

## English across Cultures and Intercultural Awareness

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In order to enrich English as a language of multicultural communication and to ensure intercultural communicability among speakers of its different varieties, it is important that we develop internationally collaborated and coordinated educational programs. This paper addresses some of the important issues involved in intercultural awareness as a pedagogical response to actual and potential inconveniences of incommunicability caused or to be caused by the spread of English as a multicultural and multinational language.

Intercultural awareness is explored in terms of intercultural literacy in which teaching awareness of language plays an important role. Teaching awareness of language aims at our clear understanding of how language is designed and how people use language. Thus, it can be useful for students to become conscious of the function of language in multilingual and multicultural settings, thereby enhancing intercultural literacy, which is needed for improved mutual communicability among different varieties of English. In this connection, the study of metaphor will be emphasized, accompanied by reports from training sessions intended for metaphorical analysis of everyday language.

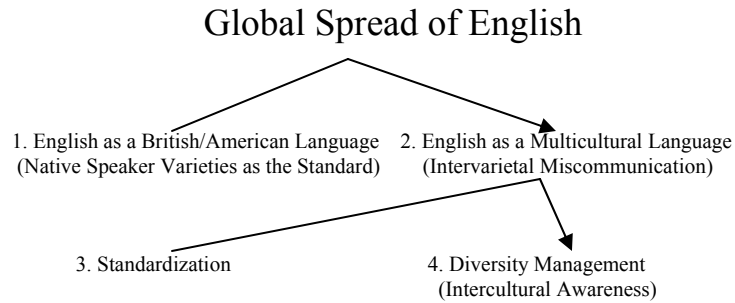
### Intervarietal Incommunicability

The world-wide spread of English has not ended up with the global acceptance of American English or British English as the norm of usage. Rather, the global spread of English has prompted the multicultural diversification of English (Route 2, in Diagram 1). One of the implications, or rather complications, of these multicultural enrichments continuously added to the English language concerns mutual communicability among world Englishes. This is an actual and immediate problem as well as a potential concern. Cases of zero communication/miscommunication in intervaretal interactions are abundant.

In fear of a new Babel, people often cry for a return to American English or British English as the standardized norm (Route 3, in Diagram 1). However, it is important to recognize here that standardization or eventually re-standardization of the de-standardized standards is not a plausible way of dealing with the current multiculturalism and multi-formalism of world Englishes.

People tend to believe that a common language is a uniform language. But this is not true. English can be a common language on a multinational basis only when its cultural diversity is accepted. A common language has to be a multicultural language (Honna, 2000, 2003). A lot of allowances have to be made, and differences accepted. If the American English standard, for example, was imposed upon all users of English, English would never become an international common language. Thus, if we are to establish English as a multicultural language and use it as an international language, we have to address the issue of diversity management by means of intercultural awareness (Route 4).

Diagram 1: Global Spread of English



Before we go any further, it is important to be reminded of the implausibility of possible standardization measures. Firstly, standardization (or re-standardization) was essentially a measure meant to have prevented the multiculturalization of English and has evidently failed to perform its job. American English or British English per se did not become a global language. English has spread as a multicultural language across the world. It would be illogical to expect the measure that did not stop the new trend to work as a new role of reversing it.

Secondly, it is natural that diffusion should cause adaptation or mutation. Where the apple is not a local product and apple polishing is not practiced, it is often more difficult for local people to internalize the idiom than normally imagined. Instead, local people recall a semantically similar set-phrase in their vernacular and put it into their usage of English such as “shoe shining” (Malaysia) and “sesame grinding” (Japan). Likewise, things and ideas that are not codified in American English or British English have to be referred to in new coinages by local people. Thus, Japanese speakers cannot help but saying “paper driver” (driver who has a driver’s license but has not driven a car), “hot carpet” (electrically warmed carpet) or “washlet” (wash + toilet: electrically warmed stool equipped with two bidets intended for the two different private parts). These and many others, including such greetings as “Where are you going?” and “Have you eaten?”, cannot be inhibited.

