

Take it Outside! - Speaking Homework for English Communication Classes

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Abstract

In many EFL contexts, opportunities for oral communication outside the classroom are limited. This paper describes the development and implementation of a communicative oral English homework assignment at a Japanese university that increases those opportunities. Authors review literature that supports the concept behind this homework in its aim to facilitate low-pressure, peer-to-peer free speaking practice, leading to increased fluency, motivation, and use of target communication strategies. The assignment is outlined and results of a survey completed by 114 students who participated in the assignment are discussed. Participants' own perceptions of the efficacy of this assignment in improving fluency, encouraging use of speaking strategies, increasing confidence in speaking English and enhancing enjoyment of using English were recorded in the survey. Results indicate a majority of students perceived the assignment as being beneficial to their oral English ability, in addition to being enjoyable. Based on these results and further reflection, authors discuss the limitations of and possible improvements to the assignment. This action research demonstrates that despite limited opportunities for oral communication outside the classroom, the strategies and practice recommended can help learners beyond the context of the language classroom.

Keywords: Teaching EFL, oral communication, speaking strategies, motivation

Introduction

In their seminal work examining the unique challenges of teaching spoken English, Brown and Yule (1983) assert that, "In the production of speech, [...] each speaker needs to speak. He needs to speak individually and, ideally, he needs someone to listen to him speaking and to respond to him" (p. 25). Nearly 30 years later, this essential truth has not changed; however, logistics limit EFL instructors' ability to provide opportunities for the very practice that Brown and Yule stress is essential. EFL instructors in Japan are further confounded by the silence that prevails in speaking classes full of students who have been conditioned to speak out only if they are sure of giving the correct answer. Learners in this environment struggle to find a balance between the desire to be accurate and the need to communicate effectively in spoken English. Indeed, as Ur (1981) contends, "if communication practice is one of the most important components of the language learning/teaching practice, it is one of the most problematical. It is much more difficult to get learners to express themselves freely than it is to extract right answers in a controlled exercise" (p. 2).

This paper proposes a solution to this issue in the form of a Speaking Homework (SH) assignment that succeeds in addressing many of its facets. The assignment is grounded in language acquisition research which emphasizes the importance of frequent practice, the motivational effects of positive student perceptions of assignment efficacy and low-stress communication opportunities, and the fluency effects of consciously-applied communication strategies. This paper is the result of action research in the classroom and is intended to be a practical, useful guide to instructors of foreign languages in a wide variety of settings. The activity can be implemented with all class levels, helping to increase students' motivation, fluency, and overall enjoyment of the lesson.

How Speaking Homework Started

Teachers of oral English in EFL situations are always faced with the issue of how to provide enough speaking practice opportunities for their students in an environment where such chances rarely present themselves outside of class. One of the authors of this paper grappled with this problem after several years of teaching oral English classes at the university level in Japan resulted in frustration due to the seeming necessity of assigning reading, writing and listening homework for students in oral communication classes who, most of all, needed to practice speaking.

The author's belief in the value of teaching oral communication strategies (CS) led to the choice of a course textbook based on CS, entitled *Nice Talking with You* (Kenny & Woo, 2004), wherein the idea of students explicitly noticing their own use of target language structures during a short conversation with a peer was introduced. After teaching students how to notate their own observations of the strengths and weaknesses of their in-class conversations with peers, the author decided to ask students to have similar conversations outside of class, after which they would reflect upon both their own and their partner's language use, strategy use, and overall performance. That explicit reflection was then submitted as homework.

Student response to the speaking homework assignment was encouraging. Many observations noted that participants "enjoyed" the conversation, and as the weeks passed, students began to comment that they "used more strategies than before" and that their conversations lasted longer than they had in earlier homework assignments. Encouraged by these comments and by improved in-class performance, the authors have collaborated on lesson planning and have continued to refine the assignment, which has become a core feature of their speaking classes. Speaking Homework (SH) provides a unique opportunity for out-of-class oral interaction in an EFL setting, an idea which other researchers have incorporated in differing forms into their syllabi (Barker, 2005; Schneider, 2001).

Literature Review

Motivation

"Motivation plays a vital role in academic learning in general, and this is particularly true of the sustained process of mastering an L2" (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005, p. 616). However,

engendering this motivation in non-English majors is, by many accounts (Janzen, 2008, for example), very challenging.

