

# Theatre as TBLT

The implementation of theatre in a high school EFL  
Oral Communication course in Japan

by

Robin David Reid

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## ABSTRACT

Task-based learning and teaching (TBLT) has garnered growing interest from educators in EFL contexts around the world, particularly in East Asian classroom contexts such as Japan where prominent entrance examinations can exert a strong influence on pedagogy (Wada, 2002; Stewart, 2009). Aiming to increase communicative practice during class in such contexts, implementation of TBLT has yielded mixed results and some have questioned the ability of TBLT to achieve its objectives given the institutional constraints present in those contexts (Carless 2004, 2007, 2009; Butler 2011; Sato 2010, 2011). Most of these studies explore pedagogical tasks of a more conventional nature and overlook how holistic activities from other disciplines outside of language teaching can function as legitimate examples of TBLT. The current study nominated theatre as one such holistic activity and examined the implementation of theatre as a form of task-based pedagogy, following the study of Carson (2012