Japanese EFL Students' Willingness to Communicate in the L2
－ Causes and Solutions －

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Abstract

  Previous research has shown that WTC in the target language is predicted by examining ELL's levels of anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence (MacIntyre, 1994; Yashima, 2002); however Japanese EFL learner and teacher interactions have not been closely examined. To better understand JEFLs' willingness to communicate in the L2, and how teachers affect students' WTC, a revised version of Matsuoka's (2004) WTC survey was administered to 69 Japanese EFL university students. Participants ranked willingness to perform tasks in the L2 with their English faculty's language teachers, revealing relatively low levels of WTC in the L2 across both native and non-native teachers. After examining mean scores, outliers, and previous WTC research, probable causes for lack of WTC included demotivation, teachers' behaviors and teaching styles, and student-teacher interactions. Based on these findings, communicative pedagogical strategies and methods are recommended for educators teaching in a Japanese EFL environment.

Key Words : willingness to communicate, classroom instruction, foreign language anxiety

Common Acronyms: CA (Communication Apprehension); WTC (Willingness to Communicate); JELL (Japanese English Language Learner); FLA (Foreign Language Anxiety)

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1.0 Introduction

Individual language learners all present different challenges when looking to acquire a second language (Dörnyei, 2005; Mitchell, Miles, & Marsden, 2013), including creativity, learning styles, and cognitive differences. These individual learning differences, however, are determined by an individual's personality, resulting in an inability to uncover precise pedagogical solutions within second language acquisition (SLA). Despite this, researchers continue to hypothesize ways motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, and willingness to communicate (WTC) can hinder English language learners (ELL) L2 acquisition. Because ELLs have these tensions, anxieties, and insecurities, research proposes solutions in order to have higher acquisition rates in the classroom.

Japanese ELL populations in particular have shown personal and social factors affecting English language acquisition despite government interference on education policy (Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; MEXT, 2011). Compulsory education systems, historical changes in language policy, and (lack of) success within English as a foreign language has been a constant factor for Japanese language learners.

2.0 Literature

2.1 Motivation

Motivation, loosely defined by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013), is a set of factors that has a "potential range of influences on human behavior" (p. 4). Examining the scope of motivation through SLA, Gardner's theory (1985) argued that in order for language learners to be motivated they must: 1) have positive attitudes toward the L2; 2) desire to learn; and 3) retain high effort or intensity. Gardener and Lambert (1959; 1972) also encouraged emphasis being placed on social psychological factors—language learners' opinions about the target language, culture, and people—rather than extrinsic factors. Crooks and Schmidt (1991) (c.f. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013) argued L2 motivation is multi-faceted and intertwines with classroom environments, thus, impacting classrooms, syllabus designs, and extracurricular activities. In 1995, Tremblay and Gardner expanded on Crooks and Schmidt, creating a model for L2 motivation that demonstrated how referring back to goal salience, valence, and self-efficacy increased motivational behavior in ESL students.

2.1.1 Motivation Effects on SLA

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) outline the intrinsic forms of motivation that affect second language acquisition, saying that although all forms play a role in SLA, intrinsic is more impactful that extrinsic. For example, Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) demonstrate student's enthusiasm to communicate with native

speakers, boosting levels of intrinsic motivation. Schmidt (1993) also reveals L2 learners who are more willing to struggle and take chances in the target language with have higher pragmatic competence skills. Similarly, Pintrich and Schunk (c.f. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013) agree that L2 learners facing an "optimal or moderate level of challenge" will be more intrinsically motivated (p. 26).

Although motivation is often studied in SLA environments, demotivation also plays a significant role (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013; Kikuchi, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Sugino, 2010). Kikuchi and Sakai (2009), using Dörnyei's model, expand demotivational factors that affect Japanese EFL classrooms in particular: 1) course books; 2) test scores; 3) non-communicative methods; and 4) teaching styles and [in]competency in the L2.

2.1.2 Best Teaching Practices

Motivation in L2 can be affected by students' experience and perceptions about the target language and culture (Gardener & Lambert, 1972), but classroom environments also influence SLA. Gardener & Lambert (1972) summarized research showing steps educators can take to optimize motivation, including material/task design and grouping and evaluation structures, such as incorporating student voices and altering assessment styles.

Tremblay & Gardner (1995) argued goal setting—having students set individual and classroom goals—is a strategy teachers can utilize to establish higher levels of intrinsic motivation (p. 515). Emaliana (2017) suggested teachers build an active classroom, with group work and activities to stimulate learning. Similarly, role-play and group work has shown an increase students' L2 communication in the classroom (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; VanPattern, 2002). Kikuchi (2009), however, demonstrated that L2 incompetencies leads to classroom demotivation—resulting in textbooks and class materials becoming difficult and unrelatable. For educators to create engaging and stimulating classes, she suggested teachers interact with students more, minimize testing, and utilize interesting and up-to-date textbooks.

2.2 Language Anxiety

Anxiety is known to limit one's ability to perform basic actions and tasks, however in SLA, focus lies on language learning anxiety (Gardener, 1985; Gregersen, Meza, & MacIntyre 2014; MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre, 1999). Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985) (c.f. Mitchell, et al., 2013), for example, broadly introduces the affective filter, or emotional impediment, learners have that interrupts language acquisition. Expanding on anxiety, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) surveyed foreign language learners' individual anxiety levels while interacting in the L2, which revealed that although individual reactions vary, language anxiety while using a foreign

language develops and hinders acquisition. Krashen referred to this as having a high effective filter, and Du (2009) elaborated that anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation also affect language acquisition.