In an ideal language learning environment, a learner's initial encounter with the L2 would be "a positive experience" (Dornyei, 2001, p. 53); however, it could be argued that it is too late for that in Japan. The test preparation teaching methods employed in Japan result in many students' first experience of English being limited to the grammar translation method of learning, coupled with rote memorization of word lists and oftentimes obscure passages in textbooks. When the short-term goal of obtaining knowledge of English to regurgitate on university entrance exams has passed, "there is very little to sustain ... motivation, so the student appears in freshmen classrooms as a kind of timid, exam-worn survivor with no apparent academic purpose at university" (Berwick & Ross, 1989, p. 206).

Furthermore, students who have become acculturated to the test preparation lesson style in junior high and high school can have difficulty accepting as valid the need to develop communicative English skills upon entering university. As Bassano (1986, p. 18) maintains, the lack of enthusiasm on the part of students is often associated with "unfamiliar instructional practices" in which they had placed little credence prior to their enrollment in tertiary education in Japan. It is highly probable this mindset impedes motivation towards English learning within the university environment, as discussed by Kelly (2005) and Janzen (2008).

With the level of English amongst Japanese university students reputedly amongst the lowest in Asia (Kwan, 2002; Associated Press, 2000) however, it is imperative that instructors emphasize the relevance of learning to communicate in English. As outlined by other researchers, students need to believe that English can be useful and relevant in both their everyday lives and careers, in order to increase levels of motivation (Barker, 2005, p. 81; Dornyei, 2001, p. 57; Kelly, 2005, p. 43). The SH assignment requires students to interact orally with others in English about self-selected topics relevant to themselves and their peers on a regular basis, which, as Bassano (1986) suggests, is a confidence-building, motivating language experience. SH thus aids in bringing students to the realization that such interaction is a valuable exercise.

In addition to overcoming resistance to new teaching methods and entrenched negative attitudes based on prior learning experiences, EFL instructors in Japan must also work "to lower students' level of anxiety ..., establishing a pleasant and supportive [...] atmosphere" (Martin et al., 2006 p. 559). In describing his experience with a speaking activity done outside of class time that has parallels with SH, Barker (2005, p. 83) notes that with repeated opportunities to integrate English into their lives outside of the classroom, his students report that "they no longer feel such anxiety about using the language and are able to give a much better account of themselves when the opportunity arises". Taking part in SH, which involves speaking in low-stress, low-stakes conditions with a fellow non-native speaker of English, can therefore help to lower students' anxiety levels and the related "affective filter" (Krashen, 1982), allowing for real progress towards fluency to take place.

Fluency

Speaking fluently in a second language is a skill that must be practiced and learned, just as the piano student must repeatedly practice his recital piece or the tennis student must repeatedly

practice her serve. Without such practice, it is very difficult for the pianist to play his piece fluidly or the tennis player to start the rally effectively. Similarly, it is unlikely that a language learner will gain oral fluency without practice. This is one of the main concepts behind the SH assignment.

For the purposes of this paper, the term “oral fluency” is used to indicate speakers who can converse relatively quickly and accurately, with few pauses (as described by Skehan, 1998), and continue their conversation for a given length of time in this fluent manner. Furthermore, given the authors’ in-class focus on the instruction of communication strategy use, included in the term “oral fluency” is the ability of learners to use strategies to extend their conversations and manage periods of difficulty during which they negotiate for meaning in various ways (Varonis & Gass, 1985).

Achieving oral fluency in an EFL setting is a challenge for many reasons, one of which is the limited amount of on-task time. Non-English majors in Japanese university oral English communication classes typically meet their teachers for one 90-minute session per week over a 13- to 15-week term. The actual time those students spend producing their own utterances is but a fraction of their overall class time. The extra speaking time provided by the SH assignment multiplies that fraction, providing essential practice necessary to help students along the road to oral fluency. Furthermore, taking the fluency-building activity outside of the classroom allows students practice time away from the teacher’s evaluative gaze. Brown (2003) advises that instructors who wish to help students achieve greater oral fluency “must be willing to let go of some of the control in [their] classrooms; ... [they] must be willing to set up situations in which fluency can develop, and then encourage the students to actually communicate” (p. 7).

Extended speaking practice time is only one of the fluency benefits of this homework assignment. SH also allows partners to communicate at a level suitable for both speakers, making use of CS to help each other achieve their maximum potential. Participants have indicated that even in cases where one partner has a higher proficiency level than another, they feel more comfortable speaking with a peer than with the native-speaker teacher. The lower anxiety level contributes to increased motivation (see Motivation, above) while the out-of-class setting of the conversation allows learners to focus less on accuracy, leaving them free to concentrate on improving fluency (Littlewood, 1984).

