AJAL

Compelled to Speak: Addressing student reticence in a university EFL classroom

David P. Shea
Keio University, Japan

This paper reports on an action research investigation of a classroom activity called stand-up, designed to address student reluctance to express ideas and engage in whole-class discussion. It is set within a tertiary EFL context in Japan where students are typical reticent. To promote more active participation, students were asked to stand and volunteer an answer before they could sit down. Student opinions about the activity were collected in anonymous surveys, and data were tabulated and analysed using qualitative procedures. It was found that, though there was some misgiving and anxiety, students were strongly supportive of the activity, in part for what many saw as a needed push toward engagement, in part because participation was seen as fairly distributed and concentration was strengthened. Although the findings reflect only one teacher's approach to solving a problem of interaction, the study carries broader implications, suggesting that the L2 classroom can be a site of cultural transformation, leading to new patterns of interaction and ways of expression.

Keywords: student reticence; stand-up; pushed to speak; reflective practice; third space; EFL; Japan

Introduction

One of the more commonly noted characteristics of the EFL classroom in Japan (but also true of some other Asian contexts), is the unwavering resistance of students to express ideas actively and engage in whole-class discussion. For various reasons, students simply do not seem to feel comfortable talking in front of classmates, whether motivated by anxiety, fear of standing apart from the group, or self-imposed reserve. In response to a teacher's inquiry, for instance, many students studiously avoid eye contact and refrain from offering an opinion; if called upon, even those who know the answer typically offer only minimal response. Student reticence to communicate is frustrating for any teacher interested in creating a communicative environment in the L2 classroom, especially since productive output is thought to be essential in facilitating acquisition (Swain, 2000) as well as developing higher level thinking and analytic skills (Alexander, 2008; Hardman, 2008; Mercer & Howe, 2012). Often, applied research into the issue of reticence counsels sensitivity and accommodation to L1 cultural norms, but it might be argued that, while sensitivity is always a good idea, the L2 classroom is a place where new voices and identities are constructed. Consequently, a more assertive approach that compels participation may be called for. If so, it is of value to investigate the local parameters of student response to unfamiliar patterns of interaction, which may offer a reflective lens with which to view instructional practice in the EFL classroom.

Literature review

The reticence of Japanese students to speak and engage in classroom discussion is frequently presented as a reflection of traditional cultural values. Some researchers argue that silence itself is a form of communication (e.g., Bao, 2014; Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000), while others point to the muffling effect of teacher-centric instruction in secondary high schools focused on preparing for high stakes entrance examinations, an orientation that encourages an instructional style with little room for student expression (Humphries & Burns, 2015; Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; Osterman, 2014). Some argue that L2 classes are silent because passive participation is expected and customary, thus silence is simply an aspect of "normal" behaviour at the university level (King, 2013). There is also a widespread perception that silence is tied to associated behaviours, including lack of concentration, daydreaming, and sleeping in class (Falout, 2014; Taguchi, 2014).

Reticence to speak is evident not just in Japan but in some other Asian contexts as well, where a deeply engrained culture of learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013) is seen to demand polite respect for teacher authority, reinforcing resistance to the open expression of opinions and ideas, especially to someone with noticeably higher status. Tsui (1996) has described such Asian learners as characteristically reserved and afraid of making mistakes, traits that generate increased reservation about speaking openly in the classroom setting. Liu and Jackson (2008) argue that lower proficiency learners in particular do not like to risk speaking in English due to fear of negative evaluation; consequently they tend "to withdraw from [the very] activities that could increase their language skills" (p. 72).

In terms of pedagogic response, Harumi (2011, p. 264) has catalogued a range of instructional practices that EFL teachers might effectively use to elicit more active student talk, including increased wait time and linguistic support (e.g. repetition or rephrasing). Harumi also points out that many students do not want to be singled out or compete for turns and suggests that Western teachers, especially, demonstrate sensitivity to Asian cultural norms. Group work is recommended, because it is considered less stressful for learners, in line with the cultural norms underlying silence. Talandis and Stout (2015) advocate increased use of the L1 to get students to talk more, and Humphries, Burns, and Tanaka (2015) advise using pair-work in a positive, non-threatening environment. Effiong (2016) notes that increased formality in teacher tone of address and appearance (including dress) can heighten student anxiety and increase reticence.