In addition to L2 acquisition, L2 performance, competencies, and usage are also impacted by L2 language anxiety (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005; Yashima, 2002). Studies (Effoing, 2015; Hashimoto, 2003; Yashima, 2002) have shown that ELL students with elevated levels of speaking-related anxiety, can result in students who were less engaged and less willing to communicate in the classroom. Due to these factors surrounding language anxiety (c.f. Young, 1991), for the purposes of this study, foreign language anxiety (FLA) will be defined as "[the] worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 29).

2.2.1 Best Teaching Practices

In a review of FLA literature, Young (1991) outlined instructor-learner interactions, inter/personal anxieties, and classroom procedures as causes of language anxiety. Language instructors, Brandl (1987) (c.f. Young, 1991) discovered, tended to demonstrate an authoritative role, using intimidation strategies and being less friendly in the classroom. More authoritative instructors were especially evident in teacher-centered classrooms, where there is little group work or student interaction (Emaliana, 2017). These types of classrooms are preferred by educators and is another possible cause for language anxiety (Dewaele, Franco, Magdalena, & Saito, 2019). Higher levels of FLA result in negative instructor-learner interactions, including a focus on testing (Brown & Yamashita, 1995), lack of facilitation (Dewaele, et al., 2019), and less enjoyment in the classroom (Dewaele and Dewaele, 2020).

Horwitz, et al. (1986) was the first to explore pedagogic strategies educators could utilize to decrease FLA in the classroom: enforcing coping mechanisms, identifying triggers, and creating stress-free environments. Moreover, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) demonstrated that educators who praise and provide feedback to students create less intimidating classroom environments. Similarly, Dewaele, et al. (2019) found a correlation between enjoyment in the classroom and lower level of FLA, meaning "[teachers] being friendly, not overly strict and encouraging everybody to use the [L2] frequently in class" (p. 425) resulted in more engaged and confident students (also see Dewaele, 2019). These results support an active, student-centered classroom, which, Young (1991) argued, is where instructors facilitate classrooms, give students opportunities for communication, and engage with students in workshops and conferences using the L2. Young (1991) went on to cite Koch (1991) and Terrell et al. (1988), demonstrated the importance of timing in error correction. Mitchell, et al. (2013) cited six types of error corrections and error feedback strategies that second

language teachers utilize that studies have shown to be effective in lessening anxiety in L2 learners and promoting L2 acquisition (p. 169).

2.3 Willingness to Communicate

McCroskey and Baer (1985) first conceptualized WTC by in reference to personal factors—such as communication apprehension (CA), self-perceived communicative competence, and personality traits—and aspects of personality that were responsible for the "variability in talking behavior" (p. 3). Personal differences in individuals, individual constructs, and situational constraints, thus, limit an individual's general willingness to communicate (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). McIntyre (1994) later examined factors that affected WTC among individuals' relationships, proposing WTC as the final step of a relationship before permanent behaviors were established, which lead individuals to perceived communicative competence. Those factors, as well as self-esteem, situational surrounds, group sizes, and formality (Kang, 2005; McCroskey & Baer, 1985; MacIntyre et al., 1998), influenced WTC in the native language.

2.3.1 WTC in Second Language Classroom

MacIntyre and Charos (1996) expanded on WTC in the L1, applying theories of anxiety and self-perceived communicative competence to the target language. They demonstrated that communication in the L2 was connected to "willingness to engage in L2 communication" (p. 20), L2 motivation, and perception of L2 competence. Therefore, before attaining application or willingness to communicate in the target language, an individual's personal factors must be overcome (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Factors that influence WTC in SLA include motivation, self-confidence, anxiety, and perceived communicative competence (Cao & Philip, 2006; Emaliana, 2017; MacIntyre 1994; MacIntyre and Charos 1996; Matsuoka, 2004; Yashima, 2002). Predicters for second language WTC are illustrated in Table 1.

FLA			*predicts*			**WTC**
CA & FLA		*affects*	**Self-confidence**		*influences*	**WTC**
FLA			*decreases*			**WTC**
Perceived L2 competence			*increases*			**WTC**
Motivation	*predicts*	**Self-confidence**	*decreases*	**FLA**	*increases*	**WTC**
Situational factors			*affects*			**WTC**

Table 1 Factors Impacting WTC Levels in L2

MacIntyre and Charos (1996) argue that WTC and FLA are not directly connected, rather anxiety and CA are interconnected to self-confidence, which then influences WTC. Whereas Dewaele (2019), Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asadpour (2012), and Matsuoka (2004) discovered language anxiety as the most prominent

as a predictor of WTC. Dewaele (2019) added that although FLA depleted WTC, the cause for language anxiety was triggered by students' tests results, attitudes toward English language and teachers, and teachers' friendliness.

In contrast, proficiency has had little impact on WTC (Cao & Philip, 2006; Munezane, 2013; Matsuoka, 2004; Yashima, 2002) with Valadi, Rezaee, and Baharvand (2015) arguing the opposite as true, where higher levels of WTC created higher oral proficiency for ELLs. Moreover, an increase in proficiency was due to lower FLA levels and higher perceptions of second language competencies for Japanese English language learners (JELL) (Yashima, 2002). Although this aligned with research demonstrating self-confidence's influence on WTC in the L2, motivation was still the predictor of self-confidence, decreasing FLA, which then lead to the development of WTC (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Munezane, 2013).

