and textbook manufacturers for "Inner Circle" and especially American English (Chiba, Matsuura, & Yamamoto, 1995; Kubota, 1998; Matsuda, 2002). But just because this finding isn't surprising

doesn't mean it isn't disappointing. While JALT does not keep records of members' nationality (besides "Japanese" and "non-Japanese"), my own experience at JALT meetings and conferences is that, while the organization is mostly composed of "Inner Circle" foreigners and Japanese, U.S. members don't dramatically outnumber those from countries such as the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand. And even if they did, this shouldn't outweigh the fact that there is significantly more contact (culturally and economically) between Japan and East Asia than between Japan and the U.S. The My Share genre is both reflecting this unreasonable bias towards the U.S. and helping perpetuate it.

*10.3.3.3 Languages in the corpus.* The problem becomes even more extreme when the languages mentioned in the corpus are examined, as is shown in Table 64. First, note the last line: no languages other than English, Japanese, Greek, Latin, and French are mentioned in corpus. The three instances each of Greek and Latin are in a single article, and aren't concerned with those languages, but rather about the use of Greek and Latin roots in English words. The one use of French comes from the L3 student-teacher activity discussed in 9.8.1.3. This activity isn't about teaching French (or another L3)—it's about using that L3 in the service of learning English.

Table 64

*Languages in the Corpus*

| Language | Occurrences | Percentage |
|---------|------------|-----------|
| English | 198 | 70.7% |
| Japanese | 75 | 26.8% |
| Greek | 3 | 1.1% |
| Latin | 3 | 1.1% |
| French | 1 | 0.4% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Having said that, English is not the only language taught in Japan. As mentioned in Chapter 2, MEXT does not mandate that English be taught university level (though individual universities can and do often require students to take some number of compulsory English courses), and there has been an increasing desire for

East Asian languages such as Chinese and Korean in recent years (Kobayashi, 2013). Thus, it wouldn't be unreasonable for instruction of other languages referenced. And while it would not surprise me to hear a JALT member say, "Well, JALT is for English teachers," this would, in fact, be incorrect, since JALT is the Japanese Association for Language Teaching, not "English Teaching."[125] But in JALT, non-English languages are marginalized; for example, most of the non-English language discussion, presentations, and publications tend to appear in the "Japanese as a Second Language" and "Other Language Educators" SIGs. As discussed in section 5.7, there have been almost no My Share articles published in non-English languages (and none in my corpus). JALT, and, by extension, the My Share corpus, is biased towards English to the point of naturalization.

In case it isn't clear, I am arguing that this is a failing of the My Share genre, because it is serving to perpetuate the *kokusaika* idea that "foreign languages = English." This is not a problem with the individual authors, but rather with the organization and publications team that they don't make more effort to solicit publications about or written in other languages. One of the editors surmised that part of the problem, at least in terms of getting Japanese submissions, is that their own experiences participating on hiring committees in Japanese universities is that that *The Language Teacher* seems to not be a particularly prestigious publication for Japanese teachers. Also, to be slightly more charitable to the corpus, many of the activities described in it could be used to teach languages other than English, except for those focusing on a grammatical issue that is uniquely linked to English.

There is one additional note regarding languages in this corpus: when speaking about the students, there is a universal assumption that the students' native language is Japanese. However, Ministry of Education figures from 2016 showed that 42.9% of the more than 80,000 non-Japanese children at public primary and secondary schools need remedial Japanese (Yoshida & Aoki, 2017). Furthermore, in 2016, there were just under 300,000 international students studying in Japan.[126] Thus, some of the assumptions in the corpus about how students will interact with

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[125] For educators at the tertiary level , there is a different organization, the Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET) that does focus only on English.
[126] Though, at least at the university level, I know that some international students (especially, short-term ones) are not required to take English courses.

English based upon the presumption that their native language is Japanese and that they have Japanese cultural attitudes are not universally accurate. As an example of the former, one article says, "The use of articles is a notoriously troublesome area for many Japanese learners of English. It is due to the fact that Japanese lacks the article system." This statement is accurate since it explicitly refers to "Japanese learners of English," but those learners may not make up the entirety of the students in an English class. On the cultural side, another article says, "Also, Japanese people tend to be modest and avoid talking about their achievements." Since the activity is designed in part to help students overcome this alleged problem, the activity may not be helpful for non-Japanese students.[127]

*10.3.3.4 Cultural artifacts.* The final category of items I attempted to count in the corpus were cultural items such as television shows, celebrities, music, holidays, etc. with a distinctly national identity, which I called "cultural artifacts" for lack of a better word to encompass these varied items. This count was conducted by hand, and, as such, probably means that the results slightly undercount the actual instances in the corpus. In addition, some of the items were ambiguous and thus their categorization was a judgment call on my part. For example, the smart phone application LINE is available internationally, but it is a Japanese company and, at the time the article that talked about it was published, had almost one-fourth of its total userbase in Japan (Horwitz, 2014); as such, I classified it as Japanese. On the other hand, I felt that TED Talks, while run by a U.S. and Canadian organization, has conferences throughout the world, as well as both an international viewership and international orientation, and thus I categorized it as International. In a few cases, I placed items into multiple categories, such as *Memoirs of a Geisha* being counted as both Japanese (due to the movie's setting) and American (due to the movie having been made by a U.S. movie production company and based on a U.S. novel). Cases which I could not determine were not counted. Table 65 shows the results of this survey of cultural artifacts.

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[127] I have a separate problem with the idea that there is something wrong with being modest that makes it worthy of trying to "correct," since that seems to be imposing a foreign cultural idea that isn't necessary or even necessarily beneficial when learning English or trying to prepare for cross-cultural communication.

Table 65

*Cultural Artifacts Sorted by Country of Origin*

| Country | Occurrences | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| United States | 34 | 35.8% |
| Japan | 32 | 33.7% |
| International | 12 | 12.6% |
| United Kingdom | 5 | 5.3% |
| Western | 4 | 4.2% |
| European | 2 | 2.1% |
| Others (one time each) | 7 | 6.3% |

As in the analysis of locations and languages, the United States again occupies the top slot. Also, note the complete absence of other Asian cultures. China, India, and Indonesia had one mention each, with the representations being a game, a newspaper, and a tourist location, respectively. I would argue that this overrepresentation is more problematic than the overrepresentation of English, since this can be partially understood to be a consequence (more than a cause) of the dominance of English as a second language in Japan, which is effectively codified in Japanese government policy (Hashimoto, 2011). But the cultural artifacts used often play a small role in the activities, and could be quickly substituted for other items if a teacher desired to be less Ameri-centric. Why doesn't this corpus have discussions about travelling to China, South Korea, or Taiwan, which are the top three destinations for travelers from Japan in 2016 (JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Company, 2018)? Or activities using South Korean pop music, which is not only popular in Japan but can include excellent examples of English coming from Asia? Or discussions about doing business in China, Japan's largest trading partner (Japan External Trade Organization, 2018)? As before, this imbalance in cultural artifacts is not just a reflection of tendencies in Japan, it is one of the many things perpetuating this tendency.

**10.3.4 Summary of internationalization in the My Share corpus.** The first half of this section discussed articles that deal with international issues (with a few comparisons to similar, non-international articles). In some cases, such as the endangered species, U.S. student exchange, and movie/music/violence activities, the articles demonstrate beliefs fully consistent with the *kokusaika* ideology. In the first

case, the activity serves to give students a highly focused English skill (making short factual presentations), and raises an internationally important problem, but divorces students from responsibility for that problem and doesn't allow them to question the consequences of their behavior. In the second and third cases, the articles conflate "international"/"foreign" with "the U.S." In addition, the U.S. student exchange activity also devolves intercultural communication into a question-and-answer format that doesn't allow for real interaction—the parties are allowed to learn about each other, but not to really talk together or form transcultural bonds. Other activities in the corpus, however, are international while undermining the *kokusaika* ideology. The ecological footprint activity is the most powerful in this regard, as it requires that students see themselves as part of an interconnected world and their behaviors as having international consequences. Additionally, the foreign student exchange explicitly calls for a multicultural meeting where everyone works together to discuss and understand topics relevant to all parties.

Lastly, I will note that there is one other activity that uses the word *international* not discussed above. Because the activity involves students taking on the role of international businesspeople, I have held that activity for the final topic of this chapter: neoliberalism. As will be discussed there, there is certainly overlap between the neoliberal and *kokusaika* agendas, and the way that manifests in that particular article will be discussed in section 10.5.1.

The second half of this section looked at the frequency of several *kokusaika*-related concepts and terms in the corpus to see if there were imbalances in the representations of these items. On a positive note, this corpus does not have a native-speaker bias, with the issue appearing negatively in only three articles. However, the corpus is both exclusively focused on English-as-a-foreign-language, perpetuating the belief that English is the only "foreign" language that matters. Similarly, the U.S. was heavily overrepresented in measurements of both locations and cultural artifacts. While this is consistent with *kokusaika* attitudes, it is nonetheless disappointing and it may be worth considering editorial oversight to help correct this imbalance.

**10.4 Active Learning and Autonomy in My Share Articles**

Active learning is the pedagogical practice, introduced into Japanese educational discourse primarily after its use in the 2012 report by the Japanese Central Council of Education (Matsushita, 2018), of attempting to ensure that students are actively engaged in learning, presumed to be superior to "passive learning." The latter can be understood as traditional learning in which students 1) focus on acquiring knowledge for tests rather than understanding and 2) obtain information primarily from direct instruction (i.e., textbooks and lectures).

However, even though "active learning" became a buzzword at the tertiary level in Japan in 2012, the more general idea of promoting learner autonomy has been a part of MEXT policy at all levels of education since at least 1985 (Cave, 2001). This has been linked to a perceived need, driven in part by globalization, to move Japan towards a more "modern" culture in which the ability to independently conduct critical and creative analysis is valued (Nakata, 2011). This has alternatively been described as the desire to increase students' "transferable or generic skills" (Waniek & Nae, 2017, p. 85).

Active learning can take many forms, in large part because it does not have a widely agreed upon definition (Jones & Palmer, 2017; Prince, 2004). On the simplest scale, teachers provide brief pauses in lectures to give students time to consolidate their notes and discuss them with classmates (Prince, 2004). On the opposite end of the scale, active learning refers to radically redesigned curricula where students are presented with an outline of a problem, and then given most of the instructional time to engage in collaborative discussion, research, and analysis to arrive at suggestions for a solution which are then shared with the whole class, with the Maastricht University Problem-Based Learning program described in Waniek and Nae (2017) serving as an example. In more expansive active learning curricula, the teacher shifts from being a leader—the primary source of knowledge in the classroom—to a facilitator or assistant, with students being expected to actively work to acquire knowledge, rather than having it given to them (Drew & Mackie, 2011).

I have looked for traces of *active learning*[128] in the corpus in three ways: (1) lexically (that is, through the use of corpus searches of words explicitly linked to AL and related concepts) (2) through moves (cases where the articles use AL-related moves with or without using those exact words) and (3) pedagogically (through an analysis of the activities looking for structures and patterns that seem to be AL-related). Because of the ambiguity of the term, for all the analyses, I have tried to cast a wide net for various types of active learning.

**10.4.1 Lexical representations of AL.** Table 66 contains a summary of the major words and phrases in the corpus that are explicitly linked to autonomy, active learning, and student-centered learning (with words sharing roots combined into single entries). Note that I have only included cases where the word is linked to the underlying meaning of active learning, not other senses of the word—for example, I did not include cases where the words *active* and *actively* were linked to being physically active.[129] For comparative purposes, I also searched for a few negative terms that parallel the "positive" terms linked to AL.

First, note that there are no instances of the term *active-learning* (or the phrase *active learning*), indicating that even by the end of the corpus, four years after the term had entered the formal lexicon of Japanese educational discourse, it had not become a part of the regular professional discourse used in this genre. On the other hand, the terms *student-centered* and *learner-centered*, which have been used in connection to pre-tertiary education in Japan since the 1990s, are a little more prevalent, though these terms still only occur in less than 10% of all articles.

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[128] For simplicity and conciseness, through the rest of sections 10.4.1 and 10.4.2 I write "active learning" rather than "autonomy and active learning," though I mean to include both. The ambiguity of the two terms and the dual role they play in Japanese government policy (at the pre-tertiary and tertiary levels, respectively) means that I believe that these terms can be treated as roughly similar; later I will discuss cases where they should be treated separately.
[129] It is worth noting that Drew and Mackie (2011) found that both students and teachers sometimes mistake physical activity with active or engaged learning, but that this is fundamental misunderstanding, since the focus should be on *cognitive* engagement, not physical movement.

Table 66

*Words Related to Active Learning*

| Word | Occurrences | Number of distinct articles |
|---|---|---|
| *active* | 14 | 9 |
| *active-learning* | 0 | 0 |
| *autonomy* | 3 | 3 |
| *autonomously* | 1 | 1 |
| *engage* | 26 | 21 |
| *student-centered* | 7 | 6 |
| *learner-cent(e)red* | 6 | 5 |
| *deep* | 9 | 8 |
| *deep-learning* | 1 | 1 |
| *passive* | 2 | 2 |
| *inactive* | 2 | 1 |
| *teacher-cent(e)red* | 1 | 1 |
| *surface* | 0 | 0 |

The most common term in this category is *engage* (which includes related words like *engaging* and *engagement*). This term actually occurs 48 times in the corpus, but many of those are used as simple synonym for "talk," as in "Engage the students in conversation about their drawing." To be included here, the term had to be used to mean that students were deeply involved in thinking about the content of the activity, as in "The challenging aspect of the exercise kept them engaged." It is not clear why *engage* is the most commonly used term related to active learning in this corpus.

Of the four articles that used "negative" AL-related words (*passive, inactive,* and *teacher-centred*), three of them also used a positive word. Thus, in the same way that the "negative claim" moves usually preceded and justified a benefit of the article, these negative terms are generally used as foils for the positive active-learning related opportunities that the articles are offering.

In total, there are 64 positive active-learning related terms occurring across 56 distinct articles (31.6% of the articles in the corpus). If these terms are collected together, this means that they account for 0.6% of the terms in the corpus; if these were a single term, they would be around the 208th most frequent term in the corpus. For comparison, teaching related content words occurring more frequently are *practice* (148 times, 86th place), *game* (129 times, 99th place), *presentation* (104 times, 130th place), *discussion* (88 times, 158th place), *listening* (91 times, 147th

place), *grammar* (84 times, 167th place), and *speaking* (82 times, 174th place) Thus, looking solely at lexical items, active learning is not playing a large role in the corpus, seemingly implying that active learning is not a major concern amongst this discourse community. However, the as I will show in the next two sections, even articles which never mention active-learning can contain active learning principles, and those which do mention them don't necessarily follow those principles.

**10.4.2 Moves related to AL.** As shown in Table 15 in section 7.3, the third most frequent category of benefit moves were those related to active learning, accounting for 14.1% of all benefit moves. These moves occur across 65 (36.7%) of the articles. Thus, more than one-third of the articles explicitly mention that part of what makes their activities good is that they implement principles related to active learning. Table 67 summarizes the moves in this category.

Table 67

*Active Learning-linked Benefits*

| Code | Occurrences |
| --- | --- |
| motivating | 23 |
| autonomy-encouraging | 13 |
| engaging | 13 |
| student-centered | 11 |
| encourages self-reflection | 7 |
| increases self-awareness | 7 |
| active | 5 |
| students see themselves succeed | 2 |
| other (once each) | 4 |

The most frequent move placed in the category was "motivating," accounting for 27.1% of the AL-linked moves. Motivation has arguably been one of the biggest buzzwords in second language learning for decades, and an analysis of either the theory behind it or how to implement it in the classroom is beyond the scope of the present paper. Here, it is sufficient to say that one common aspect of active learning practices is building students' motivation, thus (hopefully) leading them to engage more with both the instant material of the classroom as well as the deeper subject such that the students might be inclined to continue learning on their own (Jones & Palmer, 2017). The somewhat high frequency of "motivating" moves is consistent

with Z. Dörnyei being the second most cited author in the corpus, as shown in section 5.3.4. Finally, it is worth noting that the "motivating" benefit often co-occurs in with other benefits, as in the following:

> This activity uses Google Earth Street View to expose learners to a wider range of vocabulary through a myriad of real-world locations and serves as a more authentic platform for communication, allowing students to see how other countries look and how people live, all in a way that is far more meaningful, <u>motivating</u>, and enriching than traditional approaches.

This one sentence was coded with four benefits, "authentic," "meaningful," "motivating," and "enriching." This linking of "motivating" with other benefits seems to imply one of two teacher beliefs: "motivating" isn't an important enough benefit to stand on its own, or that it is inherently linked to other aspects of language learning.

The second through fourth most frequent moves in this category are linked directly to the lexical items counted in the previous section. However, in some cases, items were coded with these benefits despite the absence of one of these terms. For example, one article mentions "This activity allows students to choose texts suited to their own abilities and interests." This was coded as autonomy-encouraging, since it provides students with the opportunity to make significant choices about what they will study to fulfill the requirements of this activity and class. Also, it is important to note that these three benefits refer to related but not identical concepts. Activities which promote autonomy are supposed to help students learn on their own, in part by letting them make active choices about how to further their own education rather than just following what a teacher tells them to do. Engagement, as discussed in the previous section, is about making sure that students are actively and persistently present in the activities, rather than passively waiting for information to come to them. "Student-centered" is the most ambiguous of these moves and I used it exclusively when the article used the exact terms *learner centered* or *student centered* (under various spellings).

For the most part, my focus in this research has been on what the articles say is important, only rarely evaluating the activities to see if, in my opinion, they lived

up to the descriptions. However, these three moves represent some of the most troublesome cases of benefits/terms not matching the activities. For example, "student-centered" seems to have been used at times simply because two students are talking to one another, as in a case where students work in pairs in which one of the students can see a picture, while the other cannot. The student who can see the picture describes the picture while the other one draws it. The article says, "The real beauty of the activity is that students are self-motivated to participate, every student gets lots of individual talk time, and it is more student-centered than simply listening to the teacher." The trouble is, having students talk to one another in no way makes an activity student-centered, which requires some sort of specific understanding of what students want or need to learn, and/or gives students some control over what or how they will learn. This activity does none of that—the teacher chooses the activity, the pictures, the goal, and even sets rules about what grammar patterns the students must use.

Similarly, "autonomy" should refer to cases where students are encouraged to study on their own, or, at the very least to be able to make substantive choices about how they carry out the assignments in the course. In one activity, students are told that they will make "several individual 3-minute presentations during the semester." Each presentation is on a famous person, and that person must come from a teacher-chosen theme, such as "political leader, inventor, artist, philosopher, etc." But my question is, how many philosophers does the average university students even know—that is, how many choices do they really have? Furthermore, the presentation itself is extremely rigidly formatted: "Inform students that each presentation should be organized in the following order: biographical information, famous accomplishments, and relevance for us." The timing, presentation style, and grading rubric are all defined by the teacher. Even the responsibilities of the listeners are teacher-defined. About the only choice that students get is which one of a particular group of people they will choose to talk about, and in many cases the pool to choose from is fairly limited. There is no rationale for using the claim in the introduction which says, "This activity helps students improve their presentation skills and speaking fluency and promotes learner autonomy."

There are several possible explanations for these disconnects between the stated AL-benefits and the actual contents of the activities. One is that the authors

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have chosen these terms because they are popular buzzwords in either the TESOL field or specifically in Japanese educational discourse, and they were included without actual concern about what the terms meant. Alternatively, it could be that the authors have misunderstood what those terms meant, such as thinking that simply having students work in pairs makes an activity student-centered.

The rest of the moves in this category represent less than 40% of the AL-linked moves. "Self-reflection" moves are those where the activity is designed to make students think carefully about their own behaviors; these may or may not be directly linked to language learning. For example, the "U.S. students" activity discussed in section 10.3.2.2 states that one of the benefits of the cross-cultural communication activity is that students it "ensur[es] self-reflection in the process." This seems to be reflection about cross-cultural understanding and globalized communication. "Self-awareness," was used for articles being aware of the linguistic skills they have or want to develop, such as an article that says that "Noticing is a key part of learning and this activity promotes both monitoring and noticing." Finally, note that while the "active" move appears to occur only a small number of times, this is because I only coded moves here when they didn't fit into one of the more specific cases discussed above.

**10.4.3 Pedagogical links to AL.** The previous two sections focused on the linguistic features (lexis and moves) of the articles that specifically mentioned something related to active learning to measure how frequent articles explicitly held out active learning as being important in language teaching in Japan. The present section looks at the activities themselves to examine the extent to which the teaching practices described in the corpus are compatible with one or more facets of active learning. I will examine the activities through the lens of the four AL-related terms/concepts described by Prince (2004) and previously discussed in section 2.4.4: active learning, collaborative learning, cooperative learning, and problem-based learning.

In Prince's schema, the most general term, active learning, refers to any case where students are engaged in the learning process. In the strictest sense, every activity in this corpus qualifies as active learning under this definition, though to varying degrees. This is because there are no examples in the corpus which are

strictly unidirectional lecturing from teacher to student. This is unsurprising since the point of My Share articles is to share original teaching methods and activities that have been successful in class, and it is hard to imagine how most lectures could qualify as original teaching methods.

There are, however, a few activities in which students engage in very little interaction in the classroom. The two most extreme are both pronunciation activities. In the first, the teacher lectures about the phonological variations in English past tense (/-t/, /-d/, and /-id/). After the lecture, the teacher reads some words aloud and has the students categorize them; then, the students do the same to each other. Thus, the students are engaged, but only to the extent of doing sample problems; they speak to each other, but only to repeat the examples given by the teacher. In the other activity, the focus is on the /r/ vs. /l/ minimal pair. The teacher explains the difference, and then provides several examples the students must identify. Later, students repeat the same task in groups of three, with students taking turns being the speaker. Interestingly, the article describes this activity as "fun, reflective, student-centered, and practical." The "student-centered" adjective isn't justified at all. The "reflective" adjective is justified by the article because when one student pronounces a word, they immediately see what two other students perceive the sound as. However, as even the article notes, there's no way for that students to know if a mismatch is caused by their pronunciation or by an error in listening by the other students. The solution for this in the article is for the student to ask a teacher—but this 1) immediately shifts the responsibility for judging the language to the teacher, and 2) is clearly impractical, since it would require the teacher to judge the accuracy of many simultaneously produced words across the classroom.

The other major type of activity for which student engagement might be low, at least at times, are team games where only one student from each team participates at any given time. For example, the "baseball" and "soccer" games described in section 9.8.1.3 fall under this category, since each round is a face-off between one member of each team. While students who are invested in winning or in watching their teammates perform will remain "engaged," in the sense that they will be following the action, they won't necessarily be "engaged" in the language processing that is ostensibly the target of these activities. And for students who aren't interested, the activity doesn't do anything to encourage their continued involvement in

language learning. Both articles recognize this potential problem, and rely on the teacher to keep moving new students into the playing positions: the baseball activity says, "For large classes, teachers should substitute liberally to give "benchwarmers" a chance to play," and the soccer activity says, "You might sometimes award free kicks, corners, or even penalty kicks….In these cases, you can appoint who will shoot, usually a very inactive student or someone who needs a boost."

However, with these and a few other exceptions, the majority of the activities in the corpus count as "active learning" even though a minority explicitly identify this as a feature of their activities. In other words, one almost universal teacher belief in this corpus is that learning should involve student engagement rather than passive learning. This belief is so widespread that it doesn't need to be mentioned by the authors in most cases—it is an almost naturalized component of this discourse.

To consider the collaborative and cooperative learning categories, it is important to recall how Prince (2004) differentiates between them. For collaborative learning, Prince says that "the core element…is the emphasis on student interactions rather than on learning as a solitary activity" (p. 223). For cooperative learning, "the core element…is a focus on cooperative incentives rather than competition to promote learning" (p. 223). This distinction is almost the same as the distinction I made in section 9.7 between the solo-group axis and the collaborative-cooperative axis. There, I reported that 80.8% of all articles include group work for at least part of the activity. However, not all the group work required students to collaborate. For example, one which is described as a "testing technique" involves students asking a partner interview questions and writing their answers down as accurately as possible. In this case, the students aren't collaborating, because they're not trying to achieve a common goal; there is no active negotiation of meaning, nor is there an intent to communicate—just to get answers for points on a test. In another activity, students listen to a news report, and answer cloze and comprehension questions. In the middle of the activity, the teacher should "Allow students some time to check with others around them or in small groups for common answers." These students are working in groups, but they're not really trying to achieve a common goal.

Turning to the issue of cooperation, in section 9.7, I showed that not all group activities involve cooperation. Some, like those described in the previous paragraph, involve students doing something in a group, but not towards a common goal. In addition, 32 of the activities included a competitive element. Some of those activities are purely competitive, as in the case of the intra-group games, like *karuta* or some of the board games. Others include both a cooperative component and a competitive component, as in the case of the hotel role-play discussed in 9.8.1.1. The role-play activity itself, where students pretend to be travel agents and a couple booking a honeymoon hotel, is cooperative, since the four people are together trying to find the best hotel to meet the couple's needs. However, prior to the role-play activity, students first play *karuta* to familiarize themselves with hotel iconography and vocabulary.

One final case is more complex—that of inter-group competitive games. Most of these games involve a mix of competition and cooperation, but the amount of cooperation varies based on how much teammates are allowed to work together. The "soccer" and "baseball" games are an example of competitive activities where, even though the team is ostensibly working together to achieve a goal (to win the game), they aren't actually cooperating, since they can't interact—each round is strictly between two individual members of each team. Conversely, the treasure hunt game (where students have to walk around campus, guided by a series of clues) is entirely cooperative, since each clue is solved collectively, and then the group is required to travel together to find the next clue. It's not possible to give exact numbers on which activities of this type are cooperative, since it is a continuum rather than a binary division. Nonetheless, based on the analysis in section 9.7, it is safe to say that more than 70% of the activities involve at least some amount of collaboration; this, again, places the majority of the activities into the active learning paradigm.

The final category, problem-based learning (PBL), is less prevalent in the corpus. This paradigm requires that students be presented with some sort of a genuine problem to attempt to solve, usually in collaborative groups (Prince, 2004). In language learning, much of the benefit is purported to come from exposure to genuine language and to learning the language in the process of achieving another goal rather than focusing on linguistic elements (Greenier, 2018). It's unsurprising to see few PBL in the corpus, because PBL generally involves a longer time frame,

with students working both in and out of class to accomplish the objectives that they are in part responsible for creating. In section 9.3.4, it was found that only 35 (19.8%) of the activities take place over more than one lesson, and only 14 (7.9%) take more than two lessons. Furthermore, since problem-based lessons tend to involve complicated set-ups and often a series of scaffolded steps, it's hard for them to be described in the word limit that My Share requires. Thus, it would be inappropriate to read the lack of PBL activities as indicating a belief among the authors that this kind of learning isn't important. Rather, it's more accurate to say that the My Share format constructs a view of language learning wherein problem-based learning isn't necessary, since the genre implies that language learning can be successful even when it is accomplished via a series of unlinked activities.

Having said that, I will mention three activities that do, at least in part, fall under PBL. The first involves students working on a business research project, and will be discussed in section 10.5 due to its strong links to neoliberalism. The other two are science research projects conducted in English. The first describes the activity as a "collaborative science-based project," hitting two of the four main AL buzzwords. The article doesn't so much describe an actual activity as it describes what it calls a "framework." It recommends that teachers choose a scientific concept that is "related to students' specialisations," such as "for mechanical engineering majors, a catapult project…." The presumption is that the assigned project will involve scientific concepts that the students have probably already learned in Japanese. Then the teacher helps students with some of the important English terms. Students are provided with materials, and then are set free in groups to design their project however they think best. The students have to try various designs, gather data on performance, and prepare a written project report (or, in the Variation section, a "mini-presentation"). One thing that is unclear is exactly how English language learning ties into the project. The students are told that "they will be assessed on their language output, not the design or performance of the machine," but there is no indication if the teacher tries to make or encourage the students to do the actual design and experimentation in English. The benefits gained from this project are consistent with PBL ideas, with the article saying, that it is "a means for building motivating, meaningful, and enjoyable learning opportunities into their language curricula," followed by a large list of specific language skills like report

writing, genre appropriate grammar, etc. This project demonstrates a PBL approach to language learning, but it is interesting to note that this project is only designed to work with a limited range of students in terms of major and English level and that it isn't clear how much actual English use is involved in the project.

The second science-based project, however, is not limited to science and engineering majors. The articles states that the activity is an adaptation of "a mathematics activity for native speakers." In the activity, each group is given a Rika-chan doll, a lot of rubber bands, and measuring sticks. Students attach rubber bands to the doll's feet, drop the doll from a fixed height, and measure how far it falls. They add more rubber bands, measuring each time to determine a mathematical correlation between number of rubber bands and falling distance. The students then have to extrapolate that information to guess how many rubber bands it would take for the doll to be dropped out a window ("a 20–30 meter drop is ideal") to get as close to the ground as possible without hitting it.[130] After a winner is determined, the students have to "summarize the experience and report their results orally or in writing as a linked-skills activity." Unlike the previous activity, this report does not appear to be a formal scientific report, likely because the STEM students in the previous activity would benefit from learning the specifics of the research report format, while non-STEM students likely would not. Again, this activity falls squarely under project-based learning, but it has an even more tenuous connection to English language learning. The article says, "With English as the primary means of teacher explanations and accountability through assessed reporting on group progress, the students, who would normally rely on Japanese communication, can be pushed to consider and use English throughout the task." However, the article doesn't describe what this "assessed reporting on group progress" is, nor does it give any explanation for why having to complete a final report in English would in any way compel or

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[130] One of my regrets with the current project is that time and space didn't permit a detailed analysis of gender and sexuality in the corpus, concerns for which were a large part of what drove me to this project—the misogynist blog share discussed in the Introduction, and discussions on an email mailing list about an activity included in this corpus that many of us felt were heteronormative and sexist. The Rika-chan activity would be one of the key articles in a continuation of that analysis, because, when we think about what is going on here, a female doll is being dropped, over and over, for supposed scientific experimentation, with the ultimate test having a reasonable chance to crash the doll into the ground from a scale height of 130-200 meters (30-60 stories). The fact that the goal is to "save" the woman does not mitigate the fact that the activity treats women's bodies as disposable objects.

persuade students to use English throughout. Again, it's possible that the My Share genre doesn't lend itself well to PBL; perhaps the reason that first science example seems more functional is that it is only a framework (meaning length was less of a concern) and it offered an activity where the ability to do the work in English may have actual benefit to the specific students being targeted.

In addition, I would also like to mention two activities that deliberately stand in opposition to PBL. Part of PBL is that while teachers are supposed to facilitate learning, the actual steps taken to solve the problem are supposed to be at least in part up to the students. Two activities take complex tasks and deliberately restrict or minimize the steps students take. One article says,

> A presentation can be divided into four parts: information gathering, writing, practicing, and presenting. All these are important skills, but since doing all them together can be overwhelming in one's native language, not only in English, this activity removes the first step, simplifies the second, and allows students to focus on the remaining two.

The students work in groups, and each group is assigned a country to give a presentation on. The way the activity "remove[s] the first step [and] simplifies the second" is by giving the students all the information that they could need to include in their presentation, and strictly limits each student to providing three pieces of information. Furthermore, students are allowed to use the same sentence patterns that the teacher used in a demonstration presentation. Thus, this activity not only tells students what to say, it intentionally provides an exact set of steps to transform raw information into a presentation.

In the second example, the New York–Sydney research activity discussed in section 10.3.2.4, the article states, with regards to students' normal behavior when doing a research project, that "many students waste huge amounts of time surfing the Internet as they do not first organize a research plan with specific questions to help guide their search for concrete answers." To do this, the article first has students do research in pairs on computers based on whatever techniques they already have to determine which of the two cities is better to live in. Then, the students report their answers, and the teacher methodically tears down most of what they produce,

by rejecting all opinions, claims lacking "valid evidence," and "non-relevant ideas." Then, the teacher will "emphasize the amount of time that can be wasted on the Internet" by calculating (though incorrect math) the time per usable fact. The point of this attack on student work is to give the teacher the opportunity to swoop in and teaches students "more efficient approaches to Internet research." However, the teacher doesn't actually do that—instead, they provide a set of criteria for what *they* consider to be information "needed to make the decision to live in one of the cities." Students then research those specific criteria, and then "You should find that students have a much larger number of useable facts." Not only is everything about this activity an inversion of the PBL paradigm, it is extremely critical of students and absolutely sure in its own approach, even though it would be fairly easy to argue that the criteria provided for the second research is neither sufficient nor, even, meeting author's own criteria for "good" data in the first step.

As only a single article, the New York–Sydney activity could be dismissed as an extreme view—a rejection of PBL, and a belief that the teacher's ideas are almost certainly better than the students', even for issues not related to language use. But the same attitude exists in other articles, as in the poetry-writing activity discussed in 9.5.1 with the lines, "I actually told my students that they would thank me years down the road for introducing the poem to them. They laughed at me. I'm waiting." Similarly, another article claims, "There is nothing better than getting a personal hand-written letter from somebody in this modern age of email"—a claim that many students (or, teachers, like myself) might want to disagree with but having no rhetorical space to do so given the absolute certainty of the claim. While these are extreme examples, I hold that this attitude is to some degree an inherent feature of the My Share genre, a claim I will expand upon in the Conclusion.

## 10.5 Neoliberalism in My Share Articles

Davies and Bansel (2007) described neoliberalism as the centralization of economics in the public and private domains—the idea that economic advancement is not just the best way to improve people's lives, but it is in fact the measure of improvement. In this model, the interests of individuals become subordinate to the interests of the state-industry complex. In addition, neoliberalist policies "seek to remove the buffer of social welfare as a governmental function in the belief that the

market operates most efficiently and effectively without regulation" (Lakes & Carter, 2011, p. 21). In many places this "buffer of social welfare" has included education, with a variety of forces aiming to "reform" education by privatizing it and making it subject to market forces, thus removing it from the control of governments, teachers, and unions (Apple, 2006). The consequence at the pedagogical level is often what Giroux (2010) called a "bare pedagogy" which "places an emphasis on winning at all costs, a ruthless competitiveness, hedonism, the cult of individualism, and a subject largely constructed within a market-driven rationality that abstracts economics and markets from ethical considerations" (p. 185).