Some research has focused on the way in which pedagogy does not simply respond to, but simultaneously works to shape cultural dynamics in the classroom. Inspired by van Lier's (2004) ecological perspective on language learning, Peng and Woodrow (2010, p. 834) maintain that "situational contextual factors" are more important than cultural background in strengthening the willingness to communicate. Similarly, Xie (2010) contends that teacher control over discussion topics functions to silence students, and Cao (2014) argues that willingness to communicate is not simply a "trait disposition" brought to the lesson, but a "dynamic and situated" construct that is developed in classroom activity (p. 790). This ecological perspective diverges significantly from traditional views of cultural influence, suggesting that a closer investigation of how particular teaching practices shape student attitudes may prove fruitful.

Promoting critical thinking

For a teacher working in a university setting responsible for courses in integrated academic skills, a fundamental goal is to engage students to build ideas collaboratively (Gibbons, 2009; Hardman, 2008) in ways that promote critical thinking and reflective analysis (Ko, 2013; Mercer & Howe, 2012). This goal of dynamic engagement can only be achieved if students express ideas actively and with commitment, which means that reticence is especially obstructive. Although it is true that in many cases, students are somewhat more willing to speak without hesitation in small group settings, there is typically limited interaction in whole-class discussions that follow group work. More importantly, small group dynamics are liable to generate a wholesale shift to the L1 and unbalanced participation patterns (Mercer & Dawes, 2008). Voices of marginal participants tend to be ignored in small group settings, and few students understand how to elicit and support complex and cognitively demanding academic ideas in interaction with peers (Alexander, 2008).

Method

Stand-up

To address the problem of reticence and "push" learners (Swain, 2000) to speak more productively, an activity called "stand-up" was introduced where all students were asked to stand and volunteer to say something before sitting down or to be left standing. This approach was first used in the study reported here with an advanced, content-based communication class as a quiz to ascertain whether everyone had done the homework. The tone was light, with students competing to raise their hands, following the principle of first-come, first-served. Eager to sit, most were quick to speak and the quizzes generated a lively atmosphere. Given the reception, it seemed possible to expand the scope of the activity to include theoretical questions that called for in-depth interpretation and analysis. Students were asked, for example, "what do you see as the theme?" and "what larger social issue did you notice?" After preliminary discussion in pairs, all students were required to stand again and individually propose a considered response, ideally an extended insight or observation. In practice, student ideas were often tentative, so, as they talked, the teacher added comments and tried to expand proposed interpretations, while making notes on the board which students could refer to and incorporate in written essays. The intention was to develop ideas socially, following principles of dialogic teaching (Mercer & Howe, 2012), using interactional repertoires involving restatement, extension, and clarification (Sedova, Sedlacek, & Svaricek, 2016) to scaffold participation and deepen thinking.

Certainly, stand-up goes against the passive positioning of students that usually takes place in traditional EFL classrooms. At the same time, it goes against recommendations for sensitivity and accommodation to cultural preferences to remain silent and simply listen. Stand-up is not voluntary; in fact, it is closer to what Humphries et al. (2015) call a "non-democratic style of teaching" (p. 169). In an important sense, stand-up explicitly utilizes peer pressure and increases anxiety, pushing students to try out ideas even when they lack confidence or feel reluctant to venture an explanation. There is also an element of competition, which is played out in terms of individual performance in front of the group. In other words, students are pushed through taking part in the activity to adopt new cultural practices of interaction and engagement.

Data collection

To better understand student response to stand-up, an action research (as defined by Burns, 2010) investigation was undertaken, guided by principles of emergent understanding and reflective practice (for further elaboration on these principles see Walsh, 2011). The goal was to measure what students thought about being obligated to speak in front of peers. In particular the research aimed at discovering whether the students resented being treated in what they might consider to be a demeaning way; and to determine whether they chafed at the cultural imperialism of a native speaker teacher imposing Western style interactional values. Hoping to integrate theory and practice, an overarching goal was to deepen what Johnson (2006) calls the experiential knowledge of classroom pedagogy. Statistical significance was not sought. Rather, the methodological procedures employed were local and heuristic, designed to explore the character and resonance of student perception.