Additionally, MacIntyre et al. (1998) further elaborated WTC in the L2 as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with […] specific […] persons using an L2" (p.547). This means WTC can be situational, therefore fluctuating during conversation (Kang, 2005) and influenced by group sizes and interlocutor participation (Cao & Philip, 2006).

2.3.2 WTC and CA in Japan

Communication apprehension (CA) is a fear or anxiety that is experienced when communicating with others (McCroskey, 1984; 1997) and is recognized as an indicator of communication avoidance. McCroskey, Gudykunst, and Nishida (1985) have found that Japanese college students had higher CA in their native language when compared to American and Puerto Rico students. Yashima (2002) also looked at Japanese EFL classrooms and found they had little interest in international affairs and different cultures, which had a negative impact on WTC. Munezane (2013), though, argued that ideal self impacted JELLs visualization of global situations, therefore raising WTC levels. However, because Japanese people tend to be "inward-orientated" (MEXT, 2011, p. 2), or introverted, JELLs' CA in the target language is caused by a distinctive cultural norm, which causes higher communication apprehension (McCroskey et al., 1985).

2.3.3 Best Teaching Practices

WTC is not a solitary component in second language acquisition, rather WTC is contingent on motivation (Munezane, 2013) and anxiety (Cao & Philip, 2006), among other factors. Despite this, educators resort to teacher-centered classrooms (outlined in Emaliana, 2017), reliance on testing (Brown & Yamashita, 1995)—rather than communicative skills—and unreliable classroom materials (Kikuchi, 2009). Therefore, in order to combat an ELL's psychological

impediments, teachers should develop engaging and exciting classrooms (Dewaele, 2019, Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020), where students feel encouraged (Dewaele et al., 2019) and empowered to make connections with teachers (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Kang, 2005).

Utilizing more stimulating and up-to-date texts (Kukuchi, 2009) and providing students with prior background knowledge has allowed for more active participation in L2 classrooms (Kang, 2005). This means students with current, relatable materials and texts were more willing to communicate in the target language. In addition, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) demonstrated consistent, positive teacher behavior—engaging with students, facilitating, rather than leading, and general friendliness—kept students stimulated. Furthermore, in order to drive students towards a successful L2 experience and create an engaging environment, teachers needed to have meaningful interactions with students as an individual and as a group (Emaliana, 2017; VanPattern, 2002), accomplished with smaller class sizes and more enjoyment in the classroom (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Moreover, after examining literature and analyzing FLA and foreign language enjoyment, Dewaele and Dewaele (2020) reproached second language instructors and promoted "teachers [that] work hard to create the optimal emotional climate in their classrooms [as] to allow learners to enjoy the class" (p. 57) because with anxious and bored students, WTC in the L2 was low. In summary, generally positive and active student-instructor interactions have shown to increase WTC levels (Dewaele, et al., 2019; Kang, 2005).

2.4 Japanese English Education

In 1967, after the Tokyo Olympics, Japan began to move towards modernization and globalization, which resulted in the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) utilizing Western principles in adjusting national education guidelines and objectives (Yoshida, 2003; Butler, 2004). Due to a disconnect between Japan's English abilities and similarly developed countries, MEXT implemented "An Action Plan" in 2003 aiming to improve English aptitude among the Japanese population (MEXT, 2011). The action plan was employed until 2008, when data revealed areas for improvement still existed (MEXT, 2011): including Japanese-English teachers' low command of English, lack of English competencies, teacher-centered classrooms, and outdated teaching methods (Yoneyama, 2015).

As international residents moved to Japan and Japanese businesses began developing relationships with countries overseas, the demand for English competences and globalization increased; thus, MEXT continued amending compulsory English education (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009), aiming to cultivate higher levels of the English language and international communication (MEXT, 2011). Consequently, MEXT conducted a survey to further adjust English

education, and in 2011 prompted the creation of "Five Proposals and Specific Measures for Developing Proficiency in English for International Communication" (MEXT, 2011). Although the objective was to create more competent English communicators, "schools reported focus[ing] on grammar-translation learning, or on preparation for entrance exams to senior high schools or universities" (MEXT, 2011, p. 4). English, thus, became a skill exclusive to exams (Yoneyama, 2015), where drills, forced production, explicit grammar knowledge (VanPattern, 2002), and anxieties were teaching methods used to elicit student performance (Goodman, 2011). Hinenoya and Gatbonton (2000) provided additional social factors that lowered levels of L2 proficiency in Japan—ethnocentrism, shyness, and introversion— and the influence these factors had on JELL language outcomes. MEXT (2011) agreed, stating, with limited statistical data, 'inward-oriented' personalities (p. 2) have caused fewer Japanese students to spend time studying abroad.

Despite reforms on compulsory education, classrooms, and professional development, Japan historically continued to rely on grammar translation methods and the development of receptive English skills (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Gorsuch, 1998; MEXT, 2011). Nishimuro and Borg (2015) also demonstrated teachers' assertions that L2 grammar is a necessity in SLA. However, educators created these views without reference to formal second language methodology or training. Furthermore, Nishimuro and Borg (2015) elaborated that "[it is evident] teachers of English in Japan continue to value explicit grammar work despite policy and teacher training initiatives aimed at increasing the frequency of communicative activities" (p. 31), which may be grounds for the lack of English communicative competence in JELLs' (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Ellis, 1991; Taguchi, 2005; Ishihara, 2011).