A further fluency benefit arises from the ability of students to select their own conversation topics in SH. These topics can be chosen from a list offered by the teacher or they can be left up to the students to decide. In either case, the students have the ultimate freedom in deciding the course their conversation will take, allowing them to focus on topics of particular interest to them, thereby heightening interest and increasing motivation (Bassano, 1986), while enabling them to speak on a topic about which they have considerable knowledge. Indeed, Nation (2003) advises that tasks meant to improve fluency should make use of content that is familiar to learners in order to be effective.

Communication Strategies as a Part of SH

While an in-depth discussion of the merits and demerits of the explicit instruction of communication strategies (CS) is beyond the scope of this paper, researchers have found that

students' oral proficiency benefits from such instruction (Nakatani, 2010). One aim of this paper is to demonstrate that SH encourages learners to actively use and recognize CS in oral communication.

Students in the authors' classes are introduced to a variety of strategies for managing conversations. These include, for example, appropriate gambits to open or close a conversation, strategies to check comprehension or appeal for help with vocabulary or grammar, expressions to use in order to gain more thinking time, and a number of strategies useful in extending conversations. These CS, particularly those to extend conversations, do not come naturally to students whose pre-university English language training has consisted largely of written Japanese/English grammar-translation exercises. For such students, exposure to communicative oral English has often been limited to simple, one-turn question and answer exchanges.

To simply introduce CS to students is not enough. To achieve fluency (as defined above) in using CS, students must practice using them and should also recognize them when they occur. The authors assert that when students recognize their own (or their interlocutor's) use of CS in a conversation, they are "noticing" an important language feature.

Much has been written on and debated about the subject of noticing, beginning with Schmidt's (1990) notion that language features must be consciously attended to in order to be truly acquired by the language learner. While some researchers have cast doubts upon the importance of noticing in aiding communicative competence (see, for example, Truscott, 1998), the authors of this paper have seen students become more proficient users of CS once they begin to consciously include them in their conversational repertoire and notice them in their own SH conversations. Indeed, this outcome supports Ellis' (1994) suggestion that explicit knowledge of a language feature may "function as a facilitator, helping learners to notice features in the input which they would otherwise miss and also to compare what they notice with what they produce" (p. 362).

The SH Assignment

"Few if any people achieve fluency in a foreign language solely within the confines of the classroom" (Brown, 2007, p. 1)

Participants

The teachers have carried out SH in English communication courses taken by students with wide-ranging majors, from medicine, law, and economics, to languages, sports and technology, at one large university in Japan. The English ability of the learners has varied greatly, with "Sports" majors being recognized as having a much lower overall ability in English when compared with other departments where this research was conducted. In spite of this potential setback, however, to date SH has worked well in all classes where it has been administered, regardless of the students' prior level of English.

Weekly Homework

Each week, students are given a SH paper to complete and submit in the following class.

While participants are free to choose their conversation partner, usually the initial pairs remain constant throughout the semester. (See Appendix A)

Topics

Students are assigned a topic for the SH, for example “Senior High School” (see Appendix B for a further list). As far as possible, the topics are connected to the theme of the textbook for that week. In the first one or two classes of the semester, students complete the first part of the SH paper (“Get Ready”) in class to ensure they fully comprehend what is required of them.

“Get Ready”

Past research (including Schneider, 2001 and Barker, 2005) has involved students speaking together outside of class on a regular basis, yet there has been minimal focus on and attention to communication strategies, or “preparation” prior to the actual speaking assignment. An important tenet of SH however, is the preparation time. As pointed out by Nelson (1995), “reflectivity[, which entails] taking one’s time to think something through,” (p. 11) is an essential aspect of Japanese learning. This “thinking time” before the actual conversation takes place helps learners consider what they want to talk about, together with the strategies they can employ to keep the conversation moving.

The first part of “Get Ready” encourages students to write any particular words or expressions they might want to use in the conversation. Students look up any words they think may be helpful, in addition to reviewing expressions taught in class. In “Questions I want to ask” and “Things I want to say”, participants are asked to consider (and notate) questions they can ask their partner about the topic, together with how to express some of their own thoughts on an aspect of the topic in question. In order to help ensure that they can speak for the allotted time, a minimum of three sentences for each section are usually required. The inspiration for this stage of SH is the timed speaking activity preparation outlined in Kenny and Woo’s *Nice Talking with You* (2004).