Questionnaires were collected from a total of nine classes taught over three semesters: Fall 2014, Spring 2015, and Fall 2015 (Table 1). There were four first-year English communication classes, four first-year reading classes and one class on social issues in business with of 3rd and 4th year students. The reading and communication seminars both fulfilled required language credits for first-year students, with assignment to the class based upon scores on the TOEIC test, used as an institutional placement measure. Students were not English majors, but they nevertheless demonstrated advanced English language proficiencies, scoring near the top of the test. Approximately a third of the students had spent time abroad in English-speaking countries, and many were near-native speakers of the language. In contrast, the class on social issues in business was an elective course that included a more diverse mix of proficiencies, from intermediate to advanced. All classes contained between 19 and 24 students.

It is always difficult to obtain the genuine opinion of informants on a questionnaire, but care was taken to minimize potential bias in data collection, with particular attention paid to avoiding influence from student concerns about grades or teacher approval. Feedback was solicited as an ordinary component of class activity, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. All surveys were carried out with complete anonymity, and data tabulation and analysis were carried out only after courses had ended and grades had been submitted. Students were asked to answer honestly. There was room for dissent, and indeed some critical comments were made about the class as well as the activity, as noted below. The purpose of the research was explained at the beginning of each term, and both oral and written permission were granted to collect data. Students agreed that comments would be slightly edited for grammaticality without changing the content or tone of responses.

To measure the breadth of student opinion, two 4-point Likert scale questions (strongly agree/agree and disagree/strongly disagree) were included on regular term-final class evaluations. The first question, directed at six classes asked whether it was good to do stand-up, while the second question, which asked whether students felt stand-up to be effective in encouraging preparation and participation, was included on all nine class evaluations. All surveys were administered in English, which, given the proficiencies demonstrated in class, seemed well within student ability to understand.

Table 1. Questionnaire Surveys

	Class	Term	N
1.	Communication (CI) *†	Fall 2014	19
2.	Communication (CR) *†	Fall 2014	22
3.	Communication (CC) *†	Spr. 2015	19
4.	Communication (CD) *	Spr. 2015	20
5.	Reading (RA) *†	Spr. 2015	20
6.	Reading (RB) *	Spr. 2015	21
7.	Reading (RC)	Fall 2015	20
8.	Reading (RD)	Fall 2015	20
9.	Upper Level Seminar (K) †	Spr. 2015	24
	Total		185

* Only these classes were asked whether it was good to do stand-up (N=121).

† These classes were asked to provide additional mid-course open-ended comments.

To measure the depth of student opinion, open-ended questions were included on all nine term-final evaluations, asking students to explain in their own words what they thought about doing stand-up. In addition, open ended comments were also solicited on single item surveys, carried out at the semester mid-point in five of the classes, generating 81 additional responses. Students were free to reply in Japanese if they wanted, in which case, the comment was translated into English.

Data analysis

Simple aggregates of agree/disagree were calculated for the Likert scale questions. Open ended comments were analysed inductively, following procedures of qualitative inquiry (as described by Patton, 2015; Thomas, 2006). Using recursive coding, comments were selected and divided into open and then axial categories which were refined based on commonality and salience until core categories emerged and theoretical saturation was reached; that is, all comments were coded and a grounded interpretation was achieved. The research objective was not to generalize across contexts, but to gain insight into the effectiveness of stand-up and estimate how it was received within the research context.

Results

Surprisingly, students were strongly positive about being compelled to speak and express ideas in a whole-class setting. Some resistance was expected, especially from those with severe language anxiety, but as analysis proceeded, it became evident that an overwhelming majority of students in all classes expressed support for the activity. Reasons varied, but overall, students demonstrated a fundamentally positive attitude to using the language in spite of their anxiety. That is, commitment to speaking English

was stronger than reticence about its use. Further, this engagement was rooted in a social alignment that included concern, not simply for potential criticism or discomfort, but also for balanced access and increased concentration. In the following sections, the character of student response is explored in more detail.

Evaluation of the activity

Responding to the question about the value of stand-up, nearly two thirds of the students (78 of 121) in the six classes which were asked this question expressed unmistakably solid support, with almost 98% (118 of 121) agreeing that stand-up was good to do. Three students expressed disagreement, noting that they disliked the activity, but those three also signalled that stand-up was effective and, in open ended feedback, they made positive comments about its impact. One of the three stated, for example, "I did not like it, but I think it is an effective way to get students involved in the class." S/he added "I wouldn't have watched the movies [for homework] if there were no stand up activity."