The influence of neoliberalism on Japanese educational policy has been well demonstrated (Amano & Poole, 2005; Newby, et al., 2009; K. Takayama, 2009). This has manifested in deregulation and localization—that is, the shifting of power from central ministries towards peripheral entities, sometimes down to the individual school level. While the most dramatic example of this is the transformation of the public, national universities into quasi-autonomous entities which continue to receive some state funding but were given autonomy in issues of hiring, firing, and curricula (Goodman, 2005), the influence of neoliberalism and deregulation can be seen in numerous aspects of Japanese education. For example, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme appears to most observers to be an educationally focused project. However, it was originally created by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help local businesses and governments build connections to foreign countries through personal relationships with the JET participants (Hashimoto, 2011; McConnell, 2000).[131] Nods towards local control over pre-tertiary education can be seen in the adoption of the Integrated Studies Period designed to give local schools and/or school boards the chance to create customized curricula to meet local needs (Aline & Hosoda, 2004), as well as in the flexibility originally given to schools in implementing English education at the primary school level (Butler, 2007). At a more fundamental level, some of the basic principles of Japanese education have been consumed by the neoliberal agenda, with heavy emphasis being placed on *kosei* (literally, "individuality"), which, in its "new"

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[131] JET participants serve limited contracts, with a current five-year maximum, and thus the expectation is that they will return home and act as reverse ambassadors for Japanese businesses and society.

form has come to mean "to be a self-governing individual who accepts educational and social responsibilities that are no longer performed by the state" (K. Takayama, 2009, p. 134). K. Takayama also argued that the promotion of *yutori* education (see section 2.2.3) served to legitimize deregulation and led towards a multi-track educational path that divides education into different strata based on pure market logic. Furthermore, the very act of learning foreign languages in Japan is tied up with internationalization and neoliberalism, since the goal is for students to acquire language skills (almost exclusively English) that will advance the interests of Japan and Japanese companies in a "globalized" economy (Hashimoto, 2000, 2009, 2011).

Searching for traces of neoliberalism in the My Share corpus is a difficult task, because neoliberalism is such a part of modern life that it is nearly ubiquitous—as Metcalf (2017) said, "It is a name for a premise that, quietly, has come to regulate all we practise and believe: that competition is the only legitimate organising principle for human activity." Thus, the following sections examine only some of the more outstanding examples of neoliberalism in the corpus. Since there are no specific terms or moves related to neoliberalism, the analysis is entirely at the discourse level, and looks at four topics: activities linked to future employment, activities linked to consumerism, the costs of teaching and learning, and economic interdiscursivity.

**10.5.1 Activities linked to future employment.** In a neoliberal paradigm, everything in life can be measured by economic activity and productivity, and education is generally viewed as a means to acquire skills for future employment and/or certifications (degrees, licenses, etc.) that qualify one to enter particular jobs. The idea of educating people for their personal or ethical improvement, their enjoyment, or their civic responsibility (except insofar as civic responsibility is equated with being a productive worker) always plays a lesser role compared to providing knowledge and skills that will benefit students' future employers and the economic being of the nation state.[132]

The first sense in which the corpus is consistent with the neoliberal agenda is its strict focus on improving English (and only English) language education, as

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[132] By the logic of neoliberalism, this kind of education-training is beneficial not just for the state and employers, but also for students, because there is no greater pursuit than personal economic growth.

discussed in section 10.3.3.3. As Hashimoto (2009, 2011) showed, "foreign language learning" has long meant "English language learning" in Japanese education, and the 2003 Action Plan makes clear that the goal of learning English is to create "graduates can use English in their work" (MEXT, 2003, cited in Hato, 2005). The My Share corpus is consistent with and complicit in this promotion of English language learning at the expense of all other potential foreign languages. The one time a third language is discussed, the L3 becomes just another means for the students to practice using English.

In addition to this broad sense, there are several activities that focus more directly on the teaching/learning of English for future employment purposes. Most of these have been discussed elsewhere in this paper: the student-teaching activities discussed in section 9.8.1.2; the job-interview practice activities discussed in 9.8.2.2, and the project-based activity where STEM students practice doing and reporting scientific research, in section 10.4.3. Three additional activities that touch lightly on the issue of future employment are as follows: in the first, students play a guessing game to learn the names of occupations. This could be considered "general" English, though it is English specifically associated with capitalist behavior. The second is a presentation activity that is specifically designed to address the needs of the author's "medical and nursing students." The author argues that these students tend to use English that is so difficult in presentations that neither the audience nor the presenter can understand what they mean. The ability to give clear, understandable presentations is described as "a necessary skill if they become researchers and present their findings in English." The third article is a "walk-and-talk," where students walk around the class and ask other students questions and record their answers (like the sketch pops activity described in section 9.8.2.3). This activity is not unusual, but the claim that opens the article and justifies the activity is. It says, "There is a growing need for English language learners to not only express and elicit from others their thoughts on topics of the day, but also to analyze and present any related data." This statement is odd, because being able analyze and present data about "topics of the day" doesn't seem like a skill that almost anyone needs in any language. If they do, however, it's almost certainly going to be in the context of a job, since "analysis" and "presentation of data" are not generally an appropriate response to casual conversations with others. As a side note, this phrasing is an

example of what Fairclough (2003) called the exclusion of social actors, in that the sentence does not make clear who it is that is creating this "growing need." Rather, the need is made to appear to always already exist—it is positioned as an undeniable fact of modern (probably economic) reality. Fairclough demonstrated a wide variety of ways that documents linked to neoliberalism engage in this kind of mystification and naturalization.

There is one more activity that seems to be focused on job skills; I have saved it for last because it is, for me, the most problematic in this category. In this activity, students take on the role of corporate employees (no company or field defined). Their (imaginary) employer has brought foreign clients to the city students are in, and the students' job is to "persuade their foreign clients to collaborate with them on a major international project." However, this activity does not teach students how to develop a business proposal, pitch an idea, or utilize cross-cultural communication strategies/skills. Rather, the students have to use their smart phones to find three places to bring these clients to entertain them (as the article explains, "corporate entertainment"). It is possible to imagine the same underlying activity (using smartphones to search for local information) being done with a different narrative—it could have involved students inviting foreign friends to their home town and developing a travel plan to show off their city, or with introducing foreign exchange students to the local culture. But in the article as written, business is the driving goal. Student English skill is commodified—transformed into a commodity that has value only in connection with a corporate endeavor. This is also a commodification of the local area—the value of local entertainment and cultural sites are valuable only insofar as they help persuade the foreign clients to engage in business with the local employers. In addition, the activity does all of this in a way that simply doesn't make sense: students are required to conduct the smart phone research in English. Why would a company based in Japan, with Japanese employees, looking for local entertainment sites, not conduct said research in Japanese? The last paragraph of the Conclusion clarifies the article's intent:

Using smartphone research will lead students to recognize the value of smartphones as a tool to further their English education. Smartphones are steadily becoming an integral part of students' daily lives as well as their

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future academic and work career. Teachers have an opportunity to teach students how to mindfully use their smartphones to enhance their English education. When smartphones are used consistently in class activities, students will become self-motivated and discover new ways of using their smartphones to learn English.

The article makes a complex set of interconnections, between future work (and academic career, though that can be read that as a form of "work preparation"), smartphone usage, methods for learning English, and motivation to learn English. I don't want to get caught up in the exact connections, because I think they fail to make sense on careful examination. I'm more interested in the broad connections: the future becomes work (just as, in the activity, local entertainment becomes corporate entertainment), English is embedded in work (not in personal growth), and motivation comes from the use of a consumer tool (smartphones). Students, student knowledge, English itself, and local culture all become locked into a neoliberal, corporate world.

Having described this and the other handful of job-linked articles, it is important to note that even if I add a few more that very cursorily touch on this subject, these activities amount to no more than 5–7% of the corpus. Furthermore, there are several activities that promote the exact opposite, specifically locating English language learning in terms of personal, cultural, artistic, or emotional realms. Examples previously discussed in this paper are the poetry activity discussed in section 7.5.1, the two TED Talks activities from 9.8.2.1, the Normal Rockwell activity discussed in 10.3.2.4, and the Ochikeron YouTube activity discussed in section 10.3.2.3.[133] There are many others, including another poetry activity, one about personal letter writing, several using creative writing, and discussions of emotions, holidays, and other personal events. Thus, while there are some instances of strongly connecting English language learning with future employment, they are a minority of the corpus.

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[133] The last of these occupies a middle space: the whole activity is about using YouTube videos to communicate across cultures, but it was specifically designed for a Media English elective course, meaning that the students may be intending to enter media related careers. Furthermore, the example YouTuber, Ochikeron, appears to run her channel as part of a cooking/lifestyle business including YouTube revenue and a cookbook.

**10.5.2 Consumerism in the My Share corpus.** By consumerism, I mean the idea that consumption is a naturally and inherently good idea. Any activity that involves consumer goods or the buying and selling of things was included in this category. Most of these inclusions are small. For example, one article, when talking about student journals, says that there is a "tendency for a student, at a loss for what to write, simply to chronicle the previous weekend's meals and shopping experiences." That is, this article assumes/asserts that one of the two main ways students relate to their personal history is via what they have purchased. There are at least ten articles with such inclusions, though some cases are borderline and given the wide range of ways that shopping and consumption can be described, it is likely that this analysis missed some.

There are two subcategories that deserve a little more detailed analysis. The first is advertising. In section 9.8.1.1, I described a role-playing activity where students create a video advertisement for a common product. The article doesn't provide any reason for focusing on advertisements. Another activity has students work in pairs to watch television commercials. Only one of the members is allowed to watch the screen; the one who is watching uses English to describe what they can see in the advertisement to the non-watching students. That student then has to guess what kind of product is being sold. The justification for using advertisements comes in the first line of the article: "TV commercials are a great language learning resource as they are short, high quality, culturally distinctive narratives, and are already sometimes used in English classrooms as a form of cultural exposure." This is a formulation of the neoliberal belief that everything is economics and economics is everything by equating culture and television advertising.

Another topic linked to modern consumerist behavior are activities that promote or normalize car ownership. One activity involves the students using a common U.S. "fortune-telling" device, where students randomly generate possible futures. Six facets of future life are "predicted": what kind of house they will live in, who they will marry, what kind of car they will drive, where they will live, how many children they will have, and what job they will have. In other words, car ownership is treated as equally likely and important as living somewhere, getting married, and having children. Note that while the device can predict null answers (as in "I will have zero children," "I won't have a car"), the issue is that car ownership is fully

normalized as a standard life event that, based on the way the math of the device works, will occur among 75% of people in the future. While the results are supposed to all be for fun and some of them will be either undesirable or nonsensical, the equivalence is still a powerful promotion of the consumerist mentality.[134]

Two other activities indirectly promote the idea of car ownership through their use of Google Maps. Both activities are designed to teach directions, and both advocate Google Maps Street View as superior to "standard" paper maps due to its authenticity and higher visual appeal. Google Street View, however, is an inherently car-centric program, since the Street View photos are taken from a car driven by Google, and it is known for being poor at aiding, for example, bicyclists (Bonnington, 2018). Having students practice giving and getting directions via Street View makes car travel seem normal—directions are given without reference to public transportation, to the possibility of walking off drivable streets, etc. Note that there are two other activities in the corpus that teach directions without Google Street View, so there seems to be no inherent need to do so (and, of course, the technology didn't even exist a few years ago). Here, the drive to utilize new technologies, allegedly for authenticity, normalizes automotive ownership and transforms it into the normal way of interacting with cities.

Finally, it is worth noting that even though articles supporting a consumerist ideology are a small minority of the articles in the corpus (somewhere around 10%, depending on how strict I am with which activities I include), there is only one article with a clearly anti-consumerist message. This article was discussed above in section 10.3.2.1—the ecological footprint activity. The whole point of this activity is for students and teachers together to question the consequences of a modern consumerist lifestyle in terms of potential damage done to the Earth. The lack of anti-consumerist messages is consistent with a larger trend in the corpus: there are very few activities where a major portion of the content is challenging the status quo. In addition to this one, there is an activity where students investigate gender roles by watching and discussing a scene from *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and the activity

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[134] As a side note, in reference to my above-mentioned concerns about potentially troublesome representations of gender and sexuality in the corpus, this activity also normalizes the idea of both marriage and child bearing. Not only does that not necessarily match Japanese demographic patterns, it is a heteronormative position that would be very difficult for non-heterosexual students to position themselves in.

discussed in 10.3.2.4 where students look at the depiction of violence in movies. This lack of "challenging" topics most likely suggests one or more of several teacher beliefs, all of which I've personally heard expressed by various teachers in Japan: 1) Average students in Japanese secondary and tertiary English compulsory English classes do not have enough English ability to discuss complex topics of this nature, 2) serious issues cause too much emotional/cognitive distraction, thus hampering language learning, 3) the language learning classroom is not an appropriate place to discuss serious issues—teachers should focus on only teaching "language," or 4) language teachers should not challenge status quo ideas, to protect themselves and/or because the status quo is good.

**10.5.3 The cost of teaching.** In section 9.4, I discussed the issue of classroom materials at length. Section 9.4.4 focused on materials that would likely not be freely available to teachers—that is, resources that they would either need to have a teaching/resource budget to pay for, or they would have to pay for out of their own pocket. In these activities, teaching itself becomes embedded in the construct of buying and selling items, and the idea that buying something will in some way aid teaching reinforces the idea that success is linked to consumption. Similar points could be made for the technology-based articles that specifically promote these technologies as being better than previous, perhaps less costly, alternative (see, for example, the Google Street View articles discussed in the previous section). The only other time that the role of teacher as consumer arises in the corpus is in the case of one article that mentions potential legal concerns in making photocopies of copyrighted graded readers for students.

**10.5.4 Neoliberalism and interdiscursivity in the My Share genre.** Lastly, it is worth noting that while there were some cases, noted above, where the topics of neoliberalism was evoked by the My Share articles, I was unable to find any traces of the neoliberal ideology reshaping the My Share genre itself. That is, the genre itself hasn't undergone a shift and been co-opted through the interdiscursivity of economic genres as has occurred in other educational discourses. For instance, Shore (2008) discusses how the U.K. university system has become infused with "audit culture," in which universities continually measure the economic value and

efficiency of teachers and departments through systems of accountancy, transforming universities from places of "higher learning into the modern idea of the university as corporate enterprise whose primary concern is with market share, servicing the needs of commerce, maximizing economic return and investment, and gaining competitive advantage in the 'Global Knowledge Economy'" (p. 282). This doctrine shapes how universities both talk about themselves to the public and in the internal documents they use to govern themselves. Coming from a different metaphorical perspective, Fairclough (1993) talks about the "marketization" of public education in the United Kingdom, utilizing the principle of *interdiscursivity* (the merging of genres) to show that educational institutions have in many cases absorbed the grammatical patterns, vocabulary, and structure of marketing and other neoliberal genres into their advertisements, job postings, and other discourses.

There were no significant examples of language of this sort—there does not seem to be a concern by the with students getting or with teachers providing "value." The word *value* itself appears only four times in the corpus, and tends to a vague meaning, as in "Students may try to copy sentences from their partners' vocabulary worksheets. To discourage this, explain the value of writing original sentences and discourage such behavior as you walk around the room." The closest example of the idea of "auditing" comes from a single article which says, "Most students expect their teacher to correct errors and believe that such feedback is beneficial. In fact, not giving that feedback may negatively affect their evaluation of teaching." However, it is unclear from this sentence if this refers to evaluation in a formal sense (such as the student evaluations most universities, in my experience, require students to do of their teachers once or twice a year). Thus, it appears that while there are activities where the dominating importance of economics seems to have impinged upon the class work, as described above, the genre does not seem to have been co-opted by the neoliberal ideology like many other discourses related to education have been.

## 10.6 Summary and Discussion

This chapter has reversed the strategy of the previous chapters by starting with three topics—internationalization, active learning/autonomy, and neoliberalism—from outside the corpus. These topics were chosen because they have played important roles in Japanese education policies in the last thirty to forty years. The

corpus contains traces of all three, in some cases expressing beliefs consistent with these ideologies, and in some cases resisting them. On internationalization, the way that the corpus both focuses solely on English and overrepresents the United States is reflecting and contributing to the *kokusaika* ideas that the world is divisible into "Japan" and "not-Japan" (which connects to the *nihonjinron* philosophy) and that one of the goals of the educational system is to promote English-language learning so that the Japanese nation/economy can successfully interact with the world. At the same time, there are individual activities that resist this highly instrumental orientation towards internationalization. To a much greater degree, the corpus is strongly biased towards active learning, with every activity having at least some active learning and most being heavily focused on promoting student engagement. There is less expressed interest in encouraging student autonomy. Furthermore, there are a number of cases where articles promote the activity as having or improving a specific aspect of AL/autonomy (such as "student-centered") but the activity doesn't seem to actually accomplish that goal. The connections between the corpus and neoliberalism are much fainter, with the most obvious being the activities that are linked to students' future employment. More striking is the fact that only one article stands against neoliberalism to any significant degree.

Lastly, it is important to reiterate that these three topics are not independent entities. A major idea justifying *kokusaika* attitudes is that they are necessary to support economic development in a globalizing world. Similarly, the reason that the government has come to support active learning is because of the desires of the business community that Japanese educational institutions "produce" graduates who possess what they see as important business skills like innovation and problem solving for a "knowledge-based economy." This does not mean that the fact that nearly the entire corpus uses active learning means that the collective author is actively in favor of a neoliberal world; similarly, the exclusive focus on English doesn't mean that the collective author (or, even, individual authors) believe that Japan and Japanese culture are somehow unique in the world and that it is important to preserve that uniqueness by attending only to the practical aspects (the *kokusaika* aspects) of internationalization. But it does mean that that this genre is a part of what makes these ideologies so compelling and naturalized.

# Chapter 11
## Interview and Questionnaire Analysis

## 11.1 Introduction

The intent of this chapter is to utilize what Denzin (1989) calls "Triangulation of data sources," by looking beyond the data of the My Share articles themselves (and my interpretations of that data) towards additional data drawn from questionnaires and interviews of connected parties. This desire for sources of data and interpretation that go beyond the primary texts is an important part of both many versions of both CDA (Wodak, 2001a), and CGA—the latter seeking what Bhatia (2015) called a "multiperspectival approach to analysis, in particular the use of ethnographic procedures" (p. 15). The goal in both cases is to situate the discourses being studied in a wider socio-historical context based on the understanding that texts and genres do not exist as independent, abstract entities but are rather real objects used by real people to achieve particular goals, express particular identities, and engage in particular kinds of social practice.

The need for this contextualization is the reason that I provided a partial picture of the Japanese education system (especially, foreign language education) in Chapter 2. Even though many of the authors of the My Share articles may be personally unfamiliar with either the history of Japanese education or with government educational policies, they are nonetheless teaching within institutions conditioned by that history and those policies; additionally, their students, to whom they are necessarily (at least in part) reacting to when they attempt to create "successful" activities, are products of a specifically Japanese approach to education and foreign language learning.

However, there are other, closer aspect of context to which it is also important to attend, and those are the individual people and conditions associated with the production and consumption of the texts in the corpus. The most directly involved actors are the perceived readers (mostly language teachers in Japan), the authors themselves, and the editorial staff of *The Language Teacher* (especially the editors of the My Share section). The first of these—potential readers—I chose not to investigate. It would theoretically be possible to conduct research on the reactions of readers to these articles, and I consider what such research might look like in

Chapter 13. But such an inquiry would necessitate a fundamentally different approach to research than the rest of my text. I did, however, seek to gain some insight into the latter two sets of actors. First, to better understand both the editors and the editorial process, I conducted interviews with 4 of the JALT editors (3 of whom worked directly on My Share, and a 4th who had more general knowledge of JALT publications). The goal of the interviews was to understand what the editors perceived of as the purpose and value of My Share as well as to understand what role they played in shaping the final publications via setting of the submission criteria, selecting and rejecting submissions for publication, and editing the accepted submissions. Second, to better understand the authors, I solicited their responses to an online questionnaire.[135] The goal of the questionnaire was to get insight into the demographics of the authors, their reasons for publishing, their memories of the submission and editing process, and a partial view of their ideas about language teaching/learning in Japan.

## 11.2 Method

Between November 2017 and April 2018, I interviewed 4 people who volunteered as editors for *The Language Teacher*. I originally intended to only interview people who edited the My Share section between 2011 and 2016. During this time, there were 8 different My Share editors, with 2 co-editors at a time except between January 2011 and January 2012 and in January/February 2015 when there was only a single editor.[136] However, during the first interview I conducted (which was of a My Share editor), that editor recommended that I contact a few older members of the JALT Publications team who may have had a significant impact on the development of My Share, *The Language Teacher*, and, more generally, the way that the JALT publications team interacts and manages their tasks. In addition, I was unable to contact and interview the other My Share editors from the time of my

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[135] The survey was conducted prior to the interviews, but some of the interview responses had a significant bearing on how I interpreted the survey data, so I have explained the interviews first in this chapter.

[136] Note that this is according to the bylines in the journal, which may not reflect the actual work done, since Editor 4 said that they were listed as a My Share editor for only 2 of their approximately 12 months in the position; during the remainder of the time they continued to assist with My Share editing but also held a second, "higher" position under which they were identified in the journal.

corpus. The following is an overview of the work these editors did with JALT Publications, though the descriptions are intentionally vague to help preserve anonymity.

- Editor 1: Editor of My Share section during the time frame of my corpus. Has since held several higher-level roles in JALT Publications. Interview was conducted at the JALT International conference in November 2017.

- Editor 2: Editor of My Share section prior to the time of my corpus. Before and after that time, the editor served in several other roles in JALT Publications. Interview was conducted via Skype in January, 2018.

- Editor 3: Never an editor of the My Share section but has been involved in many aspects of JALT Publications for many years for both *The Language Teacher* and other JALT publications. Interview was conducted via Skype in February, 2018.

- Editor 4: Editor of My Share section during the time of my corpus. Continued in other roles as JALT publications for several years after the My Share editorship. Interview was conducted via Skype in April, 2018.

The interviews were semi-structured, based on a set of questions about the editing process and My Share that had come up during my research. Editor 1 received the base set of questions that were all highly focused on My Share. Subsequent interviews incorporated additional lines of inquiry in response to ongoing research findings and responses to prior interviews; in addition, I included customized questions for Editors 2 and 3 regarding the additional roles they have played in JALT publication history. With all the interviews, I did not restrict myself to the planned questions, allowing the editor and I to dialogically explore other issues that arose.

The interviews were not recorded. When I conducted the first interview, it was done in a fairly public place (a convention hall) and at the time I thought that that would be the only interview (since I had, up to that time, been unable to contact any of the other editors), and that I would thus use it as an informal guide to understanding some of the rest of the data without referring to the contents in detail. Once the initial interviewee helped me contact other members of the editorial staff,

I felt that the data was worthy of the separate analysis that is included below. However, technical problems during the second interview (done on Skype) also prevented that interview from being recorded, and at that point it did not seem to make sense to record only some of the interviews. Thus, the analysis is based upon the notes I took during the interviews, and, in some cases, the responses I received to follow-up email questions. Finally, I sent each of the editors a copy of the portions of a preliminary draft of this dissertation that contained information from the editors and offered them the chance to respond, supplement the information, and/or withdraw any of their statements. Only one of the editors responded to this request, and a few revisions were made based upon their comments.

The interviews were analyzed by examining the data for repeated themes, especially those that helped provide interpretive insight on the other aspects of this project. Because the data set was relatively small, no formal coding system was used.

The questionnaire was based on a combination of the goals discussed in section 11.1 and some ideas I had gotten during early portions of the My Share analysis. The survey was created using Google Forms. Prior to sending the questionnaire to the authors, I had a colleague (who had not written a My Share article) "pilot" the survey to get an estimate for how long it would take to complete and to look for any areas of confusion; a few revisions were made prior to sending the survey to the authors. I sent an email to each of the authors explaining my research and providing a link to the form in May, 2017. For articles that had more than one author, I sent a survey to each author. I sent only one survey to authors who had more than one My Share article published in this time period. Approximately one month after the initial email request, I sent an additional email to authors who had not responded to the initial request (except in cases where the initial email "bounced back"—that is, the email server indicated that the email address was no longer valid). Copies of these letters can be found in Appendices C and D.

The questionnaire had 7 sections and contained a total of 37 closed questions and 18 open questions. A breakdown of the sections is shown in Table 68. The specific questions are discussed in the report of the results found in section 11.4. In addition, a complete copy of the survey can be found in Appendix E.

Table 68

*Author Questionnaire Overview*

| Section | Description | Number of closed questions | Number of open questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Research description and participant consent | 1 | 0 |
| 2 | Teaching experience and qualifications | 5 | 4 |
| 3 | Publication process | 0 | 4 |
| 4 | Retrospective (opinions about the activity) | 1 | 4 |
| 5 | Teaching philosophy | 27 | 0 |
| 6 | Demographics | 2 | 4 |
| 7 | Willingness to do follow-up interview | 1 | 2 |

*Note.* Closed questions include multiple choice and Likert-scale questions

The questionnaire results were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. For the quantitative data, since the total number of responses was fairly low, no statistical tests were used beyond simple measures of central tendency. The qualitative data was coded and categorized, with specific details discussed in section 11.4.

## 11.3 Editor Interview Results

In the sections below, I will discuss the major issues that arose in the editor interviews. I have chosen to organize this analysis by themes rather than providing a detailed description of each individual interview for two reasons. First, this helps preserve anonymity, since it allows me to avoid attributing, in most cases, comments to individual editors. Second, it should make it easier to see distinctions between ideas raised by all or most of the editors and those points on which the editors did not agree.

**11.3.1 Acceptance criteria.** All three interviewees who edited My Share said that, in general, they tried to accept as many of the submissions as possible. One editor even initially said that they accepted almost 100%, but after prompting, did recall a few cases of rejection. The primary reason for rejecting articles for most of the editors was that the submission did not follow the requirements laid out in the guidelines—it was too long, it wasn't formatted properly, or even that it wasn't really a description of a single classroom activity. Note that even this loose acceptance

policy is stricter than it was historically—as discussed in section 5.5, the length, scope, and structure of older My Share articles varied much more than modern-day ones.

One of the editors had a stricter set of criteria, however. In addition to rejections for structurally non-compliant submissions, one editor also placed much more emphasis on the section of the guidelines that reads, "Any idea you have dreamt up yourself—or else significantly adapted from someone else, whom you credit—that worked well is suitable. Articles are selected for publication based upon their utility in the classroom, as well as their originality" (JALT, n.d.-a). This editor felt that previous editors had accepted too many submissions that were unoriginal— that they could be found in many textbooks or other teaching guides. While I raised this issue with each of the editors, only one saw this as a major problem—the other two felt that as long as there was even a little bit of originality that the article could be published. While I don't have information from everyone who edited My Share, I would argue that the view of these other two editors probably dominated, at least during the time of my corpus, since there are a substantial number of My Share articles that replicate or at least closely resemble common practices and other publications. Perhaps the best example of this is an article about the use of name cards for each student that are also used to assign students to seats and record attendance. The author writes, "While attendance card systems are certainly not my brainchild, and are already in use in many Japanese classrooms, there still seem to be many teachers who are unaware of the aforementioned benefits." The article acknowledges that this is a common activity, yet the article was still published in My Share despite lacking originality.

The editors gave two main reasons for strongly preferring to accept submissions.[137] The first, expressed by two of the editors, was that just because a particular activity didn't seem useful to them didn't mean that it wouldn't be useful to some subset of *The Language Teacher* readers. They said that in theory they might have rejected an activity if it were for only a very narrow audience, but that they never had such a submission.

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[137] None of the editors had an exact measurement of the number of articles they rejected, though even the strictest one felt that a large majority were accepted. Even when rejected, authors were sometimes given suggestions or pointed to the aspect of the guidelines that they had not fulfilled.

A larger justification, and one expressed by all four editors, was that not only the My Share section, but *The Language Teacher* in general exists in part to serve JALT members as a part of their professional development. As one editor said, "Part of our mission is to help people's career goals. My Share is the classic first publication. It's easy, it helps get your confidence up. A gateway."[138] Another said more simply that one part of *TLT* "is service to members." Thus, in accepting these articles, they were helping these author's professional development by giving them a publication credit that they could list on their CVs.[139] With each editor, I questioned why a My Share article would be beneficial, since they don't count as either research articles/peer-reviewed papers. While most asserted that any publication is better than none, one editor, who had professional experience with the hiring of teachers, said that these publications were often sufficient to meet minimum hiring requirements at the tertiary level. That is, some university policies require that all full-time teachers have a certain number of publications, even if the job itself neither requires nor supports research. If the individual department (that is, the people who are both making the main hiring decision and have the most direct need for the employee) don't actually care about the applicant's publications, but are unable to avoid university-wide restrictions, they may be satisfied with the shorter, non-reviewed My Share articles.

Because of the desire for a high acceptance rate, the editors stated that they did not consider content when choosing articles beyond the sometimes-enforced requirement for originality. Thus, they didn't attempt to judge if the article would be effective in the classroom, if it could be used widely by a variety of teachers, or even if it contained potentially harmful ideas or techniques. In other words, the editors seemed to be expressing that they made little or no attempt to directly control the beliefs and identities represented in the articles.

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[138] Note that this and the other quotations in this section are based on my notes (since as explained in section 11.2, the interviews were not recorded). I have attempted to capture the essence of what the interviewees said in these quotations, though their actual words may have been slightly different.
[139] One could read the attitude of the editor who was concerned with originality as indirectly invoking the same principle. Thinking of the My Share/TLT as a service to members presumably applies to readers as well as writers, and readers would likely be better served by more original content.

**11.3.2 Editing process**. Several researchers have noted that, with respect to academic publications, the editing process (including the identities of the editors and the relationships formed between editors and authors) can dramatically shape both the actual published paper as well as the authors' experience in attempting to have it published—for a recent example focused on Japan, see Muller (2016). One of the most important findings from the editor interviews was that this was likely not the case with most My Share submissions. As already stated above, editors did not use the editorial power of rejection to control what types of activities are described in the My Share section. They also described editorial processes that involved little content shaping on the part of the editors.

Two of the three My Share editors described editing processes that involved several back-and-forth steps. After acceptance, these editors would make suggestions, send those suggestions to the authors, and then wait for those authors to return new drafts. While the process was open-ended, the editors said that in most cases only a couple of steps were necessary. The third editor described an even less interactive process—that editor would take a submission, accept it, make a single set of editing changes, send those to the author(s) to approve, and assuming they did (which the editor said happened most of the time), the article would go into the "to-be-published" queue. In other words, there was, under this editor, rarely a back-and-forth process. Interestingly, one of two editors discussed above also started with this type of process but switched over to a more interactive process. They chose to switch in part due to decreasing amounts of personal time, but also because they came to believe that having the authors do more of the changes was important for their professional growth. They connected this with another belief held by all the editors: that most My Share authors are fairly new to professional writing, and thus it benefited them to be more involved in the editing process, since if they did later move on to research articles, they would likely have to respond to editorial input in a more extensive way.

For all three editors, the editing done was almost always on surface-level issues such as grammar and formatting. In some cases, more extensive editing was required to reduce the word count. One editor mentioned that they made effort to strip out references from articles whenever possible. This approach to citations is reflected in the online guidelines, which state, "You might choose to reference

current research, where necessary, if an understanding of it is indispensable to communicating your idea. That said, My Share is a how-to column, and your writing style must reflect this" (JALT, n.d-a). In the same way that the editors tried to minimize the number of references in the final publication, the guidelines indicate that the focus has to be on the activity itself, with references allowed only when "indispensable."

Thus, the description of the editing process further supports the idea that the final, published papers were much more strongly shaped by the authors than by the editors. This is not to say that the beliefs, identities, etc. contained in the articles necessarily represent the authors' personal beliefs, since those authors writing must necessarily be conditioned by not only their personal ideas but also the conventions of writing for TESOL publication (perhaps especially including My Share, assuming they were readers of the section prior to their submission), which always already shape the discourse produced. Furthermore, some of the results found in earlier chapters (especially Chapter 8) were dependent on the exact lexicogrammatical choices, and those could have been influence by editorial changes. Nonetheless, the fairly light editing and minimal content oversight strongly indicate that, rather than this project being a review primarily of the work and ideas of eight editors, it can be said to at least generally represent the ideas of the larger collective of authors and the discourse community from which they are drawn.

However, there was one way in which the genre was probably strongly shaped by a series of individual editors. During some of the interviews, I was able to bring up the increase in structural formality in the 2001-2005 period (the core sections became more and more obligatory, and the overall format became less varied) that I discussed in section 5.5. Through the interviews and a follow-up email, there seemed to be a consensus that this change was editorially driven—that two or three editors working around that time took deliberate steps to formalize the genre and more strictly regulate how the articles would appear in final publication.

**11.3.3 Organizational issues affecting My Share.** By "organizational" I mean larger concerns within the JALT organization that had consequences on the My Share genre. The first major issue is financial trouble in JALT which seems to have started sometime in the 2000s. This was caused by falling membership, decreased

attendance at the annual international conference, lessened support from publishers and other associate members (in terms of advertising, conference presence, etc.), and increases in some key costs. In terms of the publications, this first manifested in *The Language Teacher* shifting from monthly to bimonthly publication in 2010. The financial pressures continued, and this led to much stricter regulations on the number of total pages in the journal and thus stricter caps on the lengths of each article. This led to the 700 word restriction on My Share articles (one editor said that, earlier, 1000 words was the maximum), which was later further reduced to the 600 word limit that remains today.

