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Comparative Culture

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**Timing Effects of Listing Gratitude toward One's Parent(s) on
Subjective Well-Being in Japanese Undergraduate Students**

Futoshi Kobayashi

Author Note

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Abstract

This study investigated the effectiveness of gratitude-listing interventions with two different timings, each with the same amount of practice (i.e., once a day for six days for a total of six times vs. once a week for five weeks for a total of six times) regarding subjective well-being. Seventy-five participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (i.e., listing three things for which they felt gratitude toward their parent(s) every day during six days for a total of six times, or once a week during five weeks for a total of six times, or no treatment). Results provided empirical evidence of effectiveness of the condensed gratitude listing practice (i.e., every day during six days for a total of six times) for subjective happiness and of effectiveness of the spaced-apart gratitude listing practice (i.e., once a week during five

weeks for a total of six times) for affect balance compared with the measurement-only control group. Further studies are needed to investigate this issue more thoroughly.

Keywords: gratitude, Japan, positive psychology, parent

Since Emmons and McCullough (2003) developed the original gratitude-listing interventions, many researchers have tried different variations of these interventions in positive psychological research (See Davis et al., 2016, for a review). In meta-analyzing five different studies, Davis et al. (2016) reported that gratitude-listing interventions demonstrated significant effects to improve well-being of participants when compared with measurement-only control groups.

However, there are still unknown factors that may influence the effectiveness of gratitude listing interventions. For example, Layous and Lyubomirsky (2014) pointed out the factors of timing and dosage. They used the metaphor of patients who are taking prescription drugs for their treatments. How often the patients take pills and how many they take makes a difference to the treatment effects. In the same vein, the effects of gratitude-listing interventions may fluctuate due to timing (i.e., frequency) and dosage (i.e., sum) of the gratitude listing practice.

Regarding the issue of timing and dosage, Dr. Robert Emmons, who is an authority in gratitude research, asserts the following:

Occasional gratitude journaling (e.g., twice weekly) boosts well-being more than the regular practice (e.g., every day) of counting blessings. Sometimes less is more. You avoid gratitude fatigue this way (Emmons, 2013, p. 12).

In addition, Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) reported on a six-week gratitude listing intervention study. Lyubomirsky and her colleagues randomly made three groups that did gratitude listing (a) once a week, (b) three times a week, and (c) did nothing. They found that participants who did gratitude listing once a week, not three times a week, significantly increased their happiness over those who were in the control group. According to Emmons (2013) and Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005), lesser frequencies and

lower dosages seem effective in some situations, but there are no clear guidelines regarding the issue of timing and dosage.

To my knowledge, there are no published experimental studies comparing the timing effects of the same amount of gratitude listing practice. Even though the total number of the pills that the patient takes is equal, the effect of the pill may be different if s/he takes three pills once a day or one pill every eight hours three times per day. In other words, the present study compared the timing effect for the same dosage of gratitude-listing interventions. Moreover, a certain type of gratitude, gratitude towards one's parent(s), was investigated in the present study because it has been emphasized in Japanese culture and history (Matsudaira, 1984; Oohata, 1971; Shintou, 1986). Previous research reported that daily listing of five things for which gratitude was felt toward one's parent(s) had improved the scores of subjective happiness and life satisfaction, however the daily events listing group, a control group with a matched activity, also improved the scores of life satisfaction and empathy via one-week intervention (Kobayashi, 2014). Additionally, other gratitude-listing intervention studies with Japanese samples did not exhibit significant intervention effects on well-being over control groups (Aikawa, Yada, & Yoshino, 2013; Otsuka, Hori, & Kawahito, 2012).

Three groups were randomly formed in this study. Group A, as a replication and a slight revision of gratitude listing of Kobayashi (2014), involved the processes of retrieving three things for which participants felt gratitude toward their parent(s), and required them to notice the three things by daily listing for six consecutive days (i.e., six entries). Group B was asked to retrieve three things for which they felt gratitude for their parent(s) and notice them by listing once a week for five weeks (i.e., six entries). Group C, as a control group, had no particular assignments for this study.

According to Ryan and Deci (2001), subjective well-being is defined with "three components: life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood, and the absence of negative

mood, together often summarized as happiness” (p. 144). In order to measure the well-being of the participants, three well-established subjective well-being measurements (i.e., subjective happiness, life satisfaction, & positive and negative affect) were used following the definition of Ryan and Deci (2001). All participants responded to these three measurements three times: just before the intervention started (Time 1), seven days later (Time 2), and five weeks and a day (i.e., 36 days) later (Time 3).

Previous studies that used similar one-week gratitude-listing intervention strategies demonstrated lasting effects toward subjective happiness in a one-month follow-up (Gander, Proyer, Ruch, & Wyss, 2013; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005) and a composite score of life satisfaction and affect balance in a five-week follow-up (Watkins, Uher, & Pichinevskiy, 2015) after the intervention was terminated.

This research was designed to be exploratory in its nature instead of testing particular hypotheses. I investigated how the subjective well-being of participants in Groups A, B, and C would change as a research question. Especially, I compared the improvements of each dependent variable for Group A from Time 1 to Time 2 and for Group B from Time 2 to Time 3 in order to check the effectiveness of the different timing schedules. In following the new statistics guidelines (Cumming, 2012), I investigated effect sizes and confidence intervals more thoroughly instead of searching for statistically significant results so that the results of the present study would be useful for future meta-analyses. When making statistical judgments on the results, I considered all the results of statistical significance levels, effect sizes, and confidence intervals, instead of relying on the statistical significance levels only.

Method

Participants

There were 25 participants in Group A, 25 participants in Group B, and 25 participants in Group C, for a total of 75. These 75 participants ranged in age from 18 to 47 years ($M = 19.53$, $SD = 3.48$). They were all undergraduate students (49 women and 26 men) who at the time were attending a liberal arts college in Miyazaki, Japan. They are all native speakers of Japanese.

Materials

Subjective Happiness. Shimai, Otake, Utsuki, Ikemi, and Lyubomirsky (2004) conducted a study with a sample of 302 Japanese undergraduate students in order to test the reliability and validity of the Japanese Subjective Happiness Scale (JSHS) that was created from the original Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). The results indicated that the JSHS demonstrated appropriate factorial validity from factor analysis, and convergent and discriminate validity from significant correlations with relative scales. Regarding reliability, there was also an indication of sound internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$) and appropriate five-week test-retest reliability ($r = .86$). The JSHS has four items and the participants rate these items on a seven-point Likert-type scale and the sum values indicate their global subjective happiness. Kobayashi (2013) reported that it demonstrated appropriate construct validity by significant correlations with relative scales and sound internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$).

Positive and Negative Affect. In order to create a handy measurement to assess the emotional states of participants, Sato and Yasuda (2001) conducted two different studies with college-age Japanese samples. As a result, a Japanese version of the Positive and Negative

Affect Schedule (PANAS) was made from the original PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The Japanese PANAS has eight adjectives to measure positive affect ($\alpha = .90$) and another eight adjectives to measure negative affect ($\alpha = .91$). In this scale, participants indicate their emotional state by rating each adjective from 1 (*does not apply to me at all*) to 6 (*applies to me greatly*) on a Likert-type scale. Additionally, Kobayashi (2013) reported that the Japanese PANAS demonstrated sound internal consistency for positive affect ($\alpha = .87$) and negative affect ($\alpha = .88$) and appropriate construct validity.

Life Satisfaction. In order to create the Japanese version of the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), Sumino (1994) conducted five different studies with various samples of Japanese university students and middle-age adults. The Japanese version of SWLS has five items that are intended to measure cognitive aspects of participants' subjective well-being via ratings that range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) on a Likert-type scale. Regarding construct validity, it exhibited significant correlations with five relative measurements. It also showed sound reliability by acceptable internal consistency in an undergraduate sample ($\alpha = .84$) and a middle-age adult sample ($\alpha = .90$) and $r = .80$ for four-week test-retest reliability. Recently, it also demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$) and appropriate construct validity with significant correlations with relative scales (Kobayashi, 2013).

Procedure

First of all, the Institutional Review Board and the Dean of the School of International Liberal Arts where the study took place granted me ethical approval to conduct this study. I visited several classes in the college where I work and explained the study to the undergraduate students. Interested students visited my office to read the description of the

study and their rights and rewards for participation. Many of them decided to participate in this study and provided informed consent. The participants randomly picked their own identification number cards (e.g., “B15” representative of the 15th participant of Group B) from a bag and used them in order to assure their anonymity whenever they answered the surveys and wrote their gratitude listings. All the participants anonymously responded to the three measurements of life satisfaction, subjective happiness, and positive and negative affect. Then, notebooks were given to all the participants of Groups A and B, and they retrieved and listed three things for which they felt gratitude toward their parent(s) for approximately five to ten minutes every night for Group A (or once a week for Group B) before going to bed. In order to avoid gratitude fatigue, participants of Groups A and B were asked to retrieve three things for which they felt gratitude toward their parent(s) when they were ages 3 to 6 on the first entry, ages 7 to 9 on the second entry, ages 10 to 12 on the third entry, ages 13 to 15 on the fourth entry, ages 16 to 18 on the fifth entry, and in college on the sixth entry. Seven days later, all participants returned to my office, answered the same surveys for the second time, and the participants of Group A returned their notebooks. Five weeks and a day later, all participants returned to my office and answered the same surveys for the third time and the participants of Group B returned their notebooks. Then, each participant who answered the surveys the full three times received 1,000 Japanese yen (approximately US \$10 in August 2016) as a financial reward.

Results

A 3 (between subjects: treatment group) X 3 (within subjects: time of assessment) Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted toward three dependent variables: subjective happiness, life satisfaction, and affect balance. The score of affect balance was made by subtracting the total number of negative affect from that of positive

affect. The results revealed significant multivariate effects across the interaction between group and time, $V = .311$, $F(12, 136) = 2.089$, $p = .021$, $\eta_p^2 = .156$. However, no significant multivariate effects were found on time, $V = .080$, $F(6, 67) = .973$, $p = .450$, $\eta_p^2 = .080$ and group, $V = .031$, $F(6, 142) = .377$, $p = .893$, $\eta_p^2 = .016$. Consequently, a 3 (between subjects: treatment group) X 3 (within subjects: time of assessment) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted toward each dependent variable. Mauchly's tests indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated regarding subjective happiness, $\chi^2(2) = 12.76$, $p = .002$ and affect valance, $\chi^2(2) = 7.06$, $p = .029$. Their estimates of sphericity were greater than .75 and thus the Huynh-Feldt estimates were reported in the present study (See Field, 2013, p. 548). The results indicated significant interaction effects on affect balance, $F(3.849, 138.6) = 4.489$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .111$. There were marginally significant interaction effects on subjective happiness, $F(3.609, 129.9) = 2.169$, $p = .083$, $\eta_p^2 = .057$, and there were no significant interaction effects on life satisfaction, $F(4, 144) = 1.574$, $p = .184$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$.

Regarding subjective happiness, post-hoc tests with a Bonferroni adjustment revealed that Group A displayed a marginally significant increase in their scores from Time 1 to Time 2, $t(24) = 2.14$, $p = .108$, mean difference = 0.920, 95% CI = [-0.134, 1.974], Cohen's $d = 0.428$, and Group B increased their scores from Time 2 to Time 3, $t(24) = 1.49$, $p = .420$, mean difference = 0.720, 95% CI = [-0.462, 1.902], Cohen's $d = 0.299$. See Table 1 and Figure 1.

Regarding affect balance, post-hoc tests with a Bonferroni adjustment revealed that Group A's scores were significantly decreased from Time 2 to Time 3, $t(24) = 2.60$, $p = .034$, mean difference = 5.640, 95% CI = [0.327, 10.953], Cohen's $d = 0.520$, and Group C's scores also decreased significantly from Time 1 to Time 3, $t(24) = 2.63$, $p = .031$, mean difference = 6.040, 95% CI = [0.413, 11.667], Cohen's $d = 0.526$. Group A's scores increased from Time 1 to Time 2, $t(24) = 1.31$, $p = .587$, mean difference = 2.280, 95% CI = [-1.998,

6.558], Cohen's $d = 0.261$, and Group B's scores increased with marginal significance from Time 2 to Time 3, $t(24) = 2.38$, $p = .060$, mean difference = 5.160, 95% CI = [-0.153, 10.473], Cohen's $d = 0.476$. See Table 1 and Figure 2.

Regarding life satisfaction, post-hoc tests with a Bonferroni adjustment revealed that Group A's scores increased from Time 1 to Time 2, $t(24) = 0.82$, $p = 1.00$, mean difference = 0.600, 95% CI = [-1.193, 2.393], Cohen's $d = 0.164$, and Group B's scores increased from Time 2 to Time 3, $t(24) = 1.76$, $p = .247$, mean difference = 1.200, 95% CI = [-0.470, 2.870], Cohen's $d = 0.352$. See Table 1 and Figure 3.

Discussion

In following the new statistics guidelines (Cumming, 2012), I considered all the results of statistical significance levels, effect sizes, and confidence intervals and would like to discuss four major findings of this study.

First, the subjective happiness of Group A seemed to increase from Time 1 to Time 2 but did not decrease at Time 3. This finding indicates that the condensed gratitude listing practice (i.e., every day during six days for a total of six times) might be effective to increase one's subjective happiness and such an effect might continue for four weeks after the termination of such a gratitude practice. Such an increase from Time 2 to Time 3 of Group B who conducted the spaced-apart gratitude listing practice (i.e., once a week during five weeks for a total of six times) was negligible.

Second, the affect balance of Group B seemed to increase from Time 2 to Time 3. This finding indicates that the spaced-apart gratitude listing practice (i.e., once a week during five weeks for a total of six times) might be effective to increase one's affect balance. Such an increase from Time 1 to Time 2 of Group A, who conducted the condensed gratitude listing practice (i.e., every day during six days for a total of six times) was negligible.

Third, the affect balance of Group C seemed to decrease from Time 1 to Time 3. Additionally, those who were in Group A did not do anything from Time 2 to Time 3 and this seemed to decrease their affect balance. These results indicate that one's affect balance might be decreased when one does not do any gratitude activities. Additionally, I suspect that the particular semester schedule in which the study was conducted might have influenced the results. Most of the participants started their assignments at the beginning of the semester when there was not much demanding school work. As the semester went by, the amount of school work increased and it might have influenced their level of affect balance.

Fourth, both the condensed and the spaced-apart gratitude listing practices seemed to make no significant effects on life satisfaction. It is intriguing because previous similar studies (Kobayashi, 2014, 2015) found the life satisfaction scale which was used in this study was useful for measuring the effects of gratitude-related practices. This might have resulted from idiosyncrasies of the particular sample.

There are some weaknesses in this study. First of all, this study used a convenience sample from a particular institution. Second, the sample size was small. Therefore, all results of this study might be the products of idiosyncrasies in the particular sample. Third, the results were based on self-reporting by the participants, therefore, there is danger of self-serving bias. Fourth, many participants of this study, who are native Japanese speakers, might be qualitatively different from a general Japanese population because many of them study liberal arts in English and they live their college life in an atypical, nearly English-only environment.

Although this study has certain weaknesses, it could provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the condensed gratitude listing practice (i.e., every day during six days for a total of six times) for subjective happiness and of effectiveness of the spaced-apart gratitude listing practice (i.e., once a week during five weeks for a total of six times) for affect balance

compared to the measurement-only control group. Further studies, especially meta-analyses, are needed to investigate this issue more thoroughly.

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Table 1
Means, Standard Errors, and 95% Confidence Intervals by Condition and Time of Assessment

DV	Condition	<i>n</i>	Time of Assessment					
			Time 1 (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	Time 2 (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	Time 3 (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI
Subjective Happiness	Group A	25	19.12 (0.764)	[17.60, 20.64]	20.04 (0.766)	[18.51, 21.57]	20.12 (0.728)	[18.67, 21.57]
	Group B	25	18.68 (0.764)	[17.16, 20.20]	18.32 (0.766)	[16.79, 19.85]	19.04 (0.728)	[17.59, 20.49]
	Group C	25	19.60 (0.764)	[18.08, 21.12]	18.92 (0.766)	[17.39, 20.45]	18.84 (0.728)	[17.39, 20.29]
Affect Balance	Group A	25	8.60 (1.78)	[5.05, 12.15]	10.88 (2.28)	[6.34, 15.42]	5.24 (2.33)	[0.60, 9.88]
	Group B	25	7.08 (1.78)	[3.53, 10.63]	4.04 (2.28)	[-.50, 8.58]	9.20 (2.33)	[4.56, 13.84]
	Group C	25	11.88 (1.78)	[8.33, 15.43]	8.80 (2.28)	[4.26, 13.34]	5.84 (2.33)	[1.20, 10.48]
Life Satisfaction	Group A	25	19.76 (1.05)	[17.67, 21.85]	20.36 (1.22)	[17.92, 22.80]	20.44 (1.25)	[17.96, 22.92]
	Group B	25	18.96 (1.05)	[16.87, 21.05]	18.96 (1.22)	[16.52, 21.40]	20.16 (1.25)	[17.68, 22.64]
	Group C	25	20.48 (1.05)	[18.39, 22.57]	20.64 (1.22)	[18.20, 23.08]	19.64 (1.25)	[17.16, 22.12]

Note. *SE* = standard error, *CI* = confidence interval, *DV* = dependent variable.

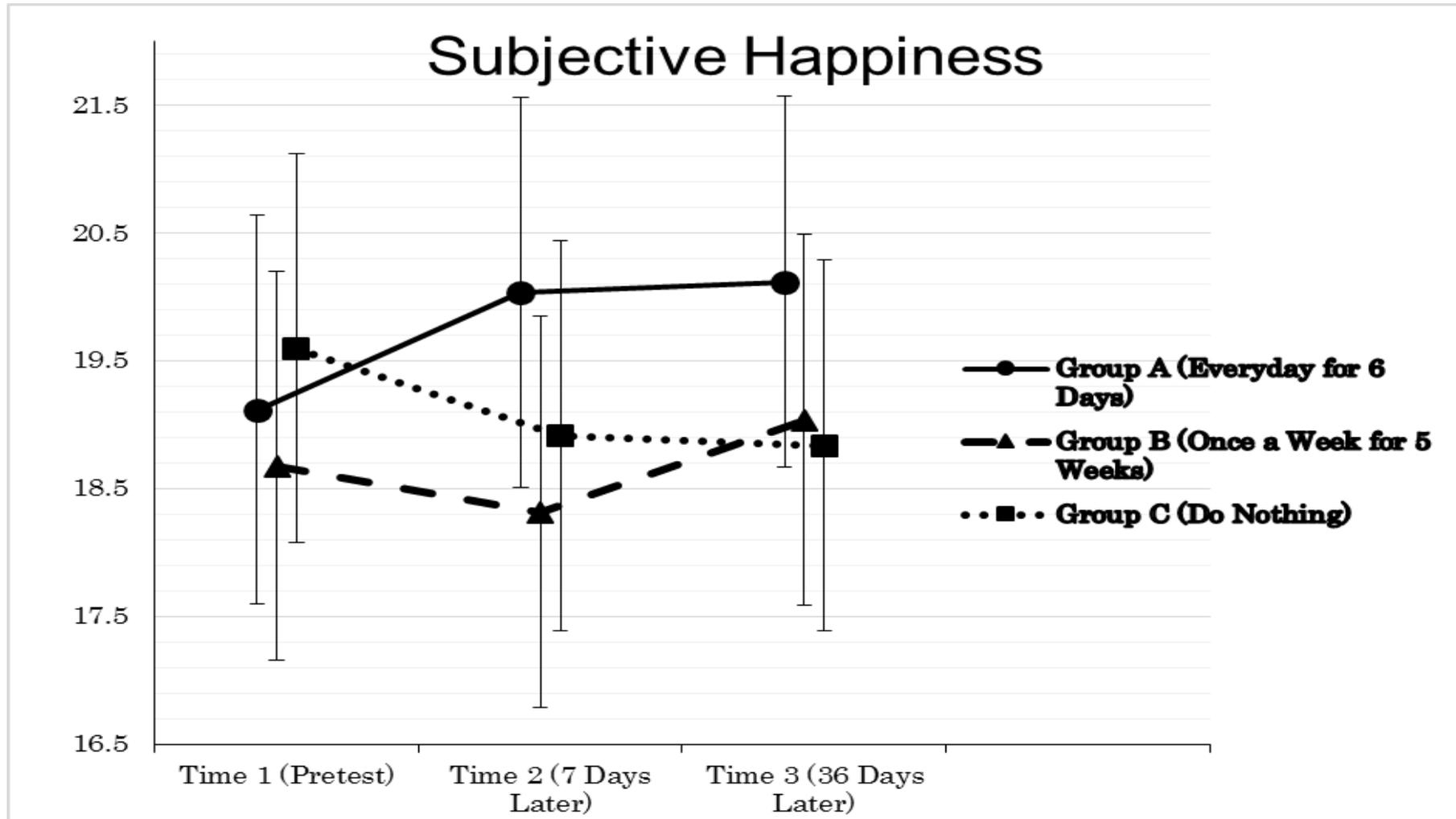


Figure 1. Changes of subjective happiness at three time periods: Time 1 (Pretest), Time 2 (7 days later) and Time 3 (36 days later). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