In response to the second survey question asking about the effectiveness of stand-up to ensure participation, more than 94% agreed (64% strongly) that the activity encouraged participation or strengthened preparation. Although 12 students disagreed, one strongly, their response is ambiguous, since five of the twelve actually evaluated the activity positively, suggesting that students may have been saying they did not need extra encouragement and would likely have participated anyway, without the incentive (or pressure) provided by stand-up. Moreover, there was no disagreement recorded on the open-ended surveys. In other words, students clearly and overwhelmingly supported the use of stand-up as a means to encourage participation. Analysis of open-ended comments, discussed below, suggests reasons for this.

"Forcement"

Student comments about stand-up demonstrated three broad ways in which they related to the activity: "forcement," fairness, and focus. Forcement refers to the push that stand-up provided, requiring learners to speak out, even briefly, in discussion. The term comes from a comment made by one student who said:

> stand-up is very helpful because it's giving me a gentle forcement in a good way to think about ideas. (CC-13)

Many students made reference to overcoming a lack of confidence and dealing with feelings of embarrassment, as well as traditionally passive participation roles in high school classrooms prior to entering university. For example:

> I believe it's a great idea. Japanese don't want to gain attention, so if this is a regular class and the teacher asked us to raise our hands, I think few will participate. (CR-4)

> I have contradictory feelings about stand-up. I totally hate the activity because I don't want to stand out personally. On the other hand, if there is no such activity, I certainly wouldn't speak out. I feel so ashamed to do this activity but I think you should continue it to make us participate in the class. (CC-1)

> I usually have my own opinions that I want to tell everyone, but people don't talk. I'm kind of shy so it's a good opportunity to stand and everybody talks about the questions. (CC-6)

Interestingly, students themselves seemed aware of the limitations caused by the preference for silence, recognizing that listening passively is not really a helpful strategy. Further, responses illustrated a culturally situated value at play, one that is not always remarked upon when discussing Japanese attitudes toward studying English: commitment and conscientious effort. Comments reflected a serious and sustained dedication to language learning. In spite of anxiety and reservation, there seemed to be an underlying readiness to engage in L2 interaction. For some, being compelled to speak was a kind of pragmatic scaffold which gave strength to act on learning goals in a way not always possible for the individual learner. The wall of silence blocking participation is bigger than students can overcome by themselves, but the intention to participate is nevertheless present.

The requirement to speak was not viewed negatively by everyone, however. Several students wrote they were grateful that stand-up promoted a positive "atmosphere for speech" (CC-3) because it provided a welcome chance to use English openly and communicatively:

> Actually, I'm always looking forward to this activity. (K-1)

> It is simple but effective. Everyone tries to think about the topic in English. (CR-17)

What to shy students was endured reluctantly, was to outgoing students something to look forward to. For enthusiastic students, the reasoning seemed to be that, since everyone was required to speak, there was less need to hold back when talking about a topic. In short, both groups, the shy and the outgoing, recognized the pragmatic utility of being made to speak. In a sense, peer pressure was reversed, and instead of expectations to remain silent, there was an assumption that ideas would be articulated.

Focused attention

A second category of response concerned a sharpened focus of attention. From one point of view, students understood stand-up in utilitarian terms, as a way to remain alert and avoid falling asleep:

> It makes me feel not only pressure but also awake. It's a better way to think, more than sitting down. A little pressure turns out to be a good thing. (RA-7)

> If we are allowed to sit all through class we stop thinking. To keep students mind active, it's a good way. (CI-16)

> I don't mind doing stand-up because it makes me feel I need to answer and participate. Also it prevents me from sleeping. (CC-11)

Moving about physically had positive effects, providing energy that, as one student said, "freshened the head" (CC, 16). Concomitantly, general concentration also increased. Students reported heightened attention to classmates' ideas and, stimulated by other interpretations, deeper consideration of their own thinking:

> Stand-up activity helps because it stimulates us to think of more new ideas. It is an unusual way of answering questions in a university, but it develops our ability to listen to others and brainstorm at the same time, effectively. (CC-7)

> It helps me think of a better answer even when I have no ideas. (CI-9)

> I liked it most when I had nothing to say but at last made a good opinion through listening and getting ideas from other students and teacher. (CI-8)

Expected to express something, even an abbreviated idea during their turn at talk, students listened more carefully to classmates, framing their own statements in terms of what others had said. Students generated new ideas, in part because of pressure to think of a better answer, in part because the social nature of thinking was being made accessible, as students became involved in the collaborative construction of ideas.