2.4.1 Language Competency

In addition to low communicative competencies, Japanese nationals have been consistently under-scoring in English proficiency when compared to similarly developed countries (EPI, 2019). Accordingly, out of 100 countries, Japan scored 53rd on EF's English Proficiency Index, 11th of 25 countries in Asia; this qualifies as "Low" proficiency (EPI, 2019).
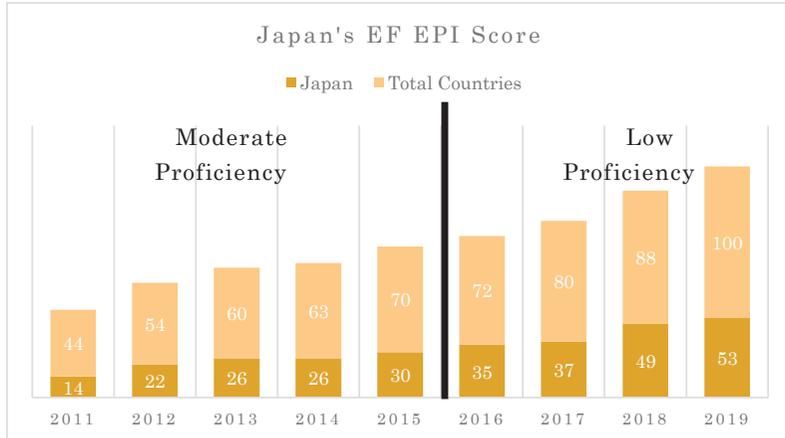
Figure 1 Japanese English Ranking from EPI

Figure 1 illustrates Japan's English proficiency over the past nine years. Although Japan appears to be increasing their ranking each year, when compared to other countries of similar statue, Japan falls below average. This resulted in "Moderate" level of proficiency dropping to "Low" in 2015 despite government policy changes and language planning revisions that attempted to employ English usage (Yoshida, 2003).

2.5 Current Research

Although MEXT has made amends to compulsory English education (Yoshida, 2003; Butler, 2004) in hopes to gain more competent English communicators (MEXT, 2011), they have disregarded the gaps in their communication-focused redesign. MEXT focuses on measuring English through standardized tests and assessments that measure proficiency rather than communicative skills (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). The Japanese government attempts to utilize new teaching methods and objectives (MEXT, 2011; Goodman, 2011), but without student motivation in the L2, acquisition remains relatively low (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Hsu, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Sugino, 2010). Due to the lack of research for Japanese EFL students' willingness to communicate in the L2, this research is designed to answer the following questions:

1) To what extent are Japanese EFL learners willing to communicate with their educators in the L2?
2) How do different educators produce different WTC level with Japanese EFL students?

Additionally, possible causes for WTC levels will be overviewed as well as pedagogical stances that can be utilized to further enhance WTC in a Japanese EFL environment.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Participants

A total of 76 Japanese EFL undergraduate students participated in the study; however, outliers were removed, leaving n=69. All participants were members of an International Communication Department at a rural university in the Hokuriku region of Japan where the researcher taught. All the students had taken at least two semesters of mandatory English language classes in the department, enrolling as full-time English Language and Literature majors. Of the 69 participants, 20% were fourth year students, 28% were third year students, 52% were second year students[i]. Seventy-two percent of the students identified as female, while 28% identified as male. Although not required, as part of the university curriculum, students have the option to study abroad: 35% of respondents participated. The average TOEIC score was 429, with a range of 175 to 880.

3.2 Instruments and Procedures

Matsuoka (2004), based on Sick's unpublished WTC survey, was utilized, and adapted to represent current education materials (i.e. replacing 'floppy disk' with 'USB drive'). As to focus on WTC in the L2 as a subordinate of motivation, the original three categories of self-confidence and motivation were removed. The online survey, administered through google forms, included 14 questions regarding WTC in the L2 with teachers in the English Language Faculty (see Table 2).

	NJ1	NJ2	NE1	NE2	NJ3	NE3	NJ4	NE4	NJ5
Q1	パソコン上のファイルを自分の USB にコピーしてもらうよう英語で頼む。					I would ask [the teacher] in English to copy a file from their computer to a personal USB drive.			
Q2	日本語を英訳にする質問を英語で聞く。					I would ask [the teacher], in English, to translate something from Japanese to English.			
Q3	学校新聞の記事を作成するため英語でインタビューする。					I would interview [teacher] in English for a school newspaper article.			
Q4	英語を日本訳にする質問を英語で聞く。					I would ask [the teacher], in English, to translate something from English to Japanese.			
Q5	リスニングテストの内容が速すぎて聞き取れなかったと英語で文句を言う。					I would complain in English because the audio for the listening test was too fast and I could not catch everything that was said.			
Q6	休んでいた間のプリントが欲しいと英語で伝える。					I would ask [teacher] for a handout, in English, during [their lunch] break.			
Q7	英語で今何時か聞く。					I would ask [teacher] for the time in English.			
Q8	自分の夏休みの思い出について 2 分間、英語で話す。					I would talk about my summer vacation for two minutes in English.			
Q9	〇〇先生のクラスで英語のスピーチコンテストに出場する。					I would participate in an English speech contest in [teacher]'s class.			

Table 2 WTC Survey Questions

Within each question, all individual teachers were listed by name. Five native Japanese (NJ) teachers and four native English (NE) teachers were included, resulting in a total of 126 questions. Students were asked to rate their motivation for different tasks to be performed in English on a scale of 1-4 in regard to each teacher: 4 being 'I would definitely try'; 3 being 'If the opportunity arose, I would like to try'; 2 being 'depends on the situation'; and 1 being 'I would avoid if possible'.