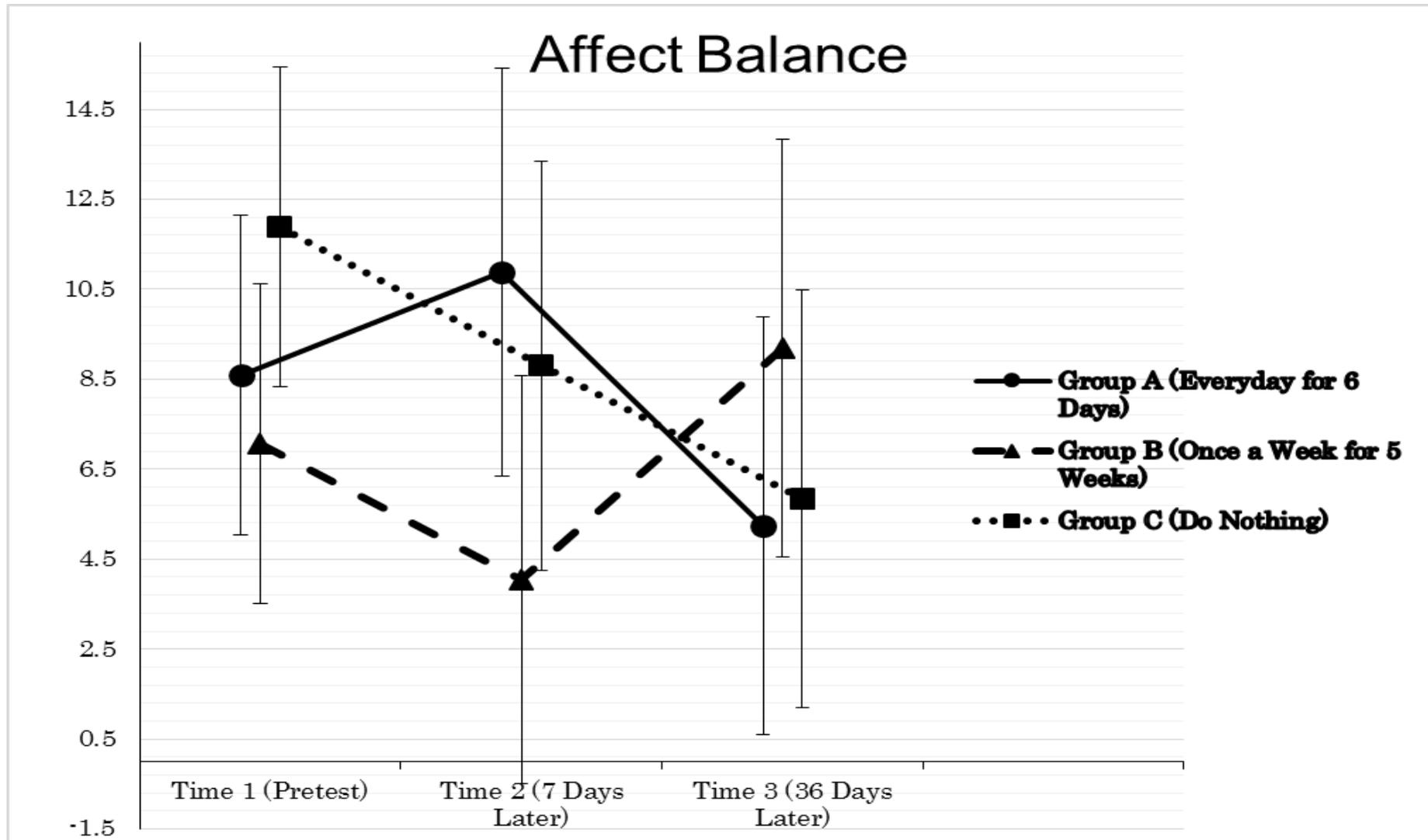


Figure 2. Changes of affect balance at three time periods: Time 1 (Pretest), Time 2 (7 days later) and Time 3 (36 days later). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

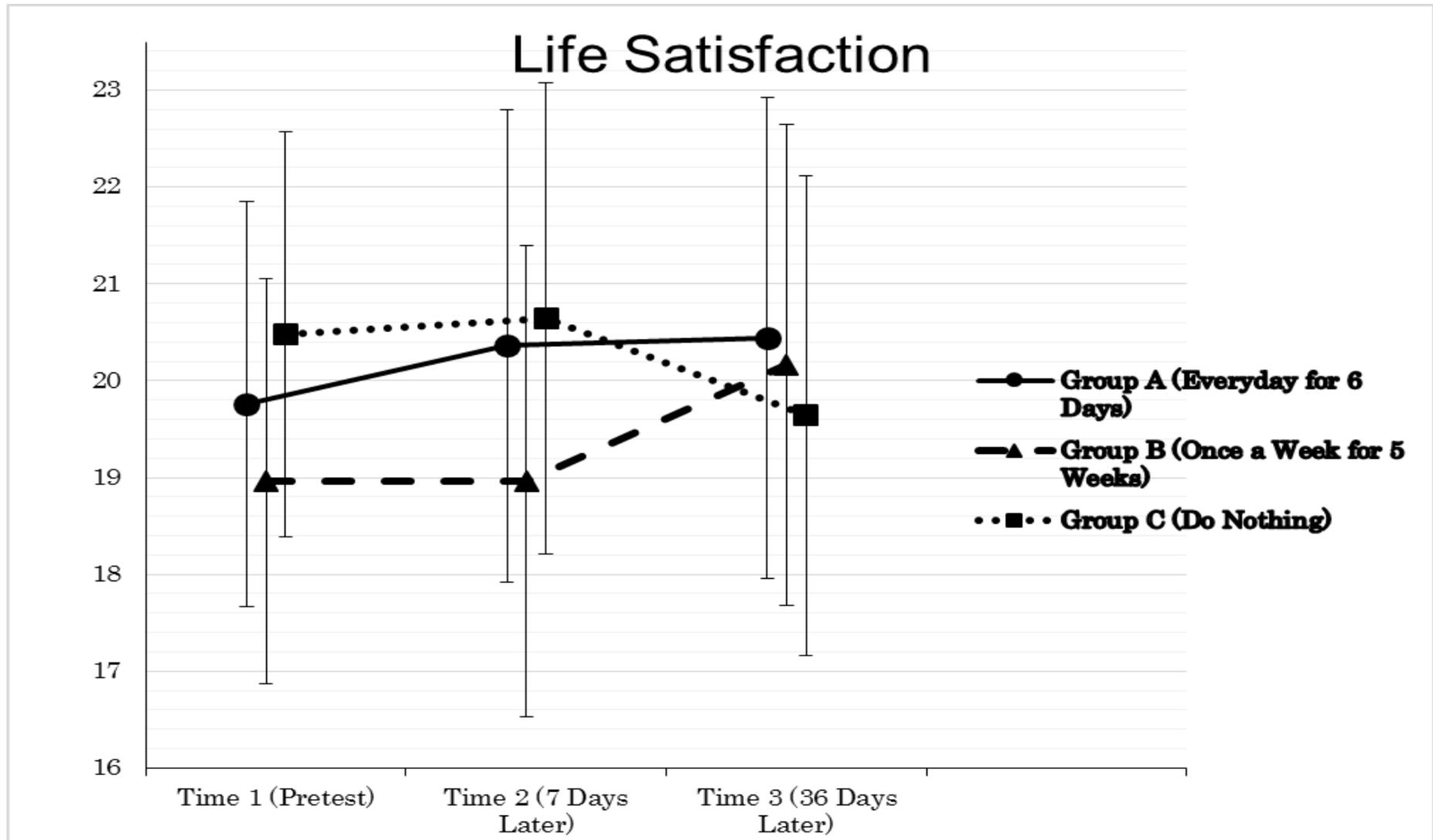


Figure 3. Changes of life satisfaction at three time periods: Time 1 (Pretest), Time 2 (7 days later) and Time 3 (36 days later). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

森鷗外の人間存在論

前田淳

- (00) 梗概
- (01) はじめに
- (02) まことの我 —明治20年代—
- (03) あこがれゆきし 夢のかよひ路 —明治30年代—
- (04) 霊の鏡 —明治40年代から大正の初めまで—
- (05) 「自然」を尊重する念 そして死 —大正11年—

(00) 【梗 概】

森鷗外の商品から人間の存在論に関わる文章を取上げて考察し、鷗外の霊肉二元論的人間存在論を明らかにしようとするのが本論の目的である。鷗外の人間存在論の展開が分かるように、取上げる作品を発表年代によって、明治20年代、同30年代、同40年代から大正5年、その後鷗外の死までと、それぞれほぼ10年に区切る。明治20年代では「舞姫」を取上げ、作中の文言「まことの我」と「我ならぬ我」に注目する。明治30年代で注目すべき作品は「マアテルリンクの脚本」及び「うた日記」中の短歌作品である。前者では文中の「霊の交流」という思想に注目し、後者では「あととめて 御魂や来ぬる我魂や あこがれゆきし 夢のかよひ路」他、霊魂の活動に言及する作品を取上げる。この時期霊肉二元論的な人間存在論は作品の上に漸く明確になりつつある。明治40年代は「キタ・セクスアリス」をはじめとして、「不思議な鏡」「金比羅」「雁」「花子」等本論が取上げるべき作品は少なくない。鷗外の胸中にはいよいよ霊肉二元論的人間存在論が明確な形をとり始めたと考えられる。その霊魂活動の描写が一種の幽体離脱の諸現象と相似ることは注意すべきである。この時期の後半に多く書かれた歴史小説について鷗外は

「歴史其儘と歴史離れ」と題する文章を残している。文中「わたくしは史料を調べて見て、其中に窺はれる「自然」を尊重する念を發した」は、一見本論が唱える靈肉二元論とは繋がらないようであるが、この「自然」という言葉によって鷗外が示そうとした世界こそ、「まことの我」が住む世界であり、「靈魂」という真実が住む世界だったのではないか。本論は最後にあの有名な「遺言」にある「宮内省陸軍皆縁故アレドモ 生死別ル、瞬間アラユル外形的取扱ヒヲ辞ス」の「外形的取扱ヒ」を取上げ、靈的な世界を真実のそれと見た鷗外にとっては、物質の支配を受ける世界を虚妄と見ることは自然で、それ故鷗外はあのように強い言葉をもってその「取扱い」を拒絶したのであると本論は考える。

(01) はじめに

明治14年12月、医学士森林太郎は本人の留学への熱い希望、小池正直などの推薦、森家の期待、西周の斡旋等を押されて陸軍軍医となった。途中明治32年6月から同35年3月まで小倉への転任という忍苦の時期を経て、以後出世の道を進み、明治40年11月46歳の時に「陸軍軍医總監に任ぜられ、陸軍省医務局長に補せら」（鷗外全集年譜）れ、陸軍軍医としての栄達を極める。しかし、世の栄達を極めた人物とは幾分違った面がこの人物にはあった。すなわち、世の栄達を肯定的に捉える人格とともに、その栄達の人生的な意味を問い、それに強い疑問を投げかけ、その疑問に生涯向き合っただけの人格が森林太郎という一人の人間の中に存在していたのである。この二人格の存在は鷗外の子息が読むものが誰しも感じるであろう。それは初期の作品「舞姫」には「心の中なにとなく妥ならず、奥深く潜みたりしまことの我は、やうやう表にあらはれて、きのふまでの我ならぬ我を攻むるに似たり」という内省的な独白となって現われ、あの有名な遺言では「余は石見人森林太郎として死せんと欲す。宮内省陸軍皆縁故あれども生死別るる瞬間あらゆる外形的取扱ひを辞す」という強烈な意思の表白となって現われる。これまで深く関わってきた「宮内省陸軍」の取り扱いを「外形的」と断じ去るこの否定的な言葉の

裏には、別に「外形的」ではないものへの深い認識が存在していたに違いない。

本論はこの森林太郎という人物の裡にある二人格を霊肉二元論的な視点から理解し、作品その他の文章を年代を区切って取上げ、鷗外森林太郎の霊肉二元論的人間存在論を明らかにしようとするものである。

(02) まことの我 —明治20年代—

鷗外の初期の代表作「舞姫」(明治23年)の次の文言から考察を始めたい。

かくて三年ばかりは夢の如くにたちしが、時来れば包みても包みがたきは人の好尚なるらむ、
余は父の遺言を守り、母の教に従ひ、人の神童なりなど褒むるが嬉しさに怠らず学びし時より、
官長の善き働き手を得たりと奨ますが喜ばしさにたゆみなく勤めし時まで、たゞ所動的、器械的
の人物になりて自ら悟らざりしが、今二十五歳になりて、既に久しくこの自由なる大学の風に当
りたればにや、心の中なにとなく妥ならず、奥深く潜みたりしまことの我は、やうやう表にあら
はれて、きのふまでの我ならぬ我を攻むるに似たり。 (下線前田)

法律研究の官命を受けてドイツに留学した主人公太田豊太郎がこれまで日本では感じたことのない内心の衝動を告白する箇所である。豊太郎は自分の内面に「まことの我」を感じ、それが留学先の自由な空気の中で「我ならぬ我」をしのいで、表面に現われて来たと思起している。しかも、それは「現われて来た」という消極的な存在としてあったばかりではなく、これまでの自分を「我ならぬ我」として「攻むる」という積極的な行為にまで及ぶものであった。「激しく呵責する、苛烈に責め苛む」という意味の表現「攻める」に籠められた作者の思いの強さが伝わってくる。そこには「我ならぬ我」に向かう「まことの我」の執拗で同情のない¹「攻撃」の様が動的に言い尽くされている。これは「まことの我」に深い真実を認めて始めてありえた表現であった。「父の遺言」「母の教え」「人の神童なりなど褒むる」「官長の善き働き手を得たりと奨ま」すことなどこれまでの生育の環境から後天的に形成された自分は、所詮存在の深みに根を持たぬ底の浅いものとして突き放されること

になる。結句「まことの我」の前に膝を折る他ない仮の自分であるという確然たる認識がこの言葉の裏には存在している。

「処女作はその作家の未来を予告する」という。若年から晩年に至るまでの鷗外の文章を年代順に読み進めて行くと、「舞姫」と後年の諸作とにはある種の連続が見られる。いや、「連続」というだけでは足りない。「我ならぬ我」「まことの我」の正体を明らかにしようとしたその思索・探索の痕が作品のあるいは表に現われ、あるいは裏に隠れて存在していることが分かる。

ただし、「舞姫」は初期の作品である為か、この二者（「まことの我」と「我ならぬ我」）の捉え方が、後の鷗外の作品に見られる深みを欠くように思われる。「舞姫」は「時来れば包みても包みがたきは人の好尚なるらむ」という。この「人の好尚」は「まことの我」の属性と考えられている。そうすると「まことの我」も詰まるところ自己の内部的存在であるということになる。即ちこれは、自己本来の欲求と外面からの要求とが一個の人間の中で繰り広げる相克のさまが描かれているということであり、それ以上にこの場面が語るものはない、といえるのではないか。「まことの我」は「人の好尚」にまで縮小され、「まことの我」の本体が何かというところに思索は及ばない。「人の好尚」という語句によってこの場面は「まことの我」の本性を明らかにすると同時に、その限界をも開示することになったというべきか。

処で、このような内面的葛藤は我々においても必ずしも珍しいものではない。自分本来の希望が生かされない現実に不満を持つ人は少なくないはずで、太田豊太郎のこの述懐は、それ自体はむしろ平凡な述懐であると見做すことが出来よう。この太田豊太郎の内面的な葛藤は常識的な理解が及ばぬものではなく、それは我々にも覚えのある人生の一コマである。

ただここで注意しておかなければならないのは「奥深く潜みたりし」という措辞である。豊太郎と相似た不満を持ち、機会を捉えて自分本来の道に向けて人生の舵を取り直し

たいと希望している場合にも、我々は自分の本来的希望に「奥深く潜みたりし」という誇大な形容は用いない。それは我々が今の境遇にある自分もそれを不満とする自分も共に「自分」であると認識しているからである。ところが、豊太郎はこれまでは恐らく意識の上へのぼらなかつた「奥深く潜みたりしまことの我」をあらたに認めると同時に、これまでの「我」を「我ならぬ我」と認めることで、自己の分裂を意識することになる。しかも、「奥深く潜みたりし」といって「まことの我」は自分の内面深くある自分という表現の仕方をしている。先にこの作品では「まことの我」の存在に深い思索は見られないと書いたが、この一句「奥深く潜みたりし」に眼を凝らすとここにこれ以後鷗外の思索が辿る存在論の芽があるように思われる。

(03) あこがれゆきし 夢のかよひ路 一明治30年代一

「舞姫」に現われた「まことの我」はその後どのような展開を見せるのであろうか。

ここに明治36年4月竹柏会大会で鷗外が行った講演を内容とする「マアテルリンクの脚本」（明治36年）と題する文章がある。この文章はマアテルリンクの新作脚本「モンナ・ワナ」を紹介すると同時に、マアテルリンクの著作「貧者の宝」「知恵と運命」という二著作にも紹介の筆が及んでいる。²今この前者の目次と後者の短文群を一覧して気が附くことは、その心霊主義的な傾向である。このような傾向の文章に関心を示す鷗外には興味を惹かれる。「マアテルリンクの脚本」は靈魂に触れて次のようにいう。

此人は人の靈魂と云うものを一種変った方面から見ているのでございます。（中略）其魂が世界と一種の聯絡を保っていて、その聯絡が秘密のものであって、その秘密なところがそれが運命だと、斯う云う風に考えているのでございます。

講演の語り口を髣髴させる調子であるが、この一種神懸りとも評し得る内容を語る鷗外の調子は真剣といわないまでも、真摯である。これはマアテルリンクの意見に寄せる共感なくしてはありえなかつた語り口といってよい。鷗外は「罷り出でたるは小倉の田舎もの

だ」（濼休録）のような時に戯文風の砕けた物言いをする人でもあった。戯文風の文章を横に置くと、その内容と語り口の両面からこの「マアテルリンクの脚本」に寄せる鷗外の真面目な関心が伝わって来る。鷗外が「靈魂」の存在を疑わず、その働きにも関心を持っていたことが感じられるのである。

次の引用はその「靈魂」が他人との係わりにおける人間の存在に小さからぬ影響を及ぼすものであることを明かしている。先の引用と合わせて靈魂の作用は隠微なものとする点を読み過ごしてはならない。

人々の間に、気に入るとか気に入らぬとか云うことがございます。好いた人嫌な人と云うものがございます。併し其理由を聞いて見ると、どうも何処が気に入らぬ、なぜ好いていると云うことは説明が出来ませぬ。

このような思想を懐くマアテルリンクに関心を示す鷗外に本論は強い関心を持つものである。というのも、「靈魂」なるものの存在が深い所で我々を動かすという見方は、あの「まことの我」としか表現できなかつた作者の思索を一段深めて、「奥深く潜みたりしまことの我」の正体に近づくかのように思えるからである。この文章はマアテルリンクの思想を紹介する背後にある鷗外の想念を示唆するものと理解できるのである。

この文章はまた後年の作品「阿部一族」にある文言「人には誰が上にも好きな人、いやな人というものがある。そしてなぜ好きだか、いやだかと穿鑿してみると、どうかすると捕捉するほどの拠りどころがない」を直ちに思い起こさせる。勿論この相似は素材や思想の再利用という浅薄な相似ではなかつたであろう。「阿部一族」は、「マアテルリンクの脚本」が発表されてからざっと10年の後に発表された作品である。この思想が鷗外の心に深く徹した思想であった故に殆ど10年を闊した後に長く地下にあった水が時を得て地上に湧き出るように鷗外の筆から流れ出たものであると見たい。この10年の間鷗外はこの思想を忘れ去りもせず胸に懐き続け消化し自家のものとしたのである。ここに「マアテルリンクの脚本」に持つ鷗外の根底的な共感を認めなければならない。

先に述べたように「マアテルリンクの脚本」は「モンナ・ワンナ」の紹介を目的とする文章であった。

女が云うには、どうも不思議でなりませぬ、私は今まで色々な人と話をしましたけれども、お前さんと話をすると、今迄とはまるで違って、お前さんの言うことが、恰も私の心の中から出るようで、お前さんと私との二人の間には、何の境界もないような気がいたしますと申します。男も亦、如何にもさ様でございます。私も又お前さんが此処に這入って来られてから一言を聞く毎に、総て腹の底まで分かるような気がいたします。実に人間と人間との間の壁が打抜かれて、光明がさすような心地がいたしますと申します。そうすると女が、如何にも不思議な心持でございます、丁度離れ島にでも、お前さんと二人いて、周囲には何もなくて、天地の間に只二人いるような気持ちがいたします、若しも私に夫というものがないならば、私はお前さんの詞に従うようになりはせぬかと迄思われますと申します。（下線前田）

「モンナ・ワンナ」の舞台はルネサンス時代のイタリアである。フィレンツェ軍が当時敵対関係にあったピサを包囲し、その降伏を勧告する場面を鷗外は取上げる。敵将プリンチワルリイはピサ軍の大將の妻ワンナを差し出せばピサの包囲を解く用意があることを伝えてくる。夫の反対を押し切ってワンナは敵将プリンチワルリイに会いに行く。引用箇所はワンナと敵将プリンチワルリイとが語を交す場面である。敵対関係から生じる緊張を孕んだ場面であるはずなのに、両者はここに見るような³不思議な心の交流を語り合う。

ここでワンナとプリンチワルリイが互いに愛情を語る言葉は言葉数も多く具体的で、実感に裏打ちされた迫力を感じさせる。このような二人の言葉によって鷗外が伝えたかったことは何か。たとえば、プリンチワルリイは「実に人間と人間との間の壁が打抜かれて、光明がさすような心地がいたします」という。これは人間と人間との不思議な深い結び付きを描こうとする意図に出た言葉である。このような人間の結び付きがあることを疑う人間には書けぬ言葉であり、マアテルリンクは勿論このような結び付きが人間にはあるものとしてこの場面を力を込めて描いている。それを紹介する鷗外の筆も読む者の心を動かす

真剣さを持っている。

それは「お前さんの言うことが、恰も私の心の中からでるようで、お前さんと私との二人の間には、何の境界もないような気がいたします」「私も又お前さんが此処に這入って来られてから一言を聞く毎に、総て腹の底まで分かるような気がいたします」「実に人間と人間との間の壁が打抜かれて、光明がさすような心地がいたします」「丁度離れ島にでも、お前さんと二人いて、周囲には何もなくて、天地の間に只二人いるような気持ちがございます」「若しも私に夫というものが無いならば、私はお前さんの詞に従うようになりはせぬかと迄思われます」とこの短い引用の中でも何度も何度も心の真実を明かす趣旨の台詞を繰り返す説明の仕方、その念の入れようを見ればよく分かるのである。このような場面を紹介する人間にも「魂の結び付きの存在」を深く信ずるということがなければ、紹介の筆にためらいが生じ、このような熱のこもった筆遣いはできなかったのではないか。この鷗外の筆に迷いはなく、むしろその逆で感情の表現は真率である。この場面を先に引用した箇所にもみられる思想と合わせて考えると、人と人とのこのような不思議な結び付きは「靈魂」における結び付きであると考えられはしまいか。鷗外はこの「マアテルリンクの脚本」を通して、人間の計らいを超えたところで人と人とは結び付くことがあるものであり、そこには靈魂の介在があるといいたいのではないか。鷗外が心霊の結び付きに信仰を持っていたことを証しする箇所である。人間の心と心の結び付き、いわば魂の結び付きというものこそが本当の人間の関係であるという考えが鷗外の胸の中にあっただけでなかろうか。

(04) 霊の鏡 —明治40年代—

ここに我々は「霊肉二元論」の筆を進める糸口を得た。これまで「舞姫」「マアテルリンクの脚本」と考察を進めてきたが、次に鷗外の韻文作品⁴「うた日記」(明治40年9月 46歳)を取上げて考えてみたい。

明治37年2月、日本政府はロシアに対して宣戦の布告を行い、ここに日露の大戦が開
始された。鷗外もまた陸軍軍医部長としてこの戦いに参加する。この時戦地にあつて鷗外
が創作した詩歌の集成が「うた日記」である。

さて、「うた日記」は形式的には新体詩、短歌、俳句を含む詩歌集だが、佐藤春夫「陣
中の豎琴」が「筆者（前田注 佐藤春夫）の詩歌に対する狂的な愛情を以てして鷗外の詩歌
を理解するためには実に前後二十数年を要した」と告白し、それを「鷗外の詩境の難解の
證」としているように、この集は決して一読して直ちに理解ができるというような平明平
易な詩歌ばかりの集ではない。しかし、それにもかかわらず作品をよく読めばここでも鷗
外は意外なほど率直に胸懷を述べていることが分かる。それ故「うた日記」一卷は鷗外の
人間観を知る格好の資料として重要な意味があると考えられる。

「うた日記」中の一章「夢がたり」に連作短歌が三群ある。「うた日記」中には他にも
連作の短歌が含まれているが、この「夢がたり」の連作短歌が鷗外の間人存在論に関わる
ものである。

最初に考察するのは「うき我を」で始まる歌を冒頭に置く第一の短歌群十三首中の次の
一首である。

あととめて 御魂や来ぬる 我魂や あこがれゆきし 夢のかよひ路

この連作短歌の主題は妻志げで、上記の一首もまた東京にある志げを念頭に置いて詠ん
だものであろう。一首の意は「私が旅に出た後を追ってあなたの魂がやって来たからか、
或いは私の魂がこの身を離れてあなたの所にいったからか、夢にお互いを見るではない
か」という程の意味であるが、ここで特に注意されるのは「我魂やあこがれゆきし」とい
う三句目と四句目である。いうまでもなく「あこがれ」は古語で「強い思いを懐く人の魂
が肉体を離れてさまよう」ことで、岩波の古語辞典（補訂版）は「（何かにさそわれて）
心がからだから抜け出てゆく。宙にさまよう」という語釈の後に、「物思う人の魂は、げ
にあくがるるものになむありける（源氏物語・葵）」を用例に挙げる。「あこがれ」は伝

統的な和歌の発想法であり、この発想を持つ古典和歌は⁵数多い。この発想ばかりではなく、「あととめて」「あくがれゆきし」「夢のかよひ路」等の措辞も伝統的な歌語として珍しくはない。鷗外はこの古典和歌の発想、古典和歌の措辞を借りて、早くもこの時期に「我魂や あこがれゆきし」と自己の体験らしきものを語ろうとしている。鷗外は魂が肉体を抜け出るといふ不思議な現象に特別の関心があったらしく、ここに取上げた一首は、古典文学の常套的な趣向の衣に隠れて、その体験を暗に示そうとしたのではないかと考えられる。

次にこの部（「夢がたり」）の第二の連作短歌群十九首の冒頭の二首である。

おほからん 我罪せむる ことの葉を 聞かばたふとき 教えとおもはん
さもあらばあれ いかなる人か 罪なくて はじめの石を 我になげうつ

ヨハネ伝福音書（第八章第七節）の「なんじらの中、罪なき者まづ石を擲て」を取り入れる後の一首に籠められた深い「罪」の意識に注意したい。「いかなる人か 罪なくて」という訴えには「我罪」の認識が前提としてあるが、このような罪の意識を鷗外が反芻していたことをこの歌は示している。それは「おほからん我罪せむる」という第一の歌も同断で、更には

かなとこに 身をばおきてん 鍛ひ打つ かぢが手力 おとろふるまで

と詠む九番目に置かれた一首にも「我罪」への消えぬ悔恨、自身を責め苛んで已まない苦悶が読み取れる。聖書から発想する歌は他にもある。この「夢がたり」の第3の連作短歌にある次の作品である。

いばらおろす 柔手はなしや 桂とは かねておもひも かけぬ額より
血よけぶれ 額はさながら 牲卓 棘おろさん やは手たのまじ
いぎたなき 十二の徒弟 よべどよべど さめざりし夜の ひとりをそおもふ

第2と第3の歌は「茨の冠冕を編みて、その首に冠らせ」（マタイ伝第二十七章二九）とあるのにより、「いぎたなき」で始まる一首はイエスが一度「弟子たちの許にきたり、そ

の眠れるを見て」(マタイ伝第二十六章四十)眠らずに祈りを凝らすようにといい、しかも「復きたりて彼らの眠れるを見たまふ」(マタイ伝第二十六章四三)による事はいうまでもない。福音書が伝えるイエス終焉の場面を借りて自らの胸懷を述べようとする趣向であるが、この聖書の場面を作歌に取り入れる聖書への関心は本論が説こうとする鷗外の人間存在論の理解への補助線とみることができる。それならば今少し大胆にこの鷗外の福音書への関心を本論の関心に引き付けて考えてみたい。

イエスは「なんぢら悔改めよ、天国は近づきたり」(マタイ伝第四章一七)と説き始め、以後比喻を用いたり奇蹟を示したりして「天国」(靈魂の世界)に入るために信徒が行うべきことを説き続ける。そしてその説教が「もし右の目なんぢを躓かせば、抉り出して棄てよ、五体の一つ亡びて、全身ゲヘナに投げ入れられぬは益なり」(マタイ伝第五章二九)のように過激に傾く場合も少なくない。我が身に害をなす肉体を苛んで、靈魂の救済を得るという発想は、先の短歌「かなとこに 身をばおきてん……」の発想及びその激しさにおいて通うものがある。更に使徒を宣教に遣わす際に述べる言葉「身を殺して靈魂をころし得ぬ者どもを懼るな、身と靈魂とをゲヘナにて滅し得る者をおそれよ」(マタイ伝第一〇章二八)は、明確に靈魂と肉体の別を認め、靈魂を肉体の優位に置き、使徒を励ます言葉である。これはまた鷗外の靈肉二元論への関心を明らかに示して余りあるものである。

鷗外の韻文作品のあるものは、散文作品以上に鷗外の胸中深奥の秘密を明かすものである。「舞姫」発表の約20年後に鷗外は詩集「沙羅の木」(大正4年9月)を発表している。この中に百首歌「我百首」(明治42年5月 「昴」)がある。この短歌の一群については、「この種の(前田注 奇想天外な)西洋と東洋、古代と現代、壮大な宇宙的創造と微視的な日常現実の直写といった組合せ・取合せの妙は「我百首」全体に互つてみられる顕著な特徴である。あえて言つてしまへばこれは鷗外の「あそび」かもしれない」という⁶評がある。しかし本論はその「あそび」とも見える歌の中に(- 或いは、「あそび」であ

ったからこそ漏らすことができた -) 鷗外の隠された「本音」を読む。

わが魂は人に逢わんと抜け出でて壁の間をくねりて入りぬ

をりをりは四大仮合の六尺を真直に竪てて譴責を受く

さて「わが魂は人に逢わんと抜け出でて壁の間をくねりて入りぬ」は、先の「うた日記」で取上げた「あととめて 御魂や来ぬる 我魂や あこがれゆきし 夢のかよひ路」と同様「魂が肉体から抜け出てゆくこと」、すなわち「あこがれ」を詠んだところに特徴がある。一首の上の句「わが魂は人に逢わんと抜け出でて」は詠み口こそ古典和歌のそれではないが、人に逢うために魂が我が身を抜け出でるという発想は矢張り古典的といえるである。しかし、下の句「壁の間をくねりて入りぬ」は古典和歌の発想ではない。⁷岡井隆氏は「下の句の「くねりて入りぬ」がおもしろい。「わが魂」がくねって入るのである」と注意している。「くねりて入りぬ」に目を止めた岡井氏の指摘には教えられる。作者鷗外はこの「おもしろい」発想をいかにして着想し得たのか。本論は霊魂が肉体を抜ける「幽体離脱」とも呼ばれるこのような現象をこれ以後も繰返し取上げる鷗外の根深い関心の裏に、この現象を単なる言葉の上の「あそび」として取上げたという以上の真実があるのではないかと考える。その推測の根拠の一つが「くねりて入りぬ」という表現である。立花隆氏は⁸「臨死体験（下）」に次のような幽体離脱体験談を載せている。

自分が体から離れて空中に浮いていることを発見したS・Sさんは、もしかしたらこのまま肉体に戻れず、死んでしまうのかもしれないと思って、パニック状態におちいった。早く自分の体に戻ろうと、手足をバタバタさせて、もがきにもがいた。すると少しずつ降下して、自分の体に近付いた。半分重なるくらいまで戻ったところで、どうしても最後のところがうまく合体できなかった。あせって、思わず、「戻りたーいっ」と心の中で叫ぶと、「にゅおおん」という感じの何ともいえない感覚が全身をつつみ、そのとたんに体の中に戻った。（下線前田）

この幽体離脱体験談は幽体が肉体に戻る際の感覚を「にゅおおん」と表現し、それを「何ともいえない感覚」としている。この「くねりて入りぬ」も「なんともいえない感

覚」の体験的な裏付がなければ考え出すことが出来ない表現のようで、「にゅおおん」という変わった感覚的な表現に通じるものがあるように思われる。

さて、「我百首」中最も注目されるのは、「四大仮合」「譴責」など難しい漢語が使われている一首である。

「四大仮合」について、⁹岡井隆氏は「万物を構成する四大要素である地水火風が、さまざまな因縁で仮りに和合して出来た、この自分という人間の身体」と説明している。そして「仏教語からなるが、鷗外は宗教的意味というより、シダイケゴウの音韻（漢語の響き）を好んだのであろう」としている。果たして「シダイケゴウの音韻を好んだ」だけの理由で鷗外はこの漢語を使用したのでしょうか。漢訳仏語「仮合」を使った背後に肉体的存在は仮のものであるという霊肉二元論に立つ解釈が存在すると本論は見る。霊的存在こそ真実在であるという鷗外の霊肉二元論が「四大仮合」の使用に漏れ出ていると見るのである。

これまで見てきたように、鷗外には靈魂と肉体とを対照させ、靈魂の優位を説こうとする傾向がある。肉体的な存在としての我々は仮の存在であって、靈魂こそが真実在であるという見方からするならば、この肉体はまさに「仮りに和合して出来た」ものであって、それは「まことの我」（靈魂）が一時宿るところのものに過ぎない。このように考えると「四大仮合」は単なる声調上の選択ではなく、矢張り鷗外の人間存在論に根拠を持つ措辞であったと見なければならぬ。

鷗外は明治42年10月「昴」に「金比羅」を発表する。

何だか自分の生活に内容が無いようで、平生哲学者と名告って、他人の思想の受売をしているのに嫌なような心持がする。船の機関ががたがた云うのが耳に附く。自分の体も此船と同じことで、種々な思想を載せたり卸したり、がたがたと運転しているが、それに何の意義もないように思う。妻や子供の事を思っている。世には夫婦の愛や、家庭の幸福というような物を、人生の内容のように云っているものもある。併しそれも自分の空虚な処を充たすには足らな

い。妻も子供も、只因襲の朽ちた索で自分の機関に繋がれているに過ぎない。(下線前田)

まず、下線を引いた文言「自分の体」である。これを「自分」とせず「自分の体」といったところに注意したい。「自分の体」(「自分の機関」と同意)という表現には靈魂と肉体とが一体となって在る存在という二元論的存在論が背後にある。靈肉二元論的な思想がなければ世間通行の「自分」という言葉を用い、「自分も此船と同じことで」で十分意を尽くし得たはずである。それをわざわざ「自分の体」と言わなければならなかった鷗外の意図を汲むべきである。こんな所に表現の細部にまで注意を怠らなかつた鷗外の厳密で細心な言葉に対する感覚がよく現われている。次に本論のこの読解を裏付けるのが「妻や子供の事を思つて見る。世には夫婦の愛や、家庭の幸福というような物を、人生の内容のように云っているものもある。併しそれも自分の空虚な処を充たすには足りない。妻も子供も、只因襲の朽ちた索で自分の機関に繋がれているに過ぎない」である。妻子は畢竟「自分の空虚な処を充たすには足りない」存在とされているが、これを読んだ妻子はどう感じるだろうか。この一文を鷗外の妻子が読む時の胸中を想像すると、これは¹⁰甚だ思い遣りのない発言であるが、鷗外の真情に立つと、これは鷗外の人間存在についての思想から出た、まことに正直な表白であつたといわなければならない。即ち、子供や妻なるものは仮のものである肉体的存在の上から生じた関係であり、その結び付きは「因襲の朽ちた索で自分の機関に繋がれている」仮のものである。それ故それは真実の結び付きであるところの靈魂のそれであるとはとうてい言えないわけだからである。この率直な物言いには驚かされるが、鷗外は自己の存在論の一端を正直に述べたに過ぎぬといえるであろう。

このような考えを別の表現で表明した作品に「キタ・セクスアリス」(明治42年「昴」)がある。「二十になつた」で始まる段に大学を卒業した主人公金井湛が見合いをする場面が出てくる。

妻というものを、どうせいつか持つことになるだろう。持つには嫌な奴では困る。嫌か好かをこっちで極めるのは容易である。しかし女だって嫌な男を持つては困るだろう。生んで貰つた親

に対して、こう云うのは、恩義に背くようではあるが、女が僕の容貌を見て、好だと思ふという
ことは、一寸想像しにくい。(中略) そんなら僕の霊の側はどうだ。余り結構な霊を持ち合わせて
いるとも思わないが、これまで色々な人に触れて見たところが、僕の霊がそう気恥かしくて、
包み隠してばかりいなければならないようにも思わない。霊の試験を受ける事になれば、僕だっ
て必ず落第するとも思わない。さて結婚の風俗を見るに、容貌の見合はあるが、霊の見合は無い。

(下線前田)

作者は人間の存在を「容貌(肉体)」と「霊(魂)」とに分け、見合いには「容貌の見合」
はあるが「霊の見合」はない、としている。これから人間の存在を作者が霊肉二元論的に考
えていたという判断は動かしがたい。さて、霊肉のどちらを作者は重く見ているか。先の「マ
アテルリンクの脚本」のモンナ・ワンナと敵将プリンチワルリイとの対話を思い出すまでも
なく、これはどうしても「霊の見合」を重く見ているといわなければならない。

今先の「幽体離脱」をほのめかず短歌の発展的な内容と考えることができるので「キタ・
セクスアリス」の次の一場面を指摘しておく。最も散文の表現は、短歌作品の表現の率直さ
には及ばないようであるが。問題の箇所は「十九になった」で始まる一段にある。

僕はこの時忽ち醒覚したような心持がした。譬えば今まで波の渦巻の中にいたものが、岸の
上に飛び上がって、波の騒ぐのを眺めるようなものである。宴会の一座が純客観的に僕の目に
映ずる。

卒業式後の謝恩会の一場面である。直前まで他の参加者同様宴席の賑わいに呑み込まれ
ていた金井湛がある些細な事件をきっかけに引用箇所のような心境に至ったというのであ
る。その時の心境が読者の頭にクッキリと刻み付けられるのは、いかにもこの作者らしい輪
郭の明確な「今まで波の渦巻の中にいたものが、岸の上に飛び上がって、波の騒ぐのを眺め
る」という具体的な比喩表現の効果である。このように視覚的で具体的な描写を読むとある
いはここに書かれているような、自分の意識が突然その場を離れるような一寸不思議な体
験を作者は実際に持っていたのではなかったかという推測に再び捉われる。

ところで、「自分の意識が突然その場を離れるような一寸不思議な体験」は我々の日常的体験でもある。それは、人と話しをしていて、ふいに自分の意識が会話を離れ、話をしている相手の目とか、口元とかに移ってしまう、というような体験である。ただ、これを我々は「気が散る」とか「集中していない」とかといった否定的表現で片付けてしまう。しかし、「キタ・セクスアリス」の表現を丹念に辿ってみると、この場面で作者が描こうとしている心理状態は上に述べた我々にも起こりうるようなそれとは少し違う。引用の文章は「譬えば今まで波の渦巻の中にいたものが、岸の上に飛び上がって、波の騒ぐのを眺めるようなものである」と言っている。これは自分の意識が全く肉体を離れて宴会の場を上から眺め渡しているような¹¹特徴のある書き方である。我々の「気が散る」「集中していない」とは異なる精神状態である。これまで考察してきた幾つかの文章や短歌作品を思い合わせると、幽体離脱現象を思わせるこの描写の背後には実体験が存在するのではないかと思わせられるのである。

これまで論じてきた鷗外の作品の理解をこれに加えて、この箇所を今少し深い所まで読み解きたい。先に作者は「我百首」で「魂は人に逢わんと抜け出でて壁の間をくねりて入りぬ」と言い、実体験を暗示する表現を用いて「靈魂が肉体を抜け出る」ことを描こうとした。また漢訳仏語「四大仮合」を用い、この肉体を「仮りに和合して出来た」と表現した。作者にしてみれば、我々の肉体は靈魂の仮の宿りの場であって、そうであればその宿りの場を一時的に抜け出ることもありうると思ったのであろうか。いや、考えただけではいけないのではないか。幾度も繰り返される「幽体離脱」の描写を読むと、先にも述べたことだが、この作者は実際に自らの靈魂が肉体を離れる体験を持っていたのではないかと推測したくなる。

明治43年7月「三田文学」に発表された「花子」では、この靈肉の二元論が繰り返され、更に明瞭に靈の優位が示される。ロダンは次のように言う。

人の体も形が形として面白いのではありません。靈の鏡です。形の上に透き徹って見える内

の焰が面白いのです。

ここにも先に「キタ・セクスアリス」で「霊の見合」「容貌の見合」として語られたのと同じ霊肉二元論的思想が今度は余りにも明瞭な表現を用いて語られている。即ち、人間の存在は霊と肉との二つの要素から成り立っており、肉体（「人の体」）は「霊の鏡」に過ぎないという。そして、「形の上に透き徹って見える内の焰が面白い」とロダンに言わせている。これは「人の形」は真の実体ではなく、真の実体は「霊」であるという一歩踏み込んだ思想である。霊肉二元の優劣の関係はこの言葉によって明確に示されたといわなければならない。

鷗外という人は入念な人であった。「花子」発表と大体同じ時期に、これは創作ではなく翻訳作品であるが、同様の考えを大胆に述べた作品がある。後に「諸国物語」に収録されることになる「死」がそれである。作品に二人の青年仕官の「死」をめぐる対話がある。この作品で強い議論を展開するゴロロボフと呼ぶ士官は次のように言う。

わたくしの霊というわたくしの自己です。体は仮の宿に過ぎません。

何と率直な立言ではないか。ここにも先に見たのと同様の思想が紛れもないほどあからさまに語られている。この作品の発表は明治43年9月で、「花子」発表の二ヶ月後である。この二作品の近接する発表時期から考えると、当時の鷗外には「霊」は「肉」の上に位置する支配的存在という思想が非常に親しいものであったのであろう。それを一方では創作でまた一方では翻訳で示そうとしているかのごとくである。

ここで「妄想」（明治44年3月）を挙げずに筆を進めることは、大きな手抜きという批判を受けることになるだろう。

生れてから今日まで、自分は何をしてゐるか。（中略）併し自分のしてゐる事は、役者が舞台へ出て或る役を勤めてゐるに過ぎないやうに感ぜられる。その勤めてゐる役の背後に、別に何物かが存在してゐなくてはならないやうに感ぜられる。（中略）一寸舞台から降りて、静かに自分といふものを考へて見たい、背後の何物かの面目を覗いて見たいと思ひ思ひしながら、舞台監督

の鞭を背中に受けて、役から役を勤め続けてある。此役が即ち生だとは考へられない。背後にある或る物が真の生ではあるまいかと思はれる。

よく知られた文章であるが、ここにある「此役が即ち生だとは考へられない。背後にある或る物が真の生ではあるまいかと思はれる」という文に注意してみたい。ここに見られる二人格は丁度「舞姫」の「奥深く潜みたりしまことの我は、やうやう表にあらはれて、きのふまでの我ならぬ我を攻むるに似たり」の「きのうまでの我ならぬ我」（舞台での役）と「まことの我」（真の生）との関係に対応する。ただ、「舞姫」が「我ならぬ我を攻むるに似たり」と主情的であるのに対して「妄想」の筆致は観照的である。

この「舞姫」の主情的な筆致と「妄想」の観照的なそれとの違いは第三の自分の視点の有无によるものであろう。「舞姫」の場合と同じく、「妄想」では一人の人物の中の「舞台の上の自分」と「背後の何物か」という二人の自分が存在する。ところが更にその他に「一寸舞台から降りて、静かに自分といふものを考へて見たい、背後の何物かの面目を覗いて見たい」とその二人の自分を見詰める第三の自分がある。この第三の自分の存在ゆえに「妄想」のこの文章は観照的な印象を与えるのであろう。このような第三の自分の存在は「舞姫」にはない。ここに矢張り鷗外の思索の展開を見るべきであろう。

鷗外は明治44年9月から「昴」に「雁」を連載し始める。その「拾陸」（明治45年6月発行昴第6号）に次のような箇所がある。

此時からお玉は自分で自分の言ったり為たりする事を竊に観察するようになって、末造が来てもこれまでのように蟠まりのない直情で接せず、意識してもてなすようになった。その間に別に本心があって、体を離れて傍へ退いて見ている。そしてその本心は末造をも、末造の自由になっている自分をも嘲笑っている。お玉はそれに始て気が附いた時ぞっとした。併し時が立つと共に、お玉は慣れて、自分の心はそうなくてはならぬもののように感じて来た。」（下線前田）

さて世の鷗外研究者はこれをどのように解釈するのであろうか。¹²三好行雄氏はこれを

「この前後、金で身を売る女の知恵をはじめて身につけたにすぎない、といえはいえそうだが、それにしても、状況を外から見ることを覚えたもう一人のお玉が、やがて、状況に封じこまれた〈私〉の脱出を夢みはじめるのは自然のなりゆきであろう」（下線前田）という。そうであろうか。先に見た「キタ・セクスアリス」の「自分の意識が全く肉体を離れて宴会の場を上から眺め渡しているような特徴のある書き方」やすぐ後に取上げる「不思議な鏡」の魂の離脱の描写と同じく、「その間別に本心があって、体を離れて傍へ退いて見ている」というこの場面も作者の実体験に基づく描写（—その実体験が何であるかは分からないが—）であるという推論に論者は傾く。決して「女の知恵」故にできる「自己を客観視する」というような観念の世界の話ではない。

明治45年1月に鷗外は不思議な内容の小説¹³「不思議な鏡」を発表している。時期的には翌年6月に「昴」に出た「雁 拾陸」の前引の箇所を書いた時期から半年後位に書かれたものと推定される。肉体を抜け出した男の魂が、当時の文壇で活躍する作家の集まる場所に飛んでいき、そこで一人一人の作家の簡単な批評を行うという話であるが、本論の関心はこの内容にあるのではなく、霊魂が肉体を抜け出るというその設定にある。

丁度朝内において、隣の間でお上さんが遺物の勘定をしているのを聞いていた時であった。譬えば磁石に鉄が吸い寄せられるように、己の魂は体を抜けて外に出た。皮の外へは出られないと、好く西洋人が云うが、皮の外へ出られたのである。

（略）只体の方は机の前に据わって、学生を持つような毛繻子の囊に、物を入れている。影の方はその前に立って、ふらふらしながら、気の利かない体のする事をみている丈の相違である。

これは主人公の霊魂が肉体を抜け出す場面である。ここには「雁」に見られたのと同様の幽体離脱の更に詳しい描写が付け加えられている。それは魂が抜け出した後の肉体の描写であり、それは「雁」では簡単な描写ですまされたものであった。体外離脱体験の報告は現在も少なくないが、よく目にするのが臨死体験時の幽体離脱である。その時、肉体は

《亡骸》であり、もう活動することはない。ただ、死の体験を伴わない幽体離脱現象もありその記録も存在する。その時肉体は死の状態にあるのではなく、「不思議な鏡」の「己」のように活動している。¹⁴一例を挙げる。

十年くらい前になりますが、私と主人がならんでショッピングセンターに向かって歩いてい
たときのことです。突然私の意識が、私の後五メートルくらいのところに移ってしまって、前
の私をじっと見ているのです。私の意識が抜けた脱け殻の体は前を歩いているのですが、見た
ところ何の変わりもありません。後に移った私には形は何もなく視点と意識があるだけです。

『あれ、おかしいな』と思っていると、また前を歩いている私に意識が戻り、前と同じように
主人と楽しそうな会話がつづきました。私の意識が抜けている間も、会話はずっとつづいてい
たのです。そしてまたいつのまにか、意識が五メートル後に戻って、また前を歩いている私を
じっと見ているのです。そういうことがその日三、四回繰り返されました。

この体験談でも幽体離脱後の自分の肉体は幽体離脱以前と変わらぬ行動を続けていると
ある。まさに「不思議な鏡」の「影の方はその前に立って、ふらふらしながら、気の利か
ない体のする事をみている丈の相違である」とある状態である。「不思議な鏡」のこの描
写を我々は一体どう解釈すべきか。現在のところ、論者の推測に過ぎないとはいえ、繰り
返される幽体離脱の描写は、鷗外にそれに似た体験があったことを思わせるに十分であ
る。そうした体験から鷗外は実感的に心霊の実在性を確信するようになっていたのではな
いであろうか。¹⁵清田文武氏は「人間精神の深層に関連する「霊」への関心は、殊に明治
四十年代以後の鷗外の文芸観の形成にあずかるころがあった」として、霊魂に寄せる鷗
外の関心とその文学に影響を与えているという見解を示している。

(05) 「自然」を尊重する念、そして死 一大正一

「歴史其儘と歴史離れ」(大正4年1月)という短い文章で鷗外は言う。

わたくしは史料を調べて見て、其中に窺はれる「自然」を尊重する念を發した。そしてそれ

を猥に変更するのが厭になった。

ここで指摘されている「自然」とは何か。思うに、この「自然」は史実の表面的な尊重を意味するものではあるまい。これ以前大正3年10月に鷗外は単行本「意地」の広告文を出している。

「意地」は最も新らしき意味に於ける歴史小説なり。従来の意味に於ける歴史小説の行き方を全然破壊して、別に史実の新らしき取扱い方を創定したる最初の作なり。

この「史実の新らしき取扱い方を創定した」という文言は注意すべきである。「従来の意味に於ける歴史小説」とは、一方では講談に見られる享受者の興味を惹く為に敢えてする史実の歪曲のある小説であり、また一方では史実に忠実であろうと努める余り文学的な面白さを没却し去った小説であろう。これに対して「意地」に収められた三作には、史実に忠実であると同時にそこには作者の人間観察の目が光っている。そこには文学的な味わいが自ずから生まれる。それがそれまでの歴史小説とは異なる所といえるのではないであろうか。

人には誰が上にも好きな人、いやな人というものがある。そしてなぜ好きだか、いやだかと穿鑿してみると、どうかすると捕捉するほどの拠りどころがない。忠利が弥一右衛門を好かぬのも、そんなわけである。（「阿部一族」）

この文章は先にもあげたが、これに対応する文言は鷗外が用いた史料¹⁶「阿部茶事談」にはない。鷗外は史料の間隙を自己自身の人間観察から得た人間観で埋めてゆく。この箇所は奇しくも「人と人との間を支配する人間の計らいの及ばぬ力の存在」を指摘するあの霊の存在を主張する「マアテルリンクの脚本」の思想そのものである。

「歴史其儘と歴史離れ」でいう「自然」とはこのように史実を尊重しそれを深く読み解くところに現出する人間の「自然」ではなかったであろうか。それはあの「マアテルリンクの脚本」で言われた霊的世界の真実を人間の世界に現すことでもあった。

大正5年「高瀬舟」「寒山拾得」を書き終えた鷗外はおもむろに筆を歴史小説から史伝

の大作「渋江抽斎」へと向け始める。「渋江抽斎」以降の作ではますます史実尊重の傾向を強くしてゆくが、史料を読み解く人間観察の目が光る行文は物語を史実の羅列故に陥る無味乾燥の退屈から救っている。その人間観察の眼の背後に構えているのは、いうまでもなく「霊」を真実とする鷗外の人間存在に対する理解であった。

大正11年7月6日、死の到来を間近に予見した鷗外は遺言を口述し親友賀古鶴所に書き取らせる。

死ハ一切ヲ打チ切ル重大事件ナリ。奈何ナル官憲威力ト雖、此ニ反抗スル事ヲ得スト信ス。

余ハ石見人森林太郎トシテ死セント欲ス。宮内省陸軍皆縁故アレドモ生死別ル、瞬間、アラユ

ル外形的取扱ヒヲ辞ス。森林太郎トシテ死セントス。墓ハ森林太郎墓ノ外一字モホル可ラス

これまで本論は人間存在の真実在は靈魂にあるという鷗外の人間存在論を年代を区切って追究してきた。そして今この「遺言」を読み、文中の「外形的取扱ヒ」という文言を殊更に感慨深く読む。「外形的」という言葉に籠められた鷗外の真実を読み取るからである。通常我々はこれまで関わってきた社会的機関の与える栄典等を「外形的取扱ヒ」として退けることはない。それを敢えて拒絶するというのはその拒絶の意思の背後に余程強固な思想が存在していたと考えなければならない。「その仮面のもうひとつ下に、こういう遺書を書いた「人の子」がひとり、実は六十年間息を殺して潜んでいたのである」という¹⁷論者は、そのような鷗外の行為の動機を「恨み」という文字で解釈しようとしている。或いはこれを「やはり晩年の或る種の思索・修行の結果としての悟達を示すものではなかつたであらうか」として、大正9年と同10年に鷗外が見性宗般師の金剛経提唱を聴講した事実を挙げ、この悟達を「現象界の一切はうたかたの影の如きものと達観して無為に徹するならば、その時その者の享ける福は本人の分際を越えて豊かなものとなる、との悟りである」と解く¹⁸論者もいる。

本論はそれらに対して鷗外の霊肉二元論的な人間存在論からこの「遺言」の投げ掛ける謎を考えたい。霊肉二元論的な人間存在論からすれば、この世界はあくまで仮象であって、

その世界で与えられる荣誉栄典も幻の如きものである他ない。それ故鷗外は「宮内省陸軍皆縁故アレドモ」としながら、その栄典を「外形的取扱ヒ」として退けたのである。或いは人はいうかもしれない。何もそこまで意固地になって拒絶することはないではないかと。しかし、これが森林太郎という人であったのだ。私は今父を回想する¹⁹森茉莉のあの美しい文章を思い出す。

私には父が、学問や芸術に対して、山の頂を極める人のような、きれいな情熱を持っていた人のように、見えた。私は時々父に解らない字や、仮名遣いをきいたが、そういう時私はいつも大好きな父が、いくらか嫌いになるのであった。それは父の字や仮名遣いにたいする、異様に烈しい心が感じられて、それがうるさく思われたからで、あった。私に教えて呉れようとしている優しいようすの中にも、父のまるで怒ってでもいるような烈しい心がひそめられていて、それが私にうるさい感じをあたえたので、あった。父は眼に見えない「嘘字」や「仮名遣いの間違い」という敵に向って怒っていて、それが幼い私にも伝わるので、あった。

恰も「眼に見えない「嘘字」や「仮名遣いの間違い」という敵に向って怒っ」たように、「宮内省陸軍ノ栄典ハ絶対ニ取りヤメヲ請フ」と強い言葉を残した鷗外は、虚妄としか見えないこの世の栄典をその故に峻拒したのであろう。あの遺言に現われた拒絶の烈しさは「山の頂を極める人のような、きれいな情熱」の最後の輝きだったのである。（終）

【注】

森鷗外作品本文は岩波版第三次鷗外全集により、旧字は新字に旧仮名遣いは新仮名遣いに改めた。ただし、文語文の場合は、旧仮名遣いはそのままとした。

- (1) 「舞姫」初出本文（明治23年1月発行「国民之友第69号附録」）では「攻せむる」が「攻撃する」となっている
- (2) 「貧者の宝」及び「知恵と運命」は共に山崎剛訳平河出版社のものを用いた。ただし、「知恵と運命」は書名が「限りなき幸福へ」となっている

- (3) 金子幸代はこれを「霊の見合い」としている。「鷗外と〈女性〉」(大東出版社) 164頁
- (4) 作品の制作は30年代であるが、「うた日記」として発表されたのが40年代であるので、便宜上40年代の作品として扱う
- (5) 角川書店「新編国歌大観 第一巻 勅撰集編索引」25頁に「あこ(く)がれ」に発想を持つ歌が78首挙げられている
- (6) 小堀桂一郎「鷗外選集 第十巻」(1979年8月 岩波書店) 解説
- (7) 岡井隆「鷗外・茂吉・壺太郎 - 「テエベス百門」の夕映え」(書肆山田) 287頁
- (8) 立花隆「臨死体験(下)」(1994年9月 文藝春秋) 201頁
- (9) (7)に挙げたものと同じ 305頁
- (10) 鷗外はこのような読み手の胸中を忖度しないかのような遠慮のない物言いをししばする人であった。賀古鶴所を思わせる相沢謙吉に向かって「嗚呼、相沢謙吉が如き良友は世にまた得がたかるべし。されど我脳裡に一点の彼を憎むころ今日までも残れりけり」と恨み節で「舞姫」を結んだのはその一例である。
- (11) 肉体を離脱した「靈魂」が自分の肉体を見下ろすという記述は臨死体験者の体験談に多く現われる。レイモンド・A・ムーディ・Jr.、中山善之訳「かいまみた死後の世界」(1989年12月 評論社)に「自分自身の物理的肉体から抜け出したのがわかった。しかしこの時はまだ、今までとおなじ物理的世界にいて、わたしはある距離を保った場所から、まるで傍観者のように自分自身の物理的肉体を見つめていた。この異常な状態で、自分がついさきほど抜け出した物理的な肉体に蘇生術が施されているのを観察している」(31頁)とある。これは著者ムーディが「集めた数多くの事例に共通して繰り返し現われる要素」の一つであるという。同書(47頁以下)には「物理的肉体を離れる」体験談が25例挙げられているが、

「自分の肉体を真上から見ることができました」（67頁）という体験談も数例ある。

- (12) 三好行雄「日本近代文学大系11 森鷗外集」（昭和49年9月 角川書店）
165頁
- (13) 明治44年12月17日の日記に「夜に入りて不思議な鏡脱稿す」とある
- (14) 注（8）に同じ 143頁 この他にも同書には体験例が紹介されている
- (15) 「鷗外文芸の研究 中年期篇」（1991年1月 有精堂）219頁
- (16) 藤本千鶴子「校本『阿部茶事談』」（『近世・近代のことばと文学』（昭和47年 第一学習社） 所収）による
- (17) 高橋義孝「森鷗外」（昭和60年11月 新潮社）127頁
- (18) 小堀桂一郎「森鷗外」（2013年1月 ミネルバ書房）667頁
- (19) 森茉莉「父の帽子」（1975年 筑摩書房 9頁）旧字旧仮名を新字新仮名に改めた

Monetary Integration Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Region

Paweł Młodkowski

Abstract

Monetary integration in Asia has been a hot topic for years. Proponents justify regional cooperation by proving a range of benefits. The importance of their arguments stems from the fact that exchange rate instability plagues Asian countries. The competitiveness of Asian economies, being export-oriented, relies on exchange rates. In the past, macroeconomic stability was achieved through use of hard pegs. However, the costs of fixed rates called for alternative solutions. Instead, for national regimes in the Asia-Pacific region it may be feasible to introduce a common basket peg, or even a common currency, to cope with exchange rate-related problems. Successful management of regional policy may lead to an Asian Monetary Union and would not be easy. Not only must economies converge, but a great deal of political will and solidarity would be required. This paper discusses alternative solutions and offers a correlation analysis of business cycles showing the current situation in Asia.

Keywords: ASEAN, exchange rate, monetary integration, monetary policy coordination, trade.

Introduction

Asia has emerged as a global power during the last 25 years. Over this period, the region has been characterized by high levels of foreign direct investment that fueled incredible economic expansion. Factors contributing to growth have been numerous, but low labor costs and fewer regulations (including a lack of environmental protection laws) have been recognized as beneficial and therefore attractive for relocating global production to Asian countries. Socio-economic success materialized through the improvement of living standards over a relatively short period of time. This, in turn, provided grounds for discussion on possible regional solutions with regard to economic and monetary integration. After successful implementation of the ASEAN initiative, economists and governments in the region have analyzed scenarios of monetary integration. The success of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in Europe has motivated popularity of the monetary integration in Asia up until recent years. Literature concerned with various designs of the monetary system in Asia is vast.

Problem

Monetary integration, regardless of the region of the world it covers, has been a hot topic and has been gaining in popularity. This is in spite of the fact of fast expansion of currencies issued online, which has been beyond national government control.

The literature most often lists Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Thailand and the Philippines as members for Asian monetary integration (Yuen, 2002; Williamson, 2005; Eichengreen & Bayoumi, 1996). A list of potential member states of the currency union in Asia tends to differ from study to study. For instance, Eichengreen & Bayoumi (1996) also include Australia and New Zealand in their analysis of correlations. Different sets of countries are considered for the purpose of answering questions on the optimal composition of a new monetary union. Optimality is defined here with utility function maximizing potential benefits monetary union members. The above list is concise and represents the focus group for this research.

Demand for monetary integration within this group stems from a desperate need to achieve exchange rate stability. Such an attitude results from the fact that all of these countries belong to highly open small economies. As a consequence, economic performance depends heavily on the external value of their respective national currencies. The Asian currency crisis of 1997 was a problem resulting mostly from rigidity of exchange rate regimes (Hefeker & Nabor, 2002). This rigidity is also a result of the disproportionate share (in currency baskets) assigned to the dollar (Rajan, 2002). The currency crisis of 1997 raised the question of finding a valid solution to the myriad of exchange rate problems suffered by Asian countries. The goal of this paper is to present various arguments for monetary integration in the region and possible solutions to the problem of effective monetary cooperation.

There have been already many studies that have discussed various methods of achieving exchange rate stability. They have included exchange rate regimes based on fixed and flexible rates, currency basket-based regimes, and the idea of a common currency for selected countries in Asia.

Current Asian exchange rate regimes range from hard peg to free float systems. The former approach is still in use, despite the Asian currency crisis having resulted from rigidity of fixed exchange rates (Hefeker & Nabor, 2002). This is justified by the fact that the main benefit of hard peg is that of “reducing uncertainty in trade and investment” (Hefeker & Nabor, 2002, p. 3). Stability in the external value of domestic currency reduces the risk in international business. Variability of exchange rates greatly affects the competitiveness of products exported. Instable international capital flows and current account reversals put the financial stability of a nation in question. Prevalent during the currency crisis in 1997 were many competitive devaluations (Hefeker & Nabor, 2002, p. 4). As argued by Mc Kinnon (1998), Rose (1998), and Hefeker & Nabor (2002), such countermeasures added to macroeconomic instability in Asia. One may claim that hard peg regime effectively solves most of the above-mentioned problems. Popularity of fixed exchange rates in Asia is attributed to a long history of successful economic performance under such regimes. Limiting exchange rate fluctuations created instability. Governments in the region, however, and global institutions are still on a quest to achieve macroeconomic stability for the sake of each society’s wellbeing.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to provide a review of opinions on monetary integration in Asia and evaluation of possible forms of international cooperation in the area of exchange rate regime in the region. In terms of specific contribution to a discussion of available scenarios an objective is to offer a simple argument based on correlation of business cycles among potential members of an Asian Monetary Union.

Methodology

The idea of monetary integration belongs to international economic policy issues. Any study in this area must draw heavily from literature and contemporary political discussion. However, in addition to a systematic and diligent literature review, this paper offers a very simple empirical investigation on business cycle correlation among potential members of an Asian Monetary Union. Real GDP growth rates (annual observations) are the basis for calculating correlation coefficients between pairs of countries. For the purpose of presenting significant changes to the underlying situation and eligibility of Asian countries to create an optimum currency area (according to classical OCA theory), correlation coefficients are presented separately for three distinctive sub-periods over the last 113 years. Time series employed in the empirical exercise come from GAPMINDER database.

Result and Discussion

The external value of domestic currency does not need to be fixed, though. There is an option to employ the most self-sustaining solution in the form of a free float. However, to have a flexible exchange rate, a set of conditions must be met. One should note, however, that free float is not a solution for small economies. The most successful countries with freely floating exchange rates are those with the largest share in the global economy. Only in a stable and well-developed economic system do free market forces grant stability to the external value of a domestic currency. Deep foreign exchange markets with millions of

transactions and high turnover seem resistant to speculative capital flows and any other forms of market mechanism deficiencies.

According to Cowen et al. (2006, p. 46) exchange rate management marked by flexibility is likely to foster regional integration. Therefore, Asian countries would still be able to pursue national agendas without losing autonomy in exchange rate policy. Debate on monetary integration in Asia centers on an analysis of hard peg versus flexible exchange rate regimes. Fixed rates with the same peg (probably pegged to the US dollar) can be a phase in the transition to a common currency. On the other hand, remaining in a system that fuels exchange rate volatility is likely to negatively influence international transactions (trade and investment) due to inherent uncertainty (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 45).