In addition, students reported doing homework with increased attentiveness because they knew what would be required in class. In a sense, the lesson expanded beyond the walls of the classroom, as discussion was carried home after school:

> ... in order to answer the question I must read the article carefully and I also need to review it before the class. (K-6)

> I like the way we do stand-up because it makes me feel a little jitter and I know that in order to answer the question I must read the article carefully and I also need to review it before the class. (K-6)

> ... it keeps us focused, not only in class but also when we watch films at home. (CR-2)

Knowing that everyone was expected to answer produced a sense of anticipation, as students thought more reflectively in order to prepare appropriately.

Fairness

Students' comments also suggest a perception of increased equality, with classmates standing together without preference or favoured treatment. Everyone had to answer; even shy and reserved students were expected to speak at least once, while outgoing and overly enthusiastic students were slightly constrained by the pattern of participation. In effect, both the fluent and the hesitant were pushed to get involved as awareness of the class as a collaborative community was reinforced:

> It's a good idea to get everyone engaged in the discussion. If we didn't stand up, I think some people would not pay attention, especially when other students are sharing their thoughts. (RA-9)

> Everyone has a chance to speak and it becomes practice to speak English for many people. (CR-14)

> We can listen to more people's ideas equally, not only from a few students who volunteer to speak up often. (RA-8)

The sense of equality worked on two levels: access to the floor and ability to be heard. While the right to speak is often shaped by status, with the powerful and/or fluent taking more turns at talk, there was greater balance within whole-class discussion as everyone took part, regardless of popularity. Reserved students often do not get the opportunity to express their ideas, nor are they always heard when they do, but with stand-up, some of the weight associated with status was lightened. In another respect, student comments point to the drawbacks of unsupervised small-group talk, ideally useful for generating ideas, but in reality often the site of unbalanced interaction and/or exclusion.

Student comments also suggest that stand-up made it harder for the teacher to dominate the discussion:

It's a good way to make the class more interesting because we get to be part of the class instead of just listening to the teacher talking. (RA-12)

One of the more robust findings of classroom research is that teachers almost always speak more than students (Cazden, 2001), and though the student here may have been referring to large-scale lecture classes, the comment also points to an attitude of investment. To be part of the class indicates a deeper involvement in its proceedings, with a stronger connection to English and identification with the language, as well.

Discussion

In sum, students seemed to recognize that being compelled to speak worked in positive ways to circumvent constraints imposed by traditional cultural attitudes, whether deference to teacher authority, restraint before group mates, or personal reserve. Students embraced an initially unfamiliar exercise as a participation strategy that effectively repositioned the individual vis-à-vis the larger group, reinforcing the ability to express ideas and opinions and helping to deal with tensions between L1 and L2 norms. Students adopted stand-up as an effective way to manage conflicting goals lying beneath the surface display of reticence. The activity worked to create a positive and cooperative classroom atmosphere, as opportunities to speak and develop ideas increased, even among students with already high proficiency and motivation. Further, responses make it clear that being pushed to speak does not have to be cold-hearted; on the contrary, participation can be elicited within a supportive spirit of collaboration and shared inquiry.

As a strategy of interaction, stand-up may sound draconian to some, but it clearly falls within the scope of established instructional practice that draws on pushed output (Swain, 2000) and such non-voluntary nomination procedures as cold-calling that work to increase the frequency and effectiveness of participation (Dallimore & Platt, 2008, 2012). Within this perspective, stand-up affirms the value of coordination and guidance provided by the teacher to engage students in L2 discourse styles with which they have little experience, involving new ways of thinking and expression. On their own, students may lack the confidence to transform patterns of participation, but with direction and encouragement they can cross traditional cultural boundaries to appropriate new forms of talk.

It is not the intention of this paper to advocate a particular method of instruction, and stand-up is not being proposed as a solution to reticence that can be easily applied to other teaching contexts. Without doubt, "bricolage is the name of the game" (Kramsch, 2009, p. 239) and it is up to individual teachers as reflective practitioners to negotiate what Kumaravadivelu (2003) calls the parameters of particularity, addressing such issues as reticence within the local context. What stand-up does offer, however, is insight into the cultural ecology that develops in the EFL classroom. It reminds us that when studying the L2, students neither automatically reproduce the values and practices of the first language, nor mechanically adopt the culture of the second. Instead, a synthesis is fashioned, a "third space" (Kramsch, 2009) that is not exclusively the L1 or the L2, but an original constellation of communicative positionings.