One editor stated that this switch to bimonthly publications was also necessary from an editorial perspective, because the journal was unable to get enough submissions for the peer reviewed sections of the journal that passed review (the blind-review process ensured that they accepted far fewer submissions) and thus there were times when filling each issue was challenging. Furthermore, they stated that part of the reason that the journal adopted annual "My Share Special" issues, which have only one feature article and 10–14 My Share articles, was that these issues took some of the pressure off of the main editors, both in terms of their own work and in terms of the need to fill issues. This editor and one other argued that a second reason for the institution of annual My Share Special issues was the need to decrease a large backlog, with one editor saying that there was a point where there were enough My Share articles waiting in the queue for 3–4 years of bimonthly publications.

Finally, one editor said that a deliberate decision was made, somewhere around the late 2000s to early 2010s, to try to make *The Language Teacher* a more professional publication—to shift it away from a more practical, organizational newsletter towards a more "serious" research journal. This also helped justify a decrease in the length of My Share, and may perhaps have been linked to continually increasing structural restrictions.

**11.3.4 Author demographics**. All three of the editors who worked on My Share said that the majority of My Share authors were new to academic publishing at the time of their My Share submission. Two editors specifically indicated that this was a feature of My Share; as one said, "It represents a starting point, the first time

many authors have tried to get something published." However, as is shown below in section 11.4.2.1, the questionnaire results did not match this—many of the respondents claimed to have had both a lot of teaching experience as well as between some and a lot of experience having academic articles published. When I mentioned to one of the editors that their perceptions didn't seem to match the results of the questionnaire I had done and that many of the authors were established authors before they submitted their My Share articles, the editor said something to the effect of "Oh, yes, we had some people like that, too." In section 11.4.2.1, I discuss several theories for this discrepancy between the interviews and surveys, along with the consequences those theories had on how I interpreted the questionnaire results.

## 11.4 Questionnaire Results

160 distinct authors contributed to this corpus. For 30 (18.8%) of my initial emails, I received a "bounce-back" email indicating that the email address was not valid and thus could not be delivered. This was unsurprising, as many of the email addresses were linked to educational institutions, and, as I show below, most of the authors were not in permanent (tenured) positions at the time of publication. The problem was most pronounced with authors who initially published between 2011 and 2013. Thus, the response rate was certainly influenced by outdated contact information. I did not attempt to determine the current email address of the authors from whom I received no response or for whom the initial email bounced except for one author whom I knew personally and for whom I already had a newer email address. In total, 55 authors (34.4%) completed the survey. Collectively those authors wrote or co-wrote 64 of the articles in the corpus.

Two questions were required: the initial consent question and one question asking the authors to indicate the year in which their first My Share article was published. The rest of the questions were optional. However, the respondents were extraordinarily diligent and willing—of the 2915 total optional questions presented to respondents, only 84 were left blank (2.9%), and 30 of those blanks were for

authors who declined to be interviewed and thus did not provide a follow-up email address.[140]

In each of the following sections I discuss the results of one or two sections of the questionnaire. In addition, I attempt to place those results into conversation with the results and interpretations drawn from the My Share articles themselves.

**11.4.1 Demographic data.** Demographic data was collected in sections 2 and 6, and covered three main issues: experience (educational and teaching), employment situation at the time of submission, and basic demographic data. Starting with the latter, three questions asked about the respondents' language skills. The questions were free response, and I had attempted to phrase them in a way that avoided reifying the idea of "native" and "non-native" speakers.

51 of the 55 respondents provided a first language; the results are in Table 69. Assuming that those speakers who learned a language other than Japanese as their first language are not natives of Japan (a plausible though not certain assumption), then all but two of the respondents who answered the question were born and raised outside of Japan. Furthermore, this data shows the same overwhelming imbalance towards English that is found in the corpus itself.[141]

Table 69

*First Language of Respondents*

| Language | Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| English | 45 | 81.8% |
| English & Japanese simultaneously | 1 | 1.8% |
| English & Hindi simultaneously | 1 | 1.8% |
| Cantonese | 1 | 1.8% |
| French | 1 | 1.8% |
| Japanese | 1 | 1.8% |
| Russian | 1 | 1.8% |
| No answer | 4 | 7.2% |

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[140] When I designed the survey, I had been considering conducting interviews of select authors. Over the course of the project, I decided this would not be a beneficial means of pursuing answers to the main research questions since it would likely overemphasize the beliefs and interviews of a very small percentage of the authors.

[141] Of course, these results are necessarily biased by not only the English-only nature of the corpus, but also by the fact that I only provided the survey in English.

With regards to their English language ability, 38 of the respondents explicitly used either "native" or "native speaker," with one using "first language" and another using "mother tongue." Four of the remaining respondents used the term "fluent," while the remaining responses measured quality, with answers like "Amazing!" and "Very good." Note that even though the question did not prompt a particular terminology, as it asked, "How would you describe your English language proficiency?" most of the respondents measured their English language performance in a native/non-native binary, even though the corpus showed little evidence of native-speakerism as discussed in 10.3.3.1.

The answers regarding Japanese language ability varied more. Of the 51 responses, seven mentioned their performance level on a formal exam (the Japanese Language Proficiency Test); eight described what they can do with the language, such as "OK in everyday conversation, can read kanji to some extent" and "I can function in faculty meetings;" and 40 used an evaluative term, such as "Weak," "Intermediate," or "Fluent."[142] The testing responses included two who had passed JLPT level 1, two who had passed N1, one who had passed N2, and two who had passed level 3.[143] For the evaluative answers, I divided them into three rough levels, with 9 rating themselves at a low or beginner level, 17 at an intermediate level, 9 at an advanced level, 1 that indicated a high spoken but low reading level, and 4 that I couldn't easily classify ("Competent," "Needs improvement," "proficient," and "Solid"). It's hard to combine these responses, but the breakdown between low/mid/high performance is probably somewhere around 20%/45%/35%. Note that this is a somewhat higher level of Japanese proficiency than that from the Yonezawa (2009) study cited by Hayes (2013) discussed in section 9.6, though, as discussed below, this survey may skew towards those who've lived and taught in Japan longer.

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[142] Note that this sums to 55; this is because three respondents used both an evaluative term and a test level and one respondent used all three types of responses.

[143] Previously, the JLPT had four levels, with Level 1 being the top and level 4 being the lowest. In 2010 the test was changed to have five levels, called N1 to N5. N1 and N2 roughly correspond to the old level 1 and 2, N4 roughly corresponds to old level 3, N5 roughly corresponds to old level 4, and N3 is a new level added between the old level 3 and 2 because it was felt that the gap was too large (Japan Foundation, 2012).

The gender breakdown for the respondents was 80% male, 14.5% female, with the remaining respondents declining to state. No participants indicated a gender identity other than male or female. The gender ratio is an important issue to consider regarding JALT and Japanese teachers. Appleby (2014) reported that, in 2014, the membership of JALT was approximately 58.6% male and 41.3% female.[144] However, this actually masked the intersectionality of gender and nationality, since Appleby explained that the ratio among non-Japanese national members of JALT was 73% male and 27% female, while the ratio among Japanese national members was 32% male and 68% female (p. 7). Hayes (2013) estimated that somewhere between 70 and 90% of non-Japanese teachers with full time employment in Japan are male; this matches the overall statistics for women in higher education in Japan, with MEXT reporting in 2009 that only 19% of university teachers in Japan were female (cited in Hayes, 2013). Given that the evidence on first language from the previous paragraph suggests that probably very few of the respondents were Japanese natives, the extremely unbalanced gender ratio seems to be approximately consistent with both JALT ratios and the ratios among university teachers in Japan.

The final piece of basic background data was the respondents' age. Answers ranged from 30 to 68, with 20 people in their 30s, 16 in their 40s, 6 in their 50s, and five in their 60s. This was their age at the time of taking the survey, meaning they were one to six years younger at the time their My Share article was published. The average age was just over 43, and the median age was 41.

All 55 respondents answered the question about their educational qualifications. Respondents were able to select any number of choices from a variety of educational achievements. Every respondent had at least a bachelor's degree, which is unsurprising since, as far as I know, teaching English in Japan at any level, from *eikaiwa* through university, requires a Bachelor's degree. Regarding major, to simplify the question and increase the chances that many people would answer, I provided two options: "TESOL/education/applied linguistics related" or "other major." At the Bachelor's level, what field the respondents studied is unclear, as only

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[144] As of August 2018, the ratio was 40.5% male and 59.5% male, though JALT doesn't allow members to select other genders (Kobayashi, personal correspondence, August 20, 2018). I have used the older statistics above because the more recent statistics I received don't have enough detail for me to determine if there are different gender ratios among Japanese and non-Japanese members.

31 of the respondents checked the Bachelor's degree box—however, since everyone who didn't mark the Bachelor's box did check that they had a Master's or a PhD, my presumption is they also had a Bachelor's degree. Of the 31 who did mark that they had a Bachelor's degree, only six said that the bachelor's degree was in TESOL, education, applied linguistics, or a similar field, with 27 indicating that they had a Bachelor's in another field (two respondents checked that they had two Bachelor's degrees, one in TESOL, etc., and one in another field).

52 out of the 55 respondents had a Master's degree; one was still in progress on their Master's, and one marked they had a PhD but not a Master's. Only one person indicated that they neither have nor are pursuing a Master's, and that person did have a TESOL certificate. At the Master's level, ten had a Master's outside of the field, 36 had a Master's in TESOL, etc., and six had two Master's, one in and one out of TESOL, etc. Only eight of the respondents had a PhD—seven in a TESOL, etc., field, and one in another field. Finally, 21 people also had a TESOL certificate or TESOL diploma, and nine people also had a teaching credential.

Regarding field, only 9 of the respondents had no degree in the fields of TESOL, education, or applied linguistics, and of those nine, two did have a teaching credential. Thus, 87.2% of the respondents had some sort of formal education related to TESOL, education, or applied linguistics.

The final background information which I asked of the participants came from seven questions related to their working situation—five from the time that they submitted the article, and two from the present time. First, for each time frame, there was a pair of questions about where and under what conditions they worked: "Where were/are you employed" (9 choices were given, plus an "other" option, and respondents could select any number), and "Under what circumstances were/are you employed" (4 choices plus an "other" option, and respondents could select only one answer). Figure 10 summarizes the location of employment responses and Figure 11 covers the conditions of employment responses.
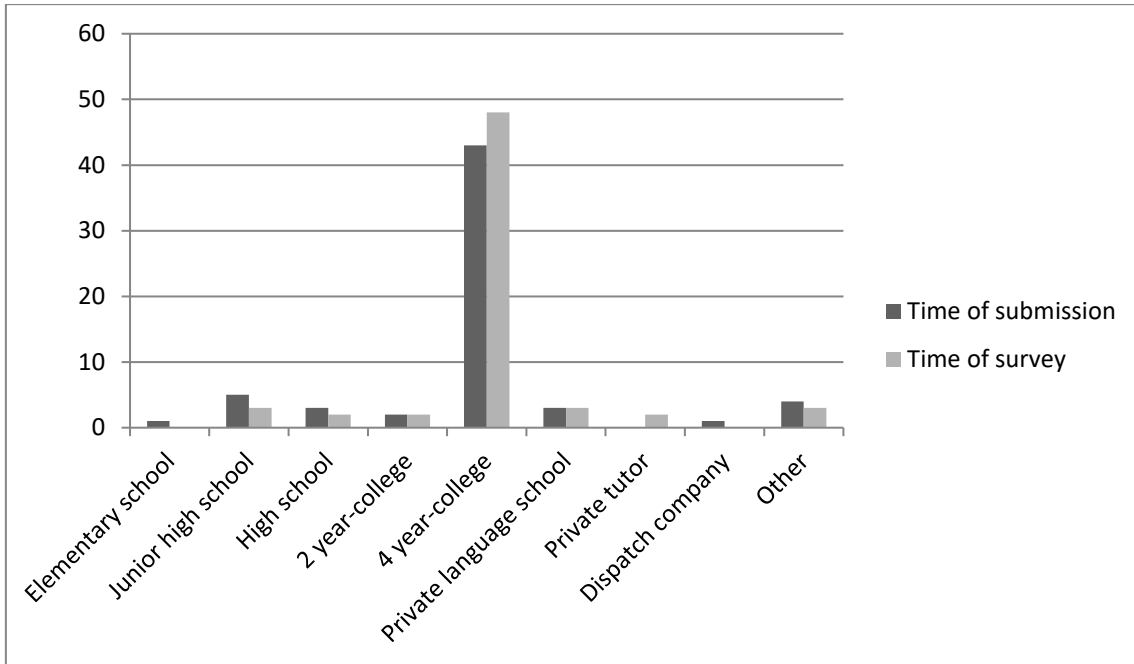
*Figure 10.* Location of employment of respondents at the time they submitted their My Share activity and the time they completed the survey.
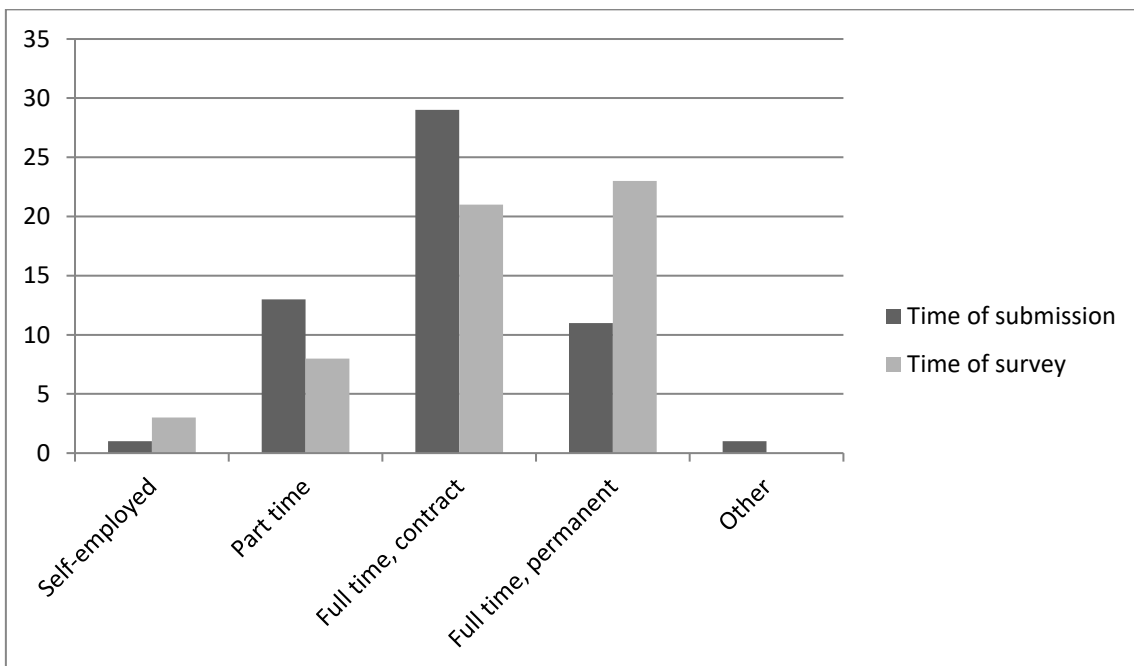


*Figure 11.* Employment condition of respondents at the time they submitted their My Share activity and the time they completed the survey.

Seven respondents indicated working at two different types of employers when they submitted the My Share article, and eight said the same thing for the time of the survey. Note that this does not mean that only seven/eight people held more than one position, since anyone who held multiple positions but all at the same level

would have marked just one type of employer. For each time-frame, one person in each group indicated that they were not working—for the submission time, one person was still a graduate student, and for the survey time, one person had already retired. A large majority of the respondents were working at the post-secondary level—83.6% at the time of submission, and 92.7% at the time of the survey.

While there was not much change in where people were working between publishing and taking the survey, there was a significant change in the conditions of employment. Whereas at the time of submission, only 11 respondents were working in permanent (tenured) positions, 23 were working in permanent positions by the time of the survey, one to six years later. Looking at each person individually, 34 people were working in the same condition, and 21 had changed conditions. Of those changes, 13 moved from full-time contract positions to full-time tenured positions, 5 moved from part time to full-time contract positions, 1 moved from being a student to a part-time position, and 2 moved from part-time work to self-employment (one of whom specified that they had retired). This means that 19 (34.5%) of the respondents had moved to higher level positions between submitting the article and completing this survey; as I will show in the next section, this is consistent with the fact that many of the respondents stated that a desire to improve their marketability (their CV) was one of their primary reasons for seeking publication in My Share.

I also asked several questions regarding their professional experience. The first pair of questions asked how long the respondents had taught professionally and how long they had taught professionally in Japan. These questions must have been unclear, since four of the respondents put a larger number for the latter than the former, an impossible response; those responses were excluded from the graph of the rest of the results shown in Figure 12. Also, one person indicated their years taught in Japan but not overall, so there is one extra response for the second question. Since this was an open-response question, a few of the answers were unclear, with question marks or plus marks, (e.g., "20+ years"). I used my best judgment on where to place each of those. Finally, one respondent simply wrote "many years" for both answers; that response was excluded.
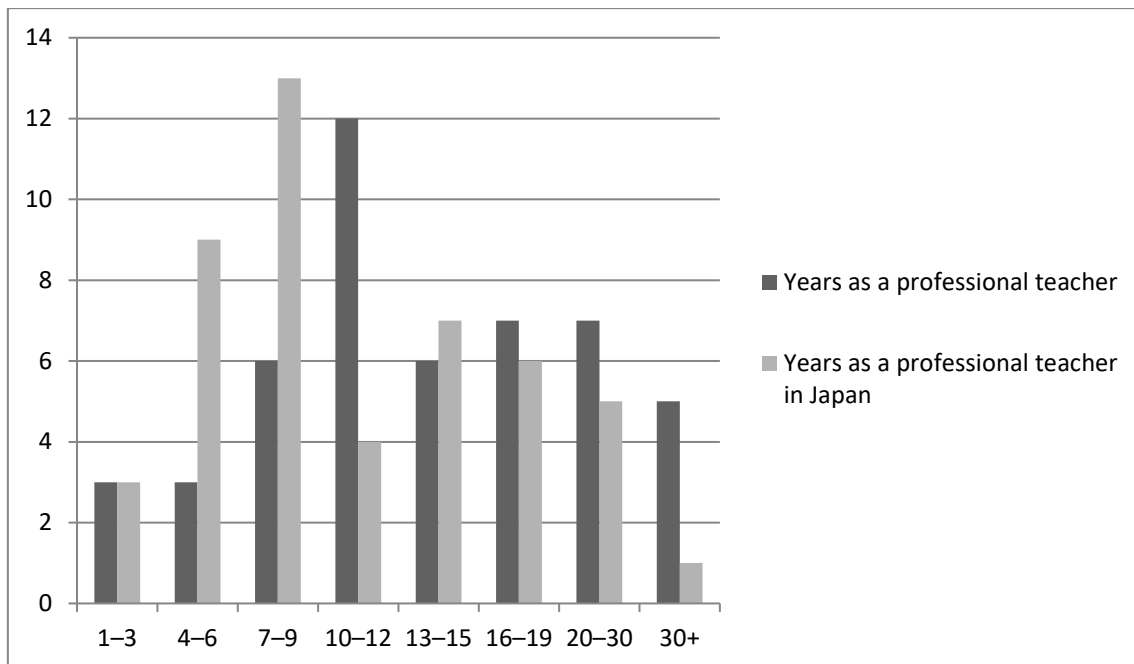
*Figure 12.* Number of years worked by respondents as of the time of submission.

The average number of years worked as a teacher was 15.1, with a median of 13, and the average number of years teaching in Japan was 11.1 with a median of 8.5. This number surprised me a little, as I expected more respondents to have been earlier in their teaching career. One final note regarding time of teaching is that 36 of the respondents had different answers for these two questions, indicating that nearly two-thirds had teaching experience outside of Japan in addition to having taught in Japan.

The final professional experience question asked how many articles they had published prior to the My Share article was a closed question, with five choices: 0, 1, 2–4, 5–9, or 10 or more. All the respondents answered this question, and the results are shown in Table 70. The results were, surprisingly, distributed somewhat evenly across the choices. Note that in section 11.3 the editors indicated that they believed most My Share authors are new to publishing; while about 33% of the authors had one or zero prior publications, nearly 24% had 10 or more publications. This significant mismatch made me believe that the results of this questionnaire were not very reliable.

Table 70

*Number of Publications Respondents Had Prior to Their First My Share Article*

| Number of prior publications | Number of responses |
|---|---|
| 0 | 10 |
| 1 | 7 |
| 2–4 | 16 |
| 5–9 | 9 |
| 10 | 13 |

There are several possible reasons for this discrepancy. First, there may be a bias in the response rates between more and less experienced authors, in two possible ways. Authors more invested in research and publication process may have been those most likely to respond to a survey of this nature.[145] Additionally, many of the emails associated with the articles were institutional emails; this means that authors who were earlier in their career, and thus more likely to have changed institutions, were disproportionately likely to have not received the survey request emails.

On the other hand, it is possible that some of the "error" may be on the part of the editors. It seems likely that those authors who needed more help were more salient in the editors' memories as they looked back on the editing process, since those authors may have taken more of the editors' efforts to complete the publication process. Another potential reason for the discrepancy is that there isn't any way that the My Share editors could know how experienced the authors were, unless that came up during the editing process (since the authors don't provide a bio). So, it could be that the editors made assumptions about the experience level of the authors that weren't accurate.

It's hard to know which of these explanations (or, more likely, what combination of these explanations) is the cause of the discrepancy. Nonetheless, the fact that there is a discrepancy raises important doubts about using the survey responses as a means for understanding the average My Share author's (or JALT

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[145] I include this as a possibility in part because I tend to respond to survey requests of this type specifically because I think of myself in the researchers' shoes and know how helpful it is to get responses; thus, I conversely theorize that teachers who are less focused on research may feel less personal pressure to participate in others' research.

community member's) ideas, since the results definitely seem biased towards more experienced teachers and authors.

**11.4.2 My Share publication process.** The survey asked five questions about the My Share publication process. Four of them focused on the editing process—the amount of time between submission and acceptance, the time that the editing took, the total time between submission and publication, and an open-ended question asking for a description of what happened during the editing process.

Regarding the three time questions, all the respondents answered the first question, and 53 out of 55 answered the second and third. However, a sizeable number of the answers expressed uncertainty—47 of the 161 responses included phrases ranging from a complete lack of certainty (e.g., "Don't remember" or "no idea") to a guess/estimate plus uncertainty ("Can't remember, but less than three [months], I think") to a number plus a question mark ("A few months?"). In addition, many of the responses included a range, such as "1–2 months," or an approximation, such as "About 15 months." This makes it difficult to pin down a reliable estimate of average times. In addition, some of the respondents who had more than one My Share published pointed out that the time frame can vary (e.g., regarding the editing time, one respondent wrote "1st time very short (weeks), 2nd time much longer (over a month)"). In at least one case, the variance was intentional: one respondent stated, "more than a year, although in one later case, because it involved cutting edge high tech that was always changing, the editors rushed it to take advantage of the novelty and to insure [sic] that it wasn't outdated before publication," indicating that the editors have the ability to shift publication dates around in special cases.

Treating the authors' uncertain guesses as accurate, and assuming the actual number for ranged answers was in the middle of the range, Figure 13 provides a rough picture of the processing times. The average time between submission and acceptance was 3.9 months, with a median of 2 months. The average editing time was 2.3 months with a median of 1 month. The average total time was 11.4 months with a median time of 12 months. Finally, it's worth mentioning that these time frames don't indicate continuous active work on the part of either editor or author. One respondent remarked, of the editing time, "The editing process took some time (a number of months) as the My Share Editor was busy, but we did one very simple,

minor rewrite," while another said even more explicitly about the entire process, "Roughly 10 months, but the actual amount of time that we spent on our submission over this long period was only a few hours." Thus, much of the processing time appears to be waiting. This pattern was verified by several of the editors, who indicated that most articles had to wait in a "queue" a year or more after editing was complete until a space was open in the journal for publication.
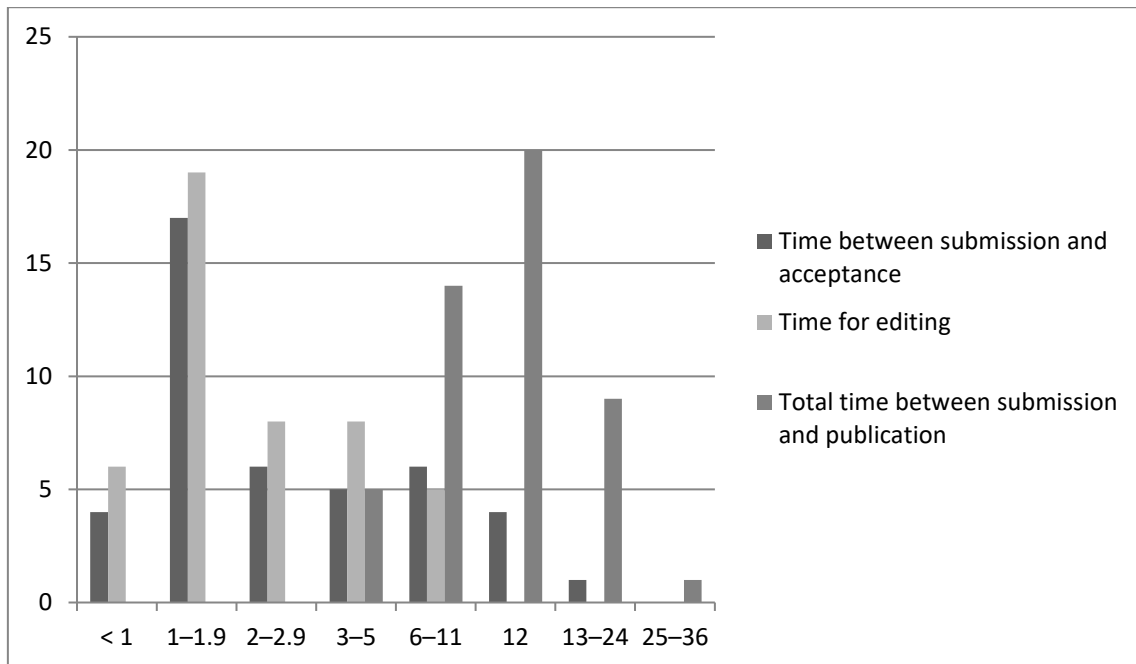


*Figure 13*. Average processing times for survey respondents. All times are in months.

The text of the fourth process question was, "Please describe the process of editing the article after it was accepted. This might include information about the role the journal editors played in the process, how many times you or they revised the article, what types of revisions were asked for, etc." While my lengthy explanation likely influenced the responses, I wanted to provoke the respondents to provide a longer answer regarding their overall impression of the process. 53 respondents provided an answer, though six of the answers indicated that the respondent could not recall anything or were otherwise uninformative.

The responses included information about a variety of subjects, including counts or estimates of the number of editing steps, explanations of what was changed, evaluations of the process, and general descriptions. Regarding the number of editing passes, the authors used a variety of terms, which are collected in Table

71. The most common responses were on the smaller side, with a "typical" length probably being one to three steps. Furthermore, the authors who said they had a particularly high number of edits, plus another who said that "the number of corrections requested by the editor was overwhelming, at first" all had zero publications prior to submitting their first My Share article. Those authors with higher numbers of publications tended to report a smaller number of editing passes. In addition to the respondent who felt "overwhelmed," two other authors specifically analyzed the amount of revisions in contrast to research articles. Interestingly, the opinions were almost opposite one another, with one respondent writing, "Compared to revising a journal article it was a fairly quick and straightforward process," and the other writing, "The 2nd time seemed unnecessarily rigorous, especially for just a shared lesson plan (not a research article)." Also, note that different editorial approaches, as discussed in section 11.3.2, may have contributed to different amounts of requested edits.

Table 71

*Number of Times the Authors Revised the Paper in Response to Editor Requests*

| Answer | Number of respondents |
| --- | --- |
| "not a lot" | 1 |
| "minor or none" | 1 |
| 1/once | 3 |
| 1–2 | 1 |
| 2/twice | 5 |
| "a couple" | 2 |
| 2–3 | 2 |
| 3 | 2 |
| "few" | 1 |
| "several" | 1 |
| "more than 3" | 1 |
| 3–4 | 2 |
| 4 | 1 |
| 5–6 | 1 |
| "at least 9" | 1 |
| "more than 10" | 1 |

Table 72 summarizes the types of changes that the authors said that they made. The most interesting finding for me is the length (16.3%), and formatting (27.6%), since these rules are very clearly described in the guidelines on the JALT publications website (JALT, n.d.-a). Some of the length responses might be because

of the change in maximum words in 2015; in addition, I do not know if the online instructions were always as clear as they are today.

Table 72

*Types of Changes Made During the Editing Process*

| Type of changes | Examples | Number of responses |
|---|---|---|
| Content/Quality | • *clarifying sections*<br>• *smoother and less complicated*<br>• *whether readers had to make assumptions to be able to enact the class properly* | 15 |
| Formatting | • *the My Share format*<br>• *mostly of a stylistic and formatting nature* | 9 |
| Length | • *pushing me to fit it all within the word limit*<br>• *needed to be cut down* | 8 |
| Grammar | • *syntax*<br>• *mostly related to style and grammar* | 7 |
| Word choice | • *wording*<br>• *mainly about the language* | 5 |

Lastly, 20 of the responses included a value judgment about the process or the editorial staff. Of those, 15 were positive, using descriptions such as "helpful," "very quick," "a very nice editor," and "helped...make it more professional." Negative comments include the two mentioned above about the requests being overwhelming from one author and too rigorous for an activity plan from another. In most cases, though, the respondents seem to have been generally accepting of or happy with the process. Beyond those negative comments, the only other real concerns came from a few authors who felt or implied that the process took too long. One author said that they thought the editors had lost or forgotten their submission; another actually had the editor confirm after a year that the submission had been forgotten.

While the first four questions focused on what happened after the article was submitted, the fifth (which was asked before the other four in the survey itself), "precedes" these, in that it asked the authors to "Please explain your reasons for submitting your My Share article for potential publication." I saved this chronologically earlier question for the end of this section because for me, it's the most important—the authors' explanations of their purposes in submitting these

articles demonstrate an important tension that exists in the idea of teaching as a profession in Japan.

All 55 respondents provided an answer to this question, though one of the responses was non-informative ("who knows?"). I examined the responses for common threads among the answers and found two major themes occurring across many responses—professional development and a desire to share—and several minor themes used by a smaller number of respondents. The majority of respondents (33 out of 55) gave more than one reason.

The most common reason given for seeking publication was to improve their professional standing, with 33 (60%) respondents including this as part or all of their response. The exact phrasing of this varied. Some of the respondents specifically referred to adding something to their CV or résumé (e.g., "to boost my résumé," "CV purposes"); others referred to the idea of getting more publications (e.g., "I needed first authored publications, however small," "to get more publications"); while others spoke more generally about improving their career opportunities (e.g., "future job hunting," "career advancement," "career development"). In some cases, the respondents even made the link between these points explicit, as in "need publications to secure my next job." Especially interesting is that 5 respondents explicitly indicated that they chose to publish in My Share (as opposed, presumably, to a longer research publication) because of the perceived ease of doing so, as in, "with my contract coming up for renewal, this represented a quick way to get something in print," and "I knew it was an easy publication."

The second most common reason for publishing in My Share, given by 20 (36.4%) of the respondents, was that they wanted to share an activity they had made with other teachers. Most said that they wanted to share the specific idea/activity that they incorporated into their submission (e.g., "Believed that it was an idea worth sharing"), while a smaller group more generally supported sharing, as in, "To share ideas." Many of the responses that were focused on a specific idea also described that idea in positive terms, as in "share previous *successful* lessons with My Share readers" (emphasis added).

In fact, following up on the previous point, another common theme in the responses was the author providing a positive evaluation of their own activity. 17 (30.9%) of the respondents used some sort of positive adjective to describe their

activities. Four used the term "good," two used "great," two used "unique," two used "practical," and one respondent each used "decent," "easily digestible," "effective," "students benefited and enjoyed," "successful," "useful," "very new," and "worked well." These responses are reminiscent of the use of benefit and experience moves in articles to justify the value of activities, as discussed in Chapter 7. In a sense, a positive evaluation of the activity is a non sequitur in response to this question, in that simply having an activity that is good doesn't inherently justify the effort of writing it up, submitting it for publication, going through the editing process, etc.

The authors provided a few other reasons for publishing in My Share. Four respondents expressed a desire to return something to the community, as in, "However, I also get ideas from My Share and wanted to contribute something in return." Each of these respondents was near the middle to late part of their career— all four were working full time (though in contracts, not tenured), and had taught in Japan for 12, 20, 20, and 31 years each; longevity is likely a necessary precondition for this response. One other response given by three respondents was that another person or persons had recommended that they publish this activity, saying things such as "People who have visited my classes asked me to do so." Two of these comments actually overlapped with the two main categories, with one saying that a colleague recommended they publish so that they could add it to their résumé, and another saying that "the responses of others" made the author want to share their idea.

The desire to share and give back to the community share a common ethos— they speak to the idea of teaching as a collective process, as something that teachers can work together to do, even though they may be teaching different students in very different circumstances and institutions. On the other hand, the most frequent response of CV building is strictly personal, in that it addresses each individual teachers' desire/need to produce a particular type of writing in order to remain in a position or achieve a better one. This aspect of teaching professionalism is very anti-collective, since each person who "adds a line to their CV" is doing so to get a job, a job that by definition could have gone to another teacher, including those with whom these articles are being "shared." There is a tension here, between the capitalistic, self-centered desire to remain employed (or become employed in a

higher capacity) and the desire to help both other teachers and, indirectly, the students taught.