Finally, the participants are asked to list any communication strategies - referred to in the classes as “Communication Tips” - they hope to utilize in the conversation (see Appendix C for a sample list of these). Although students are allowed to look at past SH papers and use a dictionary when preparing (interestingly, many elect not to), students are not permitted to talk to one another or consult the teacher. It is important to stress that this is not meant to be a written plan or a prepared dialogue, but general support to remind students of how to keep the conversation moving.

Speaking

The instructor informs students that they are to meet their partner in a location of their choice outside of regular class time, and speak for the allotted time in English (the minimum requirement being from three minutes at the beginning of semester). They are reminded that the SH paper is there as a reference, and should not be used as a script and no dictionary should be

used during the speaking time. As instructors in Japan are well aware, dictionaries can all too easily become a crutch for EFL learners in communication classes, resulting in disjointed and less natural communication. In addition, since the aim of SH is for students to move toward more natural communicative methods, it is helpful to point out that it would be highly unusual for native speakers to consult a dictionary when conversing on an everyday topic because they manage communication difficulties with a variety of CS. As students speak in class in English throughout the semester for increasing amounts of time and all the pairs carry out SH together on several occasions throughout the semester, they become accustomed to talking with each other in English.

During the conversations, CS usage is encouraged. When learners need access to a word in English with which they are unfamiliar, they try to use circumlocution, an appeal for help, or other CS to manage the obstacle. Although this can be challenging at the outset, confidence increases with time and as their familiarity with CS usage improves.

Noticing

After speaking, the students are asked to complete the “*Noticing*” (reflection) section of their SH. The reflection requires students to note perceptions of where they and their partner have performed well, in conjunction with areas they sense needing improvement. Just as Harris (1997) explicates how “self-assessment can provide a springboard for making students aware of the communication strategies they use” (p. 16), the instructors involved in the research believe this part of the SH to be fundamental in the development of more fluent English communication amongst their learners.

Teachers’ Comments

At the bottom of the SH paper, there is a comment box referring to the different aspects required and being assessed in the homework (see Appendix A). As necessary, the instructor indicates any area where the student needs to pay more attention. This box can also help remind the learners of the types of reflections they can make in their “*Noticing*” section.

Survey: Student Perceptions of SH

The fundamental objectives of this research were:

- 1) to assess whether students perceived the SH as being beneficial to their spoken English ability. If so, in what ways?
- 2) to investigate whether students felt more confident in speaking English after the assignments.

As stated above, students who consider a given assignment interesting and valid as a learning tool can be more motivated to progress in their learning, yet it is also true that

“students’ perceptions can clash with the procedural goals of communicative foreign language learning” (Harris, 1997, p. 14). For these reasons, the instructors involved in this research decided to assess the students’ own perceptions of the efficacy of SH. An anonymous survey was conducted in the final class of the semester to gauge their reactions. Participants were asked to indicate if they were male or female, and encouraged to be honest in their answers, while also being assured of anonymity.

Method

Participants

Of the 137 students who took the aforementioned SH communication classes, a total of 114 learners, 77 males and 37 females, completed the distributed survey in the final classes of the semester. All the respondents were non-English majors from four different departments (law, medicine, sports and technology) taking compulsory English communication classes in their first, second or third years of university. The average class size was 36 students; however, some did not attend on a regular basis.

Procedure

The anonymous survey comprised 10 statements aiming to ascertain students’ enjoyment and confidence levels during the SH classes. Although some past studies (including Griffiee, 1997) have used only English, it was decided that this survey should be bilingual (English and Japanese) to avoid any misunderstanding and the risk of presenting inaccurate data. Using a five-point Likert Scale format, the respondents were asked to show whether they agreed or disagreed with the given statements.

Results

This research is primarily concerned with the students’ perceptions of the assignment in five areas:

- (i) enhancing the enjoyment of using English
- (ii) feeling more relaxed when speaking English
- (iii) increasing confidence
- (iv) improving fluency / English
- (v) using Communication Strategies

Figure 1 graphically depicts the results of the six statements relevant to these five areas. The remaining four statements pertain to issues not central to the focus of this paper. Rather, they concern student compliance with the assignment and teacher feedback. A complete list of results can be referred to in Appendices D, E, and F.