Reticence is a real cultural trait but it is also malleable and open to change. Ordinarily, students may adhere to conventional customs and behavioural expectations, but in the micro-ecology of the L2 classroom created by shared activity and engagement, there is always the possibility of constructing new ways of speaking. Culture is not brought to interaction fixed and unchanged. On the contrary, in the encounter with the other language, the classroom functions as both a source of

transformation and site of performance. When students express ideas and interpretations with classmates, they are not simply developing linguistic skills, they are also creating new forms of association and social relationships. Stand-up illustrates one way in which this creative appropriation occurs. Learning English does not require an expressionist style of interaction, but neither do Asian social norms require fixed adherence to group values. Obviously, stand-up pressures students to speak, but it also allows the freedom to temporarily take on subject positions in which learners "style themselves on others, act out different identities, play out different relations of power" (Kramsch, 2009, p. 245). With stand-up, learners can speak with another voice and talk in ways that invent and create an expanded and "somewhat different self" (Lin, 2010, p. 122), which diverges from what is typically available in the L1.

Stand-up also points to the value of teacher-led discussion, involving what (Barnes, 2008, p. 2) calls the communicative system that "shapes the roles that pupils can play and goes some distance in determining the kinds of learning that they engage in." There are a number of voices recently, both in Japan and across Asia, advocating a shift to a communicative curriculum that puts learners, not teachers, at the centre of classroom discussion. Opportunities to speak are presented in terms of matching student interests, best organized around pair work and small group discussion that offers a chance to express thoughts and ideas freely, unfettered by traditional constraints and teacher control (see, for example, Xie, 2010). In writing about curriculum reform in China, for example, (Li, 2012, p. 110) states that the communicative paradigm gives students "time to talk to their classmates about anything they would like to share in English" which helps "conquer shyness." Similarly, many sociocultural discussions of scaffolding frame collaborative dialog in terms of peer interaction that enables "mutual support" and reciprocal problem-solving expertise (Swain & Watanabe, 2012, p. 3). Without rejecting either the ideal of interactional equality or the value of well-planned, supplementary pair-work and student-to-student talk, it seems clear that stand-up raises questions about a non-interventionist instructional approach that prioritizes independent group work. Left to their own devices, many students find it difficult to refashion traditional attitudes about expressing ideas in front of others, even in informal settings. Within this tension between first and second language cultural practices, the teacher's role is arguably not to step back, but to stand up and initiate new engagements and discursive identities in the dynamic, shifting third space of the EFL classroom.

About the Author
David P. Shea received his Ph.D. in foreign language education from The University of Georgia in 1993 and has worked in Japan since. Currently, he is an associate professor in the Faculty of Business & Commerce at Keio University in Tokyo, where he teaches content-based academic English classes. His main area of research is the intersection of language education and intercultural pragmatics. He is particularly interested in classroom pedagogy and dialogic teaching.

References
Alexander, R. (2008). Culture, dialogue and learning: Notes on an emerging pedagogy. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in schools* (pp. 91-114). LA: Sage.
Bao, D. (2014). *Understanding silence and reticence: Ways of participating in second language acquisition*. London/New York: Bloomsbury.
Barnes, D. (2008). Exploratory talk for learning. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in schools* (pp. 1-16). LA: Sage.
Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practioners*. London: Routledge.

Cao, Y. K. (2014). A sociocognitive perspective on second language classroom willingness to communicate. *TESOL Quarterly, 48*(4), 789-814. doi: https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.155

Cazden, C. B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (2013). Introduction: Researching cultures of learning. In L. Jin & M. Cortazzi (Eds.), *Researching Cultures of learning: International perspectives on language learning and education* (pp. 1-20). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dallimore, E. J., Hertenstein, J. H., & Platt, M. B. (2008). Using discussion pedagogy to enhance oral and written communication skills. *College Teaching, 56*(3), 163-172. doi: https://doi.org/10.3200/CTCH.56.3.163-172

Dallimore, E. J., Hertenstein, J. H., & Platt, M. B. (2012). Impact of cold-calling on student voluntary participation. *Journal of Management Education, 37*(3), 305-341. doi: 10.1177/1052562912446067

Effiong, O. (2016). Getting them speaking: Classroom social factors and foreign language anxiety. *TESOL Journal, 7*(1), 132-161. doi: https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.194

Falout, J. (2014). Circular seating arrangements: Approaching the social crux in language classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 4*(2), 275-300. doi: 10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.2.6

Gibbons, P. (2009). *English learners, academic literacy, and thinking*. Portsmouth, UK: Heinemann.