The fundamental problem in designing and introducing monetary integration in Asia is the scale of collective action required. Since the emergence of a “common currency” as an idea for ASEAN countries, there have been many alterations in expressed willingness to proceed with monetary cooperation. There was initially high solidarity followed by strong resistance, as there were local economic problems and a global financial crisis that called for drastic countermeasures at the national level.

These days it may be difficult to find many Asian countries that are still willing to engage in close forms of monetary cooperation. Currently, each country pursues and retains its own monetary and exchange rate policies, thus maintaining full autonomy in this regard. However, there are still researchers that analyze monetary cooperation and integration scenarios for Asian countries. There is one point found in the literature, as early as 2002 with Hefeker & Nabor (p.1), that has received substantial attention. It is about a system based on a basket peg. Williamson (2005) offers the idea of either each country having its own basket peg, or the creation of a single basket for pegging all Asian currencies. A different approach is advocated by Rajan (2002). He proposes implementation of the Japanese government’s

plan to introduce a tri-currency basket peg for East Asia. It would be composed of most important international currencies for trade and investment, which are the dollar, the euro, and the Japanese yen. It should be noted that currency pegs, in general, lead to more positively correlated business cycles (Frankel & Rose, 1998). This may be perceived as a substantial benefit to all countries involved in such forms of exchange rate cooperation. At the same time, achieving high symmetry in business cycles would facilitate further attempts to reach full monetary integration.

Fixed exchange rates are characterized in the literature as having few disadvantages in special circumstances. Listing just the most prominent ones here, one should point out a loss of autonomy for national governments in respect to external value of the local currency and the requirement for setting an anchor currency, both of which may prove challenging. Another problem, should some adjustments become necessary, results from further changes to the exchange rate. Changes or a withdrawal from the fixed exchange rate regime could generate a currency crisis and result in loss of credibility by the national government or its specialized agency responsible for managing exchange rate policy (Hefeker & Nabor, 2002, p. 5).

In spite of the introduction of a common basket peg for Asian countries being the most realistic, there are many objections. These doubts stem from different compositions of export and import-related flows along with diverse foreign direct and portfolio investment transfers in all potential members of such exchange rate arrangement. Within such a common basket, shares in the Japanese yen, the dollar, and the euro are difficult to calibrate in such a way that suits all Asian countries involved. In particular, the Japanese yen is commonly used for invoicing intra-regional trade. Also, denomination of sovereign debt issued by Asian countries has shifted from the dollar to the yen. However, the US dollar still retains significant influence when it comes to exchange rates in the region (Eichengreen & Bayoumi,

1996, p. 5). A collective basket may be a feasible solution in the mid-term, however. Hong Kong and Singapore, as very small and highly open economies with strong trade links with their neighbors, may find it more appealing to peg the external value of their respective national currencies to other East Asian currencies (Eichengreen & Bayoumi, 1996, p. 10). Eichengren & Bayoumi (1996, p. 11) noted that the country pairs consisting of Singapore and Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, and Hong Kong and Taiwan, would most benefit from a common external peg. Another group that includes Indonesia, South Korea, and the Philippines exhibits a weaker case for benefits stemming from a common hard peg. While the concept of a collective hard peg for Asian countries has been studied for many years, there is still no credible plan for achieving such a form of regional cooperation.

A common basket peg for all the Asian countries within this analysis has convincing rationale. It seems that after many years of fascination with economic integration, the world economy has entered a period of opposite tendencies in many regions. Not only Brexit, but also the main themes of the US presidential campaign in 2016, prove that societies are willing to support separatist initiatives. Voters support leaders that promise to protect national economies by imposing barriers to trade, controls over investment, and restrictions to the flow of people.

According to empirical investigations available in the literature, should each Asian country peg its currency to one of the G-3 currencies, greater exchange rate stability would be achieved (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 46). As a side effect, such regimes would guarantee that any changes in “the third country exchange rates would [not] disturb the trading relationships among the East Asian countries themselves” (Williamson, 2005, p. 1).

An alternative solution based on a basket of currencies to which external value of national currency is pegged, is tailoring individual baskets for each Asian country. Such a

country-specific basket would be composed of international currencies as well as the currencies of neighboring countries in the immediate region. It can be argued that tailoring currency baskets on the basis of currency composition of international trade and investment would be better adapted to the features of each specific country. This would probably reduce intraregional exchange rate variability, in turn promoting trade and investment (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 46). When it comes to technical issues related to a country-tailored currency basket, one should bear in mind that for each country involved, even a small one, the country would need to operate its own forward market for foreign exchange. This has always been problematic for smaller countries (Williamson, 2005, p. 2). Williamson (2005) claims that this problem would be effectively solved through the introduction of a formerly presented exchange rate regime based on the common basket for all Asian countries. Still, developing the most appropriate weights to compose such basket would be somewhat challenging (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 48).

The two forms of fixed exchange rate regimes using a currency basket (the common basket and the tailored one) represent two similar solutions aimed at limiting exchange rate variability at the cost of national economic policy independence. This issue may be even more problematic as international capital mobility might also be affected, as derived from the “impossible trinity” rule (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 45). The exchange rate regime options for Asian countries discussed above would reduce independence in monetary policies as long as capital flows remain unrestricted. In this case, they are subject to government control. “...regional integration may in the end be held back if countries are forced to trade off domestic stability for deeper trade linkages” (Cowen et al., 2006, p. 48).

Adapting an exchange rate regime that employs a collective currency basket and a hard peg requires a great deal of solidarity and political will. There is a need for a very good understanding of all benefits and trade-offs that are involved in such new arrangement.

Prospective forms of exchange rate and monetary cooperation in Asia still require a systematic analysis at the national level and at the regional level. Proper and competent information campaigns are required to gain common acceptance for new forms of international cooperation.

A reason for achieving good public understanding of this new regime is to avoid populists gaining the attention of the public. Even the most developed countries, like the UK, have witnessed populists, propelled by misunderstandings and ignorance, playing against coordinated international initiatives. Therefore, all countries that wish to embark on a quest for stability and prosperity by means of monetary and exchange rate cooperation must approach the marketing of these ideas to the general public with due diligence and care.

Shaping appropriate mentality in societies and generating readiness for sacrifice, especially at the beginning of monetary integration, are necessary for successful implementation of any initiatives of this magnitude. It can be argued that East Asian countries still lack the political solidarity in 2017. However, the same problem was recognized as early as 1996 (Eichengreen & Bayoumi, 1996, p. 21). This is simply an impediment that needs to be addressed by conscious and responsible public marketing.

How far are we from an Asian Monetary Union?

The various factors and conditions mentioned above lead to the fundamental question of the feasibility of a monetary union among Asian countries. There has been a consensus that an Asian Monetary Union (AMU) could be potentially beneficial. However, it is an initiative that requires lengthy and gradual reforms national levels. This kind of economic integration of diverse national economic systems calls for a great deal of political will and

requires a longer time line for its successful completion (Hekefer & Nabor, 2002; Yuen, 2000; Cowen et al., 2006).

Economic policy implications resulting from monetary integration in Asian countries would differ due to variety of factors. Smaller currency areas to be formed in Asia are also advised (Yuen, 2000, p. 16) as a viable option. It may be easier to have several groups of fewer countries that coordinate their monetary policies first, and then these small ‘currency unions’ could more easily achieve external harmonization with other currency areas in the region. Yuen (2000, p.3) claims that factors facilitating such a scenario are “the symmetry of underlying [economic] shocks, geographic proximity and socio-cultural compatibility”. By using such criteria, it has become possible to recognize three potential groupings of Asian countries for the presented alternative two-stage monetary integration scenario. These separate clusters would be comprised of: Singapore and Malaysia, Japan and Korea, and Taiwan and Hong Kong (Yuen, 2000, p. 12).

There are still many impediments to the Asian Monetary Union becoming a reality. As argued by Takeuchi (2006, p. 1) there are still significant disparities among Asian economies. Differences in industrial structure and the efficiency of factor markets (labor and capital markets) drive the costs of adopting a common currency in the region. Associated reasoning and arguments of the role of such differences stem directly from the original Optimal Currency Areas (OCA) theory. These differences are responsible for a higher probability of asymmetric shocks and resulting mismatch between economic situations in each member state and the common monetary policy. However, these arguments against monetary integration in Asia may simply be an overreaction to the advice formulated by the OCA theory. As already observed before the introduction of the euro by Eichengreen & Bayoumi (1996, p. 15-16) the labor markets of East Asia are more flexible than those of Western Europe. Monetary integration in Europe generated benefits for member countries.

The member countries have had conditions far from optimal for those advised by the OCA theory. It is more reasonable and justified to implement monetary integration in Asian countries that are closer to satisfying the OCA criteria. Asian countries are much more economically homogeneous than those of Europe. Probability of asymmetric shocks is therefore much lower. The low probability of Asian countries exhibiting unique asymmetric shocks creates a situation conducive to national governments in the region. There would be no other choice but to pursue similar (if not identical) policies across the region. In such a case, there is no reason for conflict of interest among potential member states. Joint and coordinated fiscal adjustments, along with a common monetary policy, seem highly feasible. Such a situation would allow Asian countries to form a successful monetary union (Yuen, 2000).

The main impediment for monetary integration in Asia is still a lack of political will, political solidarity, and consensus regarding regional institutional infrastructure (Rajan, 2002). Other impediments result from China's asymmetric shocks, due to many factors, but mainly because of different production structures and a unique economic model pursued by the Chinese government. This is why there had been a low correlation between the Chinese business cycle and the cycle of other Asian economies (Yuen, 2000, p. 12). Impediments to monetary integration in Asia are also of a political nature. European monetary integration was marked with increased political integration along with the creation of a supranational body (Eichengreen & Bayoumi, 1996, p. 18). The European Central Bank was able to override national governments who reached consensus on relinquishing independence of monetary policy. In 2017, after 21 years since Eichengreen & Bayoumi (1996, p. 19) formulated their comments on Asian monetary integration, countries in the region still lack understanding and the initiatives necessary to bring about greater solidarity and political

cooperation. There must be much more trust and cooperation for an Asian Monetary Union to emerge.

Another empirical test for the viability of monetary integration in Asia?

The classical OCA theory advanced several optimality conditions for a group of countries to engage in monetary integration. Generalizing OCA criteria leads to the conclusion that high positive correlation of business cycles is a pre-condition for a shock-less substitution of domestic monetary policies with a common one. Therefore, in order to get a better image of the suitability of Asian countries engaging in such integration, one could take a closer look at correlations of their business cycles over the last few years. A simple empirical investigation on the feasibility of an Asian Monetary Union delivers correlation coefficients of real GDP growth rates for China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Malaysia. Using long time series for real GDP from the GAPMINDER database, correlation coefficients were calculated for three different periods: 1900-1989, 1999-2004, and 1990-2013.

Table 1 Correlation of real GDP growth rates among Asian countries over the period from 1900 to 1990

	China	Indonesia	Japan	Korea, Rep.	Malaysia
China	1.00				
Indonesia	0.6	1.00			
Japan	-0.16	0.08	1.00		
Korea, Rep.	0.26	0.42	-0.13	1.00	
Malaysia	0.01	0.09	-0.10	0.07	1.00

Source: Author, based on GAPMINDER database (www.gapminder.org)

Table 1 presents correlation coefficients for the longest period considered (1900-1989). It indicates that over the period of 90 years in Asia, business cycles in all countries included in the empirical exercise were neither positively nor negatively correlated. Coefficients that are not significantly different from zero suggest total independence in the way these economies grew over time. However, as empirical investigation advanced with the periods covered, a very new situation was revealed for all considered Asian countries.

When correlation analysis is restricted to a shorter period - from 1999 to 2004, results (Table 2) seem to indicate a much more pronounced similarity in business cycles, with China and Japan still walking their growth paths independently.

Table 2 Correlation of real GDP growth rates among Asian countries over the period from 1999 to 2004

	China	Indonesia	Japan	Korea, Rep.	Malaysia
China	1.00				
Indonesia	0.43	1.00			
Japan	-0.04	0.57	1.00		
Korea, Rep.	0.17	0.84	0.44	1.00	
Malaysia	0.49	0.90	0.57	0.86	1.00

Source: Author, based on GAPMINDER database (www.gapminder.org)

Then, including the most recent period of economic growth up until 2013 (Table 3), shows a new situation. All of the considered national economies achieved a much stronger positive correlation of their respective business cycles over the last 27 years. What may be responsible for such a significant change is a common and similar response to the most recent

global financial crisis. However, as surprising as it is to see Japan and China with positive correlations in their business cycles, such a result is a strong supporting argument for potential monetary integration in Asia. Previous negative correlations were a strong argument for opponents of an Asian Monetary Union. These negative correlations provided ammunition to dismiss any ideas of a common monetary policy for the two prominent economies.

Table 3 Correlation of real GDP growth rates among Asian countries over the period from 1990 to 2013

	China	Indonesia	Japan	Korea, Rep.	Malaysia
China	1.00				
Indonesia	0.55	1.00			
Japan	0.22	0.49	1.00		
Korea, Rep.	0.44	0.55	0.58	1.00	
Malaysia	0.40	0.79	0.75	0.77	1.00

Source: Author, based on GAPMINDER database (www.gapminder.org)

Indonesia and Malaysia are highly positively correlated, as well as Korea and Malaysia, and Korea and Indonesia. All correlation coefficients seem to drift in the same direction. All of them are statistically significant. Common monetary policy, as is conducted in a monetary union, can be effective and beneficial for all member states as long as it suits them all at the same time. Therefore, it is important to achieve high synchronization of business cycles prior to commencing with monetary integration. Otherwise, monetary policy will generate asymmetric shocks and will be responsible for increased macroeconomic instability. Presented pairs of countries show high and growing similarity in terms of their

business cycles. One could even think about the feasibility of small cluster unions, as proposed by Yuen (2000).

Conclusions and Recommendations

There have been cycles in the popularity of monetary integration in Asia for many years. Every time there has been turmoil due to regional crisis or global recession, national governments have abandoned previously worked-out plans for closer regional cooperation. As has been discussed above, any economic integration initiatives, not only in the area of money and monetary policy, require a large dose of political will, international solidarity, and well-devised public marketing campaigns to proceed. These observations flow directly from the European experience and role model created by the EMU in Europe.

An Asian Monetary Union (AMU) is a long-term commitment requiring cooperation among countries that share difficult and painful histories. However, in this regard, potential members of an AMU are not very different from those of European countries. The difficult history of European nations was addressed through appropriate education and diligent arguments supporting integration initiatives. In this way, it became possible to overcome historically developed animosities.

Another conclusion is that designing and implementing a monetary union in Asia would require fulltime engagement of all stakeholders. Formation of a monetary union in Asia may not be feasible today due reasons presented earlier. However, empirical tests suggest that after a century (1900-2000) of independent economic growth, Asian countries witness real convergence of business cycles. This, in turn, creates a very different situation for a discussion on the feasibility of regional monetary integration. Impediments that previously existed seem to diminish, or even transform into supporting factors.

Economic stability of Asian countries would increase greatly due to monetary integration and an exchange rate regime based on a common basket with a hard peg and later on the creation of a new common currency. Policy formation in small steps and the testing of alternative seem to be a most probable scenario. Careful and well-informed political decisions have a potential to save Asian countries from potential threats to their stability on their path toward a full monetary union.

Due to the very nature of Asian economies, exchange rate stability remains the central issue for the whole region. Current exchange rate regimes allow national governments to retain some autonomy in their respective monetary policies, but in a highly globalized world, this would become less and less possible. A monetary union is an alternative for achieving external stability, but would cost national governments the loss of ability to shape monetary policy. However, potential benefits may outweigh such costs. The example of the EMU should be used as a reference. European governments seem to do well in a situation where union-wide authority (the European Central Bank) manages the common currency and conducts monetary policy that in fact suits all of member states. In addition to expanding knowledge and understanding the gist of monetary integration among citizens and politicians, governments should invest some of their resources in developing long-term economic integration plans. These schedules should, in turn, include design of institutional and political infrastructures to facilitate further economic and monetary integration for the sake of Asian nations.

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Active Learning: Writing and Speaking about Listening in a Business English Context

Alan Simpson

Abstract

Video conference needs analysis was conducted between Japanese and Chinese contact lens researchers. This revealed that the Japanese researchers struggled to understand the Chinese English. Furthermore, they often did not articulate this lack of comprehension due to differences in position and experience. Therefore, the Japanese researchers, who were also English students, wanted to build their listening skills. So they developed action research cycles to audio record and transcribe parts of their video conferences, highlighting which phonological features were problematic. This pilot study helps our understanding of phonological pronunciation and perception within contextually constrained Business English as a lingua franca environments.

Keywords

Chinese English pronunciation; L1 influences; listening; intelligibility; Business English as a lingua franca; action research

Introduction

Business English as a lingua franca (BELF) started with Louhiala et al.'s (2005) seminal work comparing the English used by two Nordic companies in a corporate merger. It was

defined as how cultural backgrounds and first language discourse practices are revealed in business interaction. Other ground breaking work was Jenkins (2000) study of the pronunciation forms of English as a lingua franca (ELF) trying to identify a Lingua Franca Core of pronunciation features. Similarly, Seidlhofer's (2001) Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) aimed to identify discrete lexical features of ELF. However, ELF has had its critics (Sowden 2012, O'Regan 2014, Dauer 2005), who argued against the implausibility of a standardized lingua franca system. Since then, ELF research has moved away from the focus on lists (Seidlhofer 2008), and evolved to focus more on the function of the exchange and the fluidity when negotiating meaning (Seidlhofer 2009). This means that there are hybrid cultural practices (Baker 2015), and ELF is beginning to focus more on the multilingualism and multi-competence of the community, rather than just the English language or Anglophone cultural norms (Jenkins 2015).

When Ehrenreich (2016) more recently described the key issues in BELF, she described the confidentiality that often limits the amount of research data available. Also, that ethnographic and multi-method research approaches give a more accurate qualitative description of the BELF interaction. In BELF contexts, power and social distance affect who speaks when and the topic of conversation. There is still the variation in phonology common in other ELF contexts, but also specific lexico-grammar, discourse and pragmatic styles which are appropriate to that industry or community-of-practice (Ehrenreich 2016). Relational talk is also an integral part of BELF communication and is thought of as more difficult than business or specialized technical talk (Ehrenreich 2016). Cooperation and collaboration make BELF exchanges successful. So participants who have more established

relationships develop sensitivity towards culturally specific conversational norms, more often than transient and ad hoc ELF encounters (Cogo 2015, Jenkins 2015).

This article starts with a needs analysis of a corporate video conference where BELF was used, including the type of company, interaction, biographical information about the participants, and the data collection methods, following Serafani et al.'s (2015) needs analysis methodological recommendations. This revealed that there was a need to develop a listening based curriculum, before pragmatic moves can be considered. Therefore, the main focus is on the phonological factors which caused comprehension difficulties, and how the students investigated these issues. Finally, some implications for future Business English as a (multi) lingua franca research and training will be described.

Needs analysis

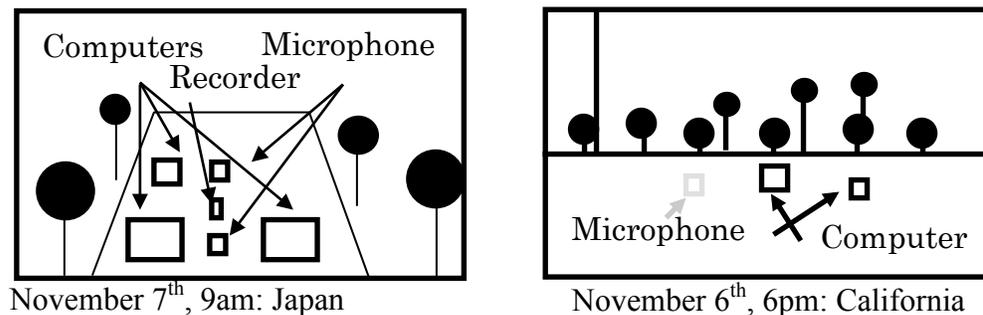
Initially a video conference was observed and analysed to identify communicative needs. This was followed by open and inductive interviews and follow-up emails with the Japanese participants. The project was conducted in a Japanese research facility of an American contact lens company. Monthly video conference calls were made between the head office in California and the research facility in Japan. The video conference was chosen as the main source of the Japanese students' needs analysis because of convenience and access. The students had just finished a one year English training contract so the author had a prior relationship, and when deciding what kind of future curriculum they would like, asked if it would be possible to observe their monthly video conference meeting. After some negotiation and understanding of the potential benefits, approval at the local level and with their Chinese manager in the U.S. was given, and confidentiality agreements were

made. Therefore, all references to names are pseudonyms, technical information has been removed, and approval to publish this paper has been given.

The video conference schedule and agenda was arranged by the chairperson in the U.S. There were nine participants on-screen and several off-screen in California, as shown in figure 1, four were Chinese. The Chinese chairperson, Ying as she'll be referred to, created an agenda, opened and closed the meeting, guided from one speaker to the next, and managed any discussions. Ying was the senior manager of chemistry and responsible for contact lens material development and the team of researchers in the U.S. She graduated from a Chinese university then studied her PhD in Japan, before moving to Canada for 5 years, and then the U.S. for 9 years. Bo, another active participant in the discussions, was a senior researcher working in the contact lens formulations group. He was from North Eastern China, but his language background, and the amount of time he had spent in the U.S. was unclear. However, he did admit, when asked at a later date by a Japanese researcher, that his English was not as strong as other researchers in California, and suggested that the Japanese students should study more proficient speakers.