**11.4.3 Perspectives on teaching.** The following three sections all tried to get a picture of the respondents' beliefs about teaching. The first did so by asking the respondents to reflect on their My Share activity, the second asked them about what is or isn't important in their activities, and the last asked them to evaluate several claims about Japanese students and English classes in Japan. While I will report the responses below, I have provided detailed analysis of only a small amount of the data (in comparison, earlier versions of this section drew comparisons between the responses and the trends found in the corpus) because the information from the editor interviews makes it seem likely that the responses are not representative—more than any other section of the survey, it seems to me that these results will be the most sensitive to the biasing problems discussed above.

*11.4.3.1 Reflections on the activity.* The first four questions were in a section entitled "Retrospective," and asked the teachers to reflect on the activity described in the article they had published. The first question asked how often they used the activity; the results for the 54 responses are shown in Figure 14. The results indicate that a majority of the respondents do continue to use their activity at least on occasion. Answers from the "other" responses as well as some other questions in this section imply that part of the reason why some respondents may no longer use their activity is that it was designed for a specific teaching circumstance that they no longer teach in. Furthermore, the fact that "sometimes" was the most frequent response at 42.6% is unsurprising, given that the overwhelming majority of the activities are designed around a specific linguistic or thematic context, and thus couldn't be used on a regular basis, even for authors who do still want to and are able to use the activity.
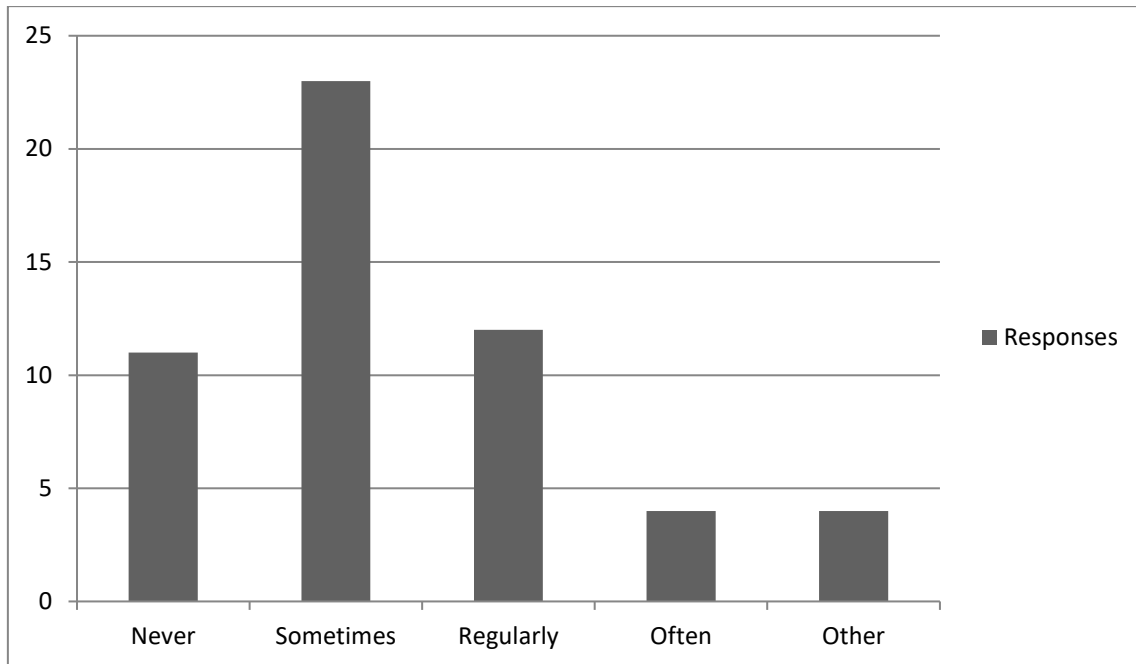
*Figure 14.* How often respondents reported using their My Share activity.

The second question asked was, "What do you think are the best things about your article/activity?" 52 of the respondents answered this question. I categorized the responses using a similar though not identical coding scheme to the "Benefit" move coding discussed in section 7.3. Table 73 contains a summary of responses that fell into categories that were common across multiple respondents; in addition, there were 25 responses that were idiosyncratic to a single respondent that are not in the table.

Table 73

*Selected "Best Things" About the Activities*

| Category | Subcategory | Occur. |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher benefit | Easy | 9 |
| | Flexible/Adaptable | 6 |
| | Addresses a genuine concern | 1 |
| | | TOTAL: 16 |
| Emotion | Fun | 3 |
| | Motivating | 3 |
| | Promoting creativity | 3 |
| | Enjoyable | 2 |
| | Interesting | 1 |
| | | TOTAL: 12 |
| Structural | Student-centered | 7 |
| | Good for review | 2 |
| | Increase the amount of language produced | 2 |
| | Improved collaboration | 1 |
| | | TOTAL: 12 |
| Teaching target | Communication | 2 |
| | Listening | 2 |
| | Vocabulary | 2 |
| | Critical thinking | 1 |
| | Eye contact | 1 |
| | Fluency | 1 |
| | IPA | 1 |
| | | TOTAL: 10 |
| General positive evaluation | Effective | 3 |
| | Exquisite | 1 |
| | Great | 1 |
| | Forward thinking | 1 |
| | | TOTAL: 6 |
| Other | Practical | 4 |
| | Matching to a specific type of class/student | 4 |
| | | TOTAL: 8 |
| Negatives | Identify a negative and solve it | TOTAL: 2 |

The next two questions asked the respondents about changes since the time of publication. The first asked if they would change anything about their article, while the second asked if their thoughts about the activity had changed since publication. There were 51 responses to each question and, in both cases, the answer was overwhelmingly some variant of "No"—45 (88.2%) said they wouldn't change the activity, and 41 (80.4%) said their thoughts about the activity hadn't changed. Changes that were suggested included five that wanted to change the article itself

(not the underlying activity), four that wanted to adapt the activity for different contexts or levels, and two that wanted to update the activity to include new technology.

Among the negative responses, there was an interesting subset: eight of the respondents said something such as, "I haven't thought much about the activity." For these eight authors, this activity and publication did not and do not play a major role in their teaching practices. This may be linked to their motivations in seeking publication: seven of the eight respondents who said that they have never thought about the article included CV improvement as one of their reasons for publishing, and the 8th was the respondent who wrote "who knows?" for their reason. And just to make the point even further, one of the "haven't thought about it" authors used by far the most pointed phrasing to describe their motivation for publishing: "Put shit on résumé." This approach to My Share is concerning, if, in fact, these activities are actually being used by other teachers, because if the authors are giving them so little thought and not even using the activities themselves, and are just interested in acquiring another publication credit, the actual quality of the activities might be questionable.

Finally, I want to return to one more of the responses to the "why did you publish" question to see one more aspect of this issue. One respondent wrote,

> It's my favorite section of TLT, and I'm a classroom ideas guy. I like coming up with ideas that work and sharing them with others, much more than a heavy research article. That sort of writing bores me to read and write.

This response shows a potential conflict that can occur for some teachers. The large number of responses that indicated the need to add a line to their CV (along with the experiences of everyone I personally know who teaches at the university level who isn't already in a tenured position) clearly indicates that publications are a required part of obtaining a university teaching job in Japan. However, some teachers don't actually have an interest in conducting, publishing, or, here, even reading research articles—yet, they must do so in order to obtain or maintain their ability to do what they "actually" want—teach. In other words, what My Share may be offering some teacher-authors isn't so much an "easy" publication, but, rather, a publication more

in line with the types of professional practices that they want to engage in that also fulfills, at least in part, the publication requirements of many tertiary teaching positions.

Bringing these ideas together, I would like to argue that the nature of the My Share format and publishing process can actually produce two contradictory types of performances. On the one hand, a teacher who is heavily focused on teaching and creating activities can have a chance to not only fulfill their professional responsibilities, but also to share what they are, at least in their own mind, particularly good at. This may actually result in better, more useful activities, since they are being produced by teachers who are highly invested in the image of themselves as teachers but not researchers.[146] On the other hand, a teacher who may or may not be heavily involved in teaching, but is definitely highly interested in obtaining a *job* as a teacher, may seek to have activities published that they haven't necessarily found to be effective. Rather, such a teacher might be focused on the end goal—getting the publication—and may thus submit what they believe they can get published, regardless of their own perceptions of or experience with the activity.

***11.4.3.2 Teaching principles.*** There was one additional question in the "Retrospective" section that asked "How have your thoughts about teaching in general changed since your article was published?" 49 respondents gave an answer, though 21 of the respondents gave minimal answers such as "no" or "yes." Table 74 collects common themes in the responses; as with other questions, answers sometimes contained more than one theme.

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[146] However, I have to temper this enthusiastic promotion of a potential value of My Share by noting that it is accurate only insofar as it is possible to be a "good" teacher and produce "good" lessons if those lesson aren't grounded in research practices. That is, it is possible that these "teaching-focused" authors may be producing lessons that they see as good based on their own observations, but which aren't producing substantial, long-term improvements in student language learning.

Table 74

*Common Themes in Answer to Question "How Have Your Thoughts About Teaching in General Changed Since Your Article Was Published?"*

| Theme | Number |
|---|---|
| *No, not really,* etc. | 19 |
| A specific teaching practice, methodology, or philosophy (total) | 15 (total) |
|       A specific move away from the ideas expressed in My Share | 6 |
| Continuation of ideas expressed in My Share (total) | 6 (total) |
|     Same ideas | 2 |
|     Similar ideas with small changes in technique | 2 |
|     Similar ideas but intensified | 2 |
| A change in teaching context led to changes in teaching | 8 |
| Professional development led to changes | 3 |
| Learning things had led to improvements in teaching | 2 |

Answers from two authors who both indicated a major change in attitude towards language teaching are worth examining. The first, whose activity was a game, has come to view university classes as a more serious place where a university student's "key role…is to rise and do his/her best to meet the standard(s) set by the instructors. Instructors, in their turn need to remind students of this with kindness and tact." The author still sees value in their activity, but only as something to be used for fun because "on a Friday afternoon, everyone should let off a little steam." On the opposite side of this was a respondent who said, "I suppose I used to take English teaching a little more seriously. Now I seen [sic] it as a personal choice on the part of the student - I couldn't care less who learns English." These responses help demonstrate that not only does the discourse community contain a multitude of voices, individual actors within that community are themselves complex beings whose beliefs about language teaching are always in flux.

The next section, "Teaching philosophy," contained 17 Likert scale evaluations. The instructions for the section read, "For the following section, please rate how important each of the following factors are for you when planning and delivering English lessons." Following that was the phrase, "I want my lessons to…" Each question completed that sentence with a short phrase describing what lessons could be like. For each sentence, respondents could choose one of five options: "Not at all important," "Unimportant," "Neutral," "Important," or "Very important." The words and phrases were chosen to reflect ideas that I had seen in the My Share

during the early stages of my analysis, as well as some ideas which I was either interested in or which I was surprised were not prevalent.

Out of all the questions (17 questions * 55 respondents = 935 possible responses), only one was left blank. Table 75 lists the responses to each question. The activities are ranked based on the "net approval," meaning how many more times the idea was rated positively than negatively, with neutral responses not affecting the total.

Table 75

*Responses to Teaching Principles Statements, Ranked by Net Approval*

| Rank | Activity | Not at all import. | Unimport. | Neutral | Import. | Very Import. | Net Approval |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | be enjoyable | 0 | 0 | 4 | 33 | 18 | 51 |
| 2 | be challenging | 0 | 0 | 5 | 40 | 10 | 50 |
| 3 | be motivating | 0 | 0 | 6 | 34 | 15 | 49 |
| 4 | build student confidence | 0 | 0 | 8 | 26 | 21 | 47 |
| 5 | be learner centered | 0 | 0 | 9 | 25 | 21 | 46 |
| 6 | use collaborative activities | 0 | 1 | 12 | 29 | 13 | 41 |
| 7 | be fun | 0 | 2 | 13 | 32 | 8 | 38 |
| 8 | encourage learner autonomy | 0 | 1 | 15 | 25 | 14 | 38 |
| 9 | feature group-work | 1 | 1 | 13 | 28 | 12 | 38 |
| 10 | promote creativity | 1 | 2 | 13 | 29 | 10 | 36 |
| 11 | use authentic English | 2 | 0 | 15 | 23 | 15 | 36 |
| 12 | give students energy | 2 | 5 | 20 | 24 | 4 | 21 |
| 13 | include new or unique components | 2 | 6 | 18 | 25 | 3 | 20 |
| 14 | include physical movement | 3 | 11 | 22 | 16 | 3 | 5 |
| 15 | be relaxing | 2 | 15 | 24 | 11 | 3 | -3 |
| 16 | be simple | 3 | 16 | 21 | 14 | 1 | -4 |
| 17 | use competitive activities | 7 | 16 | 23 | 8 | 1 | -14 |

*Note.* Net Approval = ("Important" + "Very important") – ("Not at all important" + "Unimportant")

The first thing to note is that the responses trend towards the middle, and none of the activities had either extreme of "not at all important" or "very important" as their most common response. Having said that, it is still possible to distinguish between there broad categories: those activities (15–17) which had more rejections than approvals, those which received no rejections (1–5), and those rest of the activities in the middle (6–14). Again, because of the likely bias among the respondents, I don't want to go into detail on any of the results, but one broad observation is that these respondents are generally not indifferent about teaching—they have beliefs about what is important and unimportant in teaching, some of which may potentially have been revealed by the sort of work done in the rest of the results chapters.

The final set of questions in the survey also asked about the respondents' teaching related beliefs. While the previous set asked about language learning activities, this set focuses on the students and classes themselves. That is, the former asked about things that are partially or mostly under the control of the teacher, and the latter asked about things outside of their control—the conditions to which they must respond as they make pedagogical choices. The actual question said, "Please rate each of the following statements for how much you agree or disagree with respect to classes which you have taught in Japan." This was followed by ten statements with a 5-point Likert-scale answer matrix like the one in the previous section. The five choices on this scale were "Strongly disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly agree."

As with the previous set of questions, I chose the statements based on a combination of things I saw in the corpus during early analysis and ideas I have heard other Japanese university teachers express. One difference with the previous set of questions is that all the statements about teaching techniques were phrased as positive statements while this set contained both positive and negative characterizations of students and English language classes in Japan. Table 76 summarizes the responses, ranked by net approval rating.

Table 76

*Responses to Teaching Conditions Statements, Ranked by Composite Score*

| Rank | Statement | S. Dis. | D. | Neut | Agr. | S. Agr. | Net Appr. |
|------|-----------|---------|-----|------|------|---------|-----------|
| 1 | Students lack knowledge about current events. | 0 | 3 | 11 | 26 | 15 | 38 |
| 2 | Classes contain a wide variety of English levels. | 1 | 7 | 8 | 28 | 11 | 31 |
| 3 | Students are shy or anxious about communicating in English. | 1 | 4 | 15 | 27 | 8 | 30 |
| 4 | Students don't know how to study English. | 0 | 9 | 15 | 28 | 3 | 22 |
| 5 | Students don't know how to use technology effectively. | 1 | 8 | 19 | 22 | 5 | 18 |
| 6 | Students sincerely want to improve at English. | 1 | 2 | 29 | 20 | 3 | 20 |
| 7 | Classes are so large that effective language learning is hampered. | 4 | 10 | 18 | 16 | 7 | 9 |
| 8 | Students are hard-working. | 0 | 7 | 33 | 14 | 1 | 8 |
| 9 | Students are unmotivated. | 0 | 16 | 26 | 12 | 1 | -3 |
| 10 | Students are deceitful. | 19 | 19 | 13 | 4 | 0 | -34 |

Even more so than the previous set of questions, these responses tended to stay away from the extremes. In fact, three statements (6, 8, and 9) had more neutral responses than approvals or disapprovals. Two other responses (5 and 7) had no majority response—that is, neither disapprove nor neutral nor approve received more than half of the results. My hypothesis is that this points to a lack of precision in my measuring instrument. For example, if I were forced to give a response to "Students are hardworking," I would probably choose "Neutral," but what I would really want to say is, "In my experience, some students are hard-working, and others are not. It depends a lot based on their major, the school, their age, and other factors. In addition, I based on what the students do before and after class, and also the things they say during English conversation, I think that a lot of the students who may appear to be not hardworking would more accurately be characterized as not

hardworking *for their compulsory English classes*—however, they are hardworking for things that they care about, like their major classes, their seminars, their clubs, their part-time jobs, their friends, etc.…." Ultimately, what this points to is that this measurement instrument may not be allowing teachers to precisely reflect their ideas if those ideas are simpler than "yes" or "no." A few of the statements do seem to have clearer responses (especially statements 1, 2, 3, and 10), and thus could be treated as giving clearer insight into the beliefs of this subset of the authors. But note that unlike the previous set of questions, there are no responses which were either universally approved or universally rejected.

## 11.5 Summary and Discussion

Looking behind the corpus to the ideas of some of the authors and editors involved in producing it has helped provide a better understanding of the forces shaping the genre. First, it was possible to get a better understanding of the relative roles played by the authors and editors. Since the editors accepted a large majority of the submissions (and most tried to reject only submissions which didn't follow the genre guidelines) and edited almost exclusively for length and grammar, I am fairly confident claiming that most of the content decisions are the result of the authors' choices rather than the editors.[147] On the other hand, some of the larger aspects of the genre—especially the word length—are a consequence of forces from outside of either the authors or editors. As I have mentioned before and will develop in detail in the following chapters, the word limits have significant consequences in what kinds of activities can be shared and what information can be included in the articles. The way that the context of production shapes texts is a key part of understanding discourse from a CDA perspective (Wodak, 2001a).

The other key finding from this data is how the confluence of multiple, somewhat contradictory motivations to write My Share likely has an influence on what is included in the genre. The two primary motivations were professional development (getting publications to improve one's CV) and sharing or giving back to the community. The former is a very personal motivation, and speaks to the

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[147] Though this does not mean that the editorial changes have no consequence on the beliefs represented in the genre, since, especially as shown in Chapter 8, many of those beliefs are carried in the precise word and grammar choices.

individual and competitive nature of the teaching profession in Japan. The latter presents a communal view of teaching, in which the "job" of helping students improve at English is a collective pursuit wherein teachers willingly share ideas. It is possible to consider these two perspectives as being in conflict, but it's also possible to consider them two aspects of the teaching profession. It could be said that a teacher's value is being measured primarily by their individual pursuits (i.e., publications) while their primary "job" (i.e., teaching) is devalued.

Finally, while concerns about the representativeness makes it questionable to place too much emphasis on the individual teacher beliefs demonstrated in the survey, the responses nonetheless indicate that the teacher-authors do have specific beliefs about both what is and isn't desirable in language teaching and about Japanese students and classes. This helps to justify the work found in the rest of the results chapters that seeks to uncover how these beliefs are discursively represented and constructed.

# Chapter 12
## Discussion

In this chapter I will bring together the many methods of analysis on the various aspects of the corpus into answers to the research questions set forth in the Introduction. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, I do not intend to offer a singular narrative or grand theory which explains everything that occurs in the My Share corpus. To do so would not be in keeping with the postmodern, critical approach to research that I have endeavored to follow throughout this analysis. Rather, my goal is to demonstrate the complex array of beliefs, identities, power relationships, and ideologies embedded in and constructed by this corpus. Also, note that there are cases in this discussion where I raise points or give examples not discussed previously; this chapter should be seen not as a summary of the results chapters, but rather as a continuation of the analysis and interpretation of the corpus.

## 12.1 Research Questions

To situate the following discussion, I will reprint the research questions from the introduction.

1. What are the conventions of this genre? That is, beyond the explicit rules given in the guidelines for My Share articles (JALT, n.d.-a), what features are commonly found and not found in this genre, how is the information organized, and what implications do these conventions have for the rest of the research questions?

2. In this corpus, what links can be found between discourse, pedagogy, and teacher beliefs? How is this discourse implicated in the reproduction of particular types of teacher identity, and how are those identities both created and resisted through this discourse?

3. In what ways does power operate in this discourse and the activities that it describes? What beliefs about teacher and student power are embedded in the linguistic structure of the text, and what sorts of power relationships will be played out when the activities are actually conducted? How does this

relate to the social situations that teachers and students find themselves in both inside and outside of the classroom?

4. What links exist between the My Share discourse and wider discourses about education in Japan—especially those discourses which are promoted by the Japanese government in national education and language policy?

Even though these questions were originally enumerated separately, there is a potential problem in conceptualizing them as four fully independent questions. As shown in Figure 4 in section 4.5, the genre, the beliefs expressed in it, and the discourse community that generated the genre while also being shaped by it are not actually separable things. As Fairclough (2003) said, speaking of the various elements of social practice including activities, subjects, instruments, discourse, and others, "they are different elements, but not discrete, fully separate, elements. There is a sense in which each 'internalizes' the others without being reducible to them" (p. 205). For example, one of the beliefs that is almost universally included in articles in this corpus is that language learning should be done through communication in an active learning paradigm. There are no activities which are entirely unidirectional teacher lectures, and very few which don't involve a substantial amount of interaction by students. An alternative way of stating this is to say that the My Share genre only allows articles describing activities that are based on active learning principles. And another alternative way to say it is that the discourse community likely shares the belief that, in general, language learning should be communicative and involve active learning. None of these ways of stating the situation is entirely accurate, and none of them is "truer" than any other, because there is no way to fully separate beliefs, the discourse used to articulate those beliefs, and the practices described by that discourse and conditioned upon those beliefs. As such, while the following sections break the conclusions down to match the research questions, this is more as a matter of convenience in handling the large number of conclusions than it is a representation of which "answers" go with which research questions.

## 12.2 Genre: Structure, Rules, and Purpose (Research Question 1)

Genre refers to the "ways of acting" that are linked to systematic use of discourse (Fairclough, 2003, p. 26). The My Share articles share the common purpose of

helping teachers share successful lesson activities.[148] In addition, the articles are governed by both formal rules (those defined by the JALT publishers and editors and instantiated in the guidelines) and informal ones (those which arise from the shared discursive habits of the contributors). While the details are discussed below, the first finding of note is that the shared purpose of the articles combined with a homogeneity in structure and many repeated rhetorical moves and topics means that the My Share section can be interpreted to be a distinct genre for the purpose of analysis.

**12.2.1 Structural stability.** In a structural sense—that is, in terms of what sections are included or excluded—the genre is mostly stable, with a few core elements and several optional ones. Three sections (Quick Guide, introduction, and Procedure) are obligatory, one (Conclusion) is nearly obligatory (having been omitted only once in the corpus), and a fifth (Preparation) is included almost 90% of the time. The optional sections (textual: Variation and Extension plus a few very rare ones; list-based: References and Appendices) show greater variability. There are cases with very short Variation or Extension sections that could easily be incorporated into the Procedure section, and there are already other Procedure sections that include the same type of information. In other cases, these optional sections are a bit longer and contain explanations for why a teacher might choose to extend/change the lesson in a certain way, so having them remain in a separate section makes more sense. Similarly, when I asked one editor why they allowed references at all if they generally don't want them, they said that sometimes there's just no way to avoid the reference and have the article make sense. Thus, even though it was found that prior to 2010, and especially prior to 2003, there was a lot more variability in the genre and that the amount of flexibility has decreased over time, it would probably be inaccurate to theorize that the current variability will disappear in the future. Rather, it is more likely that the genre will always allow for some flexibility to accommodate slightly different types of information and argumentative structures. On the other hand, it appears that the much larger flexibility found earlier

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[148] While this is both the main and the expressed purpose, section 11.4.2 discussed how there are additional purposes beyond this one for many of the My Share authors—especially the desire to enhance their potential to earn future employment.

in the genre's history (such as the inclusion of articles that had none of the current sections and those that didn't focus on a single successful activity but instead gave more general practical advice for teaching) is likely a thing of the past.

Combining the analyses of the moves and lexicogrammar, some claims can be made about the typical contents of each section. The introductions tend to move from general to specific (often, from "Context/Background" moves to either "Benefits" or "Facts about the activity" moves). Their purpose is to provide background information, broad descriptions, the teaching targets and, to a lesser degree, the benefits of the lesson. Conclusions, on the other hand, are strongly linked to evaluation expressed through benefits (with 83.5% of all Conclusions containing a "Benefit" move) or experiences (which often act like benefits articulated in past tense). The Preparation sections focus on two things: making physical objects (of which by far the most common are handouts/worksheets) and selecting things for use in class (like choosing videos, pictures, or reading materials). The Procedure sections unsurprisingly do what they say: tell the teacher what to do in the lesson— a large portion of which is telling the teacher what to tell/command the students to do. Conflicting results were found for the optional sections: while the analysis in Chapter 5 found them to usually contain similar information to the Procedure section, the N-grams showed them to be more of a hybrid of all four obligatory/semi-obligatory sections. This might point to why they exist as separate sections rather than just being merged into the Procedure or Conclusion sections.

**12.2.2 Who writes My Share?** In the previous section I mentioned, when talking about references, the fact that editors have some influence in the final articles. However, as discussed in Chapter 11, based on the editor interviews and author questionnaire, editors don't exercise much control over the content of My Share articles.

The two main ways that editors commonly exercise control over publications are in selecting which texts will be published, and then, after accepting texts, revising and/or suggesting revisions to the authors prior to publication. On the former point, it was learned that most My Share editors accepted as many submissions as they could, rejecting only those which fundamentally didn't fit the genre such as by being too long or not really being about an activity (that is, being closer to another genre,

like a research paper). One point from the guidelines that was treated inconsistently by the editors I interviewed says, "Articles are selected for publication based upon their utility in the classroom, as well as their originality." One of the editors felt that originality was an important criterion, and that activities which could easily be found in other resources shouldn't be accepted, while the two other My Share editors said that if there was even a little bit of originality ("a twist," as one said) in a submission then they accepted it. However, the first half of that guideline requiring "utility in the classroom" seems to have been not evaluated by the editors—they trusted that if the authors had found the activities useful, then it was likely that at least some other teachers would as well.

Regarding the second means of control (editing) for the most part editors focused only on issues of clarity, grammar, and length. Most of the editors engaged in a back-and-forth process with the authors, giving suggestions and asking the authors to revise, though one of the editors said that they preferred to just do all the editing and ask for the authors' approval. Neither process involved the editors making significant content changes.

As such, it is safe to say that decisions about the content of the articles (and, by proxy, the activities themselves) in the My Share genre were made mostly by the authors, not the editors. Of course, some of the points that the editors did touch, such as the grammar, have an impact on the beliefs that get embedded in the genre—for example, the editor-created rule requesting imperatives in the Procedure section had a major consequence on the implied power relationship between students and teachers. Furthermore, I've theorized at several points that the editor/publisher determined word length is playing a major role in defining what can (and, more to the point, can't) be said.[149]

**12.2.3 Topics.** At the highest level of abstraction, the topic of the My Share genre is fixed, in that all articles are supposed to provide practical information about

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[149] None of this is meant to imply that authors acted as independent agents making wholly personal decisions about what and how to write, nor to imply that the authors intentions have any direct or conclusive bearing on the meaning of a text. Rather, authors are always already embedded in discourses and ways of thinking, preceded in their writing by what they have heard and read before, and meaning is generated when texts are interpreted by readers in the context of their own textual histories. I merely mean to argue that it is possible to read the editorial touch on this genre as less important than that of the more general authorial discourse community.

activities that can be used in foreign language classes. However, consistent with the English focus built into Japanese foreign language education (Hadley, 1997), there are no cases of activities designed to teach other languages, whether Japanese or a different foreign language. Furthermore, as far back as I could trace the genre through the online records, only 0.2% were published in Japanese.

Regarding more specific topics, the lessons have a variety of teaching targets. There is a preference for speaking, listening, and writing lessons, with far fewer reading, pronunciation, discourse, or pragmatics lessons. Vocabulary is far more frequently mentioned than grammar. *Vocabulary* is the most frequent individual word among keywords, the most frequent keyword, and tied for first in keyword categories. *Grammar*, on the other hand, doesn't even appear among the top 40 most frequent keywords, but is the ninth most frequent keyword category. This is in part because when grammar is the focus, it tends to be divided into finer subtopics.

**12.2.4 Moves.** Looking at the rhetorical structure of the introduction and Conclusion sections of the genre through move analysis, no universal requirements were found. There are some patterns that are nearly obligatory—for instance, almost 95% of articles include either a benefit or a teaching target (with over 55% including at least one of each). However, no individual move or category of moves occurs in every article, with the most frequent category, "Fact about the activity," appearing in 91.5% of articles, and the most frequent move, "Benefit," appearing in 90.4% of articles. In addition, the sequencing of moves was highly varied, with no discernible patterns or even significant collocations among moves in either the introduction or Conclusion sections.

**12.2.5 Problems in the genre.** There are cases where terms are clearly used inconsistently across the corpus. The most problematic of these is a lack of clarity in the "Learner English level" and the "Learner maturity level" Quick Guide points. First, the terms used aren't standardized, and this lack of standardization adds only confusion, not useful information: nothing could possibly be gained by having one article say, "Any," another say, "Elementary to advanced," and a third say, "Beginner and above." Second, activities listed as having the same target level might require a very different set of skills. As discussed in section 9.3.1, part of the problem might

be that the authors are defining English level based on the students they typically teach rather than placing the activities in the context of the full range of English skills present in Japan. While the problem with "Learner maturity level" could be fixed fairly simply, the "Learner English level" may be more difficult to standardize because it requires more precise judgment of both students and activities (though in section 13.3 I offer some suggestions how this could be attempted).

Another less frequent but "bigger" case of confusion is in how the authors interpret what belongs in the Preparation section and, by extension, how the Quick Guide point "Preparation time" should be calculated, with most articles including only time spent and actions taken by the teacher alone prior to class in the Preparation section and time, while a few others include work done in class with students that is, for no clearly specified reason, considered to be "preparation" to the main activity. For example, in some activities, the action of preparing a speech (by students) is described in the Preparation section, while the action of giving the speech is described in the Procedure. While this alternative division of time/work occurs in only 10-12 of the articles, this is enough to indicate confusion about the meaning of the word "preparation." While there are other cases where words have multiple, contradictory meanings in the corpus (as with "challenging" as discussed in section 9.8.1.2.1) these represent disagreements about content, while the disagreement about "preparation" is the only one that has consequences for the basic structure of the genre.

**12.2.6 Reinterpreting the genre as fairy tale.** The My Share genre is designed to be practical—a succinct description of a classroom activity accompanied by an explanation of what makes the activity good. This could be described as a documentary or non-fiction style. I would like to argue that underneath that non-fiction covering there is a fairy tale-like quality to the genre. I mean this in three senses. First, the teacher is, quite often, a hero. This is most evident in the articles that contain negative claims, where the article identifies some problem—either that students typically have during foreign language learning, or that is common among other language classes. Following the introduction of such a problem, the activity in question inevitably "solves" that problem. This issue is discussed in detail in sections 12.3.4 and 12.4 below.

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Second, these articles are fantastic stories, rather than documentary accounts of actual practice. The activities always work, even in the face of previously identified problems. Students almost never resist, remain passive, or have difficulty understanding either the language skills being taught or the instructions for the activity. The fact that the articles always succeed is unsurprising, since both the short (in print) and long (online) instructions for the My Share section direct writers to describe (only) successful lessons. However, I would argue that the fact that there are few or no intervening obstacles (that is, there are few cases where the activity doesn't go smoothly from beginning to end) is in large part a function of the strict word limit. There simply isn't space in the articles to discuss contingency plans, even though it is possible that some of the authors had some. The sense of unreality is exacerbated by the fact that the activities are almost entirely described "in theory" rather than "in practice"—that is, they explain what a reader could/should "do" in the future, but, outside of the infrequent "Experience" moves, don't describe "what happened" when the author used the activity in the past.

Third, these articles describe activities that, for the most part, stand alone as isolated language learning events, unconnected to a larger curriculum or pedagogical plan. While there are occasionally references to the origins of the lesson (shown in "Negative claims" and "Background about the activity" moves), there is no clear picture of how these activities build on and/or supplement what students have done in the rest of the course leading up to the activity. And while the activities are usually described as leading to specified positive outcomes (shown in "Benefit" and "Teaching target" moves), there is no discussion of long-term outcomes. Just as with a fairy tale, the My Share stories do not explain, practically speaking, what happens to these students before or after the "event." Articles with optional "Extension" sections (see section 5.3.3) may describe the very next step, but that still doesn't provide long-term information. There are a few exceptions of articles that provide a clearer picture of the larger language learning context, such as those that describe themselves as the start of a longer project. For example, the *Memoirs of a Geisha* activity says, "This is a starting point for discussions about gender equality. This topic provides a platform to discuss gender equality in various other situations, such as work, family, sport, or study." 10 of the activities take place over the course of three to six lessons, which is 20–40% of a typical university semester, and three of

the activities are designed to be done every week. But these articles are the exception, with 85% of the activities taking one class session or less. Rather, the reader is asked to believe that doing the activity leads to a "happily ever after" outcome.

Thus, I believe that the very structure of the My Share genre—the goals, the world limit, and the typical moves—work together to create a fairy tale approach to teaching that says, "Do this one thing, and your students will succeed!" Furthermore, as is discussed in more detail in the next section, both students and teachers are depicted as caricatures—less people and more roles. Success becomes not a function of individual effort, motivation, or skill, but rather the magic of applying a particular activity to a particular set of students with particular learning needs.

## 12.3 Teacher and Student Beliefs and Identity (Research Question 2)

There are, without exaggerating, thousands of teacher beliefs embedded in just these 177 texts. There is no way that this paper (or any paper) can address all the beliefs in a corpus of this size. Furthermore, analysis must always be limited to those features which are not wholly naturalized to the interpreter(s) (the researcher(s) doing the analysis). The following discussion focuses on those beliefs which seem the most salient to me because they are widely prevalent in the corpus, are particularly compelling (either positively or negatively), or which help build my larger arguments about the discourse and the community which uses it.

**12.3.1 Teacher beliefs about language learning.** The beliefs which stand out the most in the corpus are those related to language learning. This is unsurprising, given the purpose of My Share. In addition, when beliefs about other topics appear, they are often idiosyncratic to a small number of articles, so they have less prominence in the corpus. Language learning beliefs, on the other hand, are repeated far more frequently.