Hardman, F. (2008). Promoting human capital: The importance of dialogic teaching in higher education. *Asian Journal of University Education, 4*(1), 31-48. Retrieved from http://education.uitm.edu.my/v1/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=135&Itemid=124

Harumi, S. (2011). Classroom silence: Voices from Japanese EFL learners. *ELT Journal, 65*(3), 260-269. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccq046

Hinenoya, K., & Gatbonton, E. (2000). Ethnocentrism, cultural traits, beliefs, and English proficiency: A Japanese sample. *The Modern Language Journal, 84*(2), 225-240. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00064

Humphries, S., & Burns, A. (2015). "In reality it's almost impossible": CLT-oriented curriculum change. *ELT Journal, 69*(3), 239-248. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccu081

Humphries, S., Burns, A., & Tanaka, T. (2015). "My head became blank and I couldn't speak": Classroom factors that influence English speaking. *Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2*(3), 164-175. Retrieved from http://www3.caes.hku.hk/ajal/index.php/ajal/issue/view/33

Johnson, K. E. (2006). The sociocultural turn and its challenges for second language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(1), 235-257. doi: https://doi.org/10.2307/40264518

Kikuchi, K., & Browne, C. (2009). English education policy in Japan: Ideals versus reality. *RELC Journal, 40*(2), 172-191. doi: 10.1177/0033688209105865

King, J. E. (2013). Silence in the second language classrooms of Japanese universities. *Applied Linguistics, 34*(3), 325-434. doi: 10.1093/applin/ams043

Ko, M. Y. (2013). A case study of an EFL teacher's critical literacy teaching in a reading class in Taiwan. *Language Teaching Research, 17*(1), 91-108. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168812457537.

Kramsch, C. (2009). Third culture and language education. In V. Cook & L. Wei (Eds.), *Contemporary Applied Linguistics* (pp. 233-254). London: Continuum.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.

Li, M. (2012). English curriculum in higher education in China for non-English majors. In J. Ruan & C. Leung (Eds.), *Perspectives on Teaching and Learning English Literacy in China* (pp. 105-114). Netherlands: Springer.

Lin, A. (2010). English and me. In D. Nunan & J. Choi (Eds.), *Language and culture: Reflective narratives and the emergence of identity* (pp. 118-124). New York: Routledge.

Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 92*(1), 71-86. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00687.

Mercer, N., & Dawes, L. (2008). The value of exploratory talk. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in schools* (pp. 55-72). LA: Sage.

Mercer, N., & Howe, C. (2012). Explaining the dialogic processes of teaching and learning: The value and potential of sociocultural theory. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 1*(1), 12-21. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2012.03.001.

Osterman, G. L. (2014). Experiences of Japanese university students' willingness to speak English in class. *SAGE Open, 4*(3). doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014543779.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). LA: Sage.

Peng, J. E., & Woodrow, L. (2010). Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning, 60* (4), 834-876. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00576

Sedova, K., Sedlacek, M., & Svaricek, R. (2016). Teacher professional development as a means of transforming student classroom talk. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 57*, 14-25. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.03.005

Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2012). Languaging: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language learning. In C. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics.*

Taguchi, N. (2014). Pragmatic socialization in an English-medium university in Japan. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 52*(2), 157-181. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/iral-2014-0007

Talandis, G., & Stout, M. (2015). Getting EFL students to speak: An action research approach. *ELT Journal, 69*(1), 11-25. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccu037

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation, 27*(2), 237-246. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214005283748

Tsui, A. B. (1996). Reticence and anxiety in second language learning. In K. M. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom* (pp. 145-167). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning: A sociocultural perspective.* Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action.* New York: Routledge.

Xie, X. (2010). Why are students quiet? Looking at the Chinese context and beyond. *ELT Journal, 64* (1), 10-20. doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccp060