



Investigating the Effects of Task-Based Language Teaching on Japanese EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate

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Despite a great deal of research literature supporting task-based language teaching (TBLT), very little is known about how TBLT actually influences the EFL classroom in practical terms. This study thus attempts to provide a much-needed link between research and practice where TBLT is concerned. Specifically, this paper focuses on the impact of TBLT on Japanese EFL university students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. Administering McCroskey's (1992) widely used WTC scale, the researchers measured the WTC of two groups of Japanese EFL university freshmen: 192 students who received task-based instruction (TBI) and 43 who received other types of instruction. Questionnaires were given at the beginning and at the end of the semester (after 16 weeks). The results of the questionnaires showed that the students that had received TBI had significantly increased their overall WTC scores, Group Discussion WTC scores and Public Speaking WTC scores over the course of the semester, while the WTC scores of the control group in all three sub-categories did not change much at all. Hence, providing some practical support to the psycholinguistic research literature advocating TBLT, this study was able to demonstrate some of the real-world benefits of TBLT in the Japanese EFL context.

Keywords: task-based language teaching, Japanese EFL learners, willingness to communicate

Introduction

Over the past 30 years, task-based language teaching (TBLT) has increasingly attracted the worldwide attention of SLA researchers (Crookes, 1986; Ellis, 2003, 2009; Long, 1985; Long & Crookes, 1992; Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1998, 2000). Although a great deal of this research seems to be advocating a task-based approach to language teaching, much of what has been written is theoretical and psycholinguistic in nature, inspired by the greater question of how learners best acquire a foreign language. As Van den Branden (2006, pp. 1-2) laments, very little is known about how TBLT actually impacts the classroom in practical terms, and we are left with a number of unanswered questions, such as the following:

Does TBLT work for teachers and learners in the classroom as well as it does for SLA researchers? Is TBLT more than a fascinating pedagogical approach that looks good on paper? Can it really inspire language teachers when they prepare their lessons or does it only frighten them because of the high demands it places on them and on their learners? Is TBLT compatible with prevailing classroom practices, with teachers and learners' subjective beliefs of what makes good language education?

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to help fill in the gap by shedding some light on what actually happens in classes where task-based methods are used. Specifically, this study will examine the effect of task-based instruction (TBI) on students' willingness to communicate in an L2 (WTC).

Literature Review

Task-Based Language Teaching

It is useful to begin with a definition of TBLT and description of what it entails. TBLT is often seen as an extension of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and continues to share some of the same basic assumptions, in that both approaches are student-centered and call for students to engage in meaningful interactions with others in order to learn a foreign language. TBLT has evolved to the point that it is now seen to have its own rationales and practices toward foreign language instruction. Specifically, TBLT is an approach to foreign language instruction in which the task is the focal point of each lesson, lessons are specified and graded in terms of these tasks, and communication is thought to be a process (i.e., means driven) focusing on how something is learned rather than a set of products (i.e., ends driven) focusing on what is to be learned (Nunan, 1988). Skehan (1998), one of the earliest proponents of TBLT, describes the central component of a task-based lesson, the task, to have five main characteristics:

- meaning is primary
- learners are not given other people's meaning to regurgitate
- there exists some type of relationship to real-world activities
- task completion is important
- assessment of tasks is conducted in terms of ability to achieve outcome

Prahu (1987) categorizes three types of tasks: information-gap, reasoning-gap, and opinion-gap. Each of these task types involves some type of gap that can only be filled by having students engage in some sort of language learning and/or using activity. For instance, a common information gap activity would involve having students complete a table by communicating with each other. Accordingly, each student in a pair would have different information on their portion of the partially completed table, and would thus need to ask questions to the other student, who has the necessary information on his/her table, in order to complete the table. In this way, meaningful language exchange takes place in order to achieve the task objective (i.e., to complete the table). Within the information, reasoning and opinion gap framework, tasks often involve students taking part in matching, speculation, rating, ranking, decision making and problem solving activities. A more specific and detailed model of how task-based lessons can be carried out in the classroom is provided in the methodology section of this paper.

TBLT in the Japanese EFL Context

As noted above, few studies have reported on the practical impact of TBLT, such as on learners' L2 performance and, as it relates to this study, their L2 willingness to communicate. For the Japanese EFL context specifically, TBLT is not widely used, as evidenced by the dearth of task-based materials currently on the Japanese ELT market (Cutrone & Beh, 2014). According to a reply in an interview with one of the preeminent applied linguists in the world and a great proponent of TBLT, Rod Ellis, one of the reasons that TBLT has failed to take off in Japan may be that a great many teachers in this context simply do not fully understand what TBLT is and may be confused as to what exactly a real *task* encompasses (Cutrone, 2018). Moreover, Ellis (2009) points out a number of other criticisms and misconceptions that seem to be preventing TBLT from becoming more of a viable option in Japan. For example, critics of TBLT have contended that TBLT is not well-suited to Japanese EFL learners (Burrows, 2008; Sato, 2009),

is mainly suited to higher-level students (Littlewood, 2007), and does not adequately deal with instruction in grammar (Sheen, 2003; Swan, 2005). In a more recent paper, Ellis (2014) responded to these assertions and explained why such criticisms are largely unfounded. As noted above, many of the misconceptions seem to stem from a lack of understanding, not to mention experience, in regards to TBLT.

Regarding the applicability of TBLT in the Japanese EFL context, Brown (2012) argues that due to the non-communicative English been taught in Japan, which has traditionally focused on reading and memorization of grammatical rules, Japanese EFL learners are simply ill-equipped to take part in lessons that are too student-centered and require collaboration. Similarly, referring specifically to the Japanese EFL context and TBLT, Burrows (2008) maintains that “a teaching approach which places too heavy a burden on students is not only unrealistic but unreasonable” (p. 18). However, based on the writers’ positive experiences administering a task-based English communication course in the Japanese EFL context (Cutrone & Beh, 2014), the unsubstantiated claims made by Brown (2012) and Burrows (2008) appear to be largely unfounded.

Similarly, claims that TBLT is unsuitable for low-level learners (Bruton, 2002; Swan, 2005) have also been challenged by experts in the field (Dickinson, 2010). According to Ellis (2009) and Willis and Willis (2007), learners with limited grammar can often function effectively enough in an L2, and thus, task-based instruction (TBI) can assist them in advancing their grammar systems by affording them opportunities to use the language resources that they have. There is ample evidence of TBLT being used effectively with lower-level learners (Edwards & Willis, 2005; Willis & Willis, 2007). Referring to the Japanese EFL context specifically, Little and Fieldsend (2009) conducted a study in which TBI was shown to assist low-level Japanese learners in developing their L2 English language proficiency.

Lastly, the assertion that TBLT neglects grammar instruction is fundamentally mistaken. All proponents of TBLT see a role for grammar instruction in task-based lessons and syllabi methodologically. As Ellis (2009) points out, “attention to form (including grammatical form) can figure in all three phases of a task-based lesson (i.e., the pre-task phase, the main-task phase, and the post-task phase), although differences exist among advocates as to what is the preferred approach” (p. 232). For the task-based instructional methods used in this study, the writers followed the seven-step framework outlined by Willis (1998), which consists of a pre-task, main task, planning for report, plenary report, listening, language analysis activities, and post-task. The second last of these steps, the Language Analysis Activities, is where students can focus specifically on grammar.

The purpose of each of these steps and how they work collectively in a task-based framework will be described below in the methodology section of this paper. For now, as it relates to grammar instruction more generally, the purpose of the Language Analysis Activities in each lesson is to expose learners to, and provide them a chance to manipulate and practice, language they could use to complete a similar task to the one they had attempted previously in the main task of the lesson. The grammatical focus occurs after the main task because upon going through the process of attempting to accomplish a particular task in the L2, learners would subsequently be more receptive to learning the target language through the course of the lesson because they could now see for themselves that they need to learn the target language to be able to accomplish a similar task in the future. In the final step of the lesson, the Post Task, learners have another chance to complete a similar task to the main task of the lesson, and thus are given a chance to apply elements of what they had just learned in the Language Analysis Activities. Accordingly, at this juncture of the lesson, students, who now have the skills and language to more effectively achieve the objective the task, should exhibit increased confidence and willingness to communicate as well.

Willingness to Communicate

Recently, the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has emerged as a model among the affective constructs to account for many of the individual differences in L2 communication. This is an especially useful tool because it has been shown to encompass many of the interrelated variables that influence performance in a foreign language, such as motivation, personality, foreign language anxiety,

experience, and self-confidence. WTC, which is directly linked to frequency of communication, can greatly impact second language acquisition (SLA) and needs to be emphasized in L2 pedagogy (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). WTC can be defined broadly as the tendency of an individual to initiate communication when free to do so (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987, 1990). MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) observed that WTC in the L1 does not necessarily transfer to the L2 and have thus defined WTC in L2 communication more fittingly as the willingness to engage in L2 communication. WTC in L1 communication was thought to be a fixed personality trait stable across situations, whereas WTC in L2 communication takes into account how different behaviors can manifest themselves across situations based on wide variations in intergroup relations and competence (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998).

Following the work of MacIntyre and Charos (1996), MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) proposed a multi-layered pyramid model of WTC, in which they hypothesize that social and individual context, affective cognitive context, motivational propensities, situated antecedents, and behavioral intention are interrelated in affecting WTC in an L2 (see Figure 1 below). This heuristic model of variables influencing WTC has seen a great deal of research support, as it has been successfully applied to second and foreign language contexts on several occasions (Burroughs, Marie, & McCroskey, 2003; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre, Clément, & Donovan, 2002; Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004).

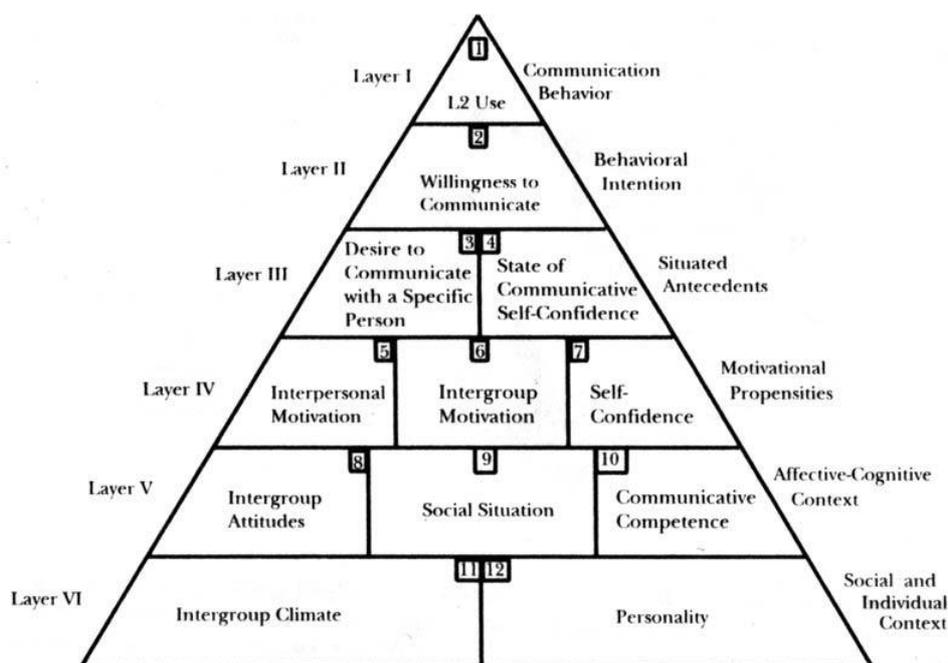


Figure 1. Heuristic model of variables influencing WTC (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998, p. 547).

The first three layers (I, II, III) of the pyramid are believed to have situation-specific effects. Layer 1, at the top of the pyramid, is communication behavior, which emerges as a result of the complex system of interrelated variables in the lower layers. Layer II is willingness to communicate and is defined as the readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a particular person, or persons, using an L2. For WTC to exist, opportunities to use the L2 are not required. According to MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998), increasing WTC should be the ultimate goal of all foreign language programs, and language programs that do not instill WTC are, therefore, failed programs. It should also be noted that MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels’ (1998) concept of WTC differs somewhat from McCroskey’s (1997) trait-like WTC, because, as mentioned above, it additionally involves situation-specific variables. Layer III, situated antecedents, consists of two immediate antecedents of WTC: the desire to

communicate with a specific person and the state of one's communicative self-confidence. Based on Clément's (1980, 1986) social context model, self-confidence in this model is thought to be made up of a combination of relative lack of anxiety and perceived competence to form a latent variable. The desire to communicate with a specific person is thought to be driven by a combination of interpersonal and intergroup motivations, involving motives related to affiliation (integrativeness) and control (instrumentality). The state of one's communicative self-confidence is based on the framework of Clément (1980) and the results of MacIntyre and Charos (1996) earlier WTC path model, which showed two contributing factors: state of perceived L2 competence and state of anxiety.

The final three layers (IV, V, and VI) of the WTC model are seen to have stable and enduring influences, and function as independent variables in analyzing WTC in an L2. Layer IV, called motivational propensities, comprises three sub-constructs: interpersonal motivation, intergroup motivation, and self-confidence. The first, interpersonal motivation, is initiated by either, or both, affiliation and/or control. Affiliation is prompted by attractiveness, physical proximity, similarities, and repeated exposure, while the role of control is to limit the cognitive, affective, and behavioral freedom of the communicators. The second, intergroup motivation, is derived directly from the group one belongs to, and as with interpersonal motivation, the basic components underlying this construct are also affiliation and control. Motives of affiliation are evident, as the basis for contact is to establish or maintain rapport, and control here refers to contact which results in the maintenance of power established between groups. The third construct, self-confidence, consists of two components: self-evaluation of L2 skills and language anxiety. Self-evaluation of L2 skills and language anxiety are highly negatively correlated in an L2.

Layer V, termed the affective and cognitive context, consists of intergroup attitudes, social situation, and communicative competence. Intergroup attitudes are thought to be determined by the frequency and quality of contact with the target group in the L2, fear of assimilation, and motivation to learn the L2. For the social situation, various factors that may affect situational variation include the setting, participants, topic, purpose, and channel of communication. Communicative competence is the result of the five main competences making up language abilities: linguistic competence, discourse competence, actional competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1995). The final layer, layer VI, designated social and individual context, consists of two base constructs: intergroup climate and personality. These constructs, which may underpin the social distance or harmony between groups, are placed at the bottom of the model, as they are believed to determine L2 WTC to a lesser degree than other variables. The social context component of this layer is realised by the intergroup climate construct, which is defined by the structural characteristics of the community and perceptual and affective correlates (Gardner & Clément, 1990). The structural characteristics of the community are conditioned by ethnolinguistic vitality and personal communication networks, and languages with high ethnolinguistic vitality are thought to retain their prestige and attract more speakers. The individual context component of layer VI is embodied in personality. Personality patterns can predict learners' reactions to communication, other people, stress, among others, and individual dispositions will influence whether one reacts positively or negatively toward a different ethnic group.