Furthermore, the mythology behind the appeal to uniformity is baseless in view of world Englishes and should be rectified. A frightening source of many don’ts for nonnative speakers, the mythology states that if you deviate from native speakers’ patterns, you will not be understood. Japanese bookstores are full of titles written by native speakers, whose theme is common: Japanese English is unintelligible to them. The fear is reinforced by self-righteous Japanese teachers of English.

A scant analysis indicates, however, that unintelligibility is not the matter. It is unbelievable native speakers find it difficult to understand the meaning of “this restaurant is delicious” (Japanese English?). Some may protest, “The restaurant is a building and a building cannot be delicious. It simply does not make sense!” But when native speakers say “he is sharp,” no one insists, “he is a person and a person cannot be a cutting tool.” The hidden agenda is differences, not intelligibility. Japanese speakers let a restaurant refer to the food served there, which native speakers do not, while both natives and non-natives see a

person as a sharp instrument that the person has as part of his or her characteristics. These differences can be ironed out through educational programs (see below).

At the same time, the fear of rejection is so strong that Chinese students often “surmise” the difficulty native speakers may have in understanding Chinese-based sentences, such as:

1. I will go look-look. (To a knock on the door of an apartment room: Singapore English)
2. We should give him some face. (China English)

However, as syntactic reduplication is a widely witnessed phenomenon in Asian and African Englishes, native speakers coming to these parts of the world are expected to inform themselves of this linguistic dynamism. So is the case with face expressions which are important local burgeons born to grow to be internationally appreciated in the region. In view of an increasing number of users of English as an additional language, native speakers and non-native speakers alike are required to prepare themselves to understand those elements of another variety that they need to know if any meaningful intervarietal communication is to be established and maintained.

### Intercultural Awareness

Diversity management by raising intercultural awareness can be approached in two ways. I would like to call the one as accommodation and the other as intercultural literacy through educated awareness of language. A typical example of the accommodation approach is found in Harris and Moran (1991). As international trade expanded in the late 20th century, American business people became increasingly aware of differences between English as an American language and English as an international language.

In an effort to motivate American business people to adjust themselves to the reality of English as an international language, Harris and Moran (1991) listed 20 measures, which covered lexical, idiomatic, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions of language use. Their two pragmatic suggestions are reproduced here (Harris & Moran, 1991, p. 47):

If possible, one should determine and reflect the cultural values of the reader on such dimensions as ... emphasizing individual versus collective accomplishments...When in doubt, a variety of value orientations should be included: “I want to thank you [individual] and your department [collective]...”

Whenever possible, either adopt the cultural reasoning style of your reader or present information in more than one format: “Trust among business partners is essential [deductive]; and our data show that our most successful joint ventures are those in which we invested initial time building a personal trusting relationship [inductive].

Works have been accumulated in phonology and syntax done along these lines including Jenkins (2000). Granted that these approaches will be useful for managing the increasing diversification of English, I am inclined to see some flaws in them: (a) although they are not

conformist, they are restrictive and prohibitive; (b) although they are not mono-cultural and mono-central, they often smack of intercultural neutralization; and (c) they are particularistic rather than general. They are simply different sides of the same coin.

#### *Restrictive and Prohibitive*

For example, Harris and Moran (1991, p. 46) suggest American business people refrain from using “‘word pictures’, constructions that depend for their meaning on invoking a particular mental image (e.g. ‘run that by me’, ‘wade through these figures’, ‘slice of the free world pie’...).” There is no doubt that these suggestions are well intended. It is a good lesson to Americans, letting them know that they cannot always have their own way because American English cannot be an international language. Interlocutors are expected to be linguistically and culturally considerate of their counterpart in intervarietal communication. Yet, if an extended list of don’ts restricts and prohibits speakers’ free exchange of expressions, it backfires. Non-native speakers deprived of their metaphorical expressions would find themselves linguistically handicapped and source-less.

#### *Culturally Neutral*

These approaches could be successful only if people were disposed to say the same thing to a similar set of events. Actually, however, people are made to see the set differently. Human beings grow up to be able to choose one form from a set, with the choice governed by a sociolinguistic rule of “who says what to whom when/where.” In any language, a mere parting event is referred to by many different expressions: Goodbye, Bye, See you again, See you soon, See you around, Take care, Take it easy, I will see you when I see you, See you on the ice, See you alligator, etc. If people were told to always use Goodbye to anyone, anytime, anywhere, they would neither welcome nor follow the decree. Similar attitudes should develop among speakers of world Englishes mostly because they tend to express themselves in a variety full of unique characteristics transferred from their national language and culture. Consequently, any attempt to deculturalize intervarietal interaction is bound to get nowhere, as much as Anglo-Americanization in the name of standardization is doomed to failure.

#### *Particularistic*

Accommodation approaches basically are case-by-case studies. Business people, travelers, students, or scholars are supposed to look up references to study how people of the country they are scheduled to visit think, behave and speak, thus mapping out communication strategies to adjust themselves to local contacts. The benefits of these approaches can be best obtained at workshops specialized in some cultural aspects of a certain country and designed to help persons planning a trip there. With episodes and cases being their main features, it is difficult to prepare a general course.

### Intercultural Literacy and Language Awareness

Instead of accommodation approaches, I have explored issues of diversity management in terms of a pedagogical concept of intercultural literacy. Here is my definition of intercultural literacy (Honna, 2003, p. 165-170):

1. Intercultural literacy is an attitude, preparedness, and competence to transmit one's message and understand others' appropriately in a cross-cultural encounter;
2. It involves an ability to adjust intercultural differences in a mutually beneficial manner;
3. Intercultural literacy is the literacy of the fourth kind after basic literacy (reading and writing plus mathematics), media literacy, and information literacy; and
4. It is expected to be introduced to the school curriculums across disciplines from primary, through secondary, to tertiary education.

At the same time, I have placed teaching awareness of language as a fundamental component in intercultural literacy. The role of language awareness in intercultural literacy is based on the assumption that part of language awareness is to improve sensitivity to, and tolerance of linguistic diversity, as is witnessed in Hawkins (1987, 1992), Donmall (1985), and James & Garrett (1991).

For example, Hawkins (1987) has this to say:

We are seeking to light fires of curiosity about the central human characteristic of language which will blaze throughout our pupils' lives. While combating linguistic complacency, we are seeking to arm our pupils against fear of the unknown which breeds prejudice and antagonism. Above all we want to make our pupils' contacts with language, both their own and that of their neighbors, richer and more interesting, simply more fun. (p. 6)

Furthermore, Hawkins (1987) continues to say:

Linguistic tolerance does not come naturally; it has to be learned and to be worked at. The first reaction to language that cannot be understood (as to other forms of social behavior that are different) is suspicion, frustration, even anger. It is hard to believe that people who can behave so mysteriously (linguistically) can be all like us. (p. 17)

Prior to Hawkins' comments, Halliday (1971) attempted to explore the issue and linked awareness of language to competence of diversity management, declaring that "...the development of awareness [of language] in the pupil will have a positive effect on his competence, though this effect is likely to be indirect and may not show up immediately" (p. 10).

To recapitulate, here is how I see awareness of language contributing to overcoming of inconveniences of incommunicability of English across cultures. The key here is the improved sensitivity to, and tolerance of linguistic diversity intralingual and/or interlingual.

Diversity Management  
(Intercultural Literacy)



Teaching Awareness of Language  
(Understanding How Language is Designed  
And How People Use Language)



Improving Sensitivity to, and Tolerance of  
Linguistic Diversity  
(Overcoming Inconveniences of Incommunicability  
of English as a Multicultural Language)

While I mention awareness of language as an indispensable constituent of language teaching at all levels of formal education, I suggest that we should selectively incorporate some basic elements of cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics into teaching English as an international language (TEIL), aiming to overcome the major inconvenience (that is, intervarectal incommunicability) caused or to be caused by the spread of English as a multicultural language across the world. All the topics such as listed in Hawkins (1987) or Van Lier (1995) are not necessary for our purposes.