*12.3.1.1 How should language be taught?* In Chapter 7, I showed that there is no benefit or group of benefits that appears in even half of the articles. In fact, only seven individual benefits appear in more than 10% of the articles: fun (20.3%), interaction-generating (16.3%), enjoyable (15.8%), flexible (level) (14.1%), creative

(12.4%), communication-generating (11.3%), and encouraging (11.3%). Using a larger grouping, there are three clusters of similar moves that appear in more than 10% of the articles: the happiness (39.0%), flexible (all) (22.0%), and energizing (11.3%) clusters. These numbers, of course, don't prove what percentage of the discourse community agrees that these are important benefits, since even though someone may consider a particular trait to be beneficial, that doesn't mean they think it needs to be used in every activity (for example, a teacher might think it is good for some activities to be fun, but also believe that some serious/challenging activities are desirable). However, to me it seems reasonable to tentatively conclude that the most frequent benefits probably represent traits that are at least somewhat widely approved of by the JALT discourse community. More importantly, they are the traits a reader would be most likely to believe that the discourse community approves of—that is, these benefit moves are likely helping to construct a belief among readers of the genre that these should be considered to be positive and important aspects of language learning.

Of these ten benefits/clusters, five refer to changes that occur within students as a result of doing the activity (fun, enjoyable, encouraging, happiness, and energizing, with the first two being subsets of the fourth). This implies a belief that language teachers can engender positive feelings in students. This also constructs a belief that language learning is more successful when students have these positive, non-linguistic experiences.

Rather, that's what I presumed to be the case for much of my analysis, but as I started combining the various ideas in the text, I realized that this claim (positive feelings make students learn better) is true only if I assume an additional belief: teachers decide (or should decide) what to teach in class based solely on what is best for their students' language learning. However, looking at just the list of most frequent benefits above, this cannot be a universally held belief because of the second-most frequent cluster: flexibility. Flexibility is a "teacher-linked" benefit, because it means a teacher can use the same lesson in more than one circumstance, adapting it to meet the needs of different teaching conditions (student level, age, major, personality, preferences, etc.). For students, there is no merit to a flexible lesson over one custom made just for them. In fact, it is possible that a flexible lesson may be worse for students, because a lesson that potentially works in many

circumstances may not ideally match any one of them individually. Thus, if more than one-fifth of the articles highlight a benefit that doesn't necessarily mean better language learning, I must question whether the other benefits do, either. For example, consider the "happiness" cluster—while some (perhaps even most) of these moves are likely included because the authors believe that students who enjoy their English lessons will learn/retain more, some of them could be included simply because the teacher themselves prefers "fun" activities to "boring" ones.

It is possible to double-down on this conflicting set of interpretations through reference to some of the idiosyncratic beliefs in the corpus. For example, the article that claims, "There is nothing better than getting a personal hand-written letter from somebody in this modern age of email" is putting forward what I regard as an extraordinarily dubious claim. I'm willing to believe that the author likes receiving hand-written letters, but for myself, I find them outdated, cumbersome, and inconvenient (not to mention that they place a social burden upon the receiver to return the letter). Furthermore, I find it hard to believe that the author wouldn't recognize themselves as being in the minority, especially when compared to the generation of students they are likely teaching. Thus, what that activity really does is promote a form of English use that the author personally likes. This is not to say that there isn't value in a lesson about letter writing—one could argue that it teaches otherwise useful grammatical, discursive, and genre rules that will benefit students in other communicative circumstances, but these ancillary benefits are not what the article focuses on.

Thus, in summary, what I can say for certain is, "A substantial number of the articles promote the idea that certain traits are beneficial in the language learning classroom." Further, I presume that in many cases there is an additional belief of "These benefits lead to better language learning," but I recognize that this is not always true, and there could be other motivations for promoting these benefits.

One additional key finding regarding how second/foreign languages should be taught relates to the use of the students' L1. As mentioned above, the corpus is entirely written in English, and the lessons are all designed to teach English. This led to the question of the corpus' orientation towards the use of Japanese in the classroom. Only eight of the articles tried to discourage or forbid the use of Japanese, while 25 explicitly recommended its use for at least a part of the lesson. On the one

hand, this seems to indicate that there is not an "English-only" belief among the teachers. However, in many cases, when Japanese was used, it was highlighted (in the title, in keywords, or in benefit moves), and thus there seems to also be a belief that a "normal" English course is done in English—that is, articles recommending the use of Japanese treat this usage as transgressive while arguing that the inclusion of some Japanese would ultimately be beneficial. Thus, it appears that the attitude towards Japanese use in the English language classroom is conflicted in this corpus.

*12.3.1.2 Organization and management.* There seems to be strong support for the idea that language lessons should be done in groups, given that 83.0% of the activities are done at least partially in groups, and 52.5% are done entirely in groups. Since much (though not all) of this group work involves the students speaking in English to each other, the corpus represents a strong belief in the importance of interaction in language learning. This is supported by "interaction-generating" and "communication-generating" being the second and seventh most frequent benefit moves, respectively.

However, the fact that interactive group activities and interaction/communication moves are so prevalent in the corpus makes another aspect of the corpus surprising: *group* was the fourth most common word in the Keyword Quick Guide point. Normally, we would expect that something that is nearly universal wouldn't appear often in the keywords, because keywords are only useful if they highlight something special about the article (for example, it wouldn't make sense for a keyword in this genre to be "language learning"). Resolution of this contradiction is possible only if an additional belief is assumed: that "typical" language lessons in Japan do not use group work. In turn, this hidden warrant supports the idea that My Share activities are special and different from the norm. Furthermore, if interactive group activities are being held up as a good part of language learning, and other activities don't use group work, then there is an implication that the way language is conducted on average is lacking. This is both reflective and constructive of the fairy tale mentality discussed above. I think it would be going too far to state that this proves that the discourse community generally believes that most language learning in Japan is bad. However, there are some cases where that sentiment is expressed explicitly, as in the "Identify a problem

of other activities" that is one of the moves in the "Negatives" category, so this seems to be, at a minimum, a belief that is not strictly rejected by the community.

One consequence of the heavy use of both group activities and lots of interaction is the need in many of the activities for the classrooms to have flexible seating and/or space to move around in. 73% of activities require some sort of specialized space, such as a classroom where students can sit in groups, comfortably share things on a desk, stand up for extended periods of time, and/or walk around the room. This implies a belief that teachers generally teach in flexible classrooms, as well as a belief that students will always be physically mobile.

The activities are much more often co-operative than competitive—32 (18.1%) of the activities contain a competitive component, while 125 (70.6%) contain a collaborative component. However, as I proposed in section 9.7, 18% may actually be high compared to the average secondary or tertiary class—though I couldn't locate any published data to support this, my personal discussions with students haven't suggested much, if any, use of competitive activities in non-language classes. The most frequent kind of competitive activities are "games," and one finding in section 9.8.1.3 regarding games was that they strongly correlated to the use of "energizing" moves. Thus, it could be that the likely higher incidence of competitive activities in the corpus relative to their use in general education in Japan is linked to the desire for active, energized classrooms.

*12.3.1.3 What should be taught.* Three of the most frequent teaching topics, as indicated by both keywords and moves, are speaking, listening, and writing—that is, three of the four items commonly called the "four skills" of language learning. This means that the four-skills paradigm is a powerful belief in this discourse. In addition, the fact that it is rare to have more than one of these items appear in the keywords of a single article (and the terms *four skills* and *four-skill* only appear a total of three times) indicates a belief in the separability of these skills. Or, more precisely, this reflects a belief that it is possible and desirable for a lesson to focus on one specific skill, since most of the activities require at least some use of more than one skill (even when only one is highlighted as a keyword or teaching target).

In section 12.2.3 I noted that those three of the "four skills" occur much more often than the fourth (reading). The two most likely interpretations of the much

lower ranking for reading are either that the collective author considers the first three skills more important than the fourth, or that they don't have any original, useful, effective ideas for how to teach reading. The latter seems more likely, given that it isn't as if reading is excluded from the lessons, just that it isn't often focused upon. What this tells us, more importantly, is that the purpose of the genre—to have discrete, original, effective activities—prevents certain types of language learning from being discussed. Similar points can be made about the higher frequency of vocabulary-related keywords, moves, and activities than grammar ones, though with one additional point: while vocabulary outnumbered grammar, the final discrepancy was smaller than early analyses suggested (the word-based analysis of keywords) because grammar activities tended to be focused around specific individual grammar points, while vocabulary tended to be treated more generally. Thus, an additional discernable teacher belief is that vocabulary instruction is amenable to generic techniques that can be applied regardless of the type of vocabulary being learned, while grammar activities need to be customized to the specific grammar point being covered.

Another finding that came out of the teaching targets analysis in section 9.5 was that 11.3% of articles have the teaching of something other than English as one of their main goals. These activities require students to use English to do the work, but make the focus an additional topic. Some of these topics have a peripheral connection to English language learning, such as the use of research skills to prepare presentations and essays, while others are mostly unrelated, such as photography, science (for science majors), and job-hunting skills. I propose that this collection of activities represents a partial step towards English Mediated Instruction, with the main difference being that most of these articles still make English a major focus of the teaching and learning, while EMI generally focuses entirely on the other topic and positions the English learning as ancillary.

As addressed above, teacher beliefs about what is not important to teach are just as important as beliefs about what are. One broad topic that is very rarely addressed in the corpus are lessons which involve students questioning current social, political, cultural, or educational systems. Note that I am not saying that these lessons are ideologically neutral. By definition, there is no such thing—education is always political, always a "site of struggle and compromise" (Apple, 2005). Rather, it

is more accurate to define these lessons as nearly universally politically aligned with the status quo. This can be seen in the way most treat neoliberalism, *kokusaika*, gender relations, etc. There are exceptions. One that I have returned to several times is the ecological footprint article that asks students to question how their normal, everyday behaviors like working and going to school contribute to global environmental problems. There is one activity that has students discuss gender and work roles in the context of *Memoirs of a Geisha*. The media studies extension to the activity where students watch and then make their own YouTube videos has students question internationalization, considering its positive role in connecting people alongside the potentially negative consequences of English domination of social networking. But these activities are notable precisely because they are exceptions—most of the articles are attempting to "'integrate' them [students] into the structure of oppression," and not to "transform that structure so that they can become 'beings for themselves'" as Freire recommends (2005, p. 74).

*12.3.1.4 Trade-offs and contradictions.* In some of the discussions above, I showed that the corpus is not monolithic—that there are multiple voices within the corpus that seem to want contradictory things. I want to review two more such issues, which could be viewed as either contradictions or as places where teachers believe that it is necessary to balance competing goals.

The first is the issue of flexibility vs. customization. Above, I showed that 22% of the activities contain a "flexibility" benefit. In section 7.6.2, I noted a subset of articles that stated that they were created in response to specific teaching conditions, such as a new type of student, or in response to a problem that the authors had in prior lessons. In addition, many of the activities mentioned in section 10.5.1 that were designed in part to give students job skills are also examples of customization, such as the presentation activity made to help nursing and medical students who have a tendency to use overly difficult vocabulary in presentations.

These two goals—having flexible lessons that can be used for a wide variety of circumstances and having lessons that are custom-made to fit a specific pedagogical need—exist in a bit of tension. In cases where the flexibility is topical, then the activity could be considered both flexible and customizable, because that activity framework could be adjusted to meet a specific topic needed by a certain

group of students. But many of the activities that self-identify as flexible are described as such because they are intentionally vague, and deal, in theory, with generalizable skills necessary for "all" English usage. For example, one activity has students work in pairs; one student builds an object from building blocks (like Lego blocks) in secret, and then describes the structure to their partner, who must rebuild it with their own blocks without looking. The article claims that "The activity may seem simple, but it is suitable for even the most advanced students as higher-level students will be able to describe more complex structures." This is a flexibility that is not also customizability, because no matter how difficult the structures are, the underlying linguistic task is nearly identical (use of prepositions, object descriptions, etc.). As discussed in section 7.6.2, there are competing interpretations for this discrepancy—perhaps these two traits are not valued equally by all members of the discourse community, or perhaps they are both valued but for different situations (that is, teachers might want to have some generalizable activities to reduce their own work load, while also having some customized activities to meet specific needs).

Another major trade-off comes in cases where a certain kind of activity is inconsistent with a common goal. An example of this was discussed in section 9.8.1.2.3, which showed that the "energizing" move is significantly underrepresented in presentation activities—in fact, no presentation activities contain energizing moves. On the other hand, a disproportionate number of presentation activities are described as "challenging." Thus, choosing to do a presentation activity means making a trade-off, in that, presumably, the authors find enough of a value in the "challenging" activity of student presentations to make it worth doing an activity likely to be unexciting to students. It seems possible that this lack of energy can be attributed to the role that the audience plays—in more than half of the presentation activities, there is no interaction between the listeners and the speaker, and in 28.6% of presentation activities, the audience is given no task at all. Thus, many of these activities are sacrificing not only energy-building, but also interaction. Other than "challenging," no benefit frequently occurs in these articles. Thus, it seems possible to me that there is a naturalized belief that presentations are inherently necessary language learning activities, and that this need overrides the

negative aspects of the activity.[150] More generally speaking, it can be said that there is a belief that language teaching requires trade-offs—that approaches/activities that may be good for one component of language learning aren't good for, and may even be actively harmful to, other components.

**12.3.2 Teacher identity.** While the distinction between "teacher beliefs" and "teacher identity" is in no way clear, in this section I will focus on those findings which point to characteristics that teachers seem to have—as opposed to ideas they seem to hold—especially as discussed in the analysis of the lexicogrammar in Chapter 8. First, the analysis of actor representation found that the agent [teacher] is more frequently elided than lexically present—that is, [teacher] appears more often as a deleted actor in passive and imperative constructions than it appears as the word *teacher* (or synonym) or pronoun. This moves the identity of the teachers into the background—teachers exist in the classroom, but they are less present as actual humans with human thoughts and desires than students are. Especially because of the very heavy use of imperatives in the Procedure section, it is as if teachers are less people than they are embodiments of the activity instructions.

In the verb co-occurrence analysis, several types of verbs were found to co-occur with [students] but not [teachers], and vice versa. [Teachers] do not frequently co-occur with verbs that indicate a change in mental state (such as *learn, memorize, notice, realize, recognize, reflect,* and *understand*, each of which frequently co-occurred with [student]). In other words, being a teacher does not involve changing during language teaching. This corpus does not position teachers as co-learners or otherwise as participants in a process of growth. In addition, [teachers] do not co-occur with words related to having emotions (while they did co-occur with *feel*, this was used as a synonym for *think,* not having emotions). So, teachers are both unchanging and unfeeling. If I want to phrase this "nicely," I could say that this corpus positions teachers as distant and objective—in charge of lessons but not a

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[150] As a point of self-reflexivity, I am aware that this claim is probably one of the most heavily influenced by my own beliefs about language teaching, in that I never have students give presentations and consider them more harmful than good in language learning; I also don't believe the oft-repeated claim that most people need to be able to give presentations in future careers, much less presentations in a foreign language. Thus, I may be reading too much into the relationship between these move frequencies.

part of them. But I could also describe this as positioning teachers as cold robots or inhuman forces, whose job is to carry out the actions described in the articles without becoming joint participants or full human beings. While I would argue that this approach to teaching is always harmful, Harris and Jones (2014) showed that this type of cold, unemotional teaching is especially harmful to both teachers and students who are queer, trans*, or otherwise marginalized by traditional teaching methodologies (and society in general).

While teachers are unchanging and unemotional, they are very much tasked with managing and controlling the classroom and the activity. Many of the 2-, 3-, and 4-grams in the Procedure section are tied to classroom management, telling the teachers how long activities should last, where to make students stand, and how they should be put into groups. In addition, many of the verbs that frequently co-occurred with [teachers] and not [students] were linked to judgment and control, such as *announce, assess, assign, award, demonstrate, emphasize, encourage, grade, highlight, instruct, monitor, point, refer*, and *stress*. Thus, a key part of the "teacher" identity in this corpus is "someone who judges what is good and important, and who expresses those judgments to others."

**12.3.3 Teaching, researching, and publishing.** One of the things that this project demonstrated is how the profession of being a teacher in Japan (primarily at the university level) is linked with non-teaching responsibilities—specifically with getting articles published. 60% of the survey respondents said that part of their reason for submitting a My Share article was to improve their job prospects, using phrases like "I wanted to put it on my résumé" and "Wanting to add to my list of publications." A few of those respondents described My Share as an "easy" and "pain-free" publication, and several of the interviewed editors described it in similar ways. My Share thus represents an opportunity for people to advance their personal careers. [151] But this has to be read in the context of what a My Share article supposedly is—a short, friendly description of something the author did in a classroom that was successful. Taking these two points together, this means that

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[151] My personal experience makes me think that this is primarily an issue for those teaching at the tertiary level, though that wasn't discernable from the data.

doing a good job in a classroom isn't sufficient to be employed as a teacher. To be a teacher (as a job), one must be more than a teacher (as a role in a classroom). My Share is probably particularly useful for professional teachers who don't actually like research—as one survey respondent said, "I'm a classroom ideas guy. I like coming up with ideas that work and sharing them with others, much more than a heavy research article."

Looking at the visual layout of *The Language Teacher*, though, shows that not all publications are equal. Feature Articles and Readers' Forum articles, the peer-reviewed component of *The Language Teacher*, are laid out in a substantially different way from My Share and other parts of the non-peer-reviewed portion of *TLT*. Besides being more visible through more frontal positioning and bolder and larger typesetting, the peer-reviewed articles are much more strongly tied to the individual authors—those authors get a photo and a biographical paragraph, and the titles of their articles are displayed on the cover of the journal. The titles of the My Share articles are not on the cover and the names of all My Share authors in the issue appear in a single list. Rather than the My Share authors getting a biographical paragraph and photo, the My Share section editors get a photo and a paragraph or two to introduce the section. Furthermore, these editors write a one or two sentence summary of the article, unlike the author-written abstract of the peer-reviewed articles. Not only do these differences elevate research over teaching (a standard story in the teaching profession), but they also collectivize teaching. That is, merging the My Share articles together into a single, running set of texts drawn together by the oversight of the editors makes the identity of the individual authors less important. This sense of collectivization is consistent with the finding that many of the survey respondents stated that one of their reasons for submitting an article was to "share ideas" and/or "to contribute something in return [for the ideas they had gotten from My Share]."

In summary, this leads to a pair of related and somewhat contradictory beliefs. First, the act of teaching in a classroom is in part a collective action—teachers can cooperate with each other to both make their own lives better or easier, but, more importantly, they can also share ideas to help students successfully learn language. At the same time, the profession of teaching requires individual, competitive

action—publishing articles in professional journals is in many cases a prerequisite to obtaining employment as a teacher, at least at the tertiary level.

**12.3.4 Student beliefs and identity.** When I speak of student beliefs and identity, I'm speaking about an even more distanced representation than with teachers. For teachers, the work above interpreted the words of some teachers (the authors) to gain an indirect assessment of the teacher beliefs promoted by the genre as well as the characteristics of the "teacher" identity in this discourse community. With students, there is no way to see what students "actually" think since none of these articles were written by students. While student voices do occasionally appear in the "Experience" moves, it would be doing students a grave disservice to act as though those are accurate reports of student ideas (or even if they are, if they come close to representing the complexity of student identity or beliefs). Rather, what is apparent are the identities that teachers are attempting to project onto students by describing students' alleged feelings and reactions to classroom activities, as well as by the way they have chosen to represent student words. Having said that, it is worth recalling that one of the findings from Chapter 7 was that when the articles do make claims about what students believe, think, or do, these claims tend to be stated very confidently, as if the article were revealing a fact about students rather than a teacherly interpretation.

In section 12.3.1.1, I reviewed the most frequent benefits of the articles, and stated that the frequency of these benefits implies that there is a belief that these are generally desirable traits of language learning lessons, and that students will learn more if the lessons include these traits (with the caveat noted in that section that in some cases teachers may make decisions about what to do in class for non-pedagogical reasons). For this formulation to be true, another teacher belief which helps define the discourse's projection of student identity must also be true: students must actually find these activities fun/exciting/energizing, etc. For example, one of the scavenger hunt games contains the following statement in the conclusion: "With practice, this game can become a valuable asset for teaching class content, building community, and making the learning process stimulating and fun." The last part ("stimulating and fun") is an "energizing" benefit followed by a "happiness" benefit. In order for the conceit of the article to work, a reader must accept the

unstated premise that walking around campus in a team, solving puzzles and searching for clues, is both fun and energizing for students. This can be identified as a belief simply by considering if the opposite is also possible: could students find having to walk around campus tiring rather than energizing? Could they find puzzle solving and/or searching for clues to be boring, uninteresting, or otherwise not fun? I think that this is self-evidently possible—many students would certainly be happier and more comfortable sitting in a class for 90 minutes than walking around campus solving puzzles in English. But the belief embedded in the article is that students (or, possibly, "most students" or "enough students") find the activity to be generally positive. Thus, according to corpus, students have positive emotional responses to many, though not all, types of language learning activities.

As an example, I want to turn briefly to the specific beliefs linking physical movement and energizing moves. A particularly clear depiction of this link can be seen in the sentence from one article describing an activity where students have to stand while chanting in English, "Since it requires people to stand while completing quick word-action sequences, it encourages blood circulation, oxygenates the body, and is designed to leave participants energized." In section 9.4.5.2 I pointed out that this type of activity effectively defines students as able-bodied. Furthermore, since the energizing cluster is correlated with the happiness cluster ($\chi^2 = 4.48$, $p = 0.034$), it seems that the students are being given the identity of enjoying physical action.

While the analysis of the moves showed what types of language learning students supposedly like and how they will react to different types of language learning activities, the analysis of the lexicogrammar in Chapter 8 provided a more fundamental description of how the corpus expects students to behave while these activities are being used. For instance, it was found that [student] co-occurred frequently with several verbs linked to emotions—specifically, *enjoy, feel, like,* and *worry*. Thus, students, unlike teachers as discussed in section 12.3.2, are expected to experience emotions in class and/or in the more general context of using a foreign language. While these verbs include both positive and negative emotions, it is worth noting that the only two frequent verbs in this corpus with strictly negative connotations (*worry* and *struggle*) both co-occur only with [students] and not [teachers].

Students are described as motivated (prior to doing the activities) only twice in the entire corpus. Students are only explicitly described as being unmotivated three times in the corpus. In two occasions, the context makes it clear that this only refers to some students (thus implying that other students may be motivated). The third makes a stronger claim, saying, "In many Japanese universities, non-English major students are often not interested in learning English, preferring to take a neutral or inactive stance; therefore, it can be rather difficult to convert them into active classroom participants." Having said that, there are 23 instances of the active learning-linked benefit "motivating." Each of these instances implies that the students' default state is "not motivated," since becoming motivated is a benefit of the activity. Thus, students are often characterized as being unmotivated, at least with respect to language learning.

Additionally, students contrast with teachers in that they are associated with processes that indicate a change in mental state, such as *learn* and *reflect*. It is expected that students will be different before and after the use of these activities. Furthermore, it could be argued that this is a fundamental belief in all My Share articles—since these are supposedly successful activities, and success is presumably defined as improving some aspect of students' language skills, then it must be assumed that students are changing.

However, what is almost entirely missing from this corpus are students who don't learn, don't want to learn, refuse to participate, etc. The "negative claim" move sometimes positions students as having negative feelings about English, such as finding English classes (or specific aspects of them, such as talking in front of the class) to be anxiety producing. Students are occasionally positioned as being unwilling to actively participate—they are occasionally labelled as "shy," "reluctant," or "hesitant." Only a couple of articles show true student resistance, as in the article which describes a student who repeatedly "did not answer when his name was called for attendance." But, as I demonstrated in sections 6.5 and 6.6, negatives are always included in articles as problems to be solved—that is, by the end of the lesson, the negative is overcome through the application of the specific methods found in that lesson. There are very few discussions within the activities that help address what to do if things "go wrong;" the most common gesture to this are a small number of articles that provide suggestions for how to keep students from switching into

Japanese during conversation work. Thus, this corpus promotes the identity of students as sometimes reluctant, but always willing and able to overcome problems as long as the teacher chooses appropriate activities and delivers them well.

One last note: the corpus assumes that all students are Japanese. In the two cases where foreign students are mentioned, they are outsiders coming to the Japanese foreign language classes to build international bonds. Just as I said above that the corpus erases students in wheelchairs or who would otherwise have difficulty moving in class, the corpus also erases foreign students, who represent a small but growing percentage of students in both secondary and tertiary education (JASSO, 2017).

## 12.4 Power Relationships between Teachers and Students (Research Question 3)

The strongest information about the power relationships came from the analysis of the lexicogrammar in Chapter 8, where I argued that the corpus constructs learning situations in which teachers have agency and students do not. This was seen primarily in the ways that students and teachers were represented in the corpus, along with the verbs that they co-occurred with.

In most cases, [students] appear directly and visibly in the corpus, using the word *student*, a close synonym (either *learner* or a group word like *member* or *team*), or a pronoun (usually *he/she,* or *they*). [Teachers], on the other hand, are lexically elided via passive and imperative sentence 81.4% of the times that they are semantically present in the corpus. Thus, not only do [students] outnumber [teachers], they are much more visible in the text—teachers merge into the background. I read this erasure of teachers from the text in the same way that Fairclough (2003) reads the erasure of agents in texts linked to globalization. In that case, the hiding of agency (and thus, the rendering of the contentious into the natural) is often accomplished through a combination of nominalization and recontextualization. I believe that the same effect is being accomplished in the My Share genre via the very heavy use of passive and imperative forms in cases where the [teacher] is the elided agent. The result of these erasures (both the teachers here and the agents promoting globalization in Fairclough's work) is to naturalize status quo power structures.

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Furthermore, these special grammatical constructions have important consequences for the power relationship between teachers and students. Passives tend to be used to hide a lack of student agency, in that there are many sentences where students are the grammatical subject and/or semantic agent, but where the actual decisions and authority are still relegated to the teacher. Imperatives, on the other hand, naturalize teacher power (since the subject of the imperatives was almost always the teacher)—and specifically power over the students, because, in most cases, these imperatives represent the teacher commanding the students to do some portion of the activity. As noted in Chapter 8, this use of imperatives is required by the guidelines for authors created by the JALT editors, and thus it is important to see that this aspect of teacher power is not a consequence of the decisions of individual authors, but, rather, inherent to the current disciplinary constraints of the genre.

In addition, the verbs that co-occur with [student] and [teacher] are different. Teachers often co-occur with verbs indicating that they can and should make judgments. In the "internal mental state" verbs cluster, not only do teachers *think* and *remember*, but they also *assess* and *determine*—and thus, judge what is good or desirable. In the "speaking" cluster, some of the verbs involve teachers making decisions about what happens in the classroom such as *call* (used in the sense of choosing a student to speak and then requiring them to do so), *announce*, *prompt*, and *remind*. Others give teachers the ability to determine what is important, such as *emphasize, familiarize, highlight, inform, note,* and *point.* Finally, the "teaching and learning" cluster verbs give teachers the authority to manage the classroom, as with *assign*, *demonstrate*, *instruct*, and *monitor,* as well as to judge students' performance, with *assess*, *award*, and *grade*. The only similar word which frequently co-occurs with [student] is *teach,* but that is only because of the two student-teacher activities discussed in section 9.8.1.2. Thus, at least at the lexical level, the genre constructs the image of a classroom where teachers make most of the key decisions—that is, a style of teaching that is teacher-controlled and not promoting of student autonomy or agency.

[Students], on the other hand, become the objects which are managed. For example, note that there are no cases in any of the frequent N-grams (see section 8.7) where [students] are actually doing any tasks or language learning. This means

that students are doing a wide variety of different actions in the text (such that no individual phrasings are frequently repeated). On the other hand, there are many N-grams linked to teacher behavior. These refer primarily to managerial aspects of teaching such as controlling how students move, organizing them into groups, and managing time. This contrast makes the classroom look more like a business or factory, in which the teacher manages students and makes them do various activities; students simply follow the teacher's instructions. It is as if the classroom is less a place where students do language learning, and more a place where language instruction is done to students. This makes these activities student-focused, but not student-centered. In addition, the strong linking of *students* to N-grams related to grouping can be read as a way to de-individualize them—that students "exist" only when they are participating in actions with others. This can be viewed as both a positive and a negative. On the positive side, it represents language learning as fundamentally interactive (as opposed to the teacher-centered lecture format of traditional *yakudoku* lessons). On the negative side, the needs, desires, and humanity of individual students are erased, and they become a collective body which is the object of educational practices, rather than individuals personally taking control over their own education.[152]

This positioning of students is linked to the fact that this corpus contains few instances of student resistance—and those which do appear are resolved over the course of the activity, as discussed in section 12.3.4. A number of people in Japan, including at very high levels of government, have seriously proposed making English a purely elective subject (Ike, 1995). Furthermore, since English has been tightly controlled at the secondary level in order "to prevent the power of English from undermining Japanese culture and traditions" (Hashimoto, 2009, p. 38), it must be the case that some people don't want students to actively engage with English activities (as most of the activities require) to prevent undesirable *kotodama*. It seems only logical that some students must share these opinions,[153] but these

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[152] While I have tried to be moderate in this paragraph, I am aware that my own bias opposing the erasure of individuality is influencing my interpretation and the way I have expressed that interpretation.

[153] Unless these ideas are solely relegated to older generations and younger ones either are indifferent to English or fully embrace developing multilingual identities, a hypothesis that does not match my own experiences.

students have no voice in the corpus. In fact, the times when students do speak, it is almost always to praise the activities. Not only are students managed and controlled during the activities, their voices and opinions are erased. This erasure harms students, and it also leaves teachers ill-prepared to work with classes that don't go as smoothly as the articles imply that they will.

Note that in all the above cases, the power that I am asserting that is aligned with teachers and not students is not the power of compulsion or violence. That is, teacher power isn't portrayed as a consequence of the teacher's ability to assign grades to students (the primary institutionally granted status that teachers have which students do not). In fact, only 23% of articles include any mention of teacher-based assessment, and many of those cases are assessment in the sense of feedback rather than in the sense of grading. Instead, teacher power (and student lack of power) is embedded across the whole system—it is assumed, and thus reinforced, that teachers lead and students follow, that teachers are subjects and students are objects. This matches the Foucauldian, deconstructivist perspective on power—that it is systemic and panoptic, operating throughout all aspects of institutions (Foucault, 1995). Note that this panoptic behavior is mirrored by the panoptic enforcement of standards in the professional publication process of My Share, as discussed in section 5.5.

Several individual articles were discussed in this paper that show specific relationships between the teachers and students. By far the most positive, in my opinion, is the "ecological footprint calculator" article, discussed in section 10.3.2.1. More than in any other article, this activity positions the teacher as a co-constructor of knowledge with their students. The teacher not only is an almost equal participant in the activity (they retain a little bit of "teacherly" status in that they are responsible for pre-teaching new vocabulary words), but they also open up their own lives for discussion and criticism by the students. Other articles have similar but usually less pronounced positionings of the teacher as participant.

Other activities, however, demonstrate an antagonistic relationship between teachers and students—or, more specifically, antagonism directed from the teacher to the student. In the poetry activity discussed in section 7.5.1, the article says, "I actually told my students that they would thank me years down the road for introducing the poem to them. They laughed at me. I'm waiting." I don't know

whether to read the last two sentences as absolute smugness or as disdain for the students, but either way it demonstrates a dismissal of the students' opinions.

In section 7.6.2 I mentioned an activity that was created to deal with a student who "did not answer when his name was called for attendance," and in section 12.3.4 I described this as a rare example of student resistance. While this part already portrays at least some students in a negative light, the article gets worse later—in the Procedure section, the article says that teachers have to count the number of students in the classroom and compare that to the number of names on the attendance sheet. Then it says, "If there are too many names, determine who the absent student is and delete that name. Students do not try that trick twice." Furthermore, in the Conclusion section, the author says that their method of having students write names alleviates another problem: "With a traditional roll call, if a mistake is made with attendance records, it is the teacher's fault. With this method, it is the student's responsibility. Thus, it is much harder for a student to argue that the roll is incorrect." These examples construct an identity of students as using multiple tactics to deceive the teacher and get out of work. The whole point of the activity is to overcome various methods of dissension or cheating that students may use, and thus places the teacher in a combative position with students. In contrast, another activity dealing with attendance issues—specifically, student lateness—not only assumes that students may have valid reasons for being late (like forgetting a wallet), it specifically balances the need to avoid class disruption when a student is late with the opportunity for students to "save face" by writing a "late note," and in so doing transforms the problem into a language learning activity by saying "the late notes can be used to teach and reinforce contextualized socio-pragmatic English, providing appropriate models of language that can be used when students are late." The first attendance activity contains no English language learning whatsoever. Perhaps the difference in underlying attitude towards students (judgmental rather than understanding) is why the former activity is about only student management and the latter simultaneously handles students' emotional needs, classroom management, and contextually-appropriate language learning.

Another pair of articles demonstrates a similar connection between the attitude that teachers have towards students and the resulting lesson—the "interruption" pair discussed in 9.8.2.4. In that pair, one article positions students'

lack of interruptions as a failing which meant that they aren't "actively participating" and that they produce conversations which "devolve into a mechanical seesaw rhythm," while the other article positions the lack of interruptions as a cross-cultural difference. Because of the antagonism expressed in the first article, the activity is a rigidly structured competition, while the second is a more open-ended interaction. Furthermore, in the first activity, the teacher shows a video of other students not interrupting (that is, a video of the students' peers) and then criticizes the video. This willingness to demean the students in the video who are proxies for the students in the class as "unnatural" requires that the teacher have little concern for the students' feelings.

While these antagonistic stances do not occur in a majority of the articles in the corpus, when read alongside the more general elevation of teacher power and removal of both student agency and student individuality, I would argue that they are not exceptions as much as they are extensions of a broader perspective towards the teacher-student relationship that is implicit in the genre.

## 12.5 Placing the Genre in the Context of Japanese Educational Ideologies and Policies (Research Question 4)

The fourth research question asked how these articles are related to wider language learning ideologies in Japan. Much of this analysis was done in Chapter 10 in the context of three specific policies, but it is also important to consider other issues raised in the historical background provided in Chapter 2.

**12.5.1 *Yakudoku* and *juken eigo*.** In 12.3.1.2, I reviewed the findings that more than 80% of the activities in the corpus are conducted (at least partially) in groups and that "interaction-generating" and "communication-generating" were the second and seventh most frequent benefits. It is important to place these findings in the context of Japanese language learning, much of which is done via *yakudoku*, a technique that is roughly similar to the Grammar-Translation method (Hino, 1988). Furthermore, secondary English education is very heavily focused on English for tests—what is called *juken eigo*—rather than English for communicative purposes (Hagerman, 2009). A consequence of this is that when students are presented with communication-focused classes, they tend to either dislike them (Matsuura, 2001)

or treat them as a fun break from "real" studying (Geluso, 2013). Thus, one has to imagine that many of the activities in the My Share corpus may not meet students' expectations of "real" English language learning. There is no indication in the corpus that the collective author recognizes this disconnect. If anything, the fact that almost 40% of the articles contain a benefit move from the positive emotion cluster seems to indicate that the collective author rejects the findings that "fun" may not be what students are looking for. An alternative reading is that the teacher-authors are aware of this discrepancy, but believe that even if students don't think they're learning, they will still be acquiring more English in "fun" interactive group lessons than in teacher-centered lectures. If the latter is the case, then this seems to make the collective author somewhat similar to the prejudiced English teacher described by Bax (2003) who refuses to recognize that communicative language teaching is an interested, ideological form of teaching imported from other countries that may be in conflict with local values (Law, 1995). Note, though, that neither Bax nor Law were arguing against the inclusion of communicative activities in language teaching—rather, they were opposed to unreflexively insisting that only communicative approaches can be successful and the idea that local conditions should have no bearing on pedagogical choices.       Thus, it is not the (almost exclusive) use of communicative activities in the corpus that is concerning, but rather the unreflective use—though, as with other issues raised above, this may very well be linked to the restricted length and focus of the articles rather than a lack of reflection on the part of the authors. So, the problem is that the genre constructs a belief that it is acceptable to ignore these issues, not that individual authors already hold this belief.

Only seven articles specifically talk about learning English for test preparation (*juken eigo*), but each of these articles recognizes that students want and/or need to study for these tests. Only one portrays a potential problem of a test-focused approach, in that it worries that test preparation can lead to attempts to acquire large amounts of vocabulary quickly, which is described as a problem "because memorizing long lists of words out of context does not sit comfortably with the communicative focus of most EFL settings." Of course, as a negative claim, this article then follows with a way to make bulk vocabulary learning more communicative. Only one of the articles, however, explicitly mentions entrance exams (the National Center Test), while the others talk about tests like TOEIC and

Eiken. This is likely partially a consequence of 35.6% of the activities being designed for only university students and older, and thus the Center Test is no longer a concern. In addition, only 14.5% of the survey respondents reported not working at least part of the time at a tertiary institution, so it could be that even among those activities targeted at a wider age range, the authors weren't thinking of the importance of entrance exam prep since it wasn't a major part of their teaching responsibilities.

It isn't clear where the articles fall regarding their willingness to accept local values, since this issue isn't raised in most articles. The "good" interruption article recognized student difficulties as springing from cultural differences. Those activities which allow the use of L1 (see section 9.6) seem to show deference to *yakudoku* learning, though only a few explicitly allow translation—most use Japanese for student discussion or preparatory work. The articles which use negative claims that specifically state that other classes are bad sometimes imply negative things about Japanese education, as in an article which says, "Copying out vocabulary and grammatical forms for the purpose of rote memorisation may lead to the type of proficiency required to pass exams, but is unlikely in itself to spark an intrinsic interest in using English creatively." But these moves occur in only 28 (15.9%) of articles, and in many cases are criticizing other communicative classes, as in the article that recommends having students make video projects rather than PowerPoint presentations because the latter "can become overused, boring, and ineffective for achieving classroom goals."

Overall, the communicative focus and group work stand in contrast to the attitudes of Japanese teachers towards CLT found by researchers such as Cook (2009) and Gorsuch (2000). However, it isn't clear if this difference is meant to be an outgrowth of these activities (as in, they're recognizing prior English education and Japanese educational values but are trying to take what they see as the "next step") or whether they are rejecting those values and attempting to substitute their own. Ultimately, I think that which of these two attitudes would be manifested in classes is tied not so much with the core activities as described in the articles, but in how those activities are delivered. But what is unequivocal is that, regardless of which attitude the authors hold, or whether this failure to engage with local values is due to a belief that they are irrelevant or simply because of a lack of space, the end

result is a genre that unreflexively promotes a style of teaching that stands in fairly strong contrast to the dominant form of language teaching in Japan. It would be hard for someone to read My Share articles and not walk away with the belief that teachers who want students to succeed must use interactive, communicative activities.

**12.5.2 Active learning and autonomy**. Both active learning and autonomy have been promoted by the Japanese government for use throughout Japanese education, with the former being a part of tertiary education principles since 2012 (Matsushita, 2018), and the latter being linked more to primary and secondary education and dating back at least to the 1980s (Cave, 2001). However, it was found that terms explicitly linked to active learning appear in less than 10% of the articles and moves related to active learning appear in only 36.7% of articles. Furthermore, some of the activities with these terms or moves do not actually employ active learning principles, with "student-centered" sometimes used only because students spoke together, and "autonomy" being used for activities heavily controlled by the teacher.

In the broadest reading of "active learning"—pedagogical activities where students do anything to interact with the material being learned, rather than just receiving it from the teacher whole cloth—essentially the entire corpus falls under AL, though a few activities, such as the pronunciation activities and some team games, only do so very lightly. Furthermore, 80.8% of the activities involve at least some collaborative work, another hallmark of AL. However, the one type of AL not common in the corpus is problem-based learning, probably because PBL usually requires multiple sessions in a single instructional cycle, and most My Share activities are designed to be completed in a single lesson; in addition, they are often more complex than could be treated under the current word limit.

Regarding autonomy, however, it is important to also factor in the naturalization of teacher power and lack of student agency found in Chapter 8. This finding means that at the lexical level, the corpus is neither student-centered nor autonomy-promoting. Thus, there appear to be multiple, contradictory voices with regards to this idea—a "high-level" push for engaging learning where students are

actively involved, but also a lower level that maintains teacher control and presumes/constructs obedient students.

**12.5.3 *Kokusaika*/Internationalization.** *Kokusaika* is the Japanese version of "internationalization" or "globalization," though Hashimoto (2000, 2011, 2013b) and others argued that *kokusaika* has a specifically Japanese character that promotes the idea of Japanese having the ability to interact with the world, primarily for business purposes, but deliberately discourages full integration with the rest of the world—Japan must remain independent and truly "Japanese." This is based on Japan's historical relationship with the outside world and, in part, the *nihonjinron* philosophy that posits that Japan and Japanese people are unique and separate and that this is a desirable state which should be maintained (Kubota, 1998, 2002). With respect to language learning, *kokusaika* policies have included a strong push for greater communicative language ability focused almost entirely on English, especially U.S. English (Matsuda, 2002).

With respect to the focus on English, the corpus is entirely consistent with *kokusaika* ideology. Every article in the corpus is written in English, and the only non-English, non-Japanese languages mentioned are used strictly in the service of teaching English. Note that this is despite the fact that MEXT does not require that tertiary schools teach English (Kobayashi, 2013), and the fact that JALT is ostensibly a professional organization for the teaching of all second languages in Japan. With regards to place, the U.S. is overrepresented in terms of locations, nationalities, and cultural artifacts.

However, actual discussion of topics related to internationalization in the corpus is rare. Only ten articles deal with these subjects directly, and some do so only very lightly. Some of these articles reinforce neoliberal, *kokusaika* views of globalization, such as the "endangered species" activity, which treats an international problem as something occurring far away with no connection to students' lives, and the "U.S. student" activity that equates "U.S. student" with "native English speaker" and implicitly argues that these speakers both own English and are significantly more important and valuable than other speakers of English. Others oppose *kokusaika* ideas. For example, the "ecological footprint calculator" activity deliberately connects student (and teacher) lives to international problems and seeks to address these through personal changes, and the Ochikeron YouTube video

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activity has students actively engage in examining the consequences of transnational connections as well as the role English plays in cross-cultural communication. In addition, there was one article that used an internationalization term, "Global English student writers," even though the activity was strictly and deliberately national in scope. Finally, none of the articles use globalization as a justification for English learning, in the way that businesses and the government often do. It is worth mentioning that it is possible that JALT is collectively more focused on this issue at present than they were at the time of the corpus, given that the theme of JALT's annual international conference in 2017 was "Language Teaching in a Global Age: Shaping the Classroom, Shaping the World."

**12.5.4 Neoliberalism.** Neoliberalism, the ideology that infuses economics into every aspect of life and measures all things with reference to the economic value they provide is as powerful in Japan as it is throughout much of the rest of the world. It is linked to *kokusaika*, since the drive for economic success at a corporate and national level are a large part of the promotion of communicative (rather than *juken eigo*) English skills. Since, as discussed in the previous section, this corpus is entirely focused on the teaching and learning of English (rather than other foreign languages), and this learning is mainly communicatively focused, this aspect of neoliberalism is supported.

There are other traces of neoliberalism in the corpus. Seven of the activities are designed to support English related to students' future career goals. While most of these articles are not overtly harmful, one (the "international project" activity) reduces both student knowledge and local culture to their economic value, commodifying both students and Japanese culture for the benefit of unnamed employers. In addition, some of the articles contain consumerist messages, with the most notable being those which assume and support automobile ownership in the students' future. The materials discussion in section 9.4 is also relevant to the issue of consumerism, since many of the activities require materials such as photocopies, computers, smartphones, office supplies, or other specialized equipment. Especially with the activities that use technology, there is a sense that language learning is improved through the use of technology, some of which may be quite costly for the teacher, the students, or the educational institution.

In section 10.5.4 I noted that unlike other genres linked to education, there does not seem to be a large amount of interdiscursivity where the language of finance, management, etc. has infiltrated the My Share genre. The heavy focus on classroom management, grouping, and timing discussed in sections 12.3.2 and 12.4 could be viewed as the treatment of the classroom as a space of control similar to a workplace or factory. However, there's no clear evidence to suggest that this is a consequence of neoliberalism rather than the more general (and probably older) idea that teachers are in control of their classes and have primary responsibility for making sure the activities function appropriately.

## 12.6 Summary

Looking at the guidelines, the My Share genre does not claim to promote any particular values, other than the idea that it is possible to improve student language learning outcomes through the use of specific teaching techniques. Nonetheless, there are countless beliefs embedded in the genre, and these beliefs have implications for teacher and student identity. Perhaps the biggest is that the genre is neither student-centered nor autonomy promoting. In fact, the genre actively strips away agency and autonomy from students, leaving them dependent on the teacher for language learning. Furthermore, the genre strips humanity and identity from both teachers and students, portraying teachers as unemotional forces and students as powerless learners mostly devoid of individuality. For the most part, the genre is consistent with both *kokusaika* and neoliberalism, and it incorporates at least part of the government's push to use more engaging active learning techniques. But this active learning does not move over to critical pedagogy or problem-based learning, and instead, for the most part, encourages a perpetuation of the status quo.

**Part 4**

**Conclusion**

The final part of this thesis contains a single chapter, "Conclusion." This chapter reviews the main findings of this project and then discusses the implications of those findings. It looks at how this research has contributed not only to the fields of critical discourse analysis and teacher identity/belief studies, but also how they can be utilized to help improve the My Share genre and other teacherly professional discourses. The chapter closes with a discussion of some of the study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

# Chapter 13
## Conclusion

This final chapter provides a critical look at the study itself. First, the main findings are reviewed. Second, I consider the broad implications of this project with respect to the analysis of genre, beliefs, and identities. Second, I propose a set of changes to editing/publishing practices at *TLT* to help address what this research suggests are problems in the My Share genre. Third, I indicate how I believe the results of this study should influence teacher-researchers when they speak or write about students in any type of professional discourse. Finally, a few limitations of the study are discussed, followed by some suggestions for future research. These suggestions are intended both as a means to overcome some of the limitations, but also as expansions of this project into other discourses and other aspects of language teaching in Japan and elsewhere.

## 13.1 Main Findings

This project has addressed four main issues with regards to a collection of published English language activity plans. The broad lesson/activity plan genre has been almost completely unresearched, and no prior work has examined this genre from a critical discourse analysis perspective or examined how the genre is linked to wider issues of social practice and teachers' beliefs. Furthermore, the specific My Share genre has never been examined in a formal study.

First, this project has established that the My Share articles constitute a distinct genre of professional teacherly discourse that differs from other teacherly discourses such as research articles. The genre has a consistent set of purposes (sharing teaching ideas and improving employment prospects for the authors) as well as a set of rules governing what can be written about and how that writing should be done. Some of those rules, such as article length and required sections, are explicitly delineated in the guidelines written by the editors. Most, however, have arisen dynamically from the genre itself and the discourse community which both writes and reads it. For instance, it was found that there is some flexibility in following the explicit guidelines. Other common aspects had no link to the guidelines at all, such as the almost universal case of including some sort of justification for why

the activity in question is useful for readers. Many aspects of the genre, however, show great variability—there are several optional sections, no moves or move sequences are obligatory, there are numerous different goals and benefits, and the articles do not agree about some basic aspects of language teaching. Finally, the research showed that even though the genre is ostensibly non-fiction (documentary), it has some fairy tale-like aspects, in that the genre seems to promote the idea that proper choice of activities is sufficient to allow a teacher to heroically and magically improve the language learning of students, regardless of the students' desires, abilities, or interests.

Understanding the rules of the genre was only the foundational step—the primary goal was to understand what information from the genre could be gathered about the collective beliefs and identities of teachers and students, the power relationship between these agents, and how these beliefs interact with wider ideologies and pedagogical ideas in Japan. Many beliefs were identified, though few were included in a majority of the articles. The most widely apparent belief is that language learning should be done communicatively and interactively, not via teacher-run lectures. While the articles argue that the activities provide a wide variety of benefits, the most frequent (and thus possibly the most highly valued by the community) are an increase in positive student emotions (especially happiness in the form of fun, enjoyment, etc.), a raising of the class energy level, and flexibility for teachers. Other smaller beliefs are also evident, as discussed in detail in section 12.3, including cases where there appeared to be conflicted opinions (such as about the use of students' L1 and how to balance student and teacher benefits).

With regards to identity, teachers are portrayed as emotionless leaders who are not participating in co-learning. In fact, their dominant role in the classroom is less "teaching" and more "management" in the sense that they have to get students into groups, control the time and flow of the class, and, outside of class, prepare and select input for students and make physical objects (mostly handouts). Students, on the other hand, are portrayed as learners who have little agency over how language learning can or should be conducted. Compared to teachers, students have more humanity in the sense that they have emotions and can and will undergo change, but they have little independence or agency while learning English.

The previous findings dovetailed with the analysis of teacher and student power. Based on what teachers and students actually do in these lessons and the grammatical structures used to represent these actions, teachers have power in this genre while students do not. Overall, I summarized this orientation towards language learning as teacher-controlled and student-focused but not student-centered. It is more accurate to say that language teaching is done to students in this corpus, rather than saying that language learning is done by them.

The final research question and resultant findings were about how this discourse connects with major ideologies in Japanese language learning. The communicative and interactive nature of the activities is quite different from the *juken eigo* focus and *yakudoku* methodology present in much language learning in Japan. However, it is not clear if the My Share articles are intended to be an outgrowth/continuation of these language learning practices or if the overall attitude is a rejection of local practices accompanied by an intent to replace them with foreign-created communicative styles (though there is some evidence from a minority of articles pointing more toward the latter than the former). Unfortunately, the corpus is strongly consistent with *kokusaika* and *nihonjinron* principles that divide the world into "Japanese" and "non-Japanese" in the way that the articles focus entirely on English language learning and disproportionately on the United States. Furthermore, there are few cases where the articles have students actively engage with international issues, just as *kokusaika* wants students to have English skills without adopting a critical, international mindset. However, there are very few cases where *kokusaika* is used as the justification for language learning, so in that way the ideology doesn't seem to have penetrated My Share. Neoliberalism is similarly present in the activities in the form of a promotion of consumerist behavior, but there are few cases where economics is the justification for language learning, nor is there widespread infiltration of the genre with the language of finance or management as has been found in other education-related discourses. Finally, contradictory results were found for active learning and autonomy: while the former is, at least at the most basic level, widely prevalent in the corpus, the latter is essentially rejected by most of the articles.

More generally speaking, this project has, following in the tradition of all critical discourse analysis work, re-established that there is a strong link between

discourse and wider social and political issues. The My Share genre, as with any other, both represents and constructs the beliefs of the discourse community that produces and reads it. Similarly, the genre helps define what it means to be a teacher or student—that is, what identities teachers and students can play both in and out of the classroom. Authors should understand that what and how they write—even in what might be viewed as a more casual format like My Share—can have consequences on future language teaching and learning. Similarly, in their role as gatekeepers and advisors, editors should understand that they also play a role in shaping these beliefs and identities.

## 13.2 Research Implications

This project has made a substantial contribution to both genre research and research on teacher beliefs and identity. For the former, this project has analyzed a wholly unexplored genre. Almost all prior analysis of professional discourse related to teaching has been on research publications (journal articles and dissertations), textbooks, or discourse which occurs in the classroom. This project, along with a few others (Liao, 2015; Parson, 2016; Swayhoover, 2014), turned to the ancillary texts that serve a practical role in the teaching community. As the first project to look at the discursive aspects of published lesson plans (Swayhoover (2014) looks at lesson plans, but primarily on a content level), this research provides insight into the role that this discourse can have on teachers and, indirectly, students and the classroom. Because the My Share genre was shown to promote and oppose a large variety of beliefs and identities, examining it is an important part of understanding language teaching in Japan. Also, as discussed below in section 13.6, this project can serve as a template for further research into how lesson plans operate in other contexts. With respect to language teacher beliefs, this project has contributed to the ongoing research field examining the teacher beliefs of language teachers in Japan (see examples in section 3.2.2), with a focus on secondary and tertiary English language teaching. It is especially important in that it shows that what teachers may say they believe (as shown through teacher belief research done by asking teachers directly) may not be the same as what their professional discourse and/or their classroom actions actually promote—in this case, the biggest discrepancy being the lack of student autonomy and student-centered learning in the corpus.

From a broader perspective, this research has demonstrated the importance of two calls to action originally discussed in Chapter 1. First, the suggestion from Ainsworth & Hardy (2014) that more discursive analysis be included in identity research is supported by the fact that this project was able to demonstrate the way the My Share genre reflects and perpetuates certain ideas about what it means to be a teacher or student. These revelations would not have been apparent without a close examination of texts to see how various levels of discourse are contributing to this identity construction.

Coming from the opposite perspective, Bhatia (2015) argued that when researchers examine professional discourse, they must do so by looking not only to the texts themselves, but rather also considering the genre as "it is likely to be interpreted, used and exploited in specific contexts, whether social, institutional, or more narrowly professional, to achieve specific disciplinary goals" (p.10). The present project would have been meaningless if I had attempted to examine the My Share corpus without examining how it interacted with the context of language learning in Japan. Furthermore, some of the insights would have been impossible to obtain without having also heard from some of the authors and editors who were involved in producing the texts. As discussed below in 13.6, it would be helpful to take this work even further to examine how lesson plans (whether from My Share or other sources) are transformed into practice in Japan. But even without that step, this research has made it clear that interpreting a genre requires a broader approach than a purely textual one, since the My Share doesn't just exist as a bunch of words, but rather exists for a purpose (or, more accurately, a set of related but not necessarily compatible purposes), and that divorcing the texts from the social practices that they condition and are conditioned by would result in an impoverished analysis. Whether or not the more methodological aspects of Bhatia's critical genre analysis are helpful I cannot say, but I do believe that their larger message of recognizing that genre is not just discourse but also a tool used by a community for discursive work is one that CDA researchers working on genre should attend to.

Thus, I would like to argue that the present project can be considered a prototype for future research on teacherly discourse, beliefs, and identity. While there are many other linguistic and non-linguistic tools, methodologies, and

research paradigms that could be brought to bear in future work, I have presented a variety of tools that, at least for the present project, produced useful findings. Furthermore, I believe that this project shows that future research in these areas should likewise use eclectic, multi-methodological approaches, since the persuasiveness of the arguments and the overall picture I have developed rely on these multiple, sometimes contradictory approaches. Note that while this position is stronger than taken by some other CD analysts, it is not contradictory to the basic principles of CDA. In fact, I see the suggestion that CDA projects be eclectically multi-methodological to be an extension of the second and third principles of CDA discussed in section 3.1.1, which call for diversity in methodology and an attendance to both macro- and micro-linguistic issues. CDA projects, especially larger-scale ones like the present project, will benefit from the simultaneous usage of a variety of tools on the same data set. Furthermore, the visual analysis in section 5.6 went beyond looking at just the texts to examining other aspects of the genre, as recommended in the fourth principle (CDA should also look at non-linguistic matters). Admittedly, this was only a small portion of the present project, but this type of addition should be considered an important (perhaps even necessary) part of CDA work.

Finally, I would like to note one other small research implication related to the fifth of the CDA principles from section 3.1.1: the recommendation that CDA projects include self-reflexivity. I have tried to keep this principle in mind when doing this project, and have mentioned my own potential biases at several points in this paper. For example, in sections 2.3 and 4.3 I gave a partial description of my own status as a white male western English teacher working in Japan—all descriptors which have influenced not only my attitudes towards language learning, but also my own professional opportunities. Additionally, I have not shied away from openly stating my opinions about language teaching and politics in some cases, as in my openly hostile stance towards neoliberalism evident in sections 1.3 and 10.5. In a few cases I have tried to call attention to biases that I think may be affecting my interpretation, as in some of the footnotes in Chapter 12. Finally, the whole project itself originated, in part, from the events related to the blog post described in Chapter 1, and I have tried to tie the findings in part to my initial concern that how we talk about students matters. But having said that, I still feel like this project has not been as reflexive as I originally wanted to be, which might help explain Lin's

(2014) observation that self-reflexivity is one of the most overlooked aspects of CDA. If I can be personal about being personal, I would say that my failing in this regard demonstrates that self-reflexivity is very difficult, in that the pressures implicit in the normal genre rules of academic writing (specifically here, dissertation writing) make it easier to take on an identity that appears more detached and "objective," even for authors trying to remain present and open about their subjectivities. It may be necessary for those who want to push further in this direction to rely more on the tools found in feminist and/or postcolonial criticism, which are often much more open about weaving personal and political concerns into academic work.

## 13.3 Practical Implications

In critical discourse analyses that look at broad collections of texts, when problems are identified, it isn't always made clear what could be done to address those problems. For example, an analysis of newspaper articles from dozens or hundreds of newspapers might identify negative ways that a topic or group of people are described by those articles, but any suggestions for change would have to be noticed and acted upon by hundreds or thousands of authors, editors, publishers, and other members of staff. In the case of the present study, on the other hand, since the articles were published at a single journal with a relatively small editorial staff, it might be possible to develop a set of best practices that could lead to substantial changes in the genre. The My Share section itself usually has only two editors, typically serving for one to two years, and *The Language Teacher* has less than a dozen high level editors supported by less than a hundred support staff such as reviewers and proofreaders, the majority of whom have do not work on the My Share section. Thus, if the journal staff were to agree with any of the concerns that I have raised, it should be possible to take steps to alleviate them. This section describes my suggestions for improving the My Share section to address these issues. These suggestions (along with those made below in section 13.4) are made in the spirit of the first principle of CDA discussed in section 3.1.1, which says that CDA should be socially committed. That is, the goal of this project was not only to make interpretations about the current state of the My Share genre, but also to offer suggestions for ways that the systemic inequalities and other problems embedded in the genre can be improved upon. I have divided the suggestions into two types:

those which I call "refinements," which maintain much of the current style and purpose of My Share articles, and those which I call "fundamental" since they significantly alter some of the more basic aspects of My Share.

**13.3.1 Suggested refinements for My Share.** The first suggestion is both the most practical and the easiest to implement: the terminology used to describe student English and maturity level in the Quick Guides should be standardized (see section 12.2.5). For maturity level, since most of the articles already use some reference to schooling, it should be possible to have authors choose from ranges such as "elementary through high school" or "high school and above." For English level, in an ideal world it would be helpful to link to some sort of standardized measurement tool, such as CEFR or TOEIC scores. However, my guess is that neither authors nor readers will usually have access to such detailed information about student levels, so it would be sufficient to use a simple ranking system with perhaps five to six levels, with ranges also allowed. The editors should provide descriptions of these levels so that authors can more easily choose; these descriptions should be customized to the Japanese language learning context. Special exceptions could be allowed at editorial discretion for activities targeted at a highly specific type of student, such as students in a particular major or with other special characteristics (such as students preparing for study-abroad).

Similarly, the editors should also more precisely define *preparation* in terms of both the Quick Guide point "Preparation time" and the Preparation section to clarify how to handle cases where authors refer to work that students do across multiple lessons. I am inclined to recommend that all work done by students should appear in the Procedure section; for example, if an activity requires students to prepare a speech in class and then present it in a following class, both class sessions would be described in the Procedure. However, that this exact framework is implemented isn't necessary so long as the terminology and structure are made more consistent.

The second suggestion follows from the first, but requires significantly more editorial work and influence. In sections 9.3 and 12.2.5 I raised the concern that not only is the terminology used for English and maturity levels imprecise, but also that there are a number of cases where the activity described doesn't match the level

given by the author, with there being many cases of articles that ostensibly have the same level but require the students have very different abilities and knowledge. This means that an experienced teacher will soon learn that it isn't possible to rely on the Quick Guide points. Worse, this lack of precision may cause readers with less teaching experience to obtain poor results from My Share articles. For example, if they try an activity that claims to be for "beginners" or "all levels" that turns out to be too difficult for their students, they may negatively evaluate their students (since they couldn't handle a "beginner" activity), doubt their own teaching skills, or keep trying to force in an activity when the real problem is that the article improperly labeled a difficult activity as an easy one. As such, I recommend that the My Share editors should suggest and, when necessary, require that authors revise their level ratings so that there is more similarity between the articles. Of course, level evaluations will always be partially a matter of personal opinion, and it may be difficult for editors who haven't taught an activity to assess exactly how it would work in practice. But some standards should be put in place so that there isn't a grave disparity between the activity and the stated level as sometimes currently occurs. As with the previous suggestions, having a set of descriptions for each level (something like "Intermediate students can carry on English conversations for several minutes, but will not be able to discuss abstract topics outside of daily life without significant scaffolding") would help both authors and editors to make more sensible choices.

The first two changes are relatively simple, and are likely to be uncontroversial. The rest of the changes, however, are based in large part on my own beliefs about language teaching and the relationship between students and teachers. The overriding idea is this: I believe that the My Share editors should consider the content of articles and the pedagogical consequences of the activities when selecting and/or editing them. First, I agree with the editor who held that submissions should have to pass some sort of "originality" test. While the argument held by all the editors I interviewed was that a major reason for accepting as many submissions as possible was that part of My Share's purpose is to be a service to JALT members (by helping them meet the professional requirement of getting published), taking that to the extreme and accepting all or almost all in-format submissions seems to me to do a disservice to the majority of the members—that is, the readers. I would like to believe that the purpose of My Share is, at least in part, to do what the guidelines

say: to help disseminate successful teaching activities to readers. If that's the case, then it seems like there should be more attention paid to how novel the suggestions are. At a bare minimum, the journal should keep a database with short summaries of each of the activities to attempt to ensure that two very similar activities aren't printed within some reasonable time frame (say, a few years). For instance, the two job interview activities described in section 9.8.2.2 are, in terms of the basic activity, nearly identical. While there are a lot of small distinctions in the activity structure as well as rhetorical distinctions in the articles that implied significantly different teacher beliefs, the underlying activities themselves are almost the same: students make fictitious companies, then write résumés, and finally do interviews to try to obtain jobs in other students' companies. These two articles were printed only one year apart. Based on how the editors described their processes for managing submissions, my guess is that while they have a database of submissions that tracks workflow (submission times, emails exchanged, the publication queue, etc.), they don't seem to have a document tracking information about the activities themselves; since the editors change fairly frequently, the memory of the editors alone isn't enough to prevent this type of unnecessary duplication.

Second, the editors should require that errors in terminology be removed. If an article claims that its activity encourages student autonomy, then the editors should require that the article actually do so or the claim should be removed. Ultimately, making judgment calls is what editors do—if a researcher submits a research article to a journal that makes questionable claims, has improper statistics, or misrepresents prior research, good editors will either reject the article or require that it be changed prior to publishing. My Share articles should be no different. Of course, making such editing suggestions would require judgment calls on the editors' part, especially with vague terms like "motivating" and "student-centered." But some of the terms are so badly misused that they need to be changed, as in the article that uses "student-centered" to describe an activity where students describe pictures to one another.

Turning towards the negative ideas that some articles express towards students and teachers and the power relationship between them, I think that the editors should be much more active in looking for and removing cases of antagonism or extreme criticism of students, such as those discussed in section 12.3.4. If, as I

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have proposed throughout this paper, how we talk about students matters, then it is harmful to publish activities that look down on students, mistakenly impute ethical failings in cases of cultural difference, contain sexist or heteronormative ideas, or are premised on the idea that when students don't actively engage in English language learning this is due to laziness or other negative character traits. Instead, articles should treat students as whole human beings, with opinions and plans which might include legitimate objections to what or how they are being taught. While articles with antagonistic stances are rare in the corpus, the number should be reduced to zero. In most cases, these problems could have been fixed in editing, though in some of the articles, the very premise might have to be changed.

But I think that having a positive attitude towards students should go further than eliminating the low-hanging fruit of antagonistic articles. That is, the editors should take steps to move the genre away from the teacher-centered state that it is currently in. In part this will mean the selection of activities that are more autonomy-promoting, that allow for more student decisions and agency, and a consequent higher level of scrutiny placed on articles that don't meet these goals.[154] This is not to say that all teacher-centered activities should be rejected. But they should only be published if they are truly original (not just small twists on common activities) and there is reason to believe that they are particularly effective in improving student long-term language learning (rather than, for example, promoting a fun classroom environment). In general, given that encouraging autonomous learning is not only likely to have positive learning outcomes, but also to be more ethical (in that it might help reduce the idea that students should be deferential to authority figures), I believe that My Share should promote more student-centered, autonomy-promoting activities.

Changing the activities (the semantics of the articles) alone won't completely eliminate the problem because, as I showed in Chapter 8, the elevation of teachers above students operates all the way down at the lexical and grammatical levels. One way that this could be addressed would be to remove the requirement that the

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[154] A note of self-reflexivity: it might be argued that I am coming dangerously close to imposing a potentially external set of values on Japanese students and teachers when I insist that the activities should promote student autonomy and decrease teacher-student power differentials. And to such an argument, I will admit that I am doing so: I take it as a standpoint that students deserve equitable treatment and should not be treated as objects of teaching rather than subjects of their own education.

Preparation and Procedure sections be written in "recipe form" (that is, in imperative mood). This rule is already not universally enforced, since only 82% of the first sentences of each step and 60% of all sentences in these sections are in imperative mood. If this rule were removed, it seems likely that (perhaps over a period of time) these numbers would shift, though it wouldn't surprise me if imperatives still counted for over half of the first sentences, if only because using imperative mood often saves a few words compared to declarative mood. But any decrease in teacher dominance would be welcome. Regarding the other issues noted in Chapter 8, I'm not entirely certain what to suggest. Certainly, it would be possible for highly trained editors who were focused on the issue of verb co-occurrences and grammatical representation to make interventions in texts that would promote a more equitable classroom, but I'm not sure that it would be possible to expect volunteer editors to devote a large amount of time to this issue, especially since I suspect that not all editors would agree that lexicogrammatical choices really have higher-order effects.

In fact, the issue of volunteer editing will always limit the sorts of changes that can be made at this level. As a journal editor myself, working on a smaller journal that only publishes once a year, I can certainly sympathize with the fact that there is a limit to what editors can do while still trying to meet publication deadlines, especially since time spent editing is time not spent doing one's own teaching or research (that is, the collective benefit to Japan and/or the TESOL field of volunteering as an editor always exists in tension with the individual need to attend to one's own teaching and/or professional goals). For this reason, I think that making structural changes and focusing on activity content is more likely to have a greater return on investment (in terms of time spent) than focusing on grammatical changes. Editors do have a responsibility for what they choose to publish and how those papers are finally written, so the first goal should be to make either easy (standardizing levels, changing the rule of imperatives, rejecting unoriginal activities) or targeted content edits (giving more feedback on levels and removing antagonism or particularly egregious cases of teacher-domination); the issue of lexicogrammatical changes can always be revisited if these other issues are positively resolved first.

**13.3.2 Suggestions for fundamental changes to My Share.** While the suggestions in the previous section will take differing amounts of effort, each of them can be implemented without significantly changing the basic structure of the genre. The following proposals, however, seek more substantial changes, some of which might arguably be described as changing the genre beyond recognition.