Background questions, including students' ID numbers (to delete duplicates), year in school, gender, TOEIC score[ii], and study abroad and duration were included. As per Matsuoka (2004), the survey was written and administered in students' L1, Japanese.

At the beginning of their respected classes, students were given 30 minutes to complete the survey. Teachers briefly explained the purpose of the survey and guaranteed both anonymity and immunity from results affecting classroom scores.

4.0 Data and Results

Responses from the WTC survey were coded, ranging from 4, 'I would definitely try', to 1, 'I would avoid if possible.' After this, participant responses were tallied by the number corresponding to their answers (a participant choose '1' x number of times, etc.), and any outliers were removed from the data set. The data without outliers was used to calculate question and individual teacher averages.

The data set that included the outliers was also examined: survey answers were evaluated against gender, study abroad (SA), year in school, and TOEIC scores.

4.1 Results

Below are the results from the WTC survey. There will be two sections presented: teachers' scores and averages and outliers from the original data set.

4.1.1 Teachers

Table 3 represents the averages of the nine teachers as scored by students. The teachers' overall averages and question averages are included.

	NJ1	NJ2	NJ3	NJ4	NJ5	NE1	NE2	NE3	NE4	Q Avg.
Q1 Avg.	1.93	2.29	2.34	2.20	1.88	2.38	2.33	2.25	2.14	2.19
Q2 Avg.	2.09	2.42	2.46	2.38	1.94	2.75	2.68	2.38	2.42	2.39
Q3 Avg.	1.77	2.04	2.06	2.14	1.77	2.39	2.29	2.09	2.06	2.07
Q4 Avg.	2.10	2.42	2.41	2.43	1.94	2.57	2.52	2.28	2.29	2.33
Q5 Avg.	1.91	2.10	2.06	2.01	1.86	2.22	2.17	1.90	1.94	2.02
Q6 Avg.	2.46	2.71	2.61	2.54	2.32	2.94	2.80	2.67	2.59	2.63
Q7 Avg.	2.23	2.42	2.41	2.29	2.09	2.54	2.45	2.35	2.38	2.35
Q8 Avg.	1.99	2.17	2.14	2.07	1.90	2.33	2.26	2.07	2.09	2.11
Q9 Avg.	1.51	1.65	1.64	1.58	1.45	1.75	1.75	1.59	1.61	1.62
T. Avg.	1.99	2.25	2.24	2.18	1.90	2.43	2.36	2.17	2.17	

Table 3 Averages for Teachers

In Table 3, teachers were divided into two groups—NJ (Native Japanese-speaking Teacher) and NE (Native English-speaking Teacher)—with numbers indicating different individuals. Overall, all teachers preformed similarly, with none of the averages exceeding three. The lowest overall NJ average was NJ5, with 1.90, and the highest average was NJ2, with 2.25. NJ1 and NJ5 averaged less than 2.0 over six times.

NE teachers scores were generally higher, with overall averages surpassing 2.0 for all four teachers. Additionally, the highest NE average was higher than the NJ scores, at 2.43 for NE1. The lowest NE score was 2.17 for both NE3 and NE4.

The highest performing question was the same for both NJ and NE teachers; Q6, asking for a handout during lunch/break times, had an overall average of 2.63. In contrast, Q9, practicing a speech in the L2 in front of the teacher, scored an average of 1.62, being the lowest scoring question.

4.1.2. Question 6 Responses

Of the nine questions, Q6 received the highest overall average of 2.63. Figure 2, below, shows participants' answers to the question "I would ask [teacher] for a handout, in English, during [their lunch] break." (休んでいた間のプリントが欲しいと英語で伝える). Four was the highest answer, 'I would definitely try,' and 1 was the lowest, 'I would avoid if possible.'
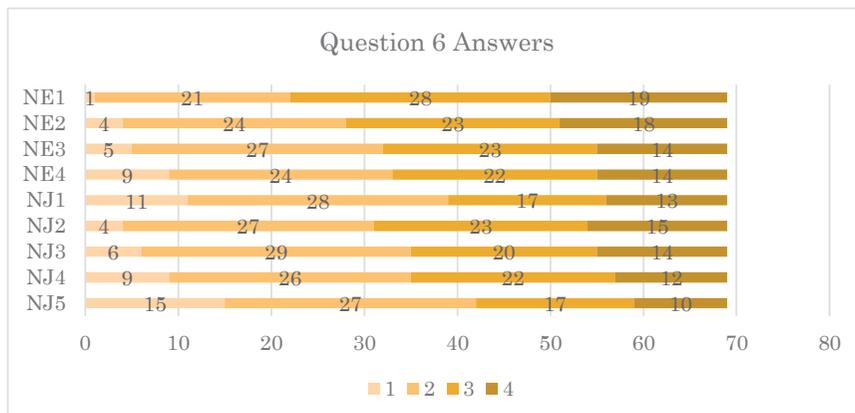
Figure 2 Teachers Accumulative Scores from Q6

The highest number of responses for '3 or '4' was NE1 with 47 total responses and the lowest number of '1' and '2' responses. Conversely, NJ1 and NJ5 had the highest number of '1' and '2' responses with 39 and 42 responses respectively.

Table 4, below, details the mean, standard deviation, and skewness of the answers for Question 6.