WTC in the Japanese EFL Context

Much has been written about Japanese EFL learners (JEFLs) and their tendency to not want to speak (Anderson, 1993; Ellis, 1991; Greer, 2000; Townsend & Danling, 1998). Undoubtedly, this reticence not only limits opportunities for L2 use and potential mastery, but it has been found to be a source of misunderstanding that can lead to negative perceptions across cultures (Cutrone, 2005, 2014; Sato, 2008). This seems to be an area of English education in which most analysts would agree that Japan has failed. For example, Ellis (1991) and Okushi (1990) have noted that the usual Japanese high school graduate is seriously deficient as an English speaker, while Farooq (2005) adds that Japanese university students are also, by and large, not even able to communicate at a survival level in English. In his tertiary-level

English Communication classes, Helgesen (1993) goes on to lament that his learners rarely initiated conversation, avoided bringing up new topics, did not challenge the teacher, seldom asked for clarification, and did not volunteer answers.

Over the past 30 years, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (i.e., MEXT) have attempted to deal with this issue, placing a greater emphasis on communication in L2 (Monbusho, 1989, 1999a, 1999b). Consequently, more materials and classroom activities have begun to focus on oral and intercultural communication. This shift has led to a concentrated research effort focusing on the affective variables that influence communication outcomes such as WTC, motivation, self-confidence, language anxiety, and attitude toward the people or group that learners will communicate with, perceived competence, and intercultural postures (Hashimoto, 2002; Matsuoka, 2005; Matsuoka & Evans, 2005; Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuck-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). Despite calls for more communication activities in EFL classes in Japan, change will be difficult whilst Japan remains mired in the current entrance examination washback cycle (Caine, 2005; Reesor, 2003; Sakui, 2004). That is, as teachers have to prepare students for non-communicative exams (that often rely heavily on rote learning, grammar translation, and passive knowledge of a foreign language), and so the educational methods used in these classes follow suit and also tend to be non-communicative, with limited opportunities for language use. Thus, in addition to needing to develop new and improved tests that focus more on language use, Japan must adopt new and innovative teaching methods, such as TBLT, to truly make a difference in learners' oral proficiency and willingness to communicate.

Yashima (2002) attempted to address some of these issues in her comprehensive study of 377 Japanese EFL freshman students majoring in Information Science at a coeducational university in Osaka, by seeking to find out with whom and for what purposes Japanese learners communicate in an L2. According to Yashima (2002), many learners seemed to understand the importance of possessing some degree of English proficiency for their futures because they felt that "English symbolizes the world around Japan, something that connects them to foreign countries and foreigners [...], with whom they can communicate by using English" (p. 57). This would seem to fit in with the recent MEXT guidelines, as well as the contentions of many scholars that English, as the lingua franca of the current global age, is important to some degree in the lives of most Japanese people (Ammon, 2003; Yano, 2001). Yashima (2002) uses the term international posture to describe this desire of Japanese to learn English to communicate with the world around them. In her study, Yashima (2002) investigated variables underlying WTC using Macintyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) heuristic model of WTC and Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model as a basic framework. The findings of her study would seem to lend empirical support to Macintyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) conceptual model of WTC in the Japanese EFL context. The results in the structural equation model illustrate the data driven path from international posture to WTC in the L2. That is, international posture influences motivation, and motivation, in turn, affects proficiency in English and L2 self-confidence, and self-confidence then has a strong and direct influence on WTC in the L2. This is consistent with Macintyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) heuristic model of WTC, in which L2 self-confidence is seen to have a more immediate role than communicative competence in affecting WTC. Further, as expected, the more internationally oriented an individual was found to be, the more willing they were to communicate in English.

From a macro perspective of self-confidence, it was also confirmed that a lower level of anxiety and a higher level of perception of L2 communication competence led to a higher level of WTC, thus supporting the results of the Macintyre and Charos (1996) study. That is, self-confidence in L2 communication, as a latent variable derived from a lack of language anxiety and perceived L2 communicative abilities, was found to influence WTC in L2 communication, as mentioned above. Somewhat surprisingly, the direct path from motivation to WTC was not found to be significant, as was expected from past research in Canadian contexts. However, the data driven path from motivation to confidence in L2 communication was found to be significant. While this result might be specific to this context, it implies that merely having motivation does not seem to be sufficient in predicting one's WTC. Rather, motivation likely needs to be accompanied by a learner's confidence in communication in the L2

in order to influence WTC.

In her study of 56 Japanese university students in an ESL context, Hashimoto (2002) replicated MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) heuristic model of WTC in a classroom setting. Consistent with Yashima's (2002) application of the WTC model, Hashimoto (2002) found that perceived L2 competence and a lack of language anxiety influenced WTC, which led to more frequent L2 communication (see Figure 2 below). In addition, further supporting MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) model, language anxiety was found to exert a strong and direct negative influence on perceived L2 competence. However, unlike MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) model, there was not a direct data driven path from perceived L2 confidence to L2 communication frequency. Hashimoto (2002) suggests this result may have been affected by the students' differing proficiency levels in each study, as the learners in MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) study were beginner level students, while the learners in Hashimoto's (2002) study were at an advanced level of proficiency in the L2. According to Hashimoto (2002), this might imply that merely perceiving that one has the ability to communicate can influence the frequency of L2 use with beginning students but not with more advanced students. Moreover, although a data driven path from WTC in the L2 to motivation was not found to be significant by MacIntyre and Charos (1996), it was found to be significant in Hashimoto's (2002) exploratory study, suggesting that WTC may have motivational properties. Another difference of note was the significant direct data driven path of perceived L2 competence to motivation. This seems to imply that perceived L2 competence or self-confidence in an L2 is a positive indicator of motivation.

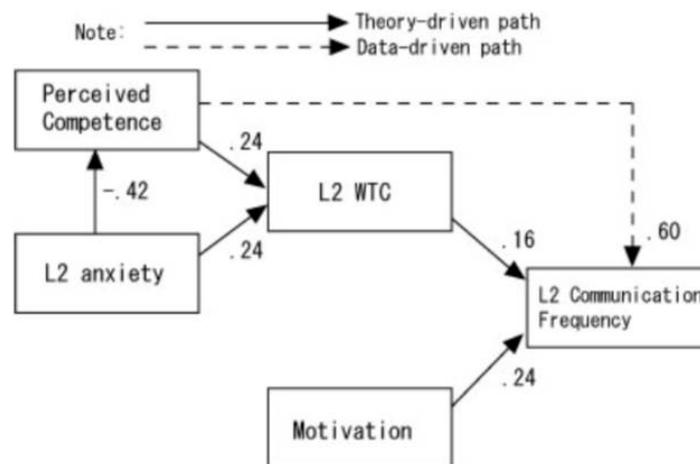


Figure 2. Hashimoto's (2002, p. 55) model of L2 communication applied to the Japanese ESL context.

In a subsequent study, Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu (2004) examined results and antecedents of L2 WTC through two separate investigations. The first investigation, involving 160 Japanese adolescent learners of English, confirmed that WTC results in more frequent communication in the L2 and that the attitudinal construct of international posture leads to WTC and communication behavior. The second of the two studies was conducted to supplement the first in a different intercultural learning situation, and thus examined the effects of a U.S. home-stay experience on Japanese adolescent learners of English' WTC in English. Similar to the results of Yashima (2002) and the first part of this currently discussed study, the results of the second investigation demonstrated that perceived L2 communication competence is strongly related to WTC, WTC results in more frequent communication in an L2, and international posture once again leads to WTC and communication behavior (see Figure 3). International posture was also a strong predictor of WTC in Matsuoka's (2004, 2005) studies in an EFL context, along with other variables, including anxiety, motivation, perceived L2 competence and personal traits, such as extraversion and introversion.

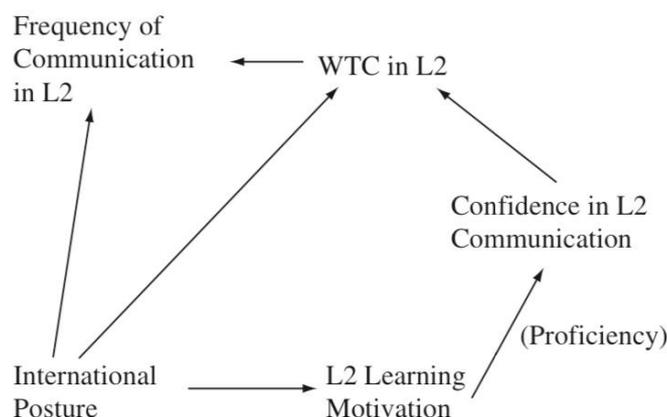


Figure 3. Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu's (2004, p. 127) communication model.

In the latter study, Matsuoka (2005) examined the variables which contribute to the classroom L2 WTC of 32 EFL students at a nursing college in Japan. Similar to the results of Yashima (2002), Matsuoka (2005) did not find any relationship between WTC in English and English proficiency. These results seem to provide support for anecdotal evidence that although some learners may have the ability to perform in the L2, they may be reluctant to do so. It should be noted that Matsuoka (2005), perhaps due to her desire to measure classroom behavior rather than general intercultural encounters, used a greatly altered version of the original McCroskey (1992) WTC scale. The original scale was used in most other studies involving WTC (Burroughs, Marie, & McCroskey, 2003; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre & Clément, 1996; MacIntyre, Clément, & Donovan 2002; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991; Yashima 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), as it has previously been demonstrated to have a high degree of reliability (Asker, 1998) and strong content and construct validity (McCroskey, 1992).

The unpublished questionnaire used by Matsuoka (2005) was developed by Sick and Nakasaka (2000, presented in Matsuoka, 2004) and Sick (2001, cited in Matsuoka, 2004), who designed their version of the WTC scale to be used as an alternative classroom assessment in a Japanese EFL context instead of the current methods used to measure students' communicative competence. According to Sick (2001), there are two major reasons this type of measurement shows great promise in ELT. First and foremost, the inclusion of the WTC model in the syllabus is supported by the research in the field and provides a convenient method for assessing several other variables of interest. Second, and most important, is the fact that the WTC model has some face validity, in that learners are thought to generally study a foreign language to use it in some way. In other words, "what good is a competent L2 speaker who is unwilling to make use of his or her competence?" (Sick, 2001, cited in Matsuoka 2004, p. 166).

This psychometric approach to measuring WTC was continued by Weaver (2005), who developed a new instrument for measuring WTC in the Japanese EFL classroom, using a Rasch model. This new research path may someday lead to reform in the Japanese EFL testing system, which appears to be sorely needed. Specifically, new types of oral proficiency tests and assessments should be considered in Japan, as esteemed scholars such as Yashima (2002) strongly advocate that increasing WTC should be the goal of language instruction in Japan, and "EFL lessons should be designed to enhance students' interest in different cultures and international affairs and activities, as well as to reduce anxiety and build confidence in communication" (p. 63).

Research Question

The aim of this study is to help fill in the gap that exists between research and practice where TBLT is concerned. Despite a great deal of theoretical and psycholinguistic research support, very little is known about how TBLT actually affects the language classroom in practical terms. Further, concerning the

Japanese EFL context, one of the major challenges teachers always face in their communication classes is trying to coax students out of their shells and get them to communicate more. The researchers hypothesize that exposure to TBI may be one way to increase students' willingness to communicate, and have thus formulated the following research question:

How will task-based instruction influence Japanese EFL university students' willingness to communicate in L2 English in this study?

To answer this question, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach using quantitative and qualitative analyses, as described and reported in the following sections.

Methodology

Participants

This study employed opportunity sampling, which is a sampling technique that consists of taking the sample from people who are available at the time of the study and fit the criteria the researchers are looking for. Consisting of an opportunistic sample, this study included six instructors of English (three females and three males; four native English speakers and two Japanese teachers of English) and 235 Japanese university students (117 females and 118 males), who were enrolled across the Faculties of Medicine, Education, Economics, Global Humanities and Social Sciences, Environmental Studies, and Engineering. Student participants were between 18 and 20 years old and had studied English for 6.5 years on average (including a collective six years in junior and senior high school). All students in this study were enrolled in first-year English Communication classes (English Communication I and II), which are compulsory courses that students across all faculties must take to fulfill their general education requirement to ultimately graduate from the university. English Communication classes are grouped according to faculty, with approximately 40-50 students in each class. Accordingly, participants represented a wide range of English proficiency levels in each class. However, the instructors' descriptions of participants' English skills in general terms are consistent with the oft-used characterization of *false beginner* in Japan (Helgesen, Brown, & Mandeville, 2007; Martin, 2003). According to Peaty (1987), who describes JEFL university students as "prototype false beginners" (p. 4), false beginners have a background in English based on their study of grammar and translation in junior and senior high school, but have very low communicative abilities.

Instruments

To measure WTC in this study, the researchers administered McCroskey's (1992) widely used 20-item, probability-estimate scale (see Appendix). Twelve of the items are scored as part of the scale, while eight of the items are fillers. Although this scale yields a total score, it also produces sub-scores, which account for some of the contextual dimensions of conversations. This includes three sub-scores based on the type of interlocutor (i.e., strangers, acquaintances, friends) and four sub-scores based on the type of communication context (i.e., public, meeting, group, dyad). Further, interviews were conducted with five student participants and two teachers who were involved with TBI in this study.

Procedure

First, to investigate the effects of TBLT on learners' WTC, the student participants in this study were asked to complete WTC questionnaires at two points in time: at the beginning and at the end of the semester (i.e., 16 weeks later). Although the focus of the investigation was on English Communication

classes in this context, questionnaires were administered across students' first year language courses, which included English Communication and Comprehensive English, as well as French, Korean and German language courses. The reason for this was that this study constituted an opportunistic sample and the researchers approached teachers of classes that they knew in order to collect data for this study. A total of 192 students (102 female and 90 male) received TBI in their English Communication courses, while 43 students (27 female and 16 male) were taught using other methods. In such an opportunistic sample, the researchers did not have control over the ELT curriculum in their university, or the teaching methods individual teachers were employing in their classrooms. While the researchers ideally preferred to form two groups with a similar number of TBI students vis-à-vis non-TBI students, the researchers had to contend with various practical constraints, and thus ultimately ended up with a disparity in the number of students in the experimental (TBI) group (192) and the control (non-TBI) group (43).

Details regarding the instruction students received in their English Communication classes are described below. All the student participants in this study were enrolled in other courses, which varied slightly depending on the faculty. In addition to the language classes mentioned above, most, if not all, students were enrolled in classes that were conducted in Japanese, such as Law, History, Physical Education, Health Sciences, Career Preparation and first-year seminar classes. Further, some of the students in the School of Global Humanities and Social Sciences were enrolled in English Reading and Writing classes. At the end of the semester, five student participants and two teachers that were involved in the task-based lessons were selected to participate in interviews. Students were chosen randomly and teachers were chosen based on their availability. Each participant was interviewed separately for approximately twenty minutes; interviews were conducted in the primary researcher's office. The purpose of these interviews was to follow up on the questionnaire and to gain a more in-depth understanding of how TBI impacted students' willingness to communicate in English.

Experimental group: TBI course and lesson structure

Following the tenets of task-based instruction (TBI) presented above, the instructors designed and administered a syllabus for fifteen weekly ninety-minute English Communication classes over the course of one semester (Cutrone & Beh, 2015). The tasks in this task-based syllabus encompassed the following themes/activities: introducing oneself to foreign guests, giving advice to foreign visitors preparing for their trips to Japan, helping foreign visitors choose between a homestay and a student dormitory, giving foreign visitors directions on a map, ranking sightseeing places in Nagasaki, rating tourist destinations in other places in Kyushu, presenting on one's hometown, arranging a day out with foreign friends, explaining and recommending Japanese foods to foreign guests, helping foreign visitors choose which hotel to stay in, providing the details of Kyushu-based festivals to foreign guests, ranking the leisure activities of Japanese university students, suggesting Japanese souvenirs to foreign guests when they return home, giving advice to foreign visitors wanting to study Japanese, and, lastly, saying goodbye and setting goals for the future. Adhering to the seven steps of a task-based lesson laid out by Willis (1998), each lesson in this task-based course consisted of the following steps:

Pre-task. This activity precedes the main task of the lesson and is designed to stimulate interest in the lesson theme and/or pre-teach any vocabulary that students might have difficulty with.

Main task. This is the central part of each lesson and provides students with opportunities for meaningful language exchange. Students engage in tasks that were created to have clear and achievable objectives, which are representative of the types of tasks learners in this context would actually do in their real lives, and are thus relevant to them. Tasks involve students taking part in matching, speculation, rating, ranking, decision making and problem solving activities. Students should speak only in English and are encouraged to focus on task completion, and thus fluency (over accuracy) at this stage.

Planning and oral report. Upon completing the main task described above, students in each group are required to share what they discussed (and their conclusions) with the rest of the class. This entails giving students a few minutes to prepare a short oral report. At this stage, since the report is somewhat more formal, public and rehearsed, students now can turn their focus toward accuracy. Accordingly, they can even use some Japanese to plan their report and solicit help from the instructor if necessary.

Listening. The purpose of the listening segment of the lesson is for students to have a chance to hear proficient speakers of English perform similar tasks to the ones they had just attempted. The listening component of each lesson is divided into two sections: the first listening and the second listening. In the first listening, students listen for gist and general comprehension. The instructor uses the second listening to point out specific features of the language that were thought to be new to students and/or important to achieving the task objective.

Language analysis activities. The language analysis activities are the part of a task-based lesson that involves grammatical exercises and explanation. While the second listening phase starts the process of raising learners' awareness of certain features of the language, the language analysis activities extends learners' access to this target language by providing them a chance to practice using these features on their own.

Post-task. This is the final phase of the lesson and provides students with another opportunity to complete a task that closely replicates the main task of the unit. From what students have learned in the unit, they should be better equipped to handle the demands of this task.

Methods used to teach English communication to control group

The 43 members of the control group (i.e., Group B) did not receive TBI in their English Communication classes. Instead, they were taught using an assortment of other methods that tended to vary from teacher to teacher. These methods ranged from teacher-centered classes that focused on grammar, reading and test-taking skills, to classes that were slightly more student-centered and employed a Presentation-Practice-Production (P-P-P) approach to language instruction. Further, some teachers employed popular course books in their classes, while other teachers either created and used their own materials or relied heavily on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) methods. Thus, there was very little consistency in how English Communication courses were taught in this context, and it is unclear just how much communication actually took place.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this study required both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. First, for the quantitative data, the researchers examined the data produced by the WTC questionnaires. Taking into account the scope of this study, total WTC scores were calculated along with sub-scores for the Group Discussion and Public Speaking categories to assess performances. These two sub-categories were chosen because our task-based framework, as described above, contains elements that relate directly to these modes of communication: Group Discussion is practiced in the Main Task and Post Task, while Public Speaking is practiced in the Oral Report segment of each lesson. The mathematical formula to calculate these sub-scores is presented at the bottom of the WTC questionnaire in the Appendix.

Further, interviews were conducted with five student participants and two teachers in the experimental group. The interviews were semi-structured, in that the interviewer had a general plan (with several themes related to TBI in mind) for the interviews, but did not enter with a predetermined set of questions, as some questions were guided by the previous responses of the interviewee. Questions were sequenced in a way that began with general questions and gradually led to more specific and potentially sensitive

questions in an effort to make participants feel more comfortable and thus provide more honest data. All responses were recorded and analyzed by the researchers, who then grouped responses that were similar into categories and themes that were relevant to this study.

Results

WTC Questionnaire

Tables 1 and 2 report the TBI and Control groups' WTC scores at the beginning and at the end of the semester. As shown in Table 1, the TBI group's mean WTC scores significantly improved in all three areas measured: overall WTC scores by 20.09, Group Discussion scores by 22.46, and Public Speaking scores by 22.04. In contrast, Table 2 shows that the Control group's mean WTC scores did not change much at all from the pre-test to the post-test, with only slight increases of 2.1 in overall WTC scores, 1.63 in Group Discussion scores, and 1.79 in Public Speaking scores.

TABLE 1
Experimental Group's WTC Scores Before and After TBI

| N = 192 | Pre-test | Post-test | Mean Diff. | (%) | t | p |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Category | Mean (SD) | Mean (SD) | | | | |
| Overall WTC | 43.21 (21.07) | 63.30 (18.49) | 20.09 | 46.49 | -18.233 | .000*** |
| Group Discussion | 46.87 (23.89) | 69.33 (19.80) | 22.46 | 47.93 | -17.405 | .000*** |
| Public Speaking | 41.53 (22.38) | 63.57 (21.09) | 22.04 | 53.07 | -17.962 | .000*** |

(Mean difference of Pre-test → Post-test significant at p<.05 level = *; significant at p<.01 level = **, and significant at p<.01 level = ***)

TABLE 2
Control Group's WTC Scores Over Time

| N = 43 | Pre-test | Post-test | Mean Diff. | (%) | t | p |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------|--------|------|
| Category | Mean (SD) | Mean (SD) | | | | |
| Overall WTC | 17.31 (22.68) | 19.41 (22.83) | 2.1 | 12.13 | -1.247 | .219 |
| Group Discussion | 18.14 (24.43) | 19.77 (26.14) | 1.63 | 8.99 | -.807 | .424 |
| Public Speaking | 17.4 (22.33) | 19.19 (24.49) | 1.79 | 10.29 | -.959 | .343 |

(Mean difference of Pre-test → Post-test significant at p<.05 level = *; significant at p<.01 level = **, and significant at p<.01 level = ***)

The bar graphs in Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the mean differences across the three categories within each group. Figure 4 shows the significant increases in the overall WTC scores, the Group Discussion WTC scores, and the Public Speaking WTC scores of the TBI group. Figure 5 shows that the WTC scores of the Control group remained low in all three categories from the pre-test to the post-test.