Enhancing the Enjoyment of Using English

Item 1. I enjoyed doing *Speaking Homework*.

Of the participants, 54% said that they “enjoyed” SH as opposed to 14% who said they did not. It is worth noting that SH enjoyment levels were similar for both men and women (M: 53%; F: 57%).

Feeling More Relaxed When Speaking English

Item 3. I am more relaxed when I speak English now than I was at the beginning of the semester.

Of the students, 73% said they felt more relaxed; however, what was most interesting about this statement was the difference between male and female respondents. While 79% of the men agreed, only 59% of the women did. As can be seen in Figure 1 however, the feeling of being more relaxed did not equate to having more confidence.

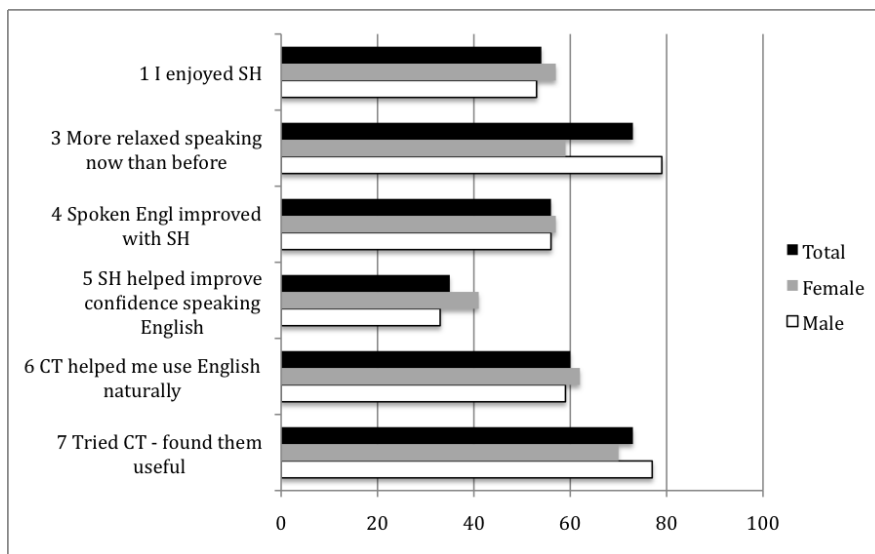


Figure 1. Speaking Homework Questionnaire Results by Item Number

Increasing Confidence

Item 5. *Speaking Homework* has helped improve my confidence in speaking English.

While 35% of the learners maintained that SH had improved their confidence, the female students (41%) perceived greater confidence than their male counterparts (33%), as Figure 2 illustrates. The results may initially seem contradictory to the results of Item 3; however, it may be that 51% were “undecided” about this statement for culturally-based reasons. In Japan,

humility is seen as favorable and is deeply engrained within society, so respondents may have refrained from identifying themselves as “confident,” considering that to be immodest.

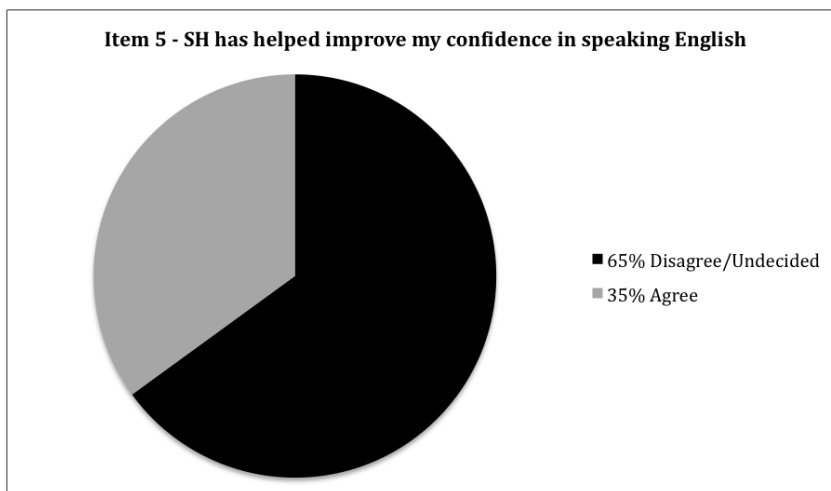


Figure 2. Results of Item 5 – SH Helped Improve My Confidence in Speaking English

Improving Fluency / English

Item 4. I feel my spoken English has improved in *Speaking Homework* assignments. Of the students, 54% sensed their spoken English had improved. It should be mentioned that fewer than 8% of the participants disagreed with this statement, and 36% were ambivalent. The reasonably high number of “undecided” people could be attributed to their feeling a sense of reluctance in expressing progress regarding a hitherto unfamiliar method of study. Further research is needed to investigate this area.