	NJ1	NJ2	NJ3	NJ4	NJ5	NE1	NE2	NE3	NE4
Mean	1.928	2.290	2.348	2.203	1.884	2.377	2.333	2.246	2.145
Average	2.46	2.71	2.61	2.54	2.32	2.94	2.80	2.67	2.59
Std. Dev.	0.880	0.806	0.855	0.901	0.814	0.842	0.869	0.793	0.809
Skewness	0.544	0.459	0.274	0.329	0.555	0.249	0.257	0.252	0.412
Std. Error Skewness	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289

Table 4 Q6 Descriptive Stats

The mean of each educator differed from the average for all nine educators. NJ1 and NJ5 had mean scores that were below 2.0, while NJ3 had the highest mean of the Japanese native teachers, differing from the average scores. All four NE teachers had scores above 2.0, with NE1 being the highest rated professor in either group.

4.1.3. Question 9 Responses

Question 9 had the lowest overall average, 1.62. The below figure, Figure 3, represents participants' responses to the question "I would participate in an English speech contest in [teacher]'s class." (○○先生のクラスで英語のスピーチコンテストに出場する。).
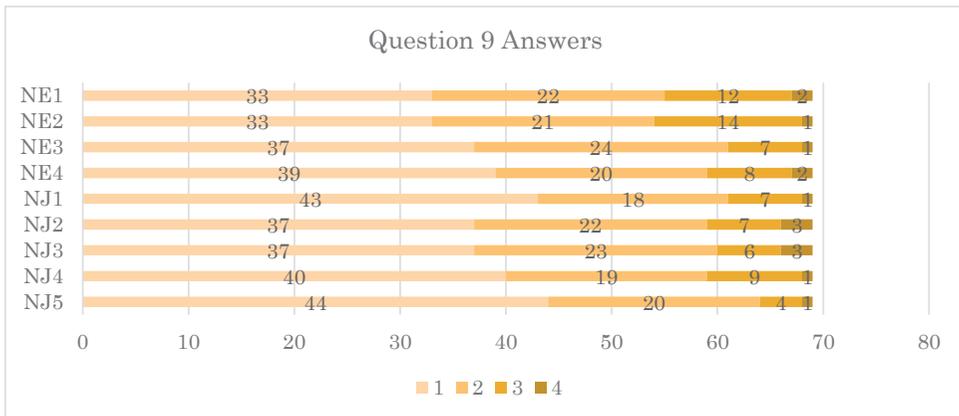
Figure 3 Teacher Accumulative Scores from Q9

All nine professors received '1, I would avoid if possible' responses more often than other answers, ranging from 33 to 44. NJ1 and NJ5 had the highest amount of '1' responses, 43 and 44, respectively. NE1 and NE2 had the highest number of responses, '3' and '4.' The remaining teachers, excluding NJ5, have relatively similar '3' and '4' responses with 8 to 10 participants each.

Table 5 details mean, standard deviation, and skewness of the answers for Question 9 below.

	NJ1	NJ2	NJ3	NJ4	NJ5	NE1	NE2	NE3	NE4
Mean	1.507	1.652	1.638	1.580	1.449	1.754	1.754	1.594	1.609
Average	1.51	1.65	1.64	1.58	1.45	1.75	1.75	1.59	1.61
Std. Dev.	0.740	0.837	0.822	0.775	0.676	0.847	0.830	0.734	0.808
Skewness	1.319	1.204	1.260	1.094	1.513	0.800	0.653	1.042	1.184
Std. Error Skewness	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.289

Table 5 Question 9: Descriptive Stats.

Standard deviation was consistent for all the teachers except NJ5, who was the lowest. Skewness, however, had more variation. NJ1 and NJ5 had more '1' and '2' answers, resulting in higher skewness, while NE2 and NE1 had a lower skewness and thus an accumulation of higher scoring responses, respectively.

4.1.4 Outliers

The upper bound limit for outliers for '1: I would avoid if possible' was 75 and the upper bound limit for outliers for '4: I would definitely try' was 37. Participants who excessively chose '4' or '1', were out of the allowable limit range were excluded from the original data set. There were no outliers for '2' or '3' responses.

Table 6 represents the participants who have been excluded from the original data set based on the number of responses being outside the upper and lower limit.

Name	Year	TOEIC	Gender	SA	Reason for Outlier
O1	4	475	F	No	'1: I would avoid if possible' = **80** responses
O2	4	630	F	Yes 4 months	'4: I would definitely try' = **72** responses
O3	3	705	F	Yes 5 months	'4: I would definitely try' = **72** responses
O4	3	575	F	Yes 10 months	'4: I would definitely try' = **81** responses
O5	3	760	F	Yes 10 months	'4: I would definitely try' = **81** responses
O6	2	410	F	No	'1: I would avoid if possible' = **81** responses
O7	2	215	M	No	'1: I would avoid if possible' = **81** responses

Table 6 Outlier Participants' Information

Table 6 illustrates all seven outlier participants. Two of the participants were fourth year students, three were third year students; and two were second year students. All but one student, a second year, identified as female and four of the participants had gone abroad for at least four months. The average TOEIC score was 539, with ranges from 215 to 760.

5.0 Discussion

Although students were not asked to give feedback or reasoning for their responses, based on previous research, below are proposed causes for the highest and lowest rated questions, relatively low levels of WTC, and the seven outlier participants. In addition, proposed solutions on methods that raise WTC in the target language will be given employing pedagogical techniques discussed in previous SLA research.