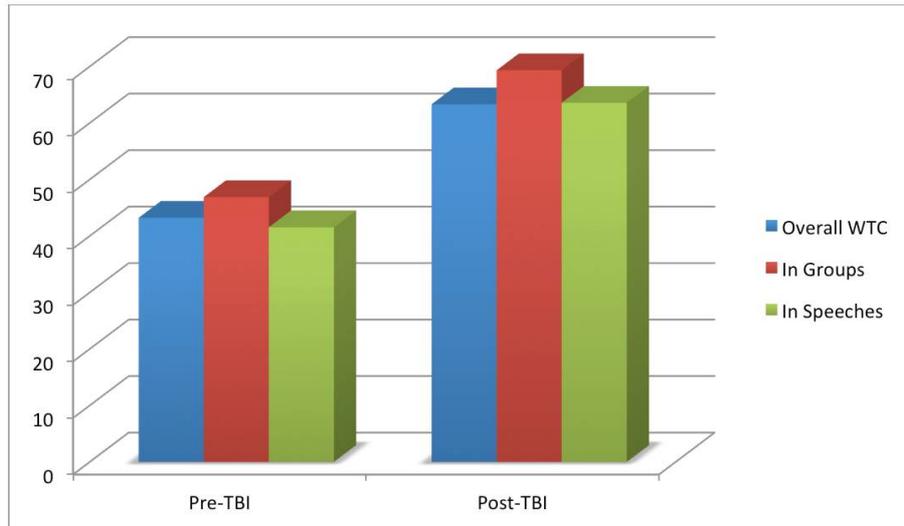


Figure 4. A comparison of WTC scores before and after TBI.

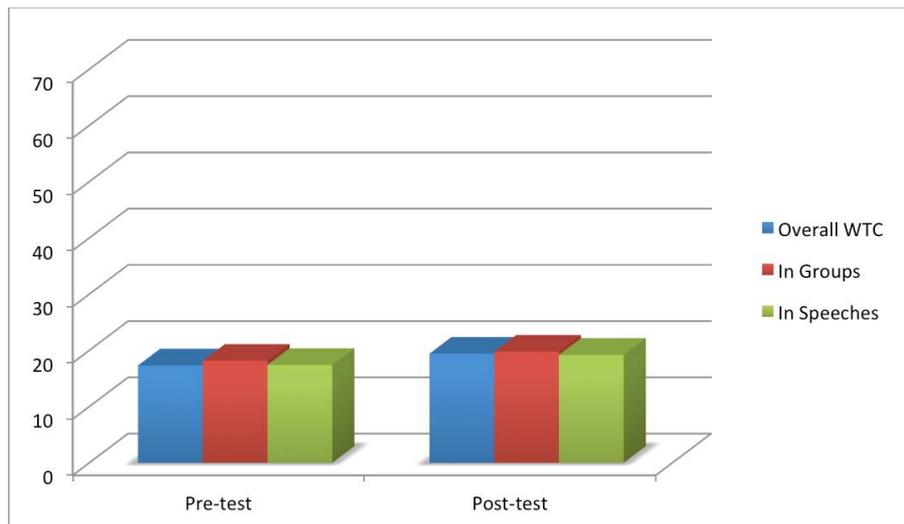


Figure 5. A comparison of the control group's WTC scores over time.

The line charts in Figures 6, 7 and 8 illustrate the mean differences between the two groups in each of the three categories. Figure 6 shows the overall WTC scores; Figure 7 shows the Group Discussion WTC scores, and Figure 8 displays the WTC Public Speaking scores. The results across the three categories mirrored each other, in that the TBI group started with a comparatively high baseline (> 43 in each category) and showed noticeable increases in WTC scores (> 20 points in each category), while the control group started with low scores (< 19 in each category) that increased only slightly from the pre-test to the test (< 3 points in each category).

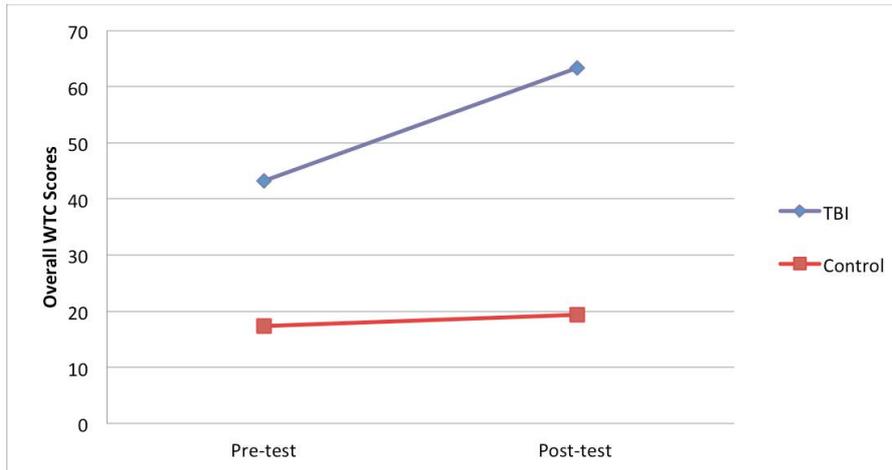


Figure 6. A comparison of overall WTC scores over time.

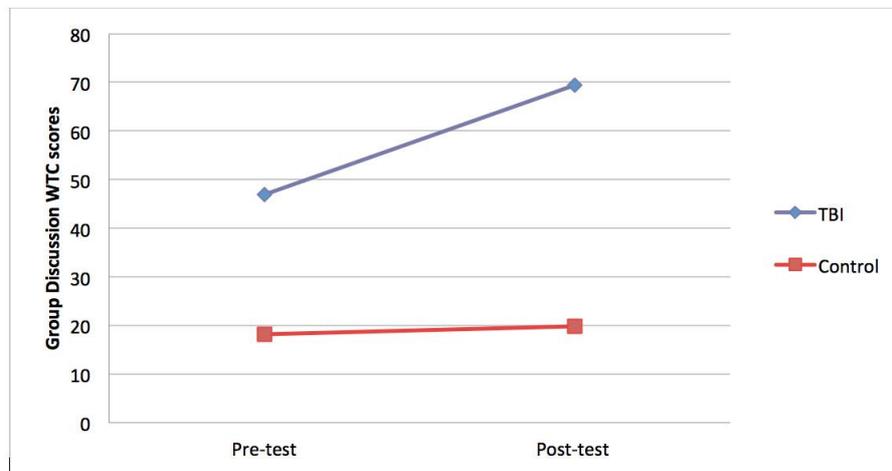


Figure 7. A comparison of group discussion WTC scores over time.

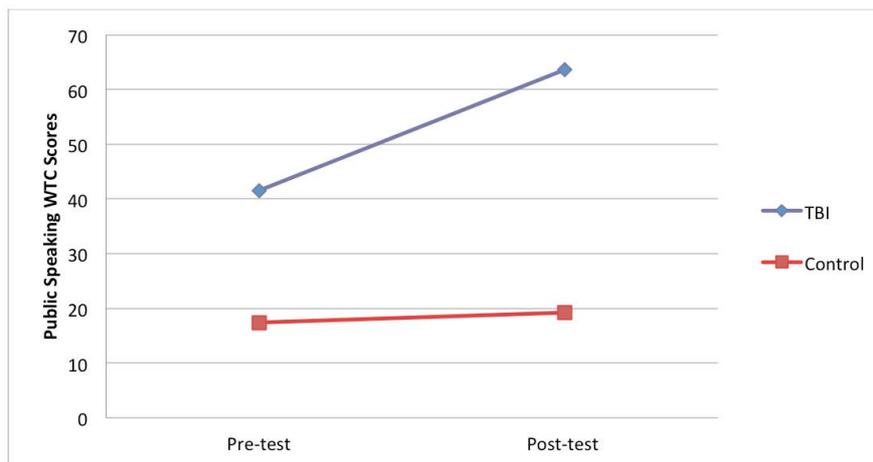


Figure 8. A comparison of public speaking WTC groups over time.