#### Metaphorical Competence

One thing that I would like to see included in these programs is the study of metaphor (metonymy and synecdoche included). In many countries, the fact remains that metaphor, a cognitive and expressive device human beings are universally equipped with, is considered as a technical term limited for literary analysis, appreciation, and criticism, not as an operation ordinary people employ in all domains of their daily lives.

As a result, Japanese schools from primary to tertiary levels do not offer systematic studies of the structure and function of metaphor in the Japanese Language courses. Similar situations are witnessed in other East Asian countries.

Metaphor has relevance to English across cultures, or world Englishes, to a great extent. If sentence 1 below is a correct sentence, so is sentence 2 and, of course, so is sentence 3, all enjoying the equal correctness and legitimacy status. These sentences are all formed in accordance with the metaphorical understanding that THE WHOLE IS THE PART.

1. *Yoko* is sharp.

As a human being, *Yoko* literally cannot be sharp. This sentence makes sense only when *Yoko* is referred to as her head, which is further referred to as an instrument for cutting because the head's main function is to think and thinking is understood as analysis (cutting). This is why the example sentence is homonymous with "Yoko has a sharp head." This relation does not hold between "An elephant is long" and "An elephant has a long trunk."

2. “The Arab *street* is angry, but the street is honest and sincere and we should listen to it,” Qatari Foreign Minister Hamed bin Jassin said in support of the popular guerrilla movement (*The Japan Times*, July 17, 2006, p. 5).

Similarly, the street here is understood as people who come out there for a protest and a demonstration.

3. That *restaurant* is very delicious. (Japanese English)

Similarly, too, the restaurant stands for the food served there.

Although these three sentences are constructed on the basis of the same metaphorical understanding of different phenomena, sentence 3 is generally unpopular. A Hong Kong respondent said, “...native English speaker may have difficulties to understand it and I personally can not accept it as proper English,” while another stated, “I’d see it as a kind of lazy form of ellipsis (deleting information that’s already known) rather than as being ungrammatical” (Whether deleting known information is a lazy act or not is another question to be seriously asked). Prominent here is the apparent lack of metaphorical awareness. It is to be hoped that tolerance of differences will be heightened by intercultural literacy.

Moreover, with the spread of English as an additional language, people are creating a variety of new expressions locally based on their first-language experiences. With the nature of world Englishes being what it is, it would be hard to accept the presupposition that sentences 1, 2, 3 below are incorrect and illegitimate because these are non-native while sentences 4, 5, 6 are correct and legitimate simply because they are native-based. A culturally equal treatment is in order.

1. He has long legs. (African English: is well known, influential)
2. He has hard ears. (Caribbean English: stubborn)
3. He has a thin face. (Philippine English: is shy)
4. He has a bitter tongue.
5. He has a sweet tooth.
6. He has green fingers.

Actually, speakers of English as an additional language are positioned to produce a variety of unique expressions. Firstly, they are learners of the language and are hardly expected to master its full lexicon. Yet, they often find themselves pressed to use the language in intercultural communication. The name of the game is “speak English now however limited your proficiency may be.” Under these circumstances, Japanese speakers might resort to expressions such as:

8. He has a wide face. (is well known, influential)
9. He has a tall nose. (is boastful)
10. He has a black belly. (is roguish)

These utterances may occur anywhere in the world first as spontaneous and sporadic expressions when speakers are pushed to speak but are not well versed in idiomatic phrases from American English or British English. They are often considered as mistakes because

they are not part of the standard phrase book. Erring speakers have allegedly committed two sins: they did not know correct expressions, and they did not speak the way native speakers would have done.

At the same time, these utterances can be established as local expressions *because* they are not included in the lexicon of native varieties *and because* local speakers insist upon their unique phraseologies. These utterances are what and how they wish to say as a response to what they see and feel. It is natural that we should be hearing these novel expressions more and more in the near future around the world. Japanese speakers rarely use these expressions currently because they are under the social pressure that proclaims, “Do not speak English until you can speak it like Americans.” With the idea of world Englishes pedagogically taught and socially accepted, the situation should change in due course.

The crux of the matter is that it is not fair if non-native expressions are invariably turned down while native expressions are upheld. These expressions cannot be banned or stigmatized. Rather, meanings have to be negotiated. We need to be ready to deal with the situation positively and creatively. It is hoped that language awareness programs to be offered in TEIL will be geared to help resolve these potential problems of Non-native Speaker Englishes.

Furthermore, if people of the world are aware of the structure and function of metaphorical extension, they should not be confounded to hear some Japanese say in English: I can’t read his belly. If people saw what metaphor is involved here, they would not have difficulty making sense of this sentence: I can’t understand what he really wants. Japanese extend the head, chest (or heart), and belly as containers, each intended for a different type of content. Thus the head is a container of knowledge (“He crammed everything into the head”), the chest of romantic thoughts (“He has his love for her hidden in the chest”) and the belly of emotions (“He decided to contain this conversation in his belly”). This applies substantially to all varieties of English, native and non-native alike.

#### Reports from Experimental Awareness Training Sessions

In my exploratory survey based on experimental awareness training sessions, I found that a short introduction of metaphorical analysis to Japanese college students could improve their willingness to enjoy and their ability (although limited) to interpret unfamiliar phrases from world Englishes. In a junior-senior course in English as an International Language that I teach in my university, students had an period (90 minutes) of basic awareness training in cognitive and expressive aspects of metaphor based on examples mostly from the Japanese language. Then, they were led to analyze Japanese expressions from a metaphorical point of view. Finally, they were given English sentences and asked to interpret them.

#### *Discussing Metaphor*

In this project, my introduction was actually very brief (60 minutes). The emphasis was that metaphor is a concept formation and understanding device, which is applied to everyday language, not to mention creative language, as is well delineated in Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Here is what we discussed, with examples drawn mainly from Japanese.



*What is Metaphor?*

1. Metaphor is a mental device human beings are universally equipped with.
2. Its function is both cognitive and linguistic.
3. It enables us to use familiar, fundamental, and concrete concepts to understand unfamiliar, profound, and abstract concepts.
4. It is based on our perception of similarities between the two things, phenomena, or concepts.
5. Examples are TIME'S PASSING IS A RIVER'S FLOWING and LIFE IS A JOURNEY. (The former is illustrated by "Let's go upstream and see what happened in Edo Era (Japanese)," where UP IS THE PAST, too, because it is known experientially that a river runs typically from the mountain to the sea. The latter allows the formation of "restarting one's life as a soba maker" or "the final terminal of one's life.")
6. Finally, in scientific fiction, the most logical and efficient language would seem to be one where one word has only one meaning. There would be no need for contextual interpretation. But if we had this kind of language in our brain, we could not have achieved our civilizations. We could not even have stood up. In order to store trillions of words invented for every single aspect of our life, our heads would have been horribly huge and heavy. Fortunately, our language is characterized by metaphor, a creative system that makes it possible for one word to have multiple meanings. Our language is made to be stored in our head.

We also discussed metonymy and synecdoche, because they are easier to comprehend and their examples are ubiquitous.

*What is Metonymy?*

1. Metonymy is a kind of metaphor that makes it possible for us to employ something's characteristics to represent something itself: THE GOLDEN BADGE FOR THE DIET PERSON in Japan.
  2. Similarly, the part can be seen as the whole, or vice versa---the process often referred to as synecdoche: THE FACE FOR THE HEAD, as is in "Please do not put your face out of the window," a public-speaker notice by a conductor in a railway train in Japan.
- Since metaphor is a cognitive and expressive device, it is important that we understand the apparatus in terms of thought and action on an everyday basis, too. Thus, our predisposition to use a few instances to lead to a conclusion was illustrated with some examples. Students were also made aware of our daily acts induced by our metaphorical conceptualization by discussing acts of substitution as representatives of metaphors in action, such as using a sake (rice wine) cup as a pencil stand.

Figure 1: A Sake Cup for a Pencil Stand (photographed by the author)



### *Metaphors in Thought and Action*

1. Although people have a few Thai acquaintances or had a few visits in Bangkok, they tend to talk about the Thais or Thailand in general.
2. Japanese old sayings such as “One instance shows the rest” (One who steals a pin will steal anything) express these characteristics of human cognition.
3. Acts of substitution are examples of metaphors in action: a sake cup as a pencil stand.

### *Analyzing Japanese Metaphorical Expressions*

After a brief lecture, students were invited to analyze the metaphorical foundations of everyday expressions. Here I chose body-part expressions because they are more familiar than others with reference to metaphors in Japanese.

#### Exercise in Analyzing Metaphors: Some Examples:

Why is it that the following sentences are all normal in Japanese? Explain each one's metaphorical background:

1. Someone's mouth spins well, is heavy, is light, etc.  
Because the mouth is understood as a tool (production machine). As the machine produces things, so does the mouth word. If a person's mouth is heavy, it is slow in producing words, and if it is light, it is fast in doing so, since SLOW IS HEAVY and FAST IS LIGHT.
2. To ride someone's mouth (and lose a lot of money)  
Because the mouth is perceived as a tool (vehicle, possibly a cart). While a cart carries goods, the mouth carries a message.
3. To beat the never-diminishing mouth  
Because the mouth is thought as a drum or a bell. As a drum or a bell, when beaten, makes a sound, so does the mouth, when prompted, speech.
4. To put into your head

Because one's head is understood as a container to store information and knowledge for memorization and further exploitation. The head is hard when the imaginary container is not plastic enough to let in something extraordinary. The head is soft when otherwise.

5. Someone's head is sharp, dull, weak, etc.

Because the head is taken as a tool for cutting such as a knife or a razor. The association stems from the understanding that the head functions as the thinking organ and thinking is cutting (analyzing). A sharp (dull) knife is referred to as a sharp (dull) head.

6. He has a fat belly. His tolerance to all sorts of men is remarkable.

Because Japanese people assume the belly as a container to contain emotional matters, usually said of men, not women. The fatter the belly, the more in volume and kind it holds (reference to its size). As an influential person rarely shows his belly, people around him cannot read his belly (reference to its content). In a touch-and-go situation, he may break his belly. How he hides or displays his belly is referred to as the belly art.

7. Suginami Ward is the navel (belly button) of Tokyo.

Because the navel is at the center of a human body, it is extended to anything that is at the center of something.

### *English Metaphors Interpreted*

After a 90-minute, one-session lecture on metaphor and workout in Japanese metaphorical expressions, students were led to decipher metaphors from world-wide varieties of English. The assumption was that if we understood the structure and the function of metaphor, or those of language on a larger scale, in Japanese, we would be able to apply the experience more successfully than otherwise to other languages being learned. And as we will see below, students actually proved that this is really the case. I gave these four sentences in a 2006 survey:

1. At a news conference in the White House.

A Reporter: Mr. President, I have a question.

President: OK. *Shoot*. (American English)

2. The government in that country is *toothless* against the international terrorist group. (General English)

3. Our boss is away today, so we can *shake legs* all day. (Singaporean and Malaysian English)

4. My friend in China does not come from a privileged family. He joined the city's police department, the country's *iron rice bowl*, immediately after high school. (Adapted from *TIME* 3/21/05) (China English)

In a 2007 survey, these four sentences were used after a similar metaphorical awareness training:

1. How about this blouse?

I'm afraid this is too *loud* for me. (General English)

2. If he doesn't agree to this proposal, I will ask his boss to lean on him. (American English)

3. She is so *thin-faced* and dislikes speaking in public. (Philippine English)
4. It's useless talking to him any more. He has *hard ears*. (Caribbean English)

In addition to these metaphorical interpretation drills, information was elicited from students as to (a) their knowledge of metaphor prior to these training sessions, (b) their evaluation of the sessions, and (c) their familiarity with the metaphors in question. The information was needed in order to prepare a realistic and an effective introduction of metaphorical awareness to TEIL.