5.1 Education/Teaching Styles

Within this particular English Department, two of the five NJ professors have academic backgrounds and societal responsibilities to general education with specialization in public middle school education. With this contextual knowledge of compulsory education in Japan, Japanese native teachers may become victim to outdated teaching styles (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Gorsuch, 1998) and translation-focused exams (Goodman, 2011; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Yoneyama, 2015) rather than on the communicative properties and approaches MEXT (2011) endorses. Although the university's objectives and curriculum are set to be communicative and teachers are regularly having updated professional development and educational workshops (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009), Japanese teachers still reverted to the ways they were taught English (Butler, 2004; Gorsuch, 1998; Nishimuro & Borg, 2015). A lack of communicative practices has

resulted in a university system that also relies on *kougi*, or lecture-styled lessons, and grammar translation to teach students L2 communication methods (Butler, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009; Nishimuro & Borg, 2015). As a result, students may not be given the opportunity to develop language skills or feel comfortable in the L2 classroom, causing an unwillingness to communicate in the target language. However, by having positive attitudes towards teachers (Dewaele, 2019), finding enjoyment in the class (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020), or making connections and socializing with other students (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Kang, 2005), WTC levels can increase.

These factors were found to influence students' interactions with educators in and outside the classroom. If students are not being taught ways to communicate in the L2 (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Nishimuro & Borg, 2015) they will not acquire the L2 or know appropriate methods for communicating with English-speaking educators. This may be caused by ethnocentric ideas (Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000), shyness or introversion in students (Matsuoka, 2005), or the inward-orientated perspectives (McCroskey et al., 1985; MEXT, 2011) that impacted students. Additionally, the use of English in an EFL classroom with native L1 speakers is lower than when speaking with native target language speakers (see Fotos, 2001 for review). As seen in the data, NE teachers had a slightly higher mean than the NJ teachers, and this may be due to the generalization of 'speak English with the native English speakers,' however education backgrounds and language application may also play a role.

5.2 Question 6 Results

Communicating in smaller groups has been shown to raise levels of WTC in the L2 (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005) and interacting with an educator outside of the classroom, compared to during class, provided a 1-on-1 exchange that reduced pressure and anxiety of students (Goodman, 2011). Therefore, students may be more willing to ask for materials, start conversations, or participate in activities when interlocutor numbers are limited.

Examining the statistics of all nine educators, NE1 and NE2 had the highest mean scores for Q6, with consistently high averages through all nine questions. Although students were not asked directly about individual educators, based on previous research, higher WTC in the L2 may be an indication of consistently positive student and teacher interactions—where students feel more comfortable speaking to these two teachers, establishing higher WTC, and eagerness to connect with teachers (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). These meaningful interactions may also be attributed to active classrooms and interactive teaching styles (Emaliana, 2017) that help students enjoy their time in the classroom and learning the L2 (Dewaele, et al., 2019; Dewaele, 2019).

In contrast, four of the five native Japanese teachers had more '1' and '2' responses when compared to the English natives, with two mean scores falling below 2.0. One reason may be due to native Japanese teachers using the L1 to make connections with their students, rather than the target language. However, based on NJ1 and NJ5's overall mean scores, NJ teachers may be having fewer and less meaningful interactions, creating less desire to communicate.

5.3 Question 9 Results

With the lowest averages and high response rate towards unwillingness, Q9, participating in a speech contest, had the lowest level of WTC for JEFL learners. Reviewing past research (McCroskey et al., 1985; MEXT, 2011), Q9's low averages were likely caused by situational surroundings and constraints, methodology, and communication apprehension (CA).

Situational surroundings are aspects of personality that restrict or limit individuals from openly communicating in the L2 (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). These surroundings influence conversation outcomes and cause fluctuations during a communicative act (Kang, 2005), causing breakdowns within discourse, or willingness to participate in a speech contest. These surroundings include CA and group sizes (Cao & Philip, 2006, MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Addressing a class as a single unit, for example, on student presenting their work, may cause anxiousness, and those who lack self-confidence were less likely to use the target language (McCroskey, 1997; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Kikuchi (2009) elaborated by demonstrating students' demotivation—caused by fear of incorrectly pronouncing or forming words and sentences—when speaking in front of their peers and classmates. In addition to being anxious when using the L2, Japanese university students also had language avoidance in their L1 (McCroskey et al., 1985), resulting in little to no interest in being seen or heard. Likewise, communication apprehension was a subordinate of situational WTC (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), therefore students with CA will be less likely to participate in an L2 presentation with peers watching. Reviewing Q9 data, students may be less willing to volunteer or participate in a speech contest because of these feelings of anxiety, CA, and fear.

5.4 Outliers

Of the seven outliers, four (O2, O3, O4, and O5) were excluded from the original data set because the number of '4: I would definitely try' responses were outside the limits' parameters. Additionally, these four participants had spent time abroad and scored higher than the average TOEIC score, 429. When students chose to participate in study abroad, they chose an experience to further understand and engross themselves in a language, which can result in "favorable

contact and communication experiences [SA] presumably reduc[ing] anxiety and enhance[ing] interest in the world, which, in turn, influence attitudes and motivation" (Yashima, 2002, p. 63). MacIntyre, et al. (1998) also demonstrated that students with pleasant experiences in the L2 "[develop] self-confidence, which is based on a lack of anxiety combined with sufficient levels of communicative competence" (p. 548). Due to the study abroad interactions and experiences, the outliers may have felt less anxious, more self-confident, and more comfortable communicating in the L2 with educators. This means their WTC levels remain relatively high in accordance with enjoyable experiences in the target language.

5.4 Proposed Pedagogical Solutions

Potential causes for students' low WTC in the L2 were evaluated against the data from this study. In order to further develop WTC in the L2 in a Japanese EFL setting, modifications to classroom environments and student-teacher interactions/behaviors must be considered.