The first fundamental change I would like to suggest is that the word limit should be altered, probably to at least double what is currently allowed. Several times throughout this paper, I have suggested that the word limits are preventing teacher-authors from including more details which could mitigate some of the problems I identified. For example, according to some of the editors, one of the reasons for using imperative tense is that it's shorter. Allowing longer articles would relieve the pressure to use a form which often perpetuates a significant power differential between students and teachers. On a pedagogical level, authors could explain more complex activities, including those which take more than a single lesson in enough detail for readers to use them. On a discursive level, allowing longer articles would let authors include more descriptions of what happened in lessons— in particular, they could devote time to showing problems that they encountered. While this probably wouldn't completely change the fairy-tale problem discussed in section 12.2.6 (since my presumption is that any added problems would still be "solved" over the course of the article), it would provide a more robust description of what occurs in actual practice, and potentially provide more authentic student voices. This suggestion could be implemented without changing the fundamental structure of the articles—that is, authors could still be expected to write a concise description of an activity (though below I propose to relax this rule as well), and they could be prohibited from using the added space to engage in pages of exposition about the theoretical background for an activity.

Note that I don't mean that the My Share section has to expand beyond its total current length, as I understand that there are financial reasons for the current total length target. Rather, if the editors allowed for longer articles, my presumption is that this would mean that some issues would have fewer than four My Share articles in print. If the editors desired, they could offset the decrease by including more online since there is no financial cost associated with adding an extra article online (though extra editing time would be required). More simply, they could switch

to a variable number of articles per issue, as was the practice prior to 2009 (see section 5.5).

It is from the My Share archive that I got the inspiration for the following suggestion as well: I believe that the My Share section would be better for both authors and readers if the genre boundaries were looser, much as they were in earlier years. As explained in section 5.5, this included discussions of new classroom technologies, broader descriptions of a full course, general hints about a current pedagogical topic, and others. I believe that such articles allow for authors to take a more nuanced approach in their descriptions of their language teaching activities while still providing practical suggestions that can be replicated by others. Currently JALT doesn't have a column that would allow the publication of such ideas, with the closest being the Readers' Forum, and that both has a significantly longer word count requirement and skews much closer to a research article in format and tone. Note, however, that, as discussed in section 5.5 with regards to one of the few semester-long activities in the current corpus, just allowing a more general treatment of a teaching problem alone isn't enough without also allowing for longer articles, since 600 words is unlikely to be enough to treat more than a single activity in sufficient detail.

Not only do I think that this would provide greater opportunities for both readers and writers to share different but still classroom-focused practical ideas, I also think it could help address some of my concerns about student agency. Since the articles are so short and so focused on a single classroom activity, there isn't a lot of space (linguistic or conceptual) for activities that allow students a lot of flexibility and independence, since such an activity is likely to require more time than a single classroom session. A more general discussion could, for example, include ways that teachers can provide conditions for independent student learning outside of the classroom, either through their own resources or in conjunction with some sort of Self Access Learning Center that many universities are starting to develop (see Curry, Mynard, Noguchi, & Watkins (2017) for an example of a SALC in Japan and Richards (2015) for more general examples of language learning occurring outside the classroom). Student voices could also take a more prominent place, though whether that would solve any of the problems discussed in section 7.5.1 would depend on how the authors utilize that option (and how the editors controlled such additions).

Furthermore, this could lead to articles that don't follow the fairy tale format discussed in section 12.2.6 since the authors wouldn't be required to demonstrate a single, complete activity that solves some sort of problem or leads to a specific benefit. For example, an article which talks more generally about a topic (technological, methodological, thematic) could present a variety of suggestions without needing to also have a complete, beginning-to-end activity. This could even include discussions of both positive and negative points about an approach/technology/etc., something which simply can't be done under the current format.

And it is this idea of including both positive and negative points that leads to my most dramatic suggestion: I believe that the My Share section should not be limited to "successful" activities. Instead, it should be open to any activity that an author has done that they believe is worth sharing—including those which "failed." If authors were able to discuss an activity that they did which was unsuccessful, and they could at least attempt to pinpoint the reasons why and articulate those reasons to others, this would presumably be very helpful to other practitioners. I consider the problems caused by the lack of "negative" My Share articles to be comparable to those produced by a lack of negative results in research articles. Fanelli (2012) hypothesized that the pressure to produce only positive results in research articles may be distorting scientific research, because it may mean that some researchers are selectively reporting their positive results while hiding or burying negative ones, or that they are post-hoc revising their hypotheses. In the case of My Share, a lack of negative results (either wholly unsuccessful activities or discussions of problems which occurred during otherwise successful activities) presents an incomplete picture. For example, if an author has a successful activity that they revised through several iterations prior to achieving "success," it would be helpful to see that iterative process. In a practical sense, it could help save time and effort for readers, since they would be less likely to try a revision that they know has already been tested. More theoretically, it would mean that readers could better understand the thought processes involved in selecting one classroom practice over another, including the beliefs that are implied by such choices. It would also significantly disrupt the fairy-tale narrative, since readers could see that teaching/learning success is the result of a complex process which includes students as subjects (rather

than objects) and is not the result of fantastic skill on the part of a teacher empowered by the magic of a special lesson. Finally, it has the potential (but certainly not the guarantee) to allow for a more complex picture of student identity. For example, if readers could see an activity that didn't work but where the teacher was able to hear from the students directly why it didn't work, and then either separately or together hypothesize about how to improve the activity in the future, they could see how students can have agency in the learning process.

**13.3.3 Other My Share concerns**. One thing that might be noted in the preceding set of suggestions is that they attend almost exclusively to my practical concerns about the genre and the issue of student agency and teacher power. This is because I would like to believe that achieving these goals would be shared by many JALT members, even if they don't agree with these specific suggestions for changing My Share (or if they don't agree that My Share is currently a problem—that is, they don't agree with the analysis this paper has provided). I have additional concerns with the genre, but I consider them to be less widely embraced across JALT, simply based on my own experiences interacting with other JALT members. For example, I believe that My Share should include more activities that help students question ideas like *kokusaika* and neoliberalism—activities that recognize that divorcing language lessons from the real world means promoting status quo inequities. I think the editors should be just as concerned about the political consequences of the articles they accept as they are about the formatting and structure. But I know that this sentiment isn't anywhere near universal in JALT—it may not even be a majority. Thus, even though I'd like to make such suggestions, I'd consider it to be more of a hope then an actual proposal for serious change.

Additionally, I believe that My Share could help move away from the *kokusaika/nihonjinron* version of internationalization which represents "foreign languages" as "English" and "English/English culture" as "U.S. English/U.S. culture." Such a suggestion faces two problems: first, native-speakerism is still a powerful force within both JALT and the wider Japanese teaching field, so there is no reason to believe that most members want to make such a move. Second, I don't practically know what steps could or should be taken to rectify the lack of Japanese articles and/or activities focused on the teaching of other languages. As someone who hasn't

been involved in the process, it would be easy to say, "They should actively seek out a wider group of submissions," but I don't know how that could be done in practice. Nonetheless, I think that it would be a good goal even if the steps to reach that goal haven't been determined yet.

## 13.4 Professional Implications for Teacher-Researchers

The specific results on identity, beliefs, and power relationships can't be directly generalized to other forms of teachers' professional discourse, or even to lesson plans published in other contexts. Having said that, the project does confirm a key point, which connects to the very beginning of the introduction of this project: how we (as teachers) talk/write about students matters. Furthermore, it was found that there are consequences for student and teacher identities and power relationships at all levels of discourse, from the individual word and grammar choices, through the topics focused on, to the moves used, all the way up to the broad structure of the writing. As such, people who write about students (most of whom are probably teachers or other educational professionals) should be aware that there are consequences to how they speak about students and learning.

While I think that most teachers would agree that certain types of speech about students have consequences (such as national educational policies) in a broad sense, the idea that every aspect of professional discourse (from word choice to structure to content) can have a potential impact on what happens in future classrooms and what identities students and teachers can occupy is probably not one that is widely held. Research of the type done here is important because it helps call attention to the multifaceted consequences of our professional discourse.

As a result of this realization, and taking into account the potential consequences found in this specific discourse, teacher-researchers should be careful in their professional work. Those who regularly publish or give presentations (whether they do so because they want to or because they have to in order to obtain or continue employment) should consider not only the results, theories, pedagogical practices, etc. that they report, but also how they report them. For that matter, the same should hold true in informal communication situations, such as personal discussions with other teachers, in staff meetings, or on online message boards. Of course, no one can be conscious of all the beliefs they are displaying or how they are

attempting to control the identities and behaviors of others, because most of these beliefs will be so naturalized that they won't be apparent to the speaker. Furthermore, many of the choices will have been, in effect, made for us by the discourses that are speaking or writing us, just as was the case for the My Share articles. But this does not mean that teachers are absolved of all responsibility. They will always have some control over the professional discourse they produce, and some (such as journal editors, leaders of school meetings, etc.) will have some ability to define the rules which in part control these genres. In the same way that biased, gendered language is no longer allowed in academic writing due to explicit rules put in place by publishers, so too can changes be made at the editorial/managerial level that may be able to help address systemic and harmful inequalities in the student-teacher relationship in some professional discourse.

## 13.5 Limitations

The first limitation of this study is the size of the corpus. At 100,000 tokens, it was possible to convincingly argue about both micro- and macro-linguistic data. But, as Meyer (2002) said, "in general, the lengthier the corpus, the better" (p. 33). Furthermore, certain issues such as lexical counts (especially on infrequent words) are especially sensitive to corpus size (Baker, 2008). For example, while the actor analysis in section 8.4 should be fairly convincing based on the widespread differences between the way that [teachers] and [students] are represented in the corpus, some of the specific details about actor-verb relationships relied upon relatively small numbers of co-occurrences that could well change if more data were used.

Second, as with any research which requires categorizing discursive data, many of the conclusions rely on the decisions I made during coding. While I have tried to lay out when possible how I made those decisions, the conclusions are inevitably as much a product of my interpretation as they are the texts themselves. It would be interesting and potentially illuminating to repeat the project or portions of it with a team of researchers who could engage in intra-group checking to add more robustness to the coding schemes.

The third point is both a limitation and a feature of the study: it looked at only texts from only one section of one journal that focuses almost entirely on English

education in a single country. Furthermore, JALT membership skews towards non-Japanese teachers in Japan, who represent a minority of both teachers and English teachers in Japan (Nagatomo, 2012). This means that it would be questionable to generalize from the findings of this analysis to broader attitudes among language teachers in Japan. Having said that, the entire point of the analysis was to examine a very focused corpus. Since all the texts are responding, directly or indirectly, to Japanese educational policies, student identities and knowledge, general language attitudes, and conditions of employment, it was possible to get a detailed understanding of a specific discourse community. A more diverse collection of texts would be less likely to have common elements that clearly point back to teacher beliefs and identities. While a wider examination of lesson plans from other contexts may be possible and is discussed in the following section, starting from a narrower corpus has made it possible to build a foundational set of tools for future analysis.

## 13.6 Future Studies

While the present project has sought to provide a picture of foreign language (especially English) teaching in Japan, there are many ways that the work done here could be expanded to continue this analysis of beliefs, identity, and power in greater detail.

With respect to the genre itself, the most obvious and important work would be to increase the size of the corpus. Not only would this help address the statistical limitations discussed above, it could also allow for more diachronic analyses of the data. For example, in section 9.4.2, I showed a change in the types of technology used in lessons over the 6-year time frame of the corpus. It could be revealing to find out if other features of the genre such as the teaching targets or benefits changed over time, and especially to see if there were any correlations between those changes and trends in either Japanese educational policy or the TESOL field.

In addition, other linguistic aspects of this corpus could be analyzed. While Chapter 8 examined how passives and imperatives served to naturalize and in some ways hide teacher agency and student lack of agency, it may also be fruitful to examine the corpus for other structures that may similarly work to create power divisions in the corpus, with nominalizations being the most likely to do so. In

addition, the tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics could be applied to the corpus to better understand how texts function to produce meanings and relationships among actors, as is commonly done in certain branches of CDA (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003).

One way to examine what consequences this genre has on the beliefs and identities of the readers would be to do research directly on sample readers. This could take place in two steps—first, it would be useful to have a better picture of how language teachers across Japan decide what to do in class. This would ideally involve both a broad questionnaire that tried to get a wide view and a focused analysis (likely including interviews and classroom observations) of a select but diverse group of teachers. Second, it should be possible to study reader reactions to specific ideas, phrasings, structures, etc. by presenting different readers with multiple versions of a sample article and tracking their responses to teacher belief questions. Such a study would, however, require careful attention to psycholinguistic theory and practices to ensure data validity. It might also be difficult to gather enough data to make statistically reliable claims.

Finally, the techniques used in the present study could be extended to other related genres. One question that the present study could not answer is how much the features found are unique to My Share and how much they are a standard part of a hypothetical "lesson plan" genre. Thus, it could be interesting to examine other lesson plans, such as those found in teacher's manuals and online websites (both those that allow free posting and downloading and those that require subscriptions). Because other activity plans are often fundamentally different at both topical and structural levels (some are extremely short and casual, while others are lengthy, heavily structured, and sometimes linked to the curricular goals of a specific institution, publisher, or country), great care would need to be taken when making comparisons. It would also be critically important to be sensitive to multicultural issues—that is, to not make judgments about activities without understanding the sociocultural context in which they were written and intended to be used.

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# Appendix A

## Selected Descriptions of My Share Sections from 1996–2010

In section 5.5, I discussed the history of My Share articles from late 1996 (the first TLT issue with the whole issue archived on the JALT website is September 1996) to 2010. I made a quick summary of 2 randomly chosen[155] issues per year (1 for 1996), to help track changes in My Share over time. Since the resulting table was too long to appear in the chapter, it has been placed in this appendix.

### 1996

| Month | No. | Words[156] | Description |
|-------|-----|-----------|-------------|
| December | html only, no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 700 | • 2 para.[157] introduction[158] <br> • 4 para. "Procedures," non-stepped[159], plus 5 example questions <br> • 3 para. Suggestions and Options <br> • 1 para. "Benefits" |
| | 2 | 690 | • 1 para. introduction <br> • 6 point bulleted list of "Materials" <br> • 1 para. "Day One: Preparation and Setting the Schema" <br> • 3 para. "Day Two: Pair Activity" <br> • 2 para. "Day Three: Group Activity" <br> • 1 para. "Suggestions and Options" |
| | 3 | 750 | • 2 para. introduction <br> • 5 point bulleted list of "Objectives" <br> • 5 para. stepped "Procedure," plus one extra sentence <br> • 4 para. "Suggestions and Options" |

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[155] In cases where the My Share articles were unavailable for the first issue I chose, I selected a new issue. I also changed issues for "My Share special" issues (which usually contain 10-15 My Share activities)

[156] The number of words is rounded to the nearest 10, and does not include the Quick Guide section.

[157] "para." = "paragraph"

[158] When a section has a title, as with "Procedures" in this article, I use quotation marks to indicate the title. If there is no explicit title, I describe the section, as with introduction here.

[159] "Stepped" refers to Preparation or Procedure sections (or differently named sections with similar purposes) with number steps, as are done in contemporary My Share articles.

**1997**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| April | html only, no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 780 | • 2 para. introduction, plus a 2 turn example dialogue<br>• 4 para. "Getting Started," plus 3 example dialogues (3 turns each)<br>• 2 para. "Further Practice," plus a 3 turn example dialogue<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 2 | 1050 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 2 point bulleted list of "Objectives," plus an introductory phrase<br>• 4 point bulleted list of "Materials," plus an introductory phrase<br>• 2 point stepped "Previewing"<br>• 5 point numbered list titled "Viewing," plus 2 an introductory paragraph. Note that this is not 5 steps, but rather 5 different activities<br>• 4 point numbered list called "Expansion Activities," plus an introductory sentence<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 3 | 670 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 3 para. "General Pre-reading"<br>• 1 para. "Specific Pre-reading"<br>• 1 para. "Post Reading"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>This is more of a general introduction to a long (maybe full semester) curriculum about reading an English novel, rather than a single, specific activity |
| October | html only, no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 1480 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. "Evaluating Specific Language Aspects"<br>• 2 para. " Examining Speech through Conversational Routines." In this section, it mentions "see Figure 1"; there is a 6 point bulleted list, which seems to match the description of Figure 1, so that was probably offset or boxed in the original text<br>• 1 para. "Evaluating Speech Through Task-Based Assignments"<br>• 1 para. "Testing"<br>• 2 para., non-stepped[160] "Procedure"<br>• 1. para. "Conclusion" |

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[160] In contrast to "stepped," as mentioned in footnote 151, "non-stepped" refers to presentations of activity procedures (or the equivalent) that appear in running prose (in paragraphs).

**1998**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| June | | html only, no appendices | |
| | 1 | 710 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 2 para. "Children's Games"<br>• 3 para. non-stepped "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Commentary |
| | 2 | 870[161] | • 3 para. introduction, including a 4 point numbered list of "reasons why studying Japan is important in English class" The last para. indicates that what follows is the procedure.<br>• 3 step "Part 1." Also, there is what appears to be a figure (example question).<br>• 3 step "Part 2," plus an introductory para.<br>• 5 para. "Comments," including a 3 point numbered list. |
| | 3 | 690 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 1 phrase of "Materials Needed"<br>• 7 step "How to Play," followed by 2 para.<br>• 7 line "Example of a Correct Procession," followed by a small picture (not explicitly referred to in the text, but meant to visually represent this example) |
| September | | html only, no appendices | |
| | 1 | 1030 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 7 para. "Procedure," separated into 1 paragraph<br>Subsections with titles as follows:<br>Step 1—Preparation<br>A. Comprehension Tasks (1 para.)<br>B. Discussions (1 para.)<br>Step 2—Planning the Show<br>A. (no title)<br>B. Deciding on a topic<br>C. Getting ready for the show<br>Step 3—Simulating the Show<br>Step 4—Reviewing the Show<br>• 2 para. conclusion |
| | 2 | 750 | • 1 para. introduction, including a 4 point bulleted list of objectives<br>• 5 para. non-stepped "Procedure," plus a 5 point bulleted list at the end of suggestions "in bringing the activity to a close" |

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[161] This activity was not digitized correctly, as it ends in the middle of a sentence. The last included sentence says, "It is very meaningful to give students a chance to think about their own culture in [sic]." While this may be missing only one word ("English"), it's possible that there is more that has been cut.

## 1998 (continued)

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| September | (continued) | | |
| | 3 | 1380 | This article has no sections, and is not a single activity—rather, it is instructions for how to use authentic English texts in class, such as how to select the piece and some vague suggestions for what to do with it. There are 12 para., plus 2 boxes of additional material—one is a sample short newspaper article, the other is a list of vocabulary words from that article; also, there is a 7 point numbered list that is introduced with "Lesson steps for this material might include." Finally, there are 2 references (1 academic, 1 to the newspaper article) |

## 1999

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| February | | | pdf and html, Quick Guide at the end;[162] no appendices—instead, "worksheets" including as images within and next to the running text |
| | 1 | 1010 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 4 para. "Previewing Activities" section, which includes long lists of questions to be given to students<br>• 1 paragraph conclusion, plus information about ordering the video used in the activity<br>• 1 sentence of Acknowledgements |
| | 2 | 680 | 7 para., no sections, including introductory, preparation, procedural, and optional extension information (that is, the same information as a modern My Share, but without the sections or steps) |
| | 3 | 520 | All one section, with a worksheet and a list of conversation questions in the middle. The actual article is about 320 words. |
| | 4 | 740 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 4 para. "Preparation" section (approximately 40% of the whole article). However, the second two paragraphs explain the activities.<br>• 1 para. "The Week" (article is entitled "A Thematic Week at a Small School")<br>• 2 para. "Conclusions and Suggestions" section<br>• 1 sentence explaining a website they drew some of the ideas from<br>Note, however, that this a very broad description of a week's worth of related activities—few details are given as in a modern My Share. |

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[162] Note that prior to 1998, I did not indicate whether the Quick Guides were at the beginning (as they are now) or at the end (as in 1998), because the html only versions don't preserve the formatting of the original. In the html versions, Quick Guides are always placed at the top of the page, in every year investigated. However, in the 1998 pdfs, even though the Quick Guides were originally printed at the end of the article, the html still places them at the beginning. It is likely that other formatting changes were not preserved in the html versions. For the rest of the appendix, when no pdf is available, I will not indicate where the Quick Guide.

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| August | | | pdf and html, Quick Guide at the end; Appendix in article 2 described below |
| | 1 | 1400 | • 2 paragraph introduction<br>• A "Preparation and Procedure" section. The 1st para. appears to be the preparation portion. It is followed by 8 long bullet points (usually multiple sentences each) listing activity steps—the first three start with "First," "Next," and "Third." Following the bulleted list there are 2 more paragraphs of explanation in this section<br>• 4 para. Conclusion<br>• 1 sentence indicating that this is an adaptation of another similarly named activity |
| | 2 | 1160 | • 2 para. introduction, including a 6 point numbered list of "beneficial features"<br>• 4 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation"<br>• 6 para. (non-stepped) "How to play." Note that the last para., however, acts more like a conclusion<br>• 1 sentence indicating that this is an adaptation of another activity<br>• 1 Appendix, printed in the text (after the body but before the Quick Guide) as if it were a Figure, of a homework worksheet |

**2000**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| June | | | pdf and html, Quick Guide at the end, embedded pictures (like mini-appendices) |
| | 1 | 1050 | • 3 para. introduction<br>• 2 para. "The benefits of recording"<br>• 1 para. "What recordings cannot do"<br>• 3 para. "Comments from students on the first day of recording," including 10 separately listed quotations from students<br>• 1 para. "A word of caution—and encouragement"<br>• 3 "Internet resources" (addresses of relevant websites)<br>• 1 sentence "Acknowledgements"<br>• 3 "References"<br>• Also, there are 3 figures (images) embedded within the text. They appear to be examples of completed student work<br><br>Overall, this reads more like a general article as a general discussion of the benefits of using cassette recorders for conversation work; there are a set of steps for an actual class activity briefly included, though the authors points to a more detailed description in one of the references. |
| | 2 | 420 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 3 point bulleted list of "Materials," plus a final recommendation sentence<br>• 11 point numbered list titled "Method" (equivalent to current "Procedures"), plus 2 explanatory sentences after the list |
| October | | | pdf and html, Quick Guide at the end, figures embedded in text appear to replace appendices |
| | 1 | 840 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. "Preparation"<br>• 5 point numbered list called "In class," (equivalent to current "Procedures"). Additionally, a figure is embedded in this section, which resembles a simple handout<br>• 1 para. "Final points" |
| | 2 | 1040 | • 1 para. "Introduction" (note this is labeled)<br>• 1 para. "Students and class,"<br>• 6 para. "Procedure" (non-stepped)<br>• 3 para. "Discussion" |

**2001**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|-------|-----|-------|-------------|
| April | html only (no pdf),no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 1110 | • 3 para. introduction<br>• 5 para. "Films;"; each paragraph lists one topic and a related film<br>• 3 para. "TV;" 1 single sentence para. of introduction, 2 para. with one topic and one episode each<br>• "Sample Lesson Plan," which intermixes list of vocabulary to be introduced, questions for students, and brief procedural explanations (9 sentences total)<br>• 4 point numbered list of "Follow-up activities" |
| | 2 | 820 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. "Preparation," plus one Figure (3 sentence short sample handout)<br>• 5 para. stepped "Procedure," plus one Figure (mostly blank sample student handout)<br>• 3 point numbered list of "Additional Points"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| December | html only (no pdf), Appendix for #2 only (included directly in html as a table) | | |
| | 1 | 910 | • 3 para. introduction<br>• 2 para. "Listening practice #1 -- Teacher introduction," plus 5 lines of questions for students<br>• 1 para. "Listening practice #2 -- Movie information," plus 1 Figure (sample handout)<br>• 2 para. "Listening practice #3 -- Scavenger hunt," plus one line (6 sentences) sample scavenger hunt clue<br>• 1. para. " Listening practice #4 -- Giving directions," plus 3 sample questions/instructions<br>• 2 para. "Listening practice #5 -- Descriptions of people," plus 2 sample descriptions<br>• 1 para. "Listening practice #6 -- Leave a message"<br>• 1 para. "Final listening and speaking practice"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>Note that this isn't a single activity, but rather 6 separate activities all falling under the title of "Using Cell Phones for Listening Practice" |

**2001 (continued)**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| December | (continued) | | |
| | 2 | 750 | <ul><li>1 para. introduction</li><li>4 point number list of "Activity Objectives"</li><li>4 stepped "Procedure;" each step has a title, 3 of the 4 steps have 1 para. each, and the last has 2 para.</li><li>1 para. "Pre/Post Activities"</li><li>3 para. "Reading strategies"</li><li>1 sentence "Acknowledgements"</li></ul> |
| | 3 | 1860 | <ul><li>2 para. introduction</li><li>4 para. "Linking and Weakening of Words," plus an 8 point bulleted list</li><li>"The Running Into Someone game," which has 1 sentence introduction, followed by 7 numbered steps, followed by 2 para. of further explanation</li><li>10 point numbered list called "Understanding and Singing the Song," followed by 1 sentence of explanation.</li><li>The song lyrics used in the article, plus the song lyrics with gaps (note that this accounts for about 480 of the words, and would likely appear in an appendix in current articles)</li></ul> |

**2002**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|-------|-----|-------|-------------|
| May | html only (no pdf), no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 450 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 3 para. "Procedure" (non-stepped) |
| | 2 | 590 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 4 steps of procedure (each Step appears as a section title (highlighted in blue and bold), but no collective "procedure" title)<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "References" |
| | 3 | 1060 | • 2 para. intro, plus example haiku<br>• 3 para. "Procedure," plus 2 sample haiku<br>• 2 para. "Counting Syllables," plus 2 sample haiku<br>• 2 "References"<br>• 3 "Resources" |
| November | html only (no pdf), no appendices | | |
| | 1 | 650 | • 1 pr. introduction<br>• 3 para. "Recitation"<br>• 2 para. "Discussion and presentation"<br>• 1 para. "Things Japanese," plus a 20 point bulleted list of 20 Japanese things/phrases associated with New Year<br>• 3 "References" |
| | 2 | 670 | There are no section titles. There are 5 para., plus 2 extended example dialogues, plus 5 Steps. The format is similar to modern My Share, with an introduction, procedure, and conclusion, just without titles. |

**2003**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| February | | | html only (no pdf), no appendices |
| | 1 | 350 | • 1 para. "Pre-activity" (this is a warm-up, not a preparation section)<br>• 4 step "Procedure"<br>Note that there is no introduction or conclusion. |
| | 2 | 600 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. "Pre-activity" (this is a warm-up, not a preparation section)<br>• 4 step "Procedure," plus "follow-up" and "sources" sub-sections inside of the "Procedure"<br>• 20 point bulleted list of "A sampler of possible names." Each point is a name, life span, and short description of a person. This list accounts for 200 of the words. |
| | 3 | 530 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 6 Step "Procedure"<br>• 2 "Options," plus an introductory sentence |
| August | | | html only (no pdf), 3rd article has an html appendix included in running text |
| | 1 | 940 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 5 step "Procedure" (includes three bulleted liss of practice phrases, of length 12, 7, and 6), plus 1 "Note" |
| | 2 | 980 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 8 step "Procedure," plus a 3 para. example writing that accounts for 210 of the words<br>• 2 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 3 | 850 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 5 step "Preparation," plus 1 para. introduction<br>• 11 step "Procedure," plus 1 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. "Final Comments"<br>• 1 "Reference" (handout) |

**2004**[163]

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| January | html only (no pdf), no appendices (embedded figures and tables) | | |
| | 1 | 660 | • 4 para. introduction<br>• "Procedure" section is broken into two parts: "Class 1," with an introductory sentence and 4 steps, and "Class 2" with an introductory sentence, 3 steps, and an embedded table<br>• 2 para. "Outcomes"<br>• 2 "References" |
| | 2 | 790 | • 3 para. introduction<br>• 6 step "Procedure," plus an embedded table, an embedded figure, 3 different extended examples accounting for a total of 390 words<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 3 | 670 | • 1 para. "Introduction" (titled)<br>• 11 step "Procedure," with 2 embedded figures (note that they are described as "worksheets," so would likely be appendices in modern My Share. Also, note that for some reason "Step 1" is unlabeled<br>• 2 para. "Follow-up" with an embedded figure (worksheet) |
| July | html only (no pdf), appendices included as plain text | | |
| | 1 | 550 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 10 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 sentence "Note"<br>• 2 Appendices |
| | 2 | 650 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 3 step "Preparation"<br>• 14 step "Procedure," plus optional steps 15 and 16, and a note<br>• 2 Appendices |

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[163] At some time between October 2000 and November 2004 (the first issue I could find with a pdf), the column added a 1 paragraph introduction from the editor of the section. In the intervening time, there are only html files, which doesn't preserve anything other than the articles themselves, so I am uncertain when this feature was added.

## 2005

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| March | | | pdf only; Quick guide at the beginning;[164] embedded figures; appendices in text in article 2 |
| | 1 | 750 | • 2 para. introduction, plus one large (280 words) embedded figure<br>• "Procedure" section with two subsections: a 3 step "Anticitpating and avoiding plagiarism," and a 3 step "Detecting plagiarism"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "Reference" |
| | 2 | 920 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 3 step "Preparation"<br>• 10 step "Procedure"<br>• 2 para. "Follow-up and Conclusion"<br>• 3 appendices, printed directly in the article, each of which is a handout for students enclosed in a box (like a figure) |
| September | | | pdf only; embedded figures, appendices in text |
| | 1 | 720 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 2 step "Preparation"<br>• 5 step "Procedure" plu optional step 6<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "Reference"<br>• 1 "Appendix" included as running text |
| | 2 | 650 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation"<br>• 6 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "My observations"<br>• 1 "Reference" |
| | 3 | 840 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 2 step "Preparation"<br>• 3 step "Procedure"<br>• 2 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 Reference |
| | 4 | 1190 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 2 step "Preparation"<br>• 9 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Concluding Remarks"<br>• 1 "Appendix" (figure appearing in running text, before the references)<br>• 3 "References" |

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[164] From at least the November 2004 issue forward, continuing through today, the Quick Guide has been at the beginning of the article.

**2006**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| May | pdf only; downloadable appendices[165] | | |
| | 1 | 760 | • 3 para. introduction<br>• 1 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation"<br>• 11 step "Procedure" plus a 2 sentence "Note from the author"<br>• List of downloadable appendices |
| | 2 | 600 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 3 step "Preparation"<br>• 10 step "Procedure" divided into three subparts: "Part 1: Teacher's mystery tour," "Part 2: Students' mystery tours," and "Part 3: Classmates' mystery tours" (5, 3, and 2 steps, respectively)<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• List of downloadable appendices |
| November | pdf only; embedded figures, combination of in-text and downloadable appendices | | |
| | 1 | 400 | • 1 para. introduction<br>• 2 step "Preparation"<br>• 6 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• List of downloadable appendices |
| | 2 | 760 | • (no introduction)<br>• 1 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation"<br>• 7 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "Appendix" in running text<br>• 3 "References" |

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[165] This is the first issue I can find where the appendices are downloadable resources. However, the addresses provided in the pdf (print version) no longer work, and they do not otherwise appear to be linked on the issue pages

**2007**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| June | | pdf only; no appendices | |
| | 1 | 840 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 2 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation"<br>• 14 step "Procedure" |
| | 2 | 710 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 7 step "Procedure"<br>• 2 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 4 "References" |
| October | | pdf only; downloadable appendices | |
| | 1 | 530 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 4 step "Preparation"<br>• 5 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Extension"<br>• 2 downloadable "Appendices" (address in pdf does not work nor do they appear elsewhere on this issue's page) |
| | 2 | 620 | • 2 para. introduction<br>• 3 step "Preparation"<br>• 5 step "Procedure"<br>• 2 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "Reference" |

**2008**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| February | pdf only; appendices in text | | |
| | 1 | 340 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 3 step "Preparation" <br> • 7 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 3 "Appendices" in running text |
| | 2 | 350 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 5 step "Procedure" <br> • 4 point bulleted list of "Conclusion" plus introductory sentence |
| August | pdf and html; downloadable appendices | | |
| | 1 | 530 | • 2 para. introduction <br> • 5 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Additional ideas" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 1 "Reference" |
| | 2 | 520 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 2 step "Preparation" <br> • 8 step "Procedure" <br> • 5 point bulleted list of "Variations," plus introductory para. <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 2 downloadable "Appendices" (address in pdf does not work, but html has appendices following activity as downloadable pdf) |
| | 3 | 690 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 10 step "Procedure" <br> • 6 point bulleted list of "Tips for PowerPoint presentations," plus introductory para. <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 3 "References" |
| | 4 | 520 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 1 sentence "Preparation" <br> • 11 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 2 "References" |

**2009**

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| January | | | pdf and html; downloadable appendices |
| | 1 | 540 | • 1 para. "Introduction"<br>• 12 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 2 "References" |
| | 2 | 610 | • 2 para. "Introduction," plus 3 point numbered list<br>• 2 step "Preparation," plus embedded picture (decorative, maybe added by editors?)<br>• 4 step "Procedure"<br>• 3 point numbered "Variations," plus introductory para.<br>• 5 point numbered list of "Notes"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 3 | 620 | • 1 para. "Introduction"<br>• 8 step "Procedure," of which the last step is optional. Also, between Step 2 and Step 3 are 3 subheadings with 1 para. each: "Class blog," "Vocabulary blog," and "Project blog"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 "Reference"<br>• 3 downloadable appendices (address in pdf does not work, but html has appendices following activity in text) |
| | 4 | 640 | • 1 para. introduction[166]<br>• 8 para. titled "Idea 1," "Idea 2," etc.<br>• 1 para. Conclusion |
| December | | | pdf and html; downloadable appendices |
| | 1 | 590 | • 1 para. "Introduction"<br>• 8 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Variations"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 2 | 700 | • 1 para. "Introduction"<br>• 1 para. "Preparation"<br>• 2 step "Class management"<br>• 4 step "Procedure"<br>• 1 para. "Follow-up activity"<br>• 1 para. "Conclusion"<br>• 1 downloadable appendix (address in pdf does not work, but html has appendix following activity as downloadable pdf) |

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[166] Note that in the first 3 activities in this issue, the introduction section had a title, but the 4th does not.