### *Results and Observations*

*Few Knew Metaphor in Ordinary Language.* In my two-year surveys done in 2006 and 2007, it was immediately clear that a sizable number of Japanese students did not have the experience of studying metaphor before they entered college (30/66=45%, 2006; 22/60=37%, 2007). Moreover, most of my students who knew something about metaphor (36/66=55%, 2006; 38/60=63%, 2007) said that they had first learned it in cognitive and other linguistics courses they had taken before my course. Since these courses unfortunately are not offered to general students on many campuses, it is very likely that a huge number of students in Japan exit from college without metaphorical awareness.

*Many Thought Awareness Exercise Useful.* At the same time, my students who participated in the surveys rated high the short sessions on the importance of metaphor in terms of intervarietal communication, and considered them as effective and heuristic in trying to understand the unfamiliar expressions given them from world Englishes (Completely Effective 20%, Very Effective 61%, N=65 [2006]; Completely Effective 27%, Very Effective 54%, N=60 [2007]). Actually, the test sentences contained such semantic extensions that contemporary Japanese does not share and students were expected to deal with them intellectually. And they obviously took advantage of the knowledge they acquired or reinforced immediately prior to the exercises (see Table 1).

*Unknown Metaphors Correctly Decoded.* In the interpretation exercises, I wanted to know how many students were acquainted with the given metaphors so that I could see how well those students with no prior knowledge tackled with the problems. Thus, when it comes to the *shoot* expression, very few (51 out of 66) knew the WORDS ARE BULLETS (or LANGUAGE IS A WEAPON) metaphor (see Table 1). Nevertheless, all students who did not know this metaphorical expression were able to decode it correctly. Actually, quite a few students were able to zero in on the targets fairly well, as is demonstrated in the figure below.

Yet, there was an exception to the generally high correct answer rate. Most students (87%) were at a loss and didn't know how to make sense of *iron rice bowl*. Further studies are required to reveal the nature of metaphors that turn out to be difficult for people from different cultural backgrounds to uncover. In fact, there should be many others enormously difficult to crack. Those that are heavily culturally loaded may look undecipherable and invincible and those that appear similarly phrased interlingually can be confusing and puzzling. (Consider, for example, differences of English and Japanese "bite one's tongue" or "pull one's legs.")

Table 1: Understanding Phrases

	Phrase	Don't know			Correct Answer		
		#	N	%	#	N	%
	Survey2006						
1	shoot	51	66	77%	51	51	100%
2	toothless	55	66	83%	50	55	91%
3	shake legs	62	66	94%	49	62	79%
4	iron rice bowl	64	66	97%	8	64	13%
	Survey2007						
5	loud for me	47	60	78%	38	47	81%
6	lean on him	56	60	93%	40	56	71%
7	thin-faced	59	60	98%	36	59	61%
8	hard ears	57	60	95%	52	57	91%

Nevertheless, this does not diminish the desirability of introducing language awareness and metaphorical awareness to TEIL. It only means that a well-prepared curriculum is imperative and it needs to be based on solid research findings. Work on metaphorical competence by Azuma (2005, p. 156) shows how Japanese students of English activate a Japanese schema in an attempt to decipher metaphorical expressions of English.

Her findings imply that it would be productive to introduce the basics of metaphor into formal mother tongue education in Japan and reinforce the awareness nurtured there in TEIL from intercultural points of view. If it takes a long time to introduce language awareness to our National Language syllabuses, then it is our urgent business to do so in TEIL.

### Conclusion

This chapter dealt with issues in intervareital incommunicability among speakers of different varieties of English. As an educational response to these actual and potential inconveniences caused and to be caused by the diffusion of English as a multicultural language, teaching awareness of language was explored as an indispensable component in intercultural awareness/literacy. Reports from training sessions indicated that metaphorical awareness could enhance improved communicability in the use of English across cultures.

While current English has a centrifugal tendency for intracultural and intranational purposes, it also has a centripetal force for intercultural and international engagements. When speakers of English converge for information exchange and mutual understanding, they are strongly motivated to adjust their respective speech manners. They are prepared to learn how they can make it. This is where language awareness training comes in, to help them help themselves in this endeavor.

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