Interviews

The responses in the interviews provide us with a more in-depth look at how students and teachers perceived their TBI experience. Upon analyzing this data, the researchers grouped responses into three categories which are relevant to the themes of this study: overall impression of TBI, how participants thought TBI was different from other learning/teaching methods they had experienced, and potential drawbacks of TBI. These themes will be presented below from the perspectives of the five students and two teachers who participated in the interviews.

Students

First, when the interviewer asked students to share their general impressions of the task-based methods used in their English Communication courses, it became very clear that all of the students interviewed had an extremely positive experience with TBLT. The following responses are representative of this:

Kana: I had so much fun in this class. It didn't even feel like I was studying in school.

Hiroshi: This was my favorite class and has made me more motivated to learn English in the future.

Harumi: I loved this class. It was unlike any other English class I have ever had.

While it was clear that all students enjoyed their TBI experience, they offered somewhat different reasons. For instance, two of the students commented on the nature of the core task-based activities in the book, as follows:

Hiroshi: The activities in this book felt very real and were practical for me. I am from Fukuoka, so I was glad to have a chance to speak English about things I knew about.

Sae: I liked this class because activities were so fun and useful for me.

Two other students commented on the authenticity of the language used in the listening exercises, as follows:

Harumi: I was interested in this class because the English I heard feels more natural. In my other English classes, I sometimes felt that the conversations were a bit unnatural.

Sara: I liked the listening exercises and especially the audio transcription of the dialogues. I was able to study these many times and feel that they helped me improve a lot.

In the following response, the final student, Kana, explains that she liked her TBI lessons because she could be more actively involved in all facets of the lesson:

Kana: In most of my previous English classes, students just sit and there and listen, passive (sic) and do nothing; some students even sleep, play on smartphone or doing (sic) other classes' work during the lecture. This class was so great because it was different; I could use English actively a lot.

As the responses above show, when students were asked to explain why they liked their task-based lessons so much, Harumi, Kana, and (to a lesser degree) Hiroshi, chose on their own to compare TBI to other methods of ELT they had experienced. When prompted explicitly to comment on the differences, Sae and Sara responded as follows:

Sae: I liked this (TBI-instructed) class better because the situations were more realistic for me. In most other English classes I had, the situations in the book were not something I can even

imagine would do or need that English in my life. But in this book, everything was real and fit just for me (sic).

Sara: The main difference for me is that for most of my English classes in Japan before, we do not have a chance to communicate much in English, which is actually what we really need most. In this class, we could do that a lot, and we could study real English, which most other classes do not. The listening exercises in other books in Japan I have used were kind of slow and unnatural; I thought it doesn't help a Japanese who will go abroad so much.

Lastly, when students were asked if they had experienced and/or noticed any drawbacks in their TBI lessons, most replied that they did not. The following response by Hiroshi, however, seems to suggest that the method of ELT instruction may not necessarily matter for some of the more demotivated students in the Japanese EFL university context:

Hiroshi: I think this way (TBI) of learning English is much better for most Japanese students, but there are some Japanese students who do not like English and will never change this feeling. For such cases, I think it is better for them to not study English, but if they have to, they should just take lecture style lessons where they can sleep and do other things.

When the interviewer asked the other four students about this issue, they all acknowledged that demotivation is a serious problem in this context; however, they did not agree with the idea that such students should simply give up on trying to learn English.

Teachers

Similar to the students that were interviewed in this study, the two teachers responded emphatically that they had extremely positive experiences with TBI. When the interviewer asked them why they felt this way, the teachers described and explained how TBI differed from other methods they had previously tried, as follows:

Brad: In the past, I had tried many different methods to motivate students, such as using videos and experimenting with a wide array of course books, in my English Communication classes. These classes are compulsory classes for non-English majors, and to be honest, overall, I did not have great success in getting my students on board. I had read about TBLT and the research support it had received over the years and, since I was pretty desperate, I needed to try something new and decided to give TBI a try. I am really glad I did, as it changed my view of English Communication classes in Japan completely. I used to dread these classes, but now I actually really look forward to them. Once the students got used to how the lessons would flow after the first few classes, I noticed a marked improvement in student motivation. Most students seemed quite engaged in the tasks and made a concerted effort to communicate with each other to complete the task.

The other teacher who was interviewed echoed similar sentiments about how student motivation seemed to increase, and then proceeded to explain why, as follows:

Madoka: For me, the big difference between TBI and what I had done before was that with TBI the whole atmosphere of the class just seemed to be so much better. Students were much more actively involved and seemed to be having a lot fun in class for a change. One of the main reasons for this was that the course was tailor made for them. I mean most, if not all, of my students are from Kyushu, and in the TBI course they were able to talk about Kyushu-related things that they knew things about. Also, the tasks were so well designed and practical for them.

Students did not have to imagine ill-conceived role play situations that might seem unrealistic to them; rather, they could simply be themselves and use English in a way that made sense to them.

Lastly, the interviewer asked the teachers if they had experienced any drawbacks with TBI. They responded they did not have any major problems but brought up a few minor issues, such as the following:

Brad: One thing I noticed is that sometimes the students were a bit too motivated to complete the task and started speaking Japanese when I was not looking. Also, sometimes I wish I had more time, as I found it a bit difficult to complete one unit from the book in one class period as I had planned.

Madoka: Well, first let me say, I am not really a normal (sic) Japanese teacher of English (JTE). I think a great many JTEs do not really understand what TBI even is and are not really curious about that. Maybe they do not think it is a serious enough method for learning English or they need to focus their energies on teaching students about how to pass entrance examinations, which focus on reading and memorization. I mean, sadly, most JTEs I know tend to still focus on grammar in their lessons, even in universities, and do not even really speak English in their classes.

In her reply, Madoka touched upon one of the potential criticisms of TBI that has been discussed above, i.e., how suitable TBI is for the Japanese EFL context. As the writers have argued, such criticism appears largely baseless and seems to stem from conjecture and intuition more than anything. What is not in dispute, however, is the fact many JTEs seem to be reluctant to try new methods of language teaching such as TBLT. As discussed below, more teacher training in alternative ELT methods is sorely needed in Japan, and particular emphasis on TBLT would be a great place to start.

Discussion

To answer the research question of this study, the findings seem to suggest that TBI had an extremely positive effect on the Japanese EFL university student participants' WTC in L2 English in this study. This finding is consistent with the anecdotal evidence of a previous pilot study, in which a group of JEFLLs reported that they enjoyed the task-based lessons they experienced and felt an increased sense of confidence and motivation to use English afterwards (Cutrone & Beh, 2014). Their comments demonstrate this, as follows:

Akiko: This was the most fun I've ever had in English class. I am looking forward to next class.

Chieko: I really liked the tasks about Japan. I think the grammar exercises were very good for giving me the language to use in task (sic) like that in my future.

Kenji: I felt that this English was useful for me. Before, I did not feel that. Maya: I feel more confident about saying things I want to say in English.

Nagako: The order of the lesson made me very want to know (sic) the kind of English I can use in that situation.

Shintaro: This lesson was great for me. It's so good that we can talk about Nagasaki, because these are the thing (sic) I know well. I think I will look at my papers after class is over because English is need (sic).