Encouraging the Use of Communication Strategies

Item 6. The *Communication Tips* helped me use English more naturally. Of the students, 60% felt that the Communication Tips helped them to use English more naturally. This high number was particularly encouraging to the instructors as one of the purposes of the course was to enable learners to communicate more naturally in English by utilizing communication strategies.

Item 7. I tried to use the *Communication Tips* and found them useful. Of the participants, 75% found Communication Tips useful, with fewer than 4% of people disagreeing with this statement. It is interesting to note that while a higher percentage of females found the communication tips enabled them to speak English more naturally (F: 62%; M: 59%), a greater number of males found them useful (M: 77%; F: 70%).

Student Compliance with the Assignment

The majority of students reported completing SH as assigned. This included 72% of the learners preparing language beforehand (Item 10), while a lesser number of the respondents (57%) said they had tried to use only English during the conversation (Item 2). The authors are currently investigating the effects of these practices on oral fluency.

Perceptions of Teacher Feedback

Almost 74% of students always read the teacher's comments (Item 9), in addition to 65% stating that the feedback was useful (Item 8). In spite of these positive results, proposed changes to the assignment regarding how learners carry out noticing (discussed later in this paper) will require a change in the format of teacher feedback.

Discussion

As the data in this research depict, the students in this study had generally positive perceptions of SH. Motivation studies suggest that these perceptions can lead to greater proficiency over the long term, supporting the inclusion of this effective activity in an EFL oral communication curriculum. While the statistics reveal a lack of confidence in the respondents' English ability (Item 5), it is beyond the scope of this paper to cover the related cultural issues, and further research is needed to investigate this important area within the Japanese EFL context.

Reflections and Recommendations for SH

The instructors in this research see SH as something that is still evolving. After conducting SH with hundreds of students, assessing the research data and receiving classroom feedback, three areas needing improvement were noted.

“Noticing”

After carefully examining SH papers over the course of a year, it became evident that the “noticing / reflection” section of the SH was proving too challenging for some students in lower level classes. The time needed for reflection and the ability to express those concepts in English seemed beyond the linguistic ability of some students.

In response to this, the instructors believe that the complexity of SH reflection should be introduced more slowly, according to the level of the students. For example, with lower level classes, the students prepare the “*Get Ready*” section, and on completion of their conversation, they tick pre-set items to indicate what was accomplished. This approach is supported by Harris (1997), who stresses the value of instructors having comprehensible criteria in order for students to evaluate themselves. This appears a more reasonable and realistic request at the outset of a course for lower level non-English majors.

The Possibility of “Cheating” and Students with Busy Schedules

There was no way to guarantee that the students actually had an English conversation with their partners outside class. Although the instructors were confident that the majority of students completed their homework as requested, there was a sense that the way of administering the assignment could be modified.

The students in this research did not major in English, and some had multiple assignments for their other courses on a regular basis. Even if some had difficulty finding time to meet and talk to their partners, the instructors received no negative feedback about this. It was decided, however, that a change in procedure should be considered to reduce the possibility of cheating and to facilitate opportunities for busy students to meet.

An Alternative Approach - Recording SH in Class

To eliminate the possibility of students cheating by not having the conversation at all, and to help students with busy schedules, the instructors could incorporate the recording of SH into their classes on a periodic basis. In an ideal situation, every student would record their conversation on a weekly basis, as has been presented in other research (for example: Schneider, 2001; Barker, 2005). Nevertheless, this is not always practical for non-English majors, with their varying schedules and little common free time, particularly in their first two years of university. Moreover, given the size and number of communication classes allotted to the instructors, it is not feasible for every recording to be listened to and given adequate feedback on a weekly basis. A way to efficiently and effectively incorporate recording is still under investigation.

Conclusion

The Speaking Homework assignment described in this paper is perceived by the majority of students to whom it is assigned to be an enjoyable, anxiety-reducing language experience encouraging the development of oral fluency in English and the use of explicitly-taught communication strategies. The instructors involved in this SH research have found positive motivational and fluency effects in their students through the use of this assignment. This confirms findings by research in language acquisition indicating that favorable learner perceptions of assignment efficacy can lead to such effects. Details of the practical implementation of the assignment require further refinement, with revision of the reflection stage of the assignment and the recording of conversations being considered.

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Appendix A

Speaking Homework Student Paper

Name: _____
No. _____

Partner's Name: _____

Student

Date _____

TOPIC

SCORE:

GET READY (Before you speak)

Words/Expressions I want to use:

Questions I want to ask my partner:

Things I want to say to my partner:

A "Communication Tip" I want to try

.... SPEAKING

NOTICING (After you speak)

Things I did well☺:

Things I need to improve:

Things my partner did well☺:

Things my partner needs to improve:

In "Get Ready," you need:		In "Noticing," you need:	
More vocabulary		More comments / examples	
More questions		Did you use the "communication tip"?	
More things		Specific examples of things you couldn't say in English, with Japanese translation	
A communication tip to try			

Appendix B

List of Sample Topics Used in SH

a family member
a (good) friend
a teacher
an important person
a special memory/occasion
junior high school
sport
a book
a film
an important lesson

Appendix C

Examples of Speaking Strategies

Appeals for help: e.g. What does _____ mean?

Natural conversation openers / Greetings: e.g. How's it going?

Asking for repetition: e.g. Pardon?

Extending the conversation with extra information: e.g. I'm from Kagoshima, but I moved to Fukuoka last year.

Extending the conversation with follow-up questions: e.g. How about you? / How long have you been playing tennis?

Using fillers: e.g. Let me see; Hmmm

Attending skills: e.g. Really? How interesting.

Attending skill: shadowing the speaker

Natural conversation closers: e.g. Hey, I have to run. / Nice chatting with you!

Appendix D

Speaking Homework Questionnaire Total Results (M,F combined)

TOTAL MALE & FEMALE /114	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PERCENTAGES					
1. I enjoyed doing Speaking Homework. 私は Speaking Homework をするのを楽しんだ。	13 11.40	49 42.98	36 31.58	12 10.53	4 3.51
2. I tried to use only English in my Speaking Homework times. 私は Speaking Homework の時間で英語だけを使うようにした。	17 14.91	48 42.11	31 27.19	17 14.91	1 0.88
3. I am more relaxed when I speak English now than I was at the beginning of the semester. 英語を話すのに、学期の初めより今のほうがリラックスしている。	33 28.95	50 43.86	27 23.68	3 2.63	1 0.88
4. I feel my spoken English has improved in Speaking Homework assignments. 私は Speaking Homework の宿題で英会話力が上達したと思う。	17 14.91	47 41.23	41 35.96	8 7.02	1 0.88
5. Speaking Homework has helped improve my confidence in speaking English. Speaking Homework で英語を話す自信がついた。	11 9.65	29 25.44	58 50.88	13 11.40	3 2.63
6. The Communication Tips helped me use English more naturally. Communication Tips で英語をもっと自然に使えるようになった	14 12.28	54 47.37	32 28.07	14 12.28	0 0
7. I tried to use the Communication Tips and found them useful. Communication Tips を使うようにしたら、便利なことが分かった。	27 23.68	58 50.88	25 21.93	2 1.75	2 1.75
8. The teacher's comments on my Speaking Homework (at the bottom of the sheet) were useful. Speaking Homework (用紙下) の先生のコメントは役に立つ。	24 21.05	50 43.86	34 29.82	5 4.39	1 0.88
9. I always read the teacher's comments about my Speaking Homework. 自分の Speaking Homework の先生のコメントをいつも読む。	39 34.21	45 39.47	18 15.79	10 8.77	2 1.75
10. I always spent time preparing my Speaking Homework BEFORE talking to my partner. 私はいつもパートナーと話す前に Speaking Homework の準備時間を持つ。	39 34.21	43 37.72	24 21.05	3 2.63	5 4.39

Appendix E

Speaking Homework Questionnaire Male Results

MALE TOTAL /77	Strongly agree	agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PERCENTAGES					
1. I enjoyed doing Speaking Homework. 私は Speaking Homework をするのを楽しんだ。	<u>8</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>10.39</u>	<u>42.86</u>	<u>28.57</u>	<u>12.99</u>	<u>5.19</u>
2. I tried to use only English in my Speaking Homework times. 私は Speaking Homework の時間で英語だけを使うようにした。	<u>10</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>12.99</u>	<u>46.75</u>	<u>22.08</u>	<u>16.88</u>	<u>1.30</u>
3. I am more relaxed when I speak English now than I was at the beginning of the semester. 英語を話すのに、学期の初めより今のほうがリラックスしている。	<u>25</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>32.47</u>	<u>46.75</u>	<u>19.48</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1.30</u>
4. I feel my spoken English has improved in Speaking Homework assignments. 私は Speaking Homework の宿題で英会話力が上達したと思う。	<u>10</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>12.99</u>	<u>42.86</u>	<u>36.36</u>	<u>7.79</u>	<u>0</u>
5. Speaking Homework has helped improve my confidence in speaking English. Speaking Homework で英語を話す自信がついた。	<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>
	<u>9.09</u>	<u>23.38</u>	<u>51.95</u>	<u>12.99</u>	<u>2.60</u>
6. The Communication Tips helped me use English more naturally. Communication Tips で英語をもっと自然に使えるようになった	<u>10</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>12.99</u>	<u>45.45</u>	<u>28.57</u>	<u>12.99</u>	<u>0</u>
7. I tried to use the Communication Tips and found them useful. Communication Tips を使うようにしたら、便利なことが分かった。	<u>18</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>23.38</u>	<u>53.25</u>	<u>19.48</u>	<u>2.60</u>	<u>1.30</u>
8. The teacher's comments on my Speaking Homework (at the bottom of the sheet) were useful. Speaking Homework (用紙下) の先生のコメントは役に立つ。	<u>16</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>20.78</u>	<u>40.26</u>	<u>33.77</u>	<u>3.90</u>	<u>1.30</u>
9. I always read the teacher's comments about my Speaking Homework. 自分の Speaking Homework の先生のコメントをいつも読む。	<u>25</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>
	<u>32.47</u>	<u>40.26</u>	<u>15.58</u>	<u>9.09</u>	<u>2.60</u>
10. I always spent time preparing my Speaking Homework BEFORE talking to my partner. 私はいつもパートナーと話す前に Speaking Homework の準備時間を持つ。	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>32.47</u>	<u>33.77</u>	<u>25.97</u>	<u>2.60</u>	<u>5.19</u>

Appendix F

Speaking Homework Questionnaire Female Results

TOTAL FEMALE /37	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PERCENTAGES					
1. I enjoyed doing Speaking Homework. 私はSpeaking Homeworkをするのを楽しんだ。	5	16	14	2	0
	13.5	43.2	37.8	5.4	0
2. I tried to use only English in my Speaking Homework times. 私はSpeaking Homeworkの時間で英語だけを使うようにした。	7	12	14	4	0
	18.9	32.4	37.8	10.8	0
3. I am more relaxed when I speak English now than I was at the beginning of the semester. 英語を話すのに、学期の初めより今のほうがリラックスしている。	8	14	12	3	0
	21.6	37.8	32.4	8.1	0
4. I feel my spoken English has improved in Speaking Homework assignments. 私はSpeaking Homeworkの宿題で英会話力が上達したと思う。	7	14	13	2	1
	18.9	37.8	35.1	5.4	2.7
5. Speaking Homework has helped improve my confidence in speaking English. Speaking Homeworkで英語を話す自信がついた。	4	11	18	3	1
	10.8	29.7	48.6	8.1	2.7
6. The Communication Tips helped me use English more naturally. Communication Tipsで英語をもっと自然に使えるようになった	4	19	10	4	0
	10.8	51.4	27	10.8	0
7. I tried to use the Communication Tips and found them useful. Communication Tipsを使うようにしたら、便利なが分かった。	9	17	10	0	1
	24.3	45.9	27	0	2.7
8. The teacher's comments on my Speaking Homework (at the bottom of the sheet) were useful. Speaking Homework（用紙下）の先生のコメントは役に立つ。	8	19	8	2	0
	21.6	51.4	21.6	5.4	0
9. I always read the teacher's comments about my Speaking Homework. 自分のSpeaking Homeworkの先生のコメントをいつも読む。	14	14	6	3	0
	37.8	37.8	16.2	8.1	0
10. I always spent time preparing my Speaking Homework BEFORE talking to my partner. 私はいつもパートナーと話す前にSpeaking Homeworkの準備時間を持つ。	14	17	4	1	1
	37.8	45.9	10.8	2.7	2.7