5.4.1 Classroom Environments

Studying English in Japan begins in middle school, with curriculum standards built around communicative styles and agendas (MEXT, 2011). However, classrooms have been built around teachers using lecture-style learning environments (Kikuchi, 2009; Yoneyama, 2015) and explicit grammar teaching (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Taguchi, 2005; VanPattern, 2002) despite teacher training in communicative approaches (Nishimuro & Borg, 2015). Current university teachers may use individual experiences with language instruction as a foundation for their methodologies, which exposes students aspiring to become language teachers to a singular SLA method or approach. Thus, a stigma of communicative uncertainty perpetuates the cycle of uncommunicative language classrooms.

In order to create more communicatively competent English language learners, English language and teacher training classrooms should reevaluate the quality and amount of communicative opportunities, language content, and strategies given to students. Furthermore, in order to manage students' enjoyment of language classes, WTC, and foreign language anxieties, limitations must be placed on enforcing grammar-translations, lectures, and testing (both academic and standardized).

How can educators create more student-friendly language classrooms?

Teacher-orientated classrooms bring focus off language learning by encouraging teachers to take control, which limits group work and language activities that have been shown to stimulate learning (Emaliana, 2017). Furthermore, when

teachers become facilitators, rather than leaders, students have more time for language practice and social interactions within groups or with the teachers (Dewaele et al., 2019). Teachers can, for example, divide content heavy lessons with intermittent activities following an instruction phase, guided practice, individual practice lesson plan. First, teachers take seven minutes to explain a language topic in the instruction phase; ten minutes for guided practice, where teachers work with students to review the content; and finally, ten minutes of individual practice where students can work in groups, or alone, with an assignment allowing them time to practice the language. VanPattern (2002) further clarified guidelines teachers can take to create a more communicative classroom by providing purposeful, or authentic, activities. Providing students with practical classroom material, like roleplays at a supermarket or discussion about a new movie, will help WTC and compel students to perform communicatively in the L2 (Kikuchi, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; VanPattern, 2002).

5.4.2 Student-Teacher Interactions

In Japan, students have higher levels of CA, in both the L1 and L2 (McCroskey et al., 1985), and introverted dispositions (Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; MEXT, 2011), therefore English teacher may have avoided the extra step needed to build relationships, which may have resulted in a reliance on testing and exam culture (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Yoneyama, 2015). In heavily relying on testing and teacher-focused classrooms (Dewaele, et al., 2019), students in Japan have become more demotivated while learning English (Kikuchi, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). These conditions have resulted in higher levels of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, et al., 1986), lower levels of self-confidence (Emaliana, 2017), and a lack of WTC in the target language (Yashima, 2002; Matsuoka, 2004) that ultimately prevents acquisition of the L2 (Du, 2009; Ghonsooly et al., 2012).

How can educators counteract JELL's unwillingness to communicate in the L2?

In order to create the maximum benefit from a learning environment, teachers need to: 1) facilitate; 2) be consistently friendly; and 3) interact with students (Dewaele et al., 2019). Facilitation acts as a medium that allows opportunities for communication. For example, teachers can present students with group tasks after learning a language point. The teacher will walk around helping struggling students, code-switching when necessary, and giving opinions and feedback as the task reaches completion. By engaging students in small groups, workshops, or conferences, educators will be able to achieve all three of the above goals, while also allowing more 1-on-1 interaction. Attending to each group with a friendly and ready-to-help composure will ease students' anxieties toward the teacher, giving them more confidence and raising WTC in English.

Smiling, creating fun and engaging lessons, talking to students about their interests, or conversing in the L1 or L2 outside of class are examples of friendly student-teacher interactions. Evidence lies with the outliers in this study, who demonstrate how attitudes towards WTC can differ based on self-confidence or language anxiety gained from SA and other pleasant L2 interactions and experiences.

6.0 Conclusion

Although native English teachers elicit slightly higher levels of WTC, Japanese EFLs struggle to communicate in the target language with any English teachers. Based on previous literature, having more confident and less anxious students will raise levels of WTC, therefore educators should create classrooms based on a student's communicative needs. By utilizing more engaging and relatable content, facilitating the class, and employing group work, teachers can create an environment where students want to communicate in and learn the L2. There were two NE teachers who, overall, outperformed the other seven teachers, which may be caused by friendliness and facilitation in the L2; however, due to the limitations of this study, the exact details of students' WTC levels remain assumed. Additional limitations include one of the NE teachers having more exposure to participants, as a professor during the time of investigation. The last limitation is a call to action for future researchers: student-teacher relationships, behaviors, and interactions were not surveyed. Therefore, a detailed analysis on factors affecting unwillingness to communicate in the L2 in Japanese EFL classrooms remains undetermined. With these results and WTC's proposed causes and possible solutions, future investigations can focus on pedagogical practices and curriculum designs that can counteract demotivating aspects of second language learning classrooms. Better understanding student teacher interpersonal communications and interactions can pave the way for a classroom focused on WTC and communication rather than tests and grammar translation in Japan.

<div align="center">End Notes</div>

[i] First year students were not included in the study because they have not participated in two semesters of courses, and do not declare a major (English or Chinese) until the beginning of their second year. However, one first year student was included as they had the credits of a second year, thus had been able to declare a major.
[ii] Students were asked to estimate their TOEIC scores on the survey, with students unsure using the number '1000' as a placeholder. Faculty at the university have access to participants' TOEIC scores and by participating in this survey, students agreed to anonymously share these scores.

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