Taro: I can use this English in my real life. Thanks. (Cutrone & Beh, 2014, p. 15)

Further, similar to the teachers interviewed in the present study, the teachers in the aforementioned study reported that their students had, by and large, increased their WTC in English. According to

Cutrone and Beh (2014), students seemed especially motivated and engrossed by the task objective, as well as by the chance to converse with their peers about things that were relevant to their lives. These observations were borne out in both the quantitative and qualitative data of this present study, which clearly point to a significant increase in motivation and WTC among the group of learners that received TBI. To confirm these findings, the next step in the research would seem to require going beyond anecdotes and perceptions of one's own WTC and should actually involve undertaking some type of systematic observation of students' communicative participation before, during and after task-based lessons/courses.

In hindsight, the results of this study should not be surprising, as the task-based lessons used in this study were tailor made to suit the desires and needs of the student participants in this study (i.e., Japanese university students who are mostly from the Kyushu region of Japan). As shown in the interview responses above, students were motivated to talk about topics that were fun and familiar to them, and could realistically envision themselves actually needing English in the situations depicted in the lessons. In addition, the task-based lessons in this study incorporated authentic models of English and realia, which were thought to be more inspiring than some of the contrived models of English and hypothetical (and potentially unimaginable and/or unrealistic) situations students may have been exposed to in their other English Communication classes.

Furthermore, students may have been motivated by the lesson structure, in that the steps of task-based lessons have been designed to demonstrate to learners that they need to develop specific language features to achieve the task (Long, 1991; Schmidt, 1990). This is why the main task comes before the listening models and language analysis activities. Once learners go through the process of trying to complete a task and realize for themselves that further language skills are required to more effectively achieve the task objective, their awareness becomes heightened and their cognitive state is much more receptive to accepting the linguistic items necessary to perform the task, which are then presented and practiced in the listening models and language awareness activities respectively. Lastly, students may have been motivated to speak by the simple fact that the tasks were goal-oriented and required meaningful exchanges to take place in order for the task to be completed.

Moreover, while the discussion above relates to all dimensions of WTC, it is worth noting that the sub-categories of the WTC construct, Group Discussion and Public Speaking, also seem to align with the tenets of a task-based framework. That is, many, if not all, of the main tasks in the task-based course require students to engage in discussions to complete the task. In doing so, students have an excellent opportunity to improve their fluency and discussion skills. Similarly, students in the TBI group will have had ample opportunities to improve their public speaking skills, as each task-based lesson includes a series of steps where learners prepare a report of their discussion and formally present it to the class.

Finally, one surprising finding in this study was the fact that the initial baseline was so much higher for the group set to receive TBI. While it is difficult to pinpoint why, one reason may have been that students in the TBI group had already purchased and looked through their books. The book that was chosen for the TBI is titled *Welcome to Kyushu, Japan* (Cutrone & Beh, 2015), and the attractive design and layout, along with places and themes that students are very familiar with, may have positively influenced students' initial WTC scores.

Conclusion

Touching upon various aspects of language education, the impetus of this study was to expand the scope of empirical work examining TBLT and to provide a response to the calls for research investigating TBLT in action (Van den Branden, 2006). In doing so, the researchers were able to probe another area of foreign language education in dire need of research attention: WTC in the Japanese EFL context. Thus, in specific terms, the researchers' main objective was to gauge the effects of TBLT on their learners' WTC. Before any tentative conclusions can be presented, however, it is important to point out some of the

limitations of this study. Due to practical constraints, the researchers were not able to control for a great many factors that easily may have influenced learners' WTC. Such variables include learners' personalities, and particularly how introverted or extroverted they are, learners' exposure to the target language outside of class, how learners felt about their teachers and/or progress in each class, the amount of time they have spent abroad, their plans and goals for the future, and whether such plans and goals involve English usage. Furthermore, it was not possible to control all facets of instruction given to the Control group in their English Communication classes, and clearly there was a great deal of variation in the instructional methods given to this group. Lastly, the researchers were unable to use a delayed post-test in this study, and thus, it is not certain how sustainable the increases in WTC, which were recorded directly after TBI, would be over time without continued treatment.

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings would seem to suggest that TBLT did indeed have a positive impact on the student participants' WTC. Hence, the results of this study lend support to the mounting anecdotal evidence and theoretical, psycholinguistic foundations of TBLT. Consequently, the researchers strongly encourage language instructors in Japan to, at the very least, explore task-based methods in their English Communication classes. For any shift in teaching methodologies to occur in Japan, however, material designers and curriculum developers would also have to be on board and willing to adapt their long-standing practices, as well as develop methods to train language instructors to use this innovative teaching approach.

In closing, the researchers would like to repeat Van den Branden's (2006) calls for more classroom research involving all practical facets of TBLT; in addition to replication studies that also measure the effects of TBLT on learners' WTC (and other affective constructs), the researchers would also like to see more studies focus on performance and language outcomes. Specifically, the researchers would like to see how TBLT compares with other instructional methods where language outcomes are concerned, and studies comparing TBLT to PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) instructional methods would be welcome.

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Appendix

Willingness to Communicate Scale

Directions: Below are twenty situations in which a person might choose to communicate or not communicate in English. Presume that the person in each situation does not speak Japanese but can speak English. Also, presume you have *completely free choice*. Indicate the percentage of times you would choose to *communicate* in each type of situation. Indicate in the space at the left what percent of the time you would choose to communicate.

0 = never, 100 = always

- _____ 1. *Talk with a service station attendant.
- _____ 2. *Talk with a physician.
- _____ 3. Present a talk to a group of strangers.
- _____ 4. Talk with an acquaintance while standing in line.
- _____ 5. *Talk with a salesperson in a store.
- _____ 6. Talk in a large meeting of friends.
- _____ 7. *Talk with a police officer.
- _____ 8. Talk in a small group of strangers.
- _____ 9. Talk with a friend while standing in line.
- _____ 10. *Talk with a waiter/waitress in a restaurant.
- _____ 11. Talk in a large meeting of acquaintances.
- _____ 12. Talk with a stranger while standing in line.
- _____ 13 *Talk with a secretary.
- _____ 14. Present a talk to a group of friends.
- _____ 15. Talk in a small group of acquaintances.
- _____ 16. *Talk with a garbage collector.
- _____ 17. Talk in a large meeting of strangers.
- _____ 18. *Talk with a spouse (or girl/boyfriend).
- _____ 19. Talk in a small group of friends.
- _____ 20. Present a talk to a group of acquaintances.

N.B.: JEFLs were provided with Japanese explanations. Furthermore, the asterisk (*) marking the filler items above, as well as the scoring table below, were not included on the questionnaires the JEFLs completed.

Scoring: The WTC permits computation of one total score and seven sub-scores. The sub-scores relate to willingness to communicate in each of four common communication contexts and with three types of audiences. To compute the scores, merely add the scores for each item and divide by the number indicated below.

| <i>Sub-score Desired</i> | <i>Scoring Formula</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Group discussion | Add scores for items 8,15, and 19; then divide by 3. |
| Meetings | Add scores for items 6, 11, and 17; then divide by 3. |
| Interpersonal conversations | Add scores for items 4,9, and 12; then divide by 3. |
| Public speaking | Add scores for items 3, 14, and 20; then divide by 3. |
| Stranger | Add scores for items 3, 8, 12, and 17; then divide by 4. |
| Acquaintance | Add scores for items 4, 11, 15, and 20; then divide by 4. |
| Friend | Add scores for items 6, 9, 14, and 19; then divide by 4. |

To compute the total WTC scores, add the sub-scores for strangers, acquaintances, and friends. Then divide by 3.