On the Japanese side, there were three contact lens researchers, and the author, also shown in figure 1. Jiro was a semi-retired director, Hisa, a manager and chemical scientist, and Hitomi, a contact lens researcher. There was a small video screen in the top right of the video conference screen showing the participants, and the main screen showed the presentation slides. Both experienced and inexperienced researchers in Japan and California gave presentations on research progress, and the discussion focused on contact lens material development approaches.

Figure 1:
The video
conference
screens



Some of the initial difficulties for the Japanese staff included: bad sound quality due to the use of only one microphone in California; receiving the presentations only minutes before the video conference started; ambiguity caused by some presenters being off-screen in the U.S.

Investigating specialist discourse

The following sequential analysis is based on Conversation Analysis principles, adapted to show phonemic transcriptions of problematic phrases. This is a similar approach to O'Neal (2014) and Matsumoto (2011) who used phonemic Conversation Analysis transcriptions to show how interlocutors negotiated meaning when pronunciation features caused a breakdown in communication. The transcription conventions are shown in the appendix.

In the following two extracts, Hisa is the senior researcher in Japan and of a similar status to Bo. The discussions are about monomer synthesis, however, the response tokens were not a clear indication of comprehension.

Extract 1: Continuers

- 48 . Hisa: What happened?
 49 . Bo: (3.0) Uh, the fact is that, the fact that the lens de-
 50 . degraded, and eh, eh some, some, eh, some type (xxx),

51. and eh, and also lost us our weight./lɒsɜsæʊweɪ/
52. You know?
53. Hisa: Hmm

The ‘Hmm’ response was inconclusive as to whether there was comprehension at this point, or it was just used as a continuer. However, contextual comprehension was shown later in the same sequence by Hisa because he asked a question.

Extract 2: Showing comprehension

63. Hisa: Do you remember I have already synthesized the macromer
64. Bo: Yes, uh, (we want to get some macromer from you so
65. that) you said so the formation of the (xxx), eh so,
66. (perhap), maybe you can ship /ʃep/ me some (xxx)?
67. (7.0)
68. Ying: Do you have the material available?
69. Hisa: Ah, ((laughs)) maybe, uhm, less than 3 grams, now.
70. Maybe. I will check it.

In line 67, the seven second delay is interactionally relevant. Bo has asked Hisa a question. However, Hisa does not respond. Therefore Ying orients to the silence as an indication that Hisa does not understand because she reformulates the question to help Hisa to make an answer. However, Conversation Analysis does not clearly prove whether Bo’s pronunciation was problematic for Hisa. Similarly it does not reveal whether the ‘hmm’ response token in extract 1 was to acknowledge comprehension or to ‘let it pass’ (Firth 1996) and try to guess the meaning from context later. Therefore, follow-up active

interviews and follow-up emails were used to co-construct, verify, and develop a deeper ethnographical understanding (Mann 2011, Basturkmen 2010).

Hisa said, “Bo is more difficult to understand than other people. Especially his voice production is not so clear.” This was supported by Hitomi and Jiro who said that, they could not understand the Chinese pronunciation and felt that some speakers spoke too quickly. In addition, Hitomi struggled with some of the technical vocabulary and said that some of the required actions were not clear, so follow-up emails were needed to clarify action points. All of the students said that listening was the most difficult issue. Even with the support of presentation slides, there was a lack of comprehension especially when listening to Ying and Bo.

This was in contrast to Louhiala et al.’s (2005) findings from their Nordic business context that phonemic and syntactic levels of communication rarely hindered communication. In this context communication continued but with impeded comprehension. Ehrenreich (2016) acknowledged that phonological variation, power issues in a business context, and language ability can affect the pragmatics of clarification. In this context, the lack of clarification and negotiation of meaning was revealing.

The students and aims

The class participants, as shown in figure 2, were the three needs analysis video conference participants, Hiro, Jiro and Hitomi, two younger contact lens researchers, Maki and Kaori, who participated in subsequent video conferences, and a new employee, Kei, who had recently graduated from university. They had a range of English abilities. They all had

chemical engineering backgrounds, and a familiarity with the technical vocabulary. However, Hisa had a doctorate and twenty years of experience, and Jiro had a full career of experience of the vocabulary, processes, and background in this field. On the other hand, Kei, who had just joined the company and was learning about the job, was not able to join the video conferences yet. However, he was encouraged to learn about these processes by studying the speaker's presentations and transcribing the audio recordings.

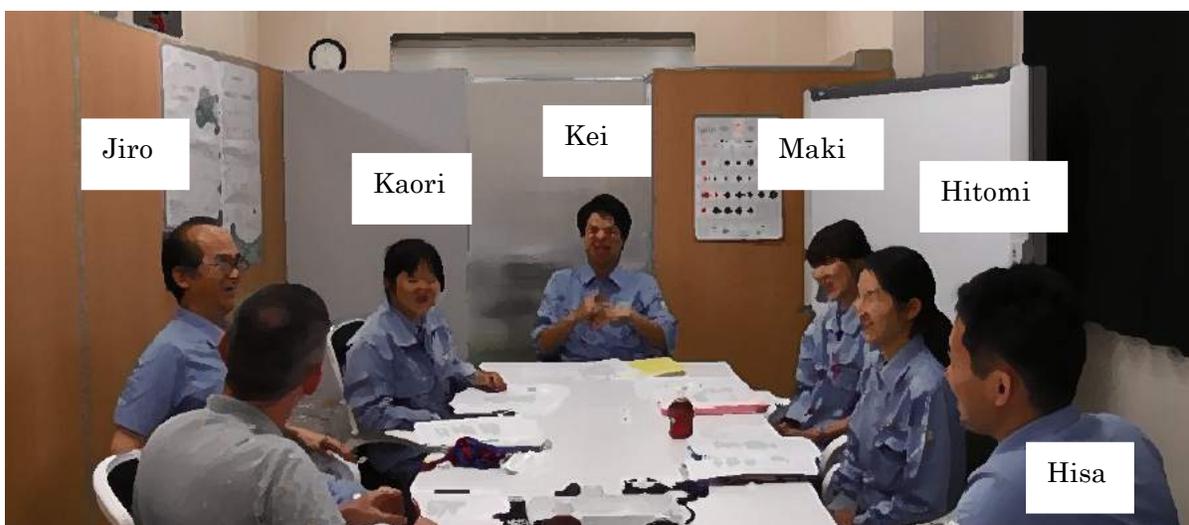


Figure 2: The students

After listening to some samples from the needs analysis video conference, the students agreed that the recordings were noisy, difficult to connect key words and understand the gist of what was being said. Therefore, the following strategies were agreed upon:

- Listen to authentic recordings of the video conferences, so that familiarity with pronunciation features and listening comprehension could be improved, especially to Ying and Bo

- Transcribe and discuss extracts
- Record Californian staff introduction interviews to study their basic pronunciation without the added complication of technical vocabulary or ambiguity because of the video conference system

The aim of this research was to discover which Chinese English pronunciation features were difficult to recognise when the Japanese students listened to them. Deterding (2013), in his study of misunderstandings in Asian ELF speech, also included instances when there was no apparent breakdown and the conversation seemed to progress smoothly, but one of the interactants subsequently reported that there were some things they had not understood. Giving minimal backchannels such as *mm* or *yeah*, are common ways of using the ‘let it pass’ strategy (Firth 1996). The primary role of such backchannels is to confirm that the listener is following what the speaker is saying, but they can also be used to conceal that the listener does not understand and is trying to let the conversation flow (Deterding 2013). This is a completely legitimate conversation strategy, and is common among lower level proficiency speakers (O’Neal, personal communication). There are not always obvious signs within the interaction of comprehension difficulties, so if there are ambiguous discourse markers, to signify comprehension, then ethnographical approaches must be taken to discover the listener’s understanding.

The Listening Process

English speakers in inner circle countries (Kachru 1985, 1992, 2005) are not necessarily more intelligible than outer or expanding country speakers (Smith and Rafiqzad 1979;

Smith and Bisazza 1982; House 2003; Shaw et al. 2009), because they do not pronounce every sound (Cogo 2009; Deterding 2013), and it is difficult to define a standard native pronunciation. Therefore, when non-native English speakers are communicating with other non-native English speakers, the relation to native speakers becomes irrelevant, and mutual intelligibility becomes the crucial interactional factor. Intelligibility is the ability to understand the words articulated through a pronunciation (Munro, Derwing & Morton, 2006; Nelson 2011), and mutual intelligibility is a judgement made in relation to both the speaker and listener. It is a dynamic, negotiated process, embedded in context, and is affected by the listener's familiarity and attitude to the accent they hear as much as the speaker's pronunciation (Goh 2000; Rajadurai 2007; Rogerson-Revell 2007). Non-native contexts also often involve a lack of common cultural knowledge, so there is more focus on meaning, rather than grammatical correctness. Zhu (2015) when discussing the negotiation of meaning in intercultural contexts, highlighted that divergence from the other speaker could be shown by not adjusting accent, speech rate, pausing or turn taking patterns, utterance length, and gestures, and not taking into account the listeners' perceived linguistic ability, interpersonal needs or goals of communication. This could also lead to a lack of confirmation checks, self-repair, and interactive repair (Mauranen 2006). How pronunciation features are recognised and interpreted are dependent on the experience and ability of the listener. These differences, combined with the sheer growth of non-native English speakers around the world creates a strong need for more research into local issues especially in BELF contexts (Bargiela-Chiappini & Zhang 2013), and creates a demand for new pedagogical approaches.

When people listen to a spoken sentence, they think that they are hearing sequences of discrete sounds and words that correspond to vocabulary in their memory. However, this is an illusion created in the mind, because when listening to an unfamiliar foreign language, a continuous stream of speech is heard without knowing where the words begin and end. The listener is not sure how to segment linguistic units into words and so relies on lower level or bottom-up processing (Collins & Mees 2013). There are cognitive constraints on working memory. Echoic memories are stored for about four seconds in the auditory cortex (Darwin et al. 1972). Therefore, if there is only one opportunity to listen to live interaction, other strategies, pragmatic or higher level processing is required (Richards 1983). What listeners select for processing becomes crucial. They need to focus on semantic clues and chunk larger units into meaning which can be dealt with quicker, and must resist the temptation to translate (Vandergrift 1998a). Another factor is the student's ability or willingness to keep on listening and not be distracted by unfamiliar words (Goh 1998).

There are two contrasting views of speech perception. The first is the bottom-up approach, where the listener builds up a representation of what was said from the lowest phonemic level, for example, /t//ε//s//t/ into longer phrases or chunks, from which we can derive meaning (Anderson & Lynch 1988).

The second is to build a top-down perception by using prior knowledge and expertise to guess, predict and fill in the meaning (Pinker 1994). Hearing research suggests that both higher-level interpretations and lower-level input representations must be simultaneously available in order to support successful speech perception and learning

(Davis and Johnsruide 2007), and this is supported by psycholinguistics (Anderson and Lynch 1988; Flowerdew 1996; Lynch 1996). Having said that, many even high level non-native speakers prefer to use bottom-up strategies rather than contextual ones (Jenkins 2000). It seems like a default fallback position. This puts a higher reliance on the acoustic signal, trying to match it with some known vocabulary items from memory. However, their guess then can be quite different from the sound. They are processing after listening rather than anticipating beforehand. “Learners are less sure of the discourse, syntax, and typical vocabulary used in the discussion of a particular topic”, (Brown 1990: 60). When something does not make sense, they are unable to decide whether the speaker used an unfamiliar word, they have misheard, or the speaker has unfamiliar pronunciation (Conrad 1983; Jenkins 2000; Pickering 2006; Deterding 2013), because of a lack of contextual inferencing skills.

L1 phonological transfer

Some breakdowns in ELF communication are because of L1 phonological transfer to the L2 (Jenkins 2000; Simpson 2014). There are important differences between the phoneme sound systems of different languages. For instance, Japanese people at first hear no difference between the contrasting English phonemes /r/ and /l/, because they do not exist in Japanese. It is difficult to perceive phonemes when there is no equivalent in the learner’s L1 (Guion et al. 2000). Therefore, “articulation must be learned before auditory differentiation can be realized” (Jenkins 2000: 34). Pedagogically, it is crucial to accept L1 phonological transfer as a universal, then identify which areas are affecting intelligibility, and address those ” (Jenkins 2000: 104).

In Chinese, there is no differentiation between long and short vowels. Therefore, Chinese speakers of English often pronounce short vowels as long vowels (Qian 2011). Chinese morphemes are usually made of a consonant plus a vowel, with no consonant clusters, and words usually end in a vowel, the same as Japanese. Chinese is a syllable timed language, while English is a stress timed language. For Chinese rhythm, the production of every syllable takes virtually the same amount of time, while in English the stressed syllable takes longer to produce. Therefore, some Chinese speakers over-articulate unstressed English syllables and words, or under-articulate consonant clusters depending on their language experience and how carefully they are speaking. If key words, that contain new or important information, are not stressed or pronounced more slowly and clearly than other words in English, it makes hearing them more difficult (Zhang & Yin 2009).

The Lingua Franca Core

The Lingua Franca Core (LFC) is a set of pronunciation features which were identified by Jenkins (2000) as being necessary for achieving mutual intelligibility between non-native English speakers. There have been scholars who have supported this simplified pronunciation model, such as Gilbert and Levis (2001), Hewings (2001), Pow (2002), Grazzi (2003) and Walker (2001), who showed how the LFC can be applied to make pronunciation teaching simpler. However, Sobkowiak (2008) suggested that the LFC promotes errors, which Jenkins (2008) refuted because that is in relation to a native speaker pronunciation standard, which the LFC is not.

It is important to appreciate that the LFC features are not a pronunciation standard, such as General American (GA) or Received Pronunciation (RP), but as a guide for

understanding how and why certain features cannot be understood.

According to Jenkins (2000), the most important areas in the LFC to preserve mutual intelligibility are:

1. Most consonant sounds

/r/ is rhotic (or pronounced), like GA, /t/ is closer to RP (rather than the flapped /t-/d/ in GA, and /p/, /t/ and /k/ should be aspirated, with a burst of air. The two consonant phonemes, /θ/ and /ð/, are not included because for Jenkins, they did not cause any phonological confusion.

2. Appropriate consonant cluster simplification

In a medial cluster there is often elision such as in listen and postpone. In the initial cluster there should never be elision, for example a Taiwanese speaker's pronunciation of the word *product* is unintelligible as ['pɑdʌk]. Final consonant clusters often have elision: scripts, facts, secondl class. So in the LFC the initial consonant cluster is seen as crucial.

3. Vowel length distinctions

Vowel length is reasonably stable across English varieties, whereas vowel quality is not. Therefore, vowel length rather than quality is more important for intelligibility (Jenkins 2000). The important part of Jenkins argument is that many L1 speakers have different vowel qualities, so it is not necessary for learners to use their vowel qualities as reference models, whereas vowel length has distinctive patterns, and if the speaker deviates from these patterns, there is a higher risk to intelligibility. Diphthongs also differ widely in quality among native speakers and so they too cannot be given high priority in L2 teaching.

Therefore, the LFC omits monophthong and diphthong quality as core items, because they are unteachable in a classroom context, as long as they have consistent length.

4. Nuclear stress

A lot of pronunciation pedagogy is based around the importance of suprasegmental variation (i.e. prosodic, stress, rhythm, and intonation). There are two kinds of stress: word stress and nuclear stress. Word stress is the stronger syllable in a word, whereas the nuclear stress is on the most prominent syllable in an intonation group (Collins and Mees 2013). The nuclear stress is used to identify the most important information. For non-native English speakers, the greatest phonological obstacles to mutual intelligibility according to Jenkins (2000) are deviant LFC sounds in combination with misproduced nuclear stress. Outside these LFC features, Jenkins said that L2 variation should be regarded as regional accent variation, and this would allow much greater freedom than GA, RP or some L2 varieties for individuals to express their identity and to accommodate their receivers. As Jenkins said, (2007), these are not fixed features and are open to further research based evidence.

Methodology

The pilot study methodology was based on student led action research cycles, developed from Zuber-Skerritt (2001), which revolve around the principles of developing a plan of action, then acting, observing and reflecting. Over a period of six months, a total of five video conferences were recorded. The first one was the needs analysis observation. This was transcribed by the author, then he selected twelve extracts of potential interest to the students, including technical explanations, feedback, and interaction, including instances

which seemed hard to understand. Then a further four video conferences were audio recorded by the students, and they selected short two minute extracts, based on their interests and needs. The audio files were then shared with the other students and everyone transcribed them as homework. In addition, two California based members of staff, Bo and Ying were interviewed and recorded by a student while she visited the U.S. on a business trip. Bo and Ying were chosen because they were the prominent members of staff, and their Chinese English was difficult to understand. They took up a lot of the video conference interaction time, by clarifying research methodology, advising, giving progress updates and highlighting action points. The interviewer, Kaori, asked some biographical information specifically about job descriptions. Then she asked the interviewees to read her technical presentation slide script. So that the students could familiarize themselves with the speakers' pronunciation patterns.

Many dictation based methods of writing transcriptions to improve listening skills are based on audio files which are not intended for the listeners (O'Neal 2014). However, this was not the case in this context. The audio files were not just intended for the listeners, but were also consequential for the actions required in their jobs. This methodology is similar to Deterding (2013), who analyzed data with the help of self-reported transcripts. The students were also introduced to the Conversation Analysis concept of a data session, which is a meeting of data researchers in order to discuss some recordings and transcripts (ten Have 1999).

In class, a different student co-chaired each data session and all students listened again to compare their transcripts. The author acted as co-chairperson and was an active

participant observer on the transcription and data session processes. He compared the students' transcripts and compiled a corpus of problematic features. These problematic words or phrases were chosen because they were unintelligible for three or more students. For reference and to triangulate the results, the author's perception was also transcribed using *TypeIt*, <http://ipa.typeit.org/full/>, which is an online website used to type IPA phonetic symbols. The author's transcriptions of the speaker's pronunciation may include inaccuracies because they are simply based on his perceptions. The author's perception was important in trying to assist in deciphering what was actually said. American dictionary pronunciation was also used as a reference, because the speakers worked and lived in California. This was transcribed using *Lingorado*, <http://lingorado.com/ipa/>. The American phonemic spellings may have inaccuracies depending on the standard used by <http://lingorado.com/ipa/>. This American dictionary pronunciation was useful to understand how the Chinese English pronunciations vary, not as a reference for what is correct, but to be able to understand that variety so that it could be further compared to Jenkins (2000) lingua franca core. If there had been negotiation between the speakers to clarify what was said, then that could have been used as a data source (Matsumoto 2011, O'Neal 2014). However, lacking a negotiation of meaning and segmental repair, and as a listening training tool, then these references are required. After the research was completed, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted to discover their perspectives of the transcription and learning cycles (Mann 2011).

Analysis

Problematic Pronunciation

Bo changed his vowel sounds in *senior*, *macromer*, *caused* and *solve*. He also dropped his *r* in *formulation* and *properties*, and added a *y* sound to the word *if*. His speech rate was measured at 100 wpm, which is below the 130wpm level highlighted by Rivers (1981) as slow. After talking to him face to face, Kaori said that she understood about fifty percent of what was said, which indicates that the speech rate was not the main problem.

The next six tables show examples of problematic consonants, vowels, assimilation, combinations, vocabulary, and unintelligible utterances. The General American pronunciation is a reference standard to what the researcher perceived was said. The problematic pronunciation features were identified as such by the students in their transcripts, and therefore clarified by the researcher to understand how the words were pronounced and why they were problematic for the students.

When Ying pronounced phrases containing /t/ it was problematic for the students, as shown in table 1.

General American pronunciation	Problematic Pronunciation	Description
What is needed /wʌt ɪz 'nɪdəd/	What is needed ['wʌtɪz 'ni:dɪd]	The /t/ was pronounced as an alveolar stop [t̚], which sounded like a quick /d/ because it was between vowels. There was also a /dɪd / sound in <u>needed</u> , but the last part was very soft and difficult to catch for the students

And want do fast /ænd 'wʌnt 'du: 'fæst /	And want do fast /ænd 'wɒn 'du: 'fæst /	The /t/ was dropped because it was after a linking consonant and before another consonant. Also the lack of the preposition <i>to</i> was confusing.
Then it's really /'ðen its 'ri:li:/	Then it's really ['ðen ɪʔz 'ri:li:]	/t/ was replaced by a glottal stop because it was after a vowel and before /z/, so the students couldn't recognize what was said.
Sixty seventy /'sɪksti: 'sevənti: /	Sixty seveny /'sɪksti: 'sevən↓i: /	When a vowel comes after /nt/ the /t/ is dropped. The intonation also decreased at the end.

Table 1: Ying's /t/

The analysis of the pronunciation of *b*, *v*, & *w* revealed some interesting factors. Bo pronounced *vital*, as /'waɪtə/, potentially because of the lack of the voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ in standard Mandarin Chinese. Furthermore, he dropped the /l/ because of a Chinese preference to finish with a vowel. However, surprisingly, Ying pronounced *switching* as /'svɪʃɪŋ/, clearly substituting /v/ for /w/. Further research, (<http://answers.echineselearning.com/questions/2010-07/11/034121977EEEFWCDS.html> retrieved April 3, 2015), revealed that pronouncing /w/ as /v/ is an L1 dialect influence which started in Northern China and Beijing and has become more popular throughout Mandarin Chinese, although it is not a standard feature of Chinese. Furthermore, Ying pronounced *obviously* as /'ɔvi:əsli:/, dropping the /b/. Initially, it was considered that this

was because there are no consonant clusters in Chinese, so Ying simplified the initial consonant cluster in the word. However, this can also be a feature of American English and could be because Ying has lots of experience of American English (O’Neal, personal communication).