**2010**[167]

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|-------|-----|-------|-------------|
| May | | | pdf and html; appendices in text after articles |
| | 1 | 600 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 3 step "Preparation" <br> • 10 step "Procedure," of which the last step is optional <br> • 1 para. "Extension" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 1 "Reference" <br> • 1 "Appendix" in running text after the references |
| | 2 | 620 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 2 step "Preparation' <br> • 4 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Variation" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" |
| | 3 | 560 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 7 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • 1 "References" |
| | 4 | 640 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 2 step "Preparation" <br> • 7 step "Procedure" <br> • 1 para. "Variation" <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion," plus a 3 point bulleted list under a subheading "Useful websites" <br> • 1 "References" <br> • 2 "Appendices" in running text after the references |
| September | | | pdf and html; downloadable appendices |
| | 1 | 700 | • 1 para. "Introduction" <br> • 2 step "Preparation" <br> • 7 step "Procedure," plus 1 extra para. after the steps <br> • 1 para. "Conclusion" <br> • Link to downloadable "Appendices"[168] (address in pdf does not work, but html has appendix following activity as downloadable pdf) |

[167] In 2010, *The Language Teacher* switched from monthly issues to bimonthly (January, March, May, July, September, and November). The issues increased in length, but did not double. On the website, the issues are marked as a single month, but on the original cover and pdf, they are listed as two months; so for example, the first issue summarized here is "May" on the website but "May / June " on the original cover and pdf

[168] Some time in 2010 the journal switched to combining all appendices together into a single pdf.

| Month | No. | Words | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| September | (continued) | | |
| | 2 | 510 | <ul><li>2 para. "Introduction"</li><li>2 step "Preparation"</li><li>8 step "Procedure"</li><li>1 para. "Conclusion"</li><li>1 "Reference"</li></ul> |
| | 3 | 610 | <ul><li>1 para. "Introduction"</li><li>1 para. (non-stepped) "Preparation," plus a 8 point bulleted list of "content suggestions"</li><li>4 step "Procedure"</li><li>1 para. "Conclusion"</li><li>1 "Reference"</li><li>Link to downloadable Appendices (address does not work; on html page, Appendix A is broken, as it appears that they attempted to directly embed information from another website that is no longer correct; Appendix B is a downloadable pdf that works correctly)</li></ul> |
| | 4 | 660 | <ul><li>1 para. "Introduction"</li><li>2 step "Preparation"</li><li>10 step "Procedure"</li><li>1 para. "Conclusion"</li><li>1 "Reference"</li><li>Link to downloadable "Appendices" (address in pdf does not work, but html has appendix following activity as downloadable pdf)</li></ul> |

# Appendix B

## Visual Elements of My Share and Other *The Language Teacher* Articles

This appendix includes figures intended to go with section 5.6, the visual analysis of My Share articles.

# TV Commercial Retelling

## Matthew Wilson

*Miyagi University*

*<mwilson@myu.ac.jp>*

### Quick Guide

- » **Keywords:** *Speaking, authentic video, learner-centered*
- » **Learner English level:** *Intermediate to advanced*
- » **Learner maturity:** *High school to university*
- » **Preparation time:** *25 minutes*
- » **Activity time:** *10 – 15 minutes*
- » **Materials:** *Computer, projector, worksheet, TV commercials*

TV commercials are a great language learning resource as they are short, high quality, culturally distinctive narratives, and are already sometimes used in English classrooms as a form of cultural exposure. However, rather than simply showing the commercial to students, a more engaging modification is to stop the commercial before the product and/or product name appears, and have students guess what is being sold. Advertisements can often be abstract and obscure which makes this a challenging, yet entertaining activity. The following pair-work activity provides one such variation that emphasizes oral production and listening in a fun, motivating, yet low-anxiety situation.

### Preparation

**Step 1:** Put together a selection of five interesting TV commercials that are appropriate for showing in class: one example commercial to introduce the activity, and four commercials for the pair work activity.

**Step 2:** Prepare "A" and "B" handouts that have different sets of at least five or six product choices, either in words or pictures, for each commercial (see appendix). Handout A will have product choices for commercials #2 and #4, while handout B will have options for commercials #1 and #3.

**Step 3:** Preview the commercials to choose an appropriate time to pause before products or product names appear.

**Optional:** Upload all the commercials onto presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint) to smooth the timing of the activity. Also, depending on the class level, a vocabulary list for each commercial could appear on the handouts or a preceding slide.

### Procedure

**Step 1:** Show students the example TV commercial. Pause it at the appropriate time, and have students think about what product the commercial is trying to sell. After hearing some ideas, show the end of the commercial and clarify what the commercial was selling.

**Step 2:** Have students make pairs and choose A and B roles. Distribute the worksheets accordingly.

**Step 3:** Have the B students close their eyes or look away for the first commercial. (Note: It is OK for them to listen to the commercial.) The A students watch commercial #1. Stop the commercial before any brand name or product images are shown. Have each A student explain what they saw in English to their partner. B students listen, look at their choices for commercial #1, and circle the product they think the commercial was selling. At this time, students should not look at or discuss each other's answers.

**Step 4:** After all the B students have chosen their answers, show all the students the complete commercial and confirm the answer. Alternatively, before showing the end of the commercial, replay it from the beginning with the sound off, describing in simple English what is happening in order to give students feedback on their language usage and provide a language model.

**Step 5:** Repeat Steps 3 and 4 three more times, alternating roles so that each student has two opportunities to both explain and listen.

### Conclusion

TV commercials have great potential in the language classroom as they can provide a wonderful stimulus for English oral production and listening tasks. Having students retell a TV commercial in a low-anxiety pairwork situation not only allows them the chance to practice speaking with fluency and accuracy, but also lets them exercise the microskills involved in conversational speech, such as self-correction, delivery variation, and backtracking for clarity.

### Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

*Figure 15.* Sample page from the March/April, 2015 issue, containing a complete article by Matthew Wilson.

*Figure 16.* Screenshot taken from the online archive of part of a My Share article by Matthew Wilson from the March/April, 2015 issue (the same article that appears in Figure 15).

# Coverage and instruction of reduced forms in EFL course books

## Michael J. Crawford
Dokkyo University

## Yasuo Ueyama
Hokkaido University of Education, Hakodate Campus

As the development of bottom-up skills in L2 listening instruction begins to gain greater attention, more and more EFL course books are beginning to include exercises that are designed to improve learners' abilities to understand reduced forms such as *gonna, wanna*, and *didja*. As a step towards understanding how forms such these are being integrated into these materials, this study examined 13 EFL course books and analyzed the number and frequency of the forms they contain, as well as the types of exercises they include. The number and frequency data was then compared to 13 different books that are specifically designed to teach reduced forms, thus allowing for a determination of the extent of coverage course books are providing. Overall, the results provided a favorable picture of course books' handling of reduced forms. However, some recommendations are made for improving coverage and making instruction more effective.

L2リスニング指導においてボトムアップスキルの開発が注目されはじめる中、学習者のgonna, wanna, didjaのような弱形に対する理解度を高めることを目的とした練習問題が含まれているEFL用テキストが増えている。弱形がこれらの教材にどのように導入されているかを明らかにするために、本研究では13冊のテキストを調査対象とし、それらの中に含まれている弱形の数および出現頻度、練習問題の種類を分析した。さらに、数と出現頻度のデータを、弱形を中心に取り上げる専門書の調査データと比較することによって、テキストでの収録範囲を確認した。分析の結果、テキストにおける弱形の取り扱い方は、概ね専門書の調査結果と一致し、良好であるということが分かった。しかし、収録範囲の細部や教育方針に関しては、改善の余地があると思われる

Researchers of second language (L2) listening echo a similar refrain about the place of their specialty in the wider field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Namely, that despite its importance for the linguistic development of learners, listening does not get the attention it deserves. Field (2008, p. 1) writes the skill has been, and continues to be, on the back burner, and states "there is still plenty of evidence that listening is undervalued." Wilson (2008, p. 17) argues that of the four skills, "listening is probably the least understood, the least researched and, historically, the least valued."

One consequence of listening having been somewhat neglected over the years is that the methods employed to teach it have not been subject to much critical review. Field (2003) argues that one shortcoming has been the lack of attention to the difficulties L2 learners face when confronted with connected speech containing assimilation, elision, and other forms of linguistic variation (hereafter referred to collectively as 'reduced forms'). This can be attributed at least partly to the fact that listening instruction has tended to emphasize the development of top-down listening processes over bottom-up processes (Vandergrift, 2004). Increasingly, however, researchers are recognizing the importance of bottom-up skills for successful listening. This applies to reduced forms, as the publication five years ago of a book-length treatment (Brown & Kondo-Brown, 2006a) of teaching and researching these forms evidences. The authors of this book note that despite the importance of reduced forms for learners, little research on their instruction has been

*Figure 17.* First page of a Feature Article from July/August 2011 by Michael J. Crawford and Yasuo Ueyama.

# The advantages and disadvantages faced by housewife English teachers in the cottage industry *Eikaiwa* business

## Diane Hawley Nagatomo
Ochanomizu University

The *eikaiwa* [conversation] business in Japan is a multi-billion dollar industry, and yet very little empirical research has been conducted on its teachers or its students. An online survey focusing on the pedagogical and personal issues of one group of *eikaiwa* teachers (foreign women who are married to Japanese men) was constructed and distributed. Results from the 31 respondents indicate an ongoing overlapping struggle with their teaching in balancing their families' personal and financial needs, their relationships with their students, and the gendered constraints imposed upon them by Japanese society. The paper ends with a call for more research of all *eikaiwa* teachers in more *eikaiwa* contexts.

日本における英会話産業は今や数十億ドル産業だが、それに携わる教師や生徒についての実証的な研究はこれまでほとんど行われていない。本論では、英会話学校の教師（いずれも日本人男性と結婚している外国人女性）を対象に、教育に関する問題および個人的な問題についてのオンライン調査を実施した。31名の教師より得た回答から、彼女らがそれぞれの家庭の問題や経済的な問題、生徒たちとの関係、そして日本社会が課している女性特有の制約といった複数の問題とバランスを取りながら、教育活動を行うことに常に苦労している現状が明らかになった。最後に、本論は、今後より多くの英会話学校の教師について、さらに多くの研究が行われる必要性を喚起する。

**E**FL research in Japan generally focuses on issues surrounding formal education, but there is scant attention paid to *eikaiwa* [conversation] schools, the students, or the teachers, even though this is a multi-billion yen business with more than 30,000 full- and part-time teachers, of whom nearly 15,000 are non-Japanese (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2005). Looking at issues that surround *eikaiwa* teaching is important if we want to understand English language learning in the Japanese context, not only because *eikaiwa* supplements formal English instruction for students, but because it is also seen by many as a consumptive activity to support a casual hobby for either "pleasure and enjoyment," or as a serious "lifelong hobby driven by intellectual curiosity" (Kubota, 2001, p. 475).

One reason why there is little research conducted in the *eikaiwa* context may be because most *eikaiwa* teachers are not academics engaging in and writing up empirical research. Bueno and Caesar (2003), in their introduction to their collection of essays of English teachers' personal experiences, explain that the difficulty they had in collecting essays from teachers in various teaching contexts was because "the people who teach below the college level, for the most part cannot write…. they are younger, their training is poor, their time is usually brief, and their motivations have more to do with adventure and travel than commitment to the classroom" (p. 15). Although it is true that youth and temporary residential status may describe many *eikaiwa* teachers, it is important to acknowledge that not all are young, impermanent, or undedicated. In fact, numerous *eikaiwa* teachers, for various reasons, have made Japan their permanent home and *eikaiwa* teaching their career.

*Figure 18.* First page of a Feature Article from January/February 2013 by Diane Hawley Nagatomo.

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# Writing Instruction: What Is Being Taught in Japanese High Schools, Why, and Why It Matters

Bern Mulvey

*Iwate University*

Citing continuing poor performance on diagnostic texts, MEXT has recently advocated for an increased emphasis on academic English, particularly writing instruction (to include critical thinking). However, little sustained attention has been given to the specifics of what is being taught now, how, and why. In this paper, I present recent national survey results and observations made during six years of teaching both Japanese and English academic writing to Japanese students at two Japanese universities. The national survey results support my own observations, suggesting that—and in direct contrast to prevailing beliefs about the curriculum—many Japanese students struggle to write logically and persuasively in English for the same reason they struggle in Japanese: because nobody yet has taught them how. Accordingly, in order to improve academic English skills, critical reading and writing skills in the L1 need development also—where possible, in conjunction with similar emphases in the L2 classes, and ideally including collaboration among all the teachers providing this instruction.

近年、文部科学省は診断調査（TOEFL、PISAなど）における継続的な成績不振を受け、国際的に質の高い英語力を目指すためのアカデミック・イングリッシュ、特に批判的思考力を含んだ学術的ライティングの指導の強化を求めている。しかし、日本の大学・高校におけるライティング指導の現状について、何が、どのように、なぜ教えられているのかといったような詳細に対しては、何ら評価・分析が行われていないのが実情である。本論文では、6年間にわたり二つの大学で日本人学生を対象とした英語・日本語でのアカデミック・ライティング指導の経験をもとに、最近発表された調査結果を検討し、日本におけるアカデミック・ライティング指導の現状および今後の課題について研究を行った。「読み・書きの指導が非常に重視されている」とよく言われる日本の国語・英語教育だが、英語に限らず母語においても、その方法を学生に指導してこなかったせいで、作文力が未だに乏しい状態であることが分かった。英語のアカデミック・ライティングの力を向上させるには、母語においても批判的な読解力、ライティング力を磨くことが必要であり、国語と英語の教員が協力し合って、こういった力を育てる必要性を論じる。

I n this article, I discuss the systemic weaknesses in the high school writing instruction students receive in Japan which make mastery of this important communicative form even more challenging for students. While hundreds of critical studies of English classroom content and pedagogy in this country exist, the overwhelming focus in the critical literature has been on oral communication skills. In comparison, writing instruction has enjoyed a privileged existence, at least partly because of the pervasiveness of the *Japanese know grammar, reading, and writing but cannot speak* stereotype (see Mulvey, 1999, 2001; Ueno, 2009). Another contributing factor to the lack of recent critical studies includes a series of influential articles by Kubota (1997, 1998, 1999) and Kubota and Lehner (2004, 2005) discussing Japanese and English academic writing education in high school and college settings in Japan. These articles describe a pattern of study and mastery of L1 rhetorical forms in Japanese high schools, including extensive exposure to writing which incorporates "unity created by a clear theme, logical development of ideas, and placing a topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph" (Kubota, 1998, p. 472)—the so-called academic English format.

The impact of the Kubota and Lehner articles on the field of contrastive rhetoric cannot be overstated. Connor (2002, 2005) has written about this impact extensively. However, as I will discuss, their characterizations of writing education in Japanese and English in academic settings in Japan suggest a high mastery level (including metacognitive awareness) of rhetorical forms in the L1 and extensive exposure to the L2—claims that are contradicted by extensive nationwide surveys and other research. Accordingly, in this article I intend to identify the problem, as well as call for more informed discussion and collaboration on possible solutions.

**Literature Review**

As alluded to above, the idea persists that Japanese students are mastering English reading and writing skills at the expense of listening and speaking. Mulvey (1999, 2001) lists numerous articles articulating this position, with Yamaoka (2010) one of several more recent examples. Most of these studies assert that this prioritizing of reading and writing skills over listening and speaking is the result of a washback effect from university entrance exams. Still, Kubota and Lehner have argued that another reason is the supposedly powerful Western (spe-

*Figure 19.* First page of a Feature Article May/June 2016 by Bern Mulvey.

# The Case Against the Case Against Holding English Classes in English

## Rintaro Sato
*Nara University of Education*

In senior high school, teachers are now officially supposed to conduct their English lessons mainly in English to develop students' communication abilities (MEXT, 2011). However, some researchers in English education have raised the case against this "English lessons in English" principle, asserting that conducting English lessons in the target language of English is not only ineffective, but harmful. This paper aims to refute critics of MEXT's guideline for conducting classes primarily in English by considering studies in second language acquisition (SLA), theories for English learners' motivation in the Japanese context, and offering an alternative for judicious use of the L1, Japanese.

現在、高校での英語の授業は主に英語で行うことになっている。しかしながらこの「英語での授業」には一部の英語教育研究者から、　効果が無いばかりか害があるとの強烈な反対意見もある。本稿では、この「英語での授業への反対意見」を第2言語習得理論や日本人学習者の英語を話そうとする意欲、有効な日本語の活用などの観点から反論する。

In the 2013 academic year, the language of communication in Japanese senior high school English classes officially became English. Under the plan announced by MEXT on Dec. 13, 2013, English classes in junior high schools will also be conducted primarily in the English language from the 2018 academic year. However, some researchers in English education take a strong position against this practice by asserting that conducting English classes in the target language is not only ineffective, but harmful. They refute the effectiveness of English classes conducted in English, considering its theoretical basis and its practical implementation by practicing teachers (e.g., Erikawa, 2009, 2014; Narita, 2013; Terashima, 2009).

From the viewpoints of theories of second language acquisition (SLA), Japanese learners' motivation for speaking, and a judicious use of L1 (Japanese) in English-medium classes, I explore the effectiveness of English-medium classes by refuting the case against holding English classes in English.

## The Case Against Holding English Classes in English

Arguments against holding English lessons in English can be divided into theoretical, practical, and L1-based objections. From the theoretical perspective, Erikawa (2014) asserts that the idea of teaching English lessons in English is now out of date by introducing Kubota (2014), who suggests the need for effective, creative language activities which utilize the mother tongue. Erikawa presents this as an example of a more up-to-date teaching method that reflects changing attitudes in global TESOL towards using L1 in foreign language classrooms, and therefore dismisses the proposal of English-medium classes as lacking a theoretical basis. Terashima (2009), while attaching importance to students' writing and presentations in English, argues that these output-based activities would be more effectively practiced in Japanese language-based English classes since teachers can teach and students can better learn how to produce English through their shared language, Japanese. Narita (2013) claims that as there are huge differences between English and Japanese phonology and grammatical systems, it is very difficult for Japanese English teachers to speak English fluently and accurately, thus making it impossible for Japanese L1 teachers to conduct effective English lessons in English.

Narita (2013) suggests that effective English classes in English can never actually be realized because both Japanese teachers and students lack sufficient English ability. It is also argued that asking Japanese teachers to conduct their lessons in English would be an excessive burden on teachers (Erikawa, 2009), be physically and mentally exhausted in the current Japanese EFL teaching environment in which students and teachers do not actually need to use English for communication outside the classroom (Terashima, 2009).

As for the effectiveness of English-medium classes, it is argued that the practice will leave some students behind (Terashima, 2009), and will widen the gap of English proficiency among them, thus creating "English haters" (Erikawa, 2009) because of the difficulty of understanding English input from

Figure 20. First page of a standard Readers' Forum Article by Rintaro Sato from September/October 2015.

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# Language teaching methodology and teacher education: Trends and issues

## *An interview with Alan Waters*

## Chit Cheung Matthew Sung

Lancaster University

Adopting appropriate teaching methods and designing suitable teaching materials are among the major concerns of language teachers around the world. Although many teachers are eager to find the 'best' or most effective ways of teaching, there are no easy answers, given the wide range of sociopolitical contexts in which teaching takes place. In this interview, Alan Waters, a leading expert in English language teaching (ELT) from Lancaster University, talks about the trends and issues surrounding language teaching methodology, materials design, as well as teacher education in ELT. With extensive experience in the field, Alan has taught English as a foreign language and taken part in teacher training projects in various parts of the world, and has published

several books and numerous journal articles. He is interested in all the main aspects of the theory and practice of ELT.

**Matthew Sung (MS):** What do you think have been the major changes in ELT methodology over the last two decades or so? What main challenges do they present for our profession?

**Alan Waters (AW):** In answer to the first of these questions, I think it depends on whether you are talking about theoretical or practical developments. As I have tried to explain in a paper on the subject that appeared in *ELT Journal* in October last year (Waters, 2012), if you look at the 'professional discourse' (major publications, conference presentations, electronic discussions, and so on), the main theoretical developments over the last 20 years or so range from the 'post-method condition' (the idea that prescribed ways of teaching such as Audiolingualism are not a credible basis for methodology), through 'appropriate methodology' (the idea that the most effective kind of methodology will be based on the sociocultural norms of the teaching situation) to, ironically enough, a renewal of 'methodism', one caused by the way that a 'communicating to learn' approach is increasingly advocated as the single best method. In the latter approach, learners use language to solve problems and (in theory, at any rate) acquire a knowledge of grammar and so on as a by-product of the communication work. Examples of methods based on

*Figure 21.* First page of an interview of Alan Waters in Readers' Forum by Chit Cheung Matthew Sung from January/February 2013.

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## Appendices

The appendices for this paper are available on the *TLT* website <jalt-publications.org/tlt>.

**Noriko Kurihara** has been teaching English at a Japanese senior high school for many years. She received an MA in TESOL at Teachers College Columbia University Japan, and currently attends a doctoral course of Kyoto University. Her research interests are writing, autonomy and collaboration. She can be contacted at <kurihara.noriko.74z@st.kyoto-u.ac.jp>.

*Figure 22.* Last page of a Feature Article by Noriko Kurihara from September/October 2014. Note the author picture and biographical statement.

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# TLT RESOURCES
# MY SHARE

Welcome to another edition of My Share. In this issue, we have four great articles for you. Yuko Matsumoto works on prediction skills in a reading class, Jennifer Altman has students teaching vocabulary to each other, Chris M. Murphy brings critical thinking into the classroom with audio/visual media, and Elizabeth J. Lange gets students to improve their English for special occasions though letter-writing activities. I hope you and your students will enjoy these activities as much as I did.

## Keep your students awake: Using prediction in a reading class

### Yuko Matsumoto
Waseda University
<ykmatsumoto3@gmail.com>

### Quick guide

**Key words**: Prediction, reading, excitement, transitions, hints

**Learner English level**: Low-intermediate to advanced

**Learner maturity**: University

**Preparation time**: 10 minutes

**Activity time**: 20-30 minutes

**Materials**: Prepared copies of a reading (cut into three or four pieces)

### Introduction

Why are so many students bored out of their minds in a reading class? It might be because they consider reading to be a completely passive activity that offers no excitement. When students are reading their favorite comic books or novels, they cannot wait to flip the page, since they are eager to find out what happens next. While reading, they are unconsciously making and checking predictions, which generates excitement. Is it possible for students to become more actively involved in English reading so that they can experience the same type of excitement in the classroom as they do when reading at home for pleasure? Here is one suggestion to enliven the reading classroom.

### Preparation

**Step 1:** Choose an appropriate text in terms of length and level of the students. For instance, a three- or four paragraph story (approximately one page) would be a perfect length for low-intermediate students. It works better if the story has several clear transitions in its flow, so that you can find proper cut-off points where the students can make a prediction about the upcoming scene.

**Step 2:** Make enough copies for each student, and cut the copies into three or four pieces at the

### …with Dax Thomas

*Figure 23.* Sample page from the May/June, 2011 issue, containing the beginning of the My Share section (including introduction by the editor Dax Thomas) and the first part of a My Share article by Yuko Matsumoto.

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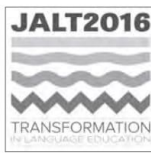
**JALT2016** 42nd Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition
**November 25–28, 2016**
TRANSFORMATION IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION
WINC Aichi, Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan

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**Regan Thomson** is a lecturer of English at Kwansei Gakuin University. He holds a Masters of Applied Linguistics from Griffith University, Australia. He has taught in Australia, Japan, and Canada for ten years. His research interests include vocabulary learning, educational neuroscience, and global Englishes. He can be contacted at <regan.thomson@kwansei.ac.jp>.

ARTICLES
JALT PRAXIS
JALT FOCUS

## [JALT PRAXIS] MY SHARE

### Philip Head and Gerry McLellan

*We welcome submissions for the My Share column. Submissions should be up to 600 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see the guidelines on our website below).*
Email: my-share@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare

*Welcome to the latest edition of My Share. Once again, summer is upon us and I, for one, am looking forward to the holidays, in hopes to escape the humidity of the city. I am counting the days until I can board my flight, and I am sure that many readers are also preparing for the last leg of the first semester. Exams will be foremost on the minds of many, and preparing, administering, and marking exams is the final hurdle before thoughts can turn to meeting up with family and friends and spending some time on R and R. Before all that, however, we have some great articles to help us get through those more difficult lessons.*

*Firstly, Gary Henscheid introduces us to an idea that helps students learn English by telling traditional Japanese stories. Next, Nick Caine utilizes the BBC Radio 4 program, **Desert Island Discs**, to help motivate students to write and speak. Douglas Perkins and Adam Pearson then show us a way to introduce foreign geography and culture into the classroom. Lastly, Richard Buckley shows us his approach to help students learn vocabulary.*

*In this month's online edition, Nick Caine shows us how to make a video wall using Padlet and Drew Larson has an idea for how to get students talking more in the classroom.*

## Draw and Tell
### Gary Henscheid
*Nihon University*

*gary.henscheid@nihon-u.ac.jp*

**Quick Guide**
» **Keywords:** *Japanese stories, folk legends, memory, recall*
» **Learner English level:** *Junior high to high school*
» **Preparation time:** *15-30 minutes*

*Figure 24.* Sample page from the July/August, 2016 issue, containing the end of a Readers' Forum article, the beginning of the My Share section (including introduction by the editors Philip Head and Gerry McLellan) and the first part of a My Share article by Gary Henscheid.

## Appendix C

### First Letter to the Authors Regarding the Questionnaire

Dear [author],

My name is Aaron Hahn. I am a teacher at [university], and I am also currently pursuing a PhD at Kumamoto University. My research uses a critical discourse analysis stance to examine how issues of power, ideology, and identity are constructed and represented in JALT My Share articles. In order to better understand the surveys and the process involved in getting them published, I am sending a survey to everyone who had a My Share article published in The Language Teacher from 2011 to 2016.

I would appreciate it if you could take a short while (I estimate the survey should take 10-15 minutes) to complete this survey. The survey can be found at https://____ [169]

I've found that due to the size of one of the question layouts, it is probably easier to complete on a computer than on a phone.

If you have any questions about this research, please reply to this email at any time. Also, if you submit a response but later want to withdraw it from the research, you can do so by sending me an email to let me know.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Regards,

Aaron Hahn

[My university affiliation]

---

[169] An active link to the survey was placed here; respondents could click on the link in the email and be taken directly to the form to complete.

## Appendix D

### Second Letter to Authors Regarding the Questionnaire

Dear [author], [170]

Apologies for contacting you again. I'm sending one final request to all My Share authors as a part of my PhD research. If you have the time and wouldn't mind giving me more insight into the My Share writing process and your thoughts on teaching, please complete the online survey at your convenience. The link to the survey is in the original email, copied below. As before, I'm happy to answer any questions you have about the study prior to or after completion of the survey.

Thank you for your time.

---

[170] Only authors who did not respond to the first email and whose email address did not bounce back were sent this second letter, approximately one month after the first.

## Appendix E
## Questionnaire for JALT My Share Authors

**Section 1: Untitled**[171]

Thank you for participating in this research. My name is Aaron Hahn, and I am conducting research for my PhD on how issues such as power, ideology, and identity are represented in JALT My Share articles. Your responses to this survey will help me better understand the process of getting an article published, who the My Share authors are, and some general ideas about your teaching philosophy. All results will be reported anonymously. If you have any questions, please contact me at [my email address] at any time. Also, if you do submit the survey but later change your mind and wish to have your data removed, you may simply email me and I will do so.

I (respondent) agree to allow Aaron Hahn to use my responses on this survey for his research. In addition, I agree that Aaron Hahn may anonymously use quotations from these responses in publications that result from this research. [172]
- Agree[173]
- Do not agree

---

[171] On the Google Form document, the sections were not numbered. Instead, each section was shown on a separate page with a section title (except for the initial landing page which does not have a title); respondents could navigate between sections using "Back" and "Next" buttons at the bottom of each page.

[172] One of two required questions; if a respondent did not click an answer before clicking next, the software placed a warning message ("This is a required question") next to the question and would not advance until the question is answered.

[173] In this reproduction, I have used round dots to indicate questions where a respondent could choose exactly one answer (compare to the square dots discussed below).

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## Section 2: Background

Note: Except for the first question in this section, you may skip any question throughout the survey that you do not wish to answer.

For each of the questions in this section, if you had more than one My Share article published between 2011-2016 (the time frame of this research), please answer about your first article.

In what year was your MyShare article published?[174]

         _____[175]

When you submitted your MyShare article, where were you employed? Choose all that apply.
- Elementary school[176]
- Junior high school
- High school
- 2 year-college (either tandai or semmongakko)
- 4 year-college
- Dispatch company
- Private language school (eikaiwa)
- Private tutor (either through a company or independently)
- Publishing company
- Other:

At the time you submitted your My Share article, under what condition were you employed?
- Full time, permanent
- Full time, contract
- Part time
- Self-employed
- Other:

At the time you submitted your My Share article, how long (in years) had you been teaching professionally?

         _____

At the time you submitted your My Share article, how long (in years) had you been teaching professionally in Japan?

         _____

---

[174] The other required question. Note also that the questions in this survey were not numbered, since the backend software automatically sorted and recorded the answers.

[175] In this reproduction, I have used "___" to indicate questions where a respondent can fill in an answer freely. The software automatically adjusted the space available, allowing a response of any length.

[176] In this reproduction, I have used a square dot to indicate questions where a respondent could select one or more answers. Many of these questions, such as this one, had a final answer marked "Other:" in which respondents could add an additional choice not included in the options.

At the time you submitted your My Share article, how many publications had you already had published?

- 0
- 1
- 2-4
- 5-9
- 10 or more

Please explain your reasons for submitting your My Share article for potential publication.

_____

Currently, where do you work? Choose all that apply.

- Elementary school
- Junior high school
- High school
- 2 year-college
- 4 year-college
- Dispatch company
- Private language school (*eikaiwa*)
- Private tutor (either through a company or independently)
- Publishing company
- Other:

Currently, under what condition are you employed?

- Full time, permanent
- Full time, contract
- Part time
- Self-employed
- Other:

**Section 3: Publication process**

For each question in this section, if you had more than one My Share article published between 2011-2016 (the time frame of this research), please answer about your first article.

After you submitted your My Share article, how long (in months) was it until it was accepted?

_____

After your article was accepted, how long (in months) was the editing process?

_____

In total, how much time (in months) elapsed between submission of your article and its eventual publication?

_____

Please describe the process of editing the article after it was accepted. This might include information about the role the journal editors played in the process, how many times you or they revised the article, what types of revisions were asked for, etc.

_____

**Section 4: Retrospective**

This section contains questions asking you about how you view your My Share activity now.

How often do you currently use this activity?
- Never
- Sometimes
- Regularly
- Often
- Other:

What do you think are the best things about your article/activity?
    _____

Are there things you wish you could change about the article/activity, and, if so, what?
    _____

How have your thoughts about this activity changed since its publication?
    _____

How have your thoughts about teaching in general changed since your article was published?
    _____

**Section 5: Teaching Philosophy**

For the following section, please rate how important each of the following factors are for you when planning and delivering English lessons. [177]

I want my lessons to...
> be challenging.
> be enjoyable
> be fun.
> be learner centered.
> be motivating.
> be relaxing
> be simple.
> build student confidence.
> encourage learner autonomy.
> feature group-work
> give students energy.
> include activities that involve physical movement.
> include new or unique components.
> promote creativity.
> use authentic English.
> use collaborative activities.
> use competitive activities.

Please rate each of the following statements for how much you agree or disagree with respect to classes which you have taught in Japan.
> Classes are so large that effective language learning is hampered.
> Classes contain a wide variety of English levels.
> Students are deceitful.
> Students are hard-working.
> Students are unmotivated.
> Students are shy or anxious about communicating in English.
> Students don't know how to study English.
> Students don't know how to use technology effectively.
> Students lack knowledge about current events.
> Students sincerely want to improve at English.

---

[177] Questions in this section were arrayed in what Google Forms calls a "Multiple choice grid" (see the image on the next page). For each of the lines, respondents could choose one of five responses. These responses were arrayed in a grid. See the image on the next page for an approximation of what the top portion of the first question looked like online. For the first set of questions ("I want my lessons to...") the choices were "Not at all important," "Unimportant," "Neutral," "Important," and "Very important." For the second set of questions, respondents rated how much they agreed with the claim from the choices "Strongly disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly agree."

# Questionnaire for JALT My Share authors

## Teaching philosophy

For the following section, please rate how important each of the following factors are for you when planning and delivering English lessons.

### I want my lessons to...

|  | Not at all important | Unimportant | Neutral | Important | Very important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| be challenging. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| be enjoyable | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| be fun. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| be learner centered. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Section 6: Demographic**

As a reminder, you are free to skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

How old are you currently?
        _____

What educational credentials do you currently hold (choose all that apply)?
- Bachelor's degree, TESOL/education/applied linguistics related
- Bachelor's degree, other major
- Master's degree, TESOL/education/applied linguistics related
- Master's degree, other major
- Doctoral or other terminal degree, TESOL/education/applied linguistics related
- Doctoral or other terminal degree,, other major
- Teaching credential
- TESOL certificate
- Other:

To which gender identity do you most identify?
- Female
- Male
- Transgender female
- Transgender male
- Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming
- Other:

What was the first language you learned to speak?
        _____

How would you describe your English language proficiency?
        _____

How would you describe your Japanese language proficiency?
        _____

**Section 7: Final page**

Thank you very much for completing this survey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [my email address]

For record-keeping purposes (so that I can track which authors have completed the survey), please provide your name. As stated previously, all data will be anonymized in publication.

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Would you be willing to conduct a follow-up interview at a later date to explore these issues in more detail? This interview would be conducted via Skype, and would most likely take place between fall 2017 and spring 2018.

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes to the previous question, please let me know the best email address to contact you.

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