Table 2 shows some of Bo’s vowels which caused confusion, including shortening and lengthening vowels, vowel variation, and epenthesis or adding an extra sound between two sounds.

General American pronunciation	Problematic pronunciation	Description
very /'veri:/	Veri well /veri/ (or vewi)	Vowel shortening, /r/ was pronounced but the vowel length was shortened, making it sound like <i>vewy well</i> .
not care /'nat 'ker /	nawt care /næʊt 'ker /	Vowel lengthening, /ɑ/ changed to /æʊ/
country / 'kʌntri: /	cowntree /'kæʊntri:/	/ʌ/changed to/æʊ/
but anyway / 'bʌt 'eni: ,wei/	but <u>ainy</u> way /'amiwei/	/ɛ/changed to the fronting /aɪ/ diphthong
senior / 'si:njər /	seneor /'si:ni:ɔr/	/jə/->/i:ɔ/
stability /stə'bɪlɪti: /	stibalidy /'strbɑ:lɪdi:/	Vowel variations, /ə/->/ɪ/, /ɪ/->/ɑ/ Central vowel moved forward and front vowel moved back
permeability / ,pɜ:mi:ə'bɪləti:/	permeabality /pɜ:mi:æ'ba:liti:/	/ɪ/->/ɑ/ Central vowel moved back
skills /'skɪlz /	skalls /'ska:lls/	
is very clear	..your presentation yis vewy	Epenthesis, /ɪ/->/jɪ/

/ ɪz 'vɛrɪ: 'klɪr /	clear /jɪs vewi/	
issue /'ɪʃu: /	This is a yissy about /ə'jɪ:ʃju: /	wrong article use, and /ɪ/->/jɪ/
Eh if there are something wrong / ɛ ɪf ðeər ər 'sʌmθɪŋ rɔŋ/	eh yif dere are someting wrong /ɛ 'jɪf dɛr ər sɛmtɪŋ rɔŋ/	/j/ is used to link the vowels /ɛ/ & /ɪ/

Table 2: Bo's vowels

There were instances of vowel shortening, lengthening, inconsistent vowel variation, and epenthesis, or adding extra sounds. *Not* and *country* were pronounced using the backing and closing diphthong /æʊ/, not monophthongs. These changes in Bo's vowel pronunciations often involved moving the place of articulation. In the phrases *a issue*, /ə'jɪʃju:/ and *Eh if* / ɛ 'jɪf /, an extra /j/ was inserted as a linking sound to separate the vowels, called y-gliding. However, in the phrase *your presentation is* /jɪs/ *very clear*, the inserted /j/ was between two consonants. This pronunciation characteristic was common for Bo, although not all instances were problematic for the students. These examples suggest L1 cross-over because in Chinese, words do not start with vowels.

Some assimilation examples from Ying and Bo, which were difficult for the students to understand, included, /θ-ð/, blending vowels, and joining the same sounds, as shown in table 3.

General American pronunciation	Problematic pronunciation	Description
What's the issue? / wʌts ði: 'ɪʃu: ? /	Whaseyissue / Whasi: 'jɪ:ʃju: /	Lagging assimilation involving /s/ & /ð/,
contents there /k ʌn't ɛnts 'ðeər /	contentsere /kən'tentser /	
Now we are doing wi: ɔr 'du:ɪŋ/	Now we are doing /'næʊwɪər 'du:ɪŋ/	<i>Now we are</i> blended together.

Table 3: Problematic assimilation

It was difficult for the students to tell if Bo had made a mistake, used a new word, changed his pronunciation or joined his words together. This was often complicated by a combination of factors, as described in table 4.

General American pronunciation	Problematic pronunciation	Description
Now lately we have /'naʊ 'leɪtli: 'wi: 'hæv/	Now lately ['næʊ 'leɪʔli:]	There was a glottal stop after the vowel and before the consonant, and there was an /r-l/ Japanese student sound perception problem.
re-scope this /ri'skɔʊp ðɪs/	re-scope this /ri:skoðɪs/	This was said softly and the consonant cluster was shortened.
I also do	I also choo- do	Self-correction
read / 'ri:d /	<u>reed</u> /r'i:d/	Unusual stress
Shelf life test	Shelf life test	New vocabulary

Table 4: Problematic combinations

There were issues on both the speakers' and listeners' sides. On the listeners' side the students were unfamiliar with glottal stops, the contrast between /l/ and /r/, self-corrections, and cut-offs.

The next listening sample contained important contact lens research feedback and was difficult to understand. Table 5 shows the students' and researcher's perception of what was said.

General American pronunciation	Problematic Pronunciation	Description
reaction [ɹi'ækʃən].	/ri'ækʃən/	For two students, <i>reaction</i> sounded like <i>direction</i> . /r/ was pronounced in a central approximant manner in the post-alveolar region, realized as [ɹ]. /d/ was also articulated in the post-alveolar region, but pronounced as a plosive stop. Note: only understanding the end of the word for Kei was similar to Kaori six months previously, which would suggest that it was a stage of her listening skill development.
vinyl /'vaɪnəl/	/'waɪnɔ/	/v/ was pronounced as /w/, and Chinese words end with vowels, which accounts for dropping the /l/.

<p>influence too much /'influənst tu mʌtʃ/</p>	<p>/influəns tu mʌtʃ/</p>	<p>There was equal stress on each syllable in <i>influence</i> and vowel variation in the word <i>much</i>. The difference between <i>so much</i> and <i>too much</i> had to be negotiated in the classroom discussion. It was finally agreed that in this context, a negative factor was being discussed so <i>too much</i> was the most appropriate phrase.</p>
<p>is acrylate / ɪz ækrɪleɪt/</p>	<p>/ɪz hæprɪleɪt/ or [ɪz a^h ɪprɪleɪt]</p>	<p>The /a/ had aspiration and sounded like /h/. Both /k/ and /p/ had strong (fortis) voiceless articulation with plosive power. However, /k/ was pronounced with the back of the tongue (velar) and /p/ with the lips (bilabial). Two students and the researcher guessed it was <i>rate</i> rather than <i>late</i> at the end of the word. However, the more experienced students said that the topic was <i>is acrylate</i>.</p>

Table 5: Bo's technical feedback

This cycle showed some of the complexities involved in the listening process. The first case related to the listener's sound perception and vocabulary, hearing *reaction* as *direction*. The second and third cases related to the speaker's L1 influences on his pronunciation of consonants, vowels, assimilation and word stress. In the third case, there was no stress, which usually does not cause problems in isolation (Jenkins 2000), however, combined with the pronunciation of *much* as /mʌtʃ/ compounded comprehension difficulties.

Constructing Meaning

Comprehension improved when the students had a stronger vocabulary. Students who had more experience, Hiro and Jiro, understood technical words such as, *macromer*, *ether*, *reaction*, and *formulation*. The less experienced students were only using sound processing,

because of their lack of experience, vocabulary or prior knowledge. The word *acrylate* was specific vocabulary for this context, and involved a variation in the speaker's pronunciation and listener's perception. Extract 4 shows the discussion about this word and the sentence in which it occurred. Furthermore, it also reveals how the students tried to negotiate and construct meaning together.

Extract 4: Vocabulary and empowerment

1. Kaori: Let's move on to line G. Please sound.
2. Alan: Please play, ok ((plays audio))
3. Kaori: Hitomi, what did you think?
4. Hitomi: I heard the sentence, *the PEG*, I couldn't catch something,
5. *have similar structure, and the backbone is acrylate.*
6. Kaori: Ok thank-you. Ma-maki?
7. Maki: I heard the same *PEG*, dadada, *they have similar structure,*
8. *and their main backbone is acrylate.*
9. Kaori: So- (26.0) I- I ((doushio = what to do?)) May- hmm, many
10. person caught mm, *PEG* and *similar structure, backbone* and
11. *acrylate.*
12. Alan: Mmm
13. Kaori: On ((gestures the previous California slide)), ehm, they,
14. they, proposed acrylate type macromers, so he, he, he want to
15. say about acrylate type macromers, not hydrate or hyperate,
16. applirate.
17. Alan: (2.0) Yeah, I think some people wrote *h*, because sometimes
18. when Bo pronounces a word with a vowel at the start, like
19. /a/ in apple for example, then I think he'll put an extra
20. sound, because of the Chinese, so he'll say like *hacrylate*,
21. when he means *acrylate*. I think that is Chinese affecting

22. his English. I guess, but I think you're right, and the
23. word is *acrylate*. But that's probably why it's confusing
24. for me and Hitomi here.
25. Hitomi: ((nods)) I heard only sound so I transcript, I made the
26. transcript by listening. On here ((pointing)), on paper,
27. it's clear, acrylate.



Figure 3: Empowerment

This extract showed that Kaori led the conversation because she had a facilitator role and the author was no longer the gatekeeper of knowledge, because she had more content knowledge. She consolidated the participants' opinions and then gave a summary using the context and her experience.

However, the classroom discussions did not always clarify what was said, because some utterances were unintelligible, as shown in table 6. This table shows the researcher's perception as well as the student perceptions of what was said.

Author perception of what was said	Student perception of what was said	Author perception of General American phonetic transcription	Description
/ˈdevaɪd/	You tried to divide Tried to evaluate You tried imide You try to invite You try to why	You tried to divide /dɪˈvaɪd/	The stress was on the first syllable, and the vowel was more like /e/ than /ɪ/
/ˈkəntəɪnɪdʒ/	Companion Continue Contains a Contains Containish Conpendage Can, can use a	Containing /kənˈteɪnɪŋ/	The stress was on the first syllable.
/ˈkʌlmɪneɪt/	Combinate carbonate conformat culminate conferrname we have made	Culminate /ˈkʌlmɪ,neɪt/	Low volume.

Table 6: Unintelligible utterances

In the first example, there was a problem understanding the vowel at the start, the nasal /m/ or /n/, the fricative /v/ or central approximant /w/, and the plosive /d/ or /t/. Also, there could have been elisions. Simply, there were too many unknowns for the meaning to be negotiated. It was unintelligible for the students. Similarly, in the second example, there was agreement that the word started with /kə/, but then there was uncertainty about whether

it was the nasal /m/ or /n/, the plosive /t/ or /p/, then some agreement about /æɪn/, /eɪn/, or /ɛn/, followed by a range of endings. *Continuing* was the most logical guess, even though that did not match the audio heard. Just as difficult was the third example, where people agreed that it started with /k/, then a vowel, then a range of guesses. This was also unintelligible. This audio sample was at a similar speech rate, 103 wpm, as other samples, but the level of vocabulary, assimilation, and variation was more difficult.

Discussion

Some scholars (O'Neal 2014; Louhiala et al. 2005), say that when there are breakdowns in lingua franca contexts, then pragmatic repair methods are more important than the reason for the breakdown. However, in this Asian BELF context, there were important factors which meant that the students did not actively engage in repair, including age, experience, and technical knowledge. Japanese culture has a tradition of being a high context culture, with the onus being on the listener (Hall E T. 1976, Gudykunst WB & Ting-Toomey S. 1988), with a high power distance factor (Hofstede G. 1983.) Therefore it is not a surprise to see these kinds of characteristics represented in the interaction through a lack of repair and passive listening techniques. Due to this, it is important to raise students' awareness of their own discourse practices, conventions and cultural preferences, and as intercultural experience increases then focus on correctness decreases and acceptance of differences improves (Wang & Jenkins 2016). Students and teachers focus more on language and form whereas professionals focus more on content (Ehrenreich 2009). For students to be able to understand more of the content, they should be taught how to be more assertive when they are comfortable doing so. However, at the same time, they also need to improve their

passive listening skills when they are not comfortable repairing these breakdowns in communication.

Therefore, the aim of this research was to use action research cycles to identify the pronunciation features which had an influence on student comprehension. At the end of the action research cycles, in one to one interviews, the students said that writing transcripts was a good way to build their listening skills, although they still wanted to build both their technical and informal vocabulary. All of the students talked about how they had learned some characteristics of Chinese English pronunciation, but understanding the video conference speakers was still very difficult. Jiro had a perception of English which was not being met, that he should practice listening to native speaker English to build up his listening skills before practicing listening to non-native speakers. This was similar to Bo's perception that the Japanese students should use a native pronunciation model. However Wang & Jenkins (2016) concluded that linguistic experience in intercultural communication between non-native speakers would improve comprehension of non-native accents. More extensive research is required to discover whether there is resistance towards 'imperfect' non-native models. From a pedagogical perspective, it is important for non-native speakers to pronounce carefully, and try to clarify and accommodate differences, rather than simply thinking that their pronunciation is not as clear as native pronunciation, whereas in many cases the opposite may be true.

During this course, the students said that they thought that part of the reason understanding Bo was difficult was due to his speaking rate. However, the problem was not his speed, because his speed was only around 100 wpm. Fast speech is above 220 words

per minute (wpm) and slow is below 130 wpm (Rivers 1981). The problem was being able to recognize when one word stopped and another started. Some students struggled to define the word boundaries and segment the data stream into words, and this created a false sense of speed. Furthermore, when a hesitation, false start, cut-off, mistake, or self-correction was produced, the students did not have the flexibility or experience to accept or accommodate these features, but they did raise their awareness. Kaori explained that it was difficult because different speakers had similar pronunciation, but some sounds were unique, like the way Bo pronounced /ɪ/ as /ɑ /. Jiro said that it depended on the person, some Chinese English speakers speak slowly and clearly and are easy to understand, but Ying and Bo were more difficult. The students also differed in how they approached the listening task. Hisa, Kaori and Hitomi preferred top-down inferencing strategies when they were listening, whereas Jiro, Mako, and Kei preferred bottom-up strategies. This led Jiro, in particular, who had good experience and knowledge of vocabulary, to hold onto unknown words in his short term memory for too long, and was not able to jump over unknown phrases and continue to follow the data stream. Listening strategies were variable between individual students, which is similar to Field's (2004) conclusions. Therefore, for the students who preferred bottom-up decoding, more inferencing and self-monitoring strategies would help (Renandya & Farrell 2011).

The phonological features which caused comprehension difficulties are shown below.

Problematic pronunciation features		
Non-rhotic /r/	/t/ variation, glottal stops, /t-d/ energy assimilation	/l-r/ speaker pronunciation and listener perception
/b v w/ variation	Consonant cluster simplification	Vowel quality
Vowel length	/j/ epenthesis	Assimilation, especially /θ-ð/
Nuclear stress	Hesitations, cut-offs and self-corrections	Combinations of these features

Table 7: Summary of problematic pronunciation (and communication) features

The students struggled to understand the pronunciation of Ying's *t*'s. Jiro said that dropping or changing *t* and *r* were not difficult. However, the students' transcripts showed that they struggled to recognize these features. The difficulty for Kaori to differentiate between *l* and *r* was because of her Japanese mother tongue. The Japanese language possesses one liquid consonant, which is most often realized as an alveolar tap [ɾ]. English has two: an alveolar lateral approximant /l/ and rhotic consonant centred on [ɹ] (Hallé et al. 1999). English /l/ is perceived by Japanese listeners as more similar to Japanese [ɾ] than English [ɹ] (Guion et al. 2000), so *lately* was heard as *really* because the /l/ was heard as /ɹ/ and there was a glottal stop instead of /t/. Hisa said, "it is difficult to catch words we cannot pronounce", which supports the case for integrated pronunciation and listening practice.

Bo often varied his vowel length pronunciation. Vowels are usually shortened before fortis consonants in native speaker varieties of English, such as *not*, / 'nat /, and *caused* / 'kɔzd /. However, Bo pronounced the monophthongs as diphthongs, such as *country* / 'kæʊntri:/, *anyway* / 'aɪniwei/, and *senior* / 'si:ni:ɔr/. Vowel variation included

stability changing to /'stɪbɑ:lɪdi:/, *permeability* changing to /pɜ:mi:æ' bɑ:lɪti:/, *skills* changing to /'skɑ:lls/, and *macromer* changing to /'mɪkromər/. More frequently, the front vowel /ɪ/ moved backwards to /ɑ/. However, the exception was the central vowel /ə/ moving forward to /ɪ/, in the word *stability*, /'stɪbɑ:lɪdi:/. Therefore, his vowel quality was not easily predictable.

A combination of vowel and consonant variations were expected, yet being able to associate them with the Chinese pronunciation patterns was not. *Very* was a good example because Bo not only shortened his final vowel sound but also /r/ sounded like a compressed-lip velar approximant /w/. This confusion between /r/ and /w/ occurs widely in South China and Hong Kong (Deterding 2013), which shows that variations are not just an L1 influence but also depend on the educational, social and dialectal background of the speaker. This was also the case with Ying's substitution of /v/ in place of /w/, in the word *switching*, which contrasted with Bo's substitution of /w/ in place of /v/ in the word *vital*. Similarly, Ying omitted /b/ in /'ɔvi:əsli:/. This was initially considered an L1 influence. However, it was discovered that this pronunciation is also common in the U.S. This showed that it was not simply an L1 influence or a lack of knowledge about English elision rules, but more generally due to Ying's education and experience. Therefore, listeners may struggle when listening to both native and non-native Americans dropping sounds in word initial consonant clusters.

Comparing assimilation rules in English and Chinese, English speakers sometimes use the extra linking sounds, *y*, *w* or *r*, for example: *She-y-isn't here. I'd like to-w-open the window*, and *America-r-and Canada* (Cleary et al. 2014) yet, they often go unnoticed.

When Bo used /y/ to link words in the phrase *What's-e 'yissue?* and Ying said, *Eh 'yif der are somting wrong*, it was also used between vowels, but was not a smooth link, occurred with a pause, and was too strongly stressed, which indicated the Chinese L1 preference to start words with a consonant.

Chinese is a syllable timed language, which means that every consonant-vowel syllable takes approximately the same amount of time, whereas English is a stress timed language with different stress given to the prominent syllables in the word and intonation group. Jenkins (2000) said that in isolation, stress is not a problem for comprehension, however, when the word *stability* was pronounced as /'strɪbəlɪdi:/ stressing the first instead of second syllable as well as changing two vowel pronunciations made comprehension very difficult.

To put this research into context, Table 8 shows a comparison with Jenkins (2000) *Lingua Franca Core*. Jenkins' LFC was written as a description of the areas speakers needed to be intelligible in a limited context. In this study, the focus was on what the listeners needed to be able to perceive what was said, also in a limited context. Both studies have a similar goal of mutual intelligibility, and it is important to note that the LFC is not used as a standard, but as a guide for critical pronunciation study.

Jenkins' LFC features necessary for speaker intelligibility	Features necessary for recognition in this study
No assimilation	No assimilation
Rhotic r	Rhotic r
Pronunciation of consonants	Pronunciation/perception of t, l, r, b, v & w

No deletion of consonants in word initial consonant clusters (in 2007, Jenkins also included word medial consonant clusters)	No deletion of consonants in any consonant clusters
Epenthesis is less likely to cause problems than elision, because the word is more recoverable.	No epenthesis (addition of extra sounds) between words
Vowel length, if stable, does not affect intelligibility	No vowel length variation
Vowel quality is not included because it is highly variable (in 2007 it was updated to being consistent or stable and not variable)	No vowel quality variation
Nuclear stress	Nuclear stress

Table 8: Comparison with Jenkins' Lingua Franca Core

O'Neal (2015) said that consonant pronunciation is consequential for maintaining intelligibility, including /z/ to /s/, /s/ to /θ/, and similarly in his 2014 paper on ELF interaction in Japan, he also found that consonant clusters in all positions are important for intelligibility. Jenkins (2007) clarified that recognition of weak vowels are important for receptive purposes. This research also showed that vowel quality was important for recognition. Similarly, vowel length was also important which is in disagreement with Jenkins and agreement with Deterding (2013). Having said that, Jenkins now puts a higher priority on negotiating and accommodating differences, which I agree is crucial in an active interaction. Assimilation by the speaker and for the listener makes intelligibility more difficult. Therefore, when students interact with many speakers who naturally use assimilation, they will need to learn how to decode or clarify what has been said. Therefore,

speakers, ELF or otherwise, who are considerate to non-native English listeners will dissimilate their words, pronounce their consonants, keep their vowel quality and quantity consistent, choose their vocabulary carefully, and pause at suitable junctures to allow the listeners some processing time. However, the listeners also need to learn about the problematic pronunciation features in table 7 to help them to recognize words, and develop accommodation strategies so they are able to be flexible when they don't understand by not being distracted by unknown phrases and also able to negotiate meaning by modifying problematic phonological segments to achieve mutual intelligibility.

Conclusion

Two important constraints, which made this an ESP context, were:

- 1) The presentations were at times, monologue, where comprehension was not acknowledged, and at other times, dialogue, during and after the presentation when there was a question, comment or discussion
- 2) The asymmetry and role of the participants limited their pragmatic choices, and ability to take turns

Although the listening processes may be similar between ESP, EFL and ELF contexts, the contextual factors are most certainly not. ELF contexts have different cultural, pragmatic and vocabulary norms from EFL contexts, as shown by the Asian Corpus of English (ACE) (Kirkpatrick 2010), and the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) (Seidlhofer 2001). However these corpora do not take into account the phonological

variations which can be the cause of communication breakdowns. Furthermore, in these video conferences, off-screen speakers and background noise, and restricted gestures, eye contact and non-verbal cues, all created additional ambiguity. This forced the listeners to rely more heavily on their bottom-up processing of the data stream.

The size of this data set means that it is just a pilot study and is not generalizable to a wider understanding of Asian BELF listening comprehension skills. However, it did enable the students to build awareness of the problematic pronunciation features they regularly encounter. It provided a clear pedagogical platform to build receptive and productive pronunciation skills, which is the first stage in developing their flexibility to accommodate variation. The main limitation of this pronunciation research was that the students did not show signs of acquisition of their new awareness; for example, the /v/ being pronounced as /w/ pattern was studied in the word *vital* in an earlier cycle. However, when it was heard again in the word *vinyl* in a later cycle, the students could not recognize it, even though it was a familiar word. Therefore, they were not able to use this knowledge to add to their decoding skills. In addition, there was no explicit assessment of listening skill development. The students were able to compare their transcripts with each other to understand their relative success rate, but there was not a categorical listening skill level evaluation, such as measuring the percentage of intelligible words (Munro & Derwing 1995). This limitation was because the students' chose the audio extracts based on a strong desire to understand the technical feedback about their contact lens research. In addition, they wanted to know why it was difficult to understand. So these two issues were at the expense of using standardized listening samples to control difficulty. This motivational

finding supports the need for authentic listening material development at the blurred boundary between listeners and users (Gao 2012).

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Appendix – Transcription Conventions

(2.0)	Pause of about 2 second	(..)	Pause of about 0.5 second
[Overlap	[[Speakers start at the same time
= =	Latched utterances	_____	Emphasis
-	Abrupt Cut-off	::	Sound stretching
(xxx)	Unable to transcribe	°°	Quiet
()	Unclear word or phrase	(())	Comment or non-speech activity
>word<	Quicker speech	<word>	Slower speech
↑	Rising Intonation	↓	Falling Intonation
//	Phonemic transcription	[]	Phonetic transcription

Expanding Affordances for English in Kyushu Area Studies On

Campus 2017

Ellen Head

Abstract

The “Area Studies On Campus” course offers students opportunities to get insight into aspects of Kyushu issues, culture, business and economic development through community field work and service learning. This article looks at how course leaders attempted to build in opportunities for using English in the Area Studies course. Traditionally, the course attracts both Japanese and overseas students, giving Japanese students a role as explainers of local content. However in 2017 there were no overseas students on the course. Moreover the vocabulary and structures needed for translating local content was above the ability level of many of the group. There was a need to bridge the gap between students of different ability levels and between classroom and out-of-class learning. In the future it is suggested that certain classroom activities would

be helpful at the start in order to help students to make a supportive group and learn the basics of observing, report-writing and interviewing.

Area Studies at MIC

Area Studies at MIC is a course for second years which is an alternative to a semester abroad. From 2015 to 2017 the course was offered as team-taught course with one subject lecturer from Social or Political Sciences and an EFL teacher. Links to local organizations and experts including fluent English speakers, were built up, giving a full program of visits and presentations from visiting speakers, ending with a service learning placement. The brief for the EFL teacher was, to stimulate students to explain things in English and to help them to re-draft written work for their portfolios.

During fieldwork early in the course in 2017, it became clear that a significant proportion of students could not easily deal with the cognitive challenge of using English in the field when input from local NPO representatives was in Japanese. The vocabulary was sometimes technical and consisted of words that they did not understand even in Japanese. The content of the course was challenging for students at a personal level due to the need to establish new relationships, evaluate situations and work out how to be of use in the field. So the questions arose: “How can we create a perceived need for students to use English?” “How can we design a program which

offers affordances for English despite being in an EFL context rather than an ESL context?" It is hoped that this article, focusing on the latter question, can be part of a developing conversation about Area Studies.

Affordances, SLA and Study Abroad

There are varying accounts of the relationships between language acquisition and study abroad, but it is generally agreed that exposure to language in an ESL context through study abroad is helpful in many ways. (Kenne, 2014). However, research reminds us that factors such as affect, attitude to the target culture, and the specific opportunities for interaction and study, play their part as well. In fact Dewey, 2015, found that students of Japanese as a foreign language in an immersion environment in the home country did better than those who studied abroad on vocabulary learning. What matters is the opportunities that students have to focus on the target language, to engage and to produce the language.

Opportunities to use the target language have been termed affordances by Van Lier. Affordances are a metaphor from ecology which Van Lier uses to describe relationships between elements in a sociocultural perspective on learning.

“Language emerges out of semiotic activity...affordances consist in the opportunities for interaction that the things in the environment possess... the environment is full of language that provides opportunities for learning to the active, participating learner.” (Van Lier 2000, p. 253).

In our course, people such as the teachers and former students who joined the class provided affordances which were stimulating to the learners. However the imperative to use English, which would be provided by an ESL context, was largely absent.

Students as mediators or interpreters

Area Studies in Kyushu presents a situation in which students have a potential role as mediators of Japanese content for a non-Japanese speaking audience. On the first field trip we sowed radish seeds and peeled leeks outside the farm house, an idyllic setting for “Eigo Kaiwa in the field”. The input in this session was all in Japanese, consisting of instructions about how to plant seeds and a talk over an hour long about why the farm owner had left her comfortable company job selling agricultural chemicals and sunk her savings in an organic farm. As the EFL teacher, I wanted to find a role for English so I tried asking students to explain some points. The replies were brief or resulted in long searches for vocabulary on cellphones. Considering our learners were struggling to understand what to do on the farm, my requests for interpreting may

have produced “cognitive overload”. Interpreting is known to be a more challenging skill than simply communicating in L2. Therefore in 2017 we allowed students to use both English and Japanese when dealing with content that was originally in Japanese. In mid-term feedback three students wrote positively about the mix of languages:

もっとお互いの考えを素直に言える雰囲気があれば Good. 英語と日本語を混ぜていいのは、どうしても最後まで続けてほしい！！ [It will be good if we can create atmosphere where people can speak honestly to each other. I want us to continue speaking in English/Japanese.]

However one disagreed:

もう少し英語で話す機会を強制するべき。もしくは他学年も多く交える機会を増やしてほしい。 [English speaking should be forced a little bit more. Or I want to interact more with students in other grades.]

This feedback is highlighted not with any intention of undermining the L2 only norm of the classroom in MIC but in order to raise the question of finding an authentic audience for students’ communication in L2. Some of the most successful projects which students undertook were concerned with translating information for tourists in Aya Town Biosphere area and in a museum near the college. When students knew that their English would be heard or read in a real-world context, then their motivation grew.

Using e-portfolios to connect with an on-line community

Research shows that virtual communities can provide a powerful stimulus and place to practice English. (Liang 2010). Since 2015 MIC has developed an e-portfolio system which potentially offers students a virtual space to share and grow in English. One way to expand the affordances for Area Studies students' use of English could be to ask students to exchange drafts of major pieces of work at the report stage and critique each others' drafts. In 2017 students exchanged links and commented on each other's work. In the future it might be beneficial to encourage peer review of content and establish a work-flow which includes continuous work on formative portfolios from which students select work for their final portfolio. As the technology improves, we hope to be able to ask students to share Mahara links with students at colleges overseas who are interested in Japan. This was attempted in 2017 but did not work well because the partner school was using Wordpress and were not open to using Mahara.

Active Teaching Learning Strategies in Area Studies

Area Studies Fieldwork sounds as if by definition it will provide an active role for students. Yet in practice, given the logistics of connecting with local organizations and speakers, the schedule needs to be arranged months beforehand, meaning that at least for the first month the locations and content of research were decided by teachers

and not by students. Classroom activities were therefore vital to building up group dynamics and norms in which students could take the initiative and use English.

Teaching for active learning is characterized by “explorative activities, problem solving, the development of higher order thinking skills that enable [students] to analyze, synthesize, evaluate and create”. Mork et al. (2017) divide active teaching learning strategies into those with inward focus (such as writing a diary) versus outward focus, (such as a discussion), and planned/extemporaneous from the point of view of the student. For the purpose of understanding our Area Studies course, we will arrange the activities according to whether they focus primarily on group dynamics (outward focus), or academic know-how such as reading/writing skills (inner focus).

Making a safe environment through reflection: Language Learning Histories

At the start of a new semester students may feel anxiety about their new group and uncertainty about the norms and aims of the class, particularly since the class content includes trips off campus and fieldwork. In addition, there was a very wide range in ability level, (TOEIC 375-720), and some demotivation. Falout (2012) suggests that if learners have become de-motivated, it can help them to write about why and how they lost their motivation. Students were asked to write “language learning histories” after the first meeting of the class in order to find out about prior experiences which

might be affecting their current motivation. The questionnaire included items about students' future goals, positive learning experiences, and metaphors for learning, in the hopes that they could draw on their past positive experiences to help them. Students were asked to read through the questionnaire in class and talk about their answers with a partner, so that they could check their understanding of the questions, start to get to know each other and open a dialogue about metacognitive aspects of learning. The questionnaire is original but draws on work by educators such as Murphey, (1997) and Benson (2004). (Questionnaire: Appendix 1)

One student mentioned in their learning history that social pressure had deterred him from speaking English as well as he could:

[At high school] I was reading aloud English text book because I was thinking the people who speak English are cool. I pronounced many times with an English teacher. On the other hand, I was scare to pronounce cool. Because some people think that I am pretending as clever. [LLH student M]

Another student also alluded to “reasons why Japanese people can’t get command of English” in vague terms:

I wouldn’t say details right now, but these process of learning English in Japanese education has certain reasons why most of Japanese people still can’t

get command of it, even though in this globalization, there is necessity to get it.

[LLH student N]

This student recommended learning vocabulary first:

I'd strongly suggest that to memorize basic 2,000 words first which means grammar is secondary.

This kind of insight could be helpful to other learners. The group included two students who talked about positive experiences at NARPI peace building camp who had experienced using English as a Lingua Franca. Writing a language learning history helped students to make connections between experiences outside class and inside and to take responsibility for their own learning. Such activities could help to scaffold elements necessary for critical thinking, such as comparing and evaluating experiences.

Brainstorming Ground Rules

In this activity, students were asked to suggest rules that would be useful for the class. Typically this should be done at the start of a new semester, though we did it a little late in 2017. If students are of a lower level then they can be given a set of rules and asked to critique and add to them. This allows teachers more control over what the rules are going to be! Making ground rules about when to use English allowed for more explicit discussion about which language to use for particular activities.

In our case the ground rules were brainstormed by students in groups, written on posters, and then the whole class voted which rules to keep. The final rule set was written up by a student leader. At some stage after the activity teachers realized they would have liked to edit the rules further but we decided that in the interests of student autonomy we should stick with the students' rules.

Ground Rules for the Area Studies Class

Speak out and ask questions actively.

Use English as much as you can.

Start and end the class on time.

Speak to your classmates in a friendly way.

Group building activities: River of needs

The “river of needs” activity originated in workshops on Non-Violent Communication, a communication training methodology aimed at conflict resolution and used in situations such as the Israel/Palestine conflict. It provides a structured way for students to talk about needs and feelings. (Rosenburg 2015). In Japanese society it may not always be considered polite to draw attention to one's own needs especially in a situation with people one does not know well, such as a new class. (Yoneyama, 1999). We did this activity while away on a four day fieldwork trip to Minami Aso.

The teacher prepared sets of small flashcards with words for various human needs such as “connection”, “understanding” and more basic needs such as “food”, “sleep”. (A list of needs is available at the Nonviolent Communication Centre Website.). These cards were placed around the room forming a “river”. Students walked around and picked up three cards representing needs they had which have been met recently. They made a group of three and talked to their group about what they chose. Students then went back and picked three cards which expressed needs which had not been met, and talked about these. This let facilitators see which needs have not been addressed. This activity was very suitable when on a field trip during which students were out of their usual environment as it enabled them to raise needs that were not being addressed and to be honest about their problems.

Interviewing Guest Speakers

Since 2015, the course lecturers have built up a network of guest speakers which includes bilingual or very fluent Japanese using English professionally and former students who have taken the Area Studies course in previous years. Speakers in 2017 included representatives from a children’s respite camp, a life guard, and UNESCO world heritage sites. They were also asked to prepare by reading the webpages about the speaker’s NPO and preparing two questions.

In terms of activities, asking students to prepare questions gave them an active role in the interaction. Comparing sessions in which students asked questions to those in which they were lectured by guest speakers, one student had this to say: “When we talked with Eri Otsu at first she didn’t speak from her own [initiative] unless we asked questions. Nervous feeling left us by degrees...[Teachers should] cherish students’ intention and talk with students as equal and with respect...Excessive support makes dependence.”

It was interesting to observe the impact of various speakers on the students. Murphey (1997) believes that students are more strongly influenced by role models who are similar to them in age. Others have pointed out the importance of non-native speaker role models. “NPRMs provide examples for students of successful L2 users with similar backgrounds to themselves, separate from the unattainable, and often daunting, native speaker construct.” (Cook, 1999, in Murphey, 1997). Eri Otsu was a particularly impactful speaker. In her early 40s, educated in England, Germany and Japan, she was instrumental in developing her area as a United Nations Agricultural Heritage site and promoting the identity of female farmers. Her session was held at her farm in Minami Aso. Her belief in learner-centered education was evident from her session as she announced at the beginning that she was not going to lecture or try to

teach anything, but would reply to questions asked by the class. In contrast, although they were impressed on other occasions by two guides who gave their speeches in English, the fact that these guides were over 70 years old did create something of a distance. The presentation by a third year student, who had taken the course in previous years, was more exciting for students. “Structuring classroom experiences to enhance near peer role modeling may be one of the most powerful ways teachers can enhance learning.” (Murphey, 1997). Until now, we generally left it to each guest speaker to decide how interactive to make their presentation. In future courses it might be a good idea to change the format from “guest speaker lecture” to “guest speaker interview” in all cases in order to make the students more active.

Reading and Writing Activities

Skim reading and matching questions and answers

Material for content based study about Japan can often be found in bilingual form for tourists and NPO developers. Students may not have the time or self-discipline to read all the English material first and their vocabulary level may also make it inefficient to do so. We decided to ask students to tackle the material about the Global International Agricultural Heritage developments at Minami Aso by reading the

Japanese first and then looking at a set of questions in English and skimming the English text to find the answers. The aim was to help students get used to skimming English academic text without looking up every word, using clues such as photos and headers and subheadings to locate the information they need. Questions which focus students' attention on main concepts, statistics or dates work as scaffolding for understanding. Rather than checking the answers with the whole class, we made an answer key and distributed one copy per 4 students. One person in each group then had to explain the answer orally without showing the key to their classmates. This was an example of how an activity which is "inner" (reading comprehension) could be given an extra stage which takes it into the outer dimension. Discussion questions relating to the issues in the text were added too.

Analyzing a Model Report

Analyzing models of the desired kind of writing to be produced, can help to scaffold the output of academic essays and reports. We faced a lack of appropriate material since the students in Area studies need to write reports which are based on their fieldwork but EFL writing textbooks do not usually deal with genres other than essay and personal narrative. A model report was written and distributed to students before they went on their long field trip. They were asked to read and analyze features such as

the use of paragraphing, subheadings, text organization around themes and analysis of the main lessons learned on the trip. After reading the model report, most students imitated the use of subheadings, paragraphing and the analysis of the purpose of the trip. It gave a clearer target for those who did not understand what they were aiming for.

Analyzing the content of last years' portfolios

To help students understand what an e-portfolio is and start to think about their own options in terms of design and content of their own portfolios, we asked students to look at last years' portfolios and spend some time browsing the articles in them. They were given a grid to fill in to heighten awareness of features such as organization, content, layout and style, before talking in threes about which portfolios they liked and why. Members then moved around the groups leaving one spokesperson behind with a laptop, to explain the discussion to other group members.

Three Point Feedback

While on the field trip, we wanted to get quick feedback in a manner which would maintain confidentiality. We asked them to write three point feedback. Students were given a very small piece of paper (4 cm by 4 cm) and asked to write their answers to the following three questions:

1. What was good about this course/lesson/activity?

2. What was not good about this course/lesson/activity?
3. What suggestion do you have (something you would like us to do or you would like to do)?

Feedback could be written in English or Japanese. Having a small piece of paper meant that students did not feel pressure to write a lot but if they had a lot to say they could write in small letters. The fact that it is a piece of scrap paper showed students that it was not part of their evaluation.

We used this activity during our field trip when it seemed that communication was not flowing smoothly in the group. We felt it was important to provide feedback to the students so that they know what the overall picture was. In the next class we wrote a summary of the main points on the whiteboard in English. The purpose of this was to let students see that their opinions were valued and to offer a sense of the spectrum of opinion within the class. It is quite common to have diametrically opposite points of view represented in feedback, for example “I do not like group work” and “I enjoyed talking in a small group”. Even if the teachers cannot implement the feedback, it is worth doing as a reality check as a stage in moving towards a solution. In our case there were points that could be implemented such as making a plan together at the beginning of the day and making opportunities for students to have choices about the order in

which we did activities.

Conclusion

Teaching Area Studies in Japan with a monolingual group of Japanese students offered challenges in terms of finding suitable goals and audience. Classroom activities played an important role in expanding the affordances for English since the activities allowed students to play a variety of roles. Students needed practice in how to play their role as “observer”, “recorder” and “initiator” rather than simply “responder” or “translator”. Paradoxically, when fieldwork was more challenging and complex, the students sometimes tended to retreat into passivity or use of L1. It is hoped that some of the scaffolding activities which were offered above might be useful to teachers in future Area Studies classes and other content-based courses.

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Appendix 1

Your Language Learning History (Guided Writing)
Name _____

Your language learning history means all the experiences you have had learning languages in your life, including learning outside class, listening to foreign music or movies, chatting to foreigners or travelling in foreign countries.

Step 1

Interview a partner about her or his language learning history.

Step 2

Write about **your own** language learning history. It does not need to be perfect!

Here are some questions you could use to ask your partner about their language learning history.

1. When did you start learning English (or another language)? How were those first classes?
2. Do you like writing? Which is your favourite skill? Why?
3. What was one good learning experience you had? Why was it good?
4. What was one negative learning experience you had? Why?
5. What is one of your language learning goals right now?
6. Think of a time you were communicating well with someone. What was it like? Try to find an image or metaphor for that experience.

The Poems of Bokusui Wakayama, Translations

**Gregory Dunne
&
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若山 牧水, *Wakayama Bokusui*, (1885–1928) was a modern Japanese tanka poet from Miyazaki Prefecture in southern Kyushu. He was active at the beginning of the 20th century, during the tanka revival started by Yosano Tekkan (1873 -1935), who founded the the literary magazine *Myoji* (Bright Star) in Tokyo in 1900 as a means, in part, towards infusing greater energy and freshness into the traditional form. Between 1908 and 1912, Bokusui’s poems gained popularity through publication in *Myoji*. Like other members of the *Myoji* group, Bokusui’s poems, according to the Japanese translator and literary scholar Donald Keene, were “filled with romantic expressions of grief and longing” but they also possessed something quite distinctive: “a vitality and a feeling for nature that set his work apart.” Keene suspects this quality of Bokusui’s poetry may be attributed to Bokusui’s country origins – he was born and raised in rural Miyazaki Prefecture. Bokusi traveled widely throughout Japan and Korea during his lifetime, composing a great many tanka along the way. He greatly enjoyed sake and this most likely contributed to his early death at forty-three years of age of liver illness.

01: 白鳥はかなしからずや空の青海のあをにも染まずただよふ

A lone white bird stays
in the air without fading
into the blueness of sky or sea
and I can't help wondering
how profound its sorrow must be

02: とこしへに解けぬひとつの不可思議の生きてうごくと自らをおもふ

An eternally unsolved
mysterious being is still
living and moving;
I cannot help thinking so
whenever I see myself

03: 海底うみなぞこに眼まなこのなき魚うおの棲むといふ眼まなこの無き魚の恋こひしかりけり

Whenever I hear
a story about an eyeless fish
living in the deep sea,
I'm desperately sick for the sight
of it, ah, my eyeless fish

04: かたはらに秋ぐさの花かたるらくほろびしものはなつかしきかな

A tiny autumn flower
blooming right beside me
whispers quietly:
“O, whatever has perished
returns everlastingly to us!”

05: 初夏の曇りの底に桜咲き居りおとろへはてて君死ににけり

At the bottom of
a cloud-filled, early-summer day
the cherry blossoms
are at their best and you, wasted
and weakened, have met your death

6: 水無月の青く明けゆく停車場に少女にも似て動く機関車

At a train station
awakening with paleness
at dawn in June
almost like a vestal girl
a steam locomotive stirs

07: ふるさとの尾鈴^{おすず}の山のかなしさよ秋もかすみのたなびきて居り

How sorrowful it appears
the mountain of my home town,
Mount Osuzu, a haze
hovering about it even
on this clearest autumn day

08: 津の国の伊丹の里ゆはるばると白雪来るその酒来る

All the way from a brewer
in the remote Itami village
it reaches me at last
the grand brand “White Snow,”
the gem of the Tsu region

(Note: “The Itami village” in “The Tsu region” is now called the Itami city in Hyogo Prefecture)

09: やと握るその手この手のいづれみな大きからぬなき青森人よ

A surprise to me –
the large hands and strong grip
of everyone I meet
here as I finally reach
northernmost Aomori

10: それほどにうまきかと人のとひたらばなんと答へむこの酒の味

How should I
answer if someone asks
why I am so
out of my mind with it –
this sake's exquisite flavor

11: 海鳥の風にさからふ^{ひと}一ならび一羽くづれてみなくづれたり

Against the ocean wind
a straight line of birds float
until, suddenly,
one of them begins to stray
and then they all go straying

12: 茂りあふ松の葉かげにこもりたる日ざしは冬のむらさきにして

Condensed behind
the luxuriant leaves of
pine trees the winter
sunshine oozes
into a deepening purple

13: 鮎焼きて母はおはしきゆめみての後もうしろでありありと見ゆ

Even after the dream
of my dearest mother broiling
a sweetfish alone,
I still see her
from behind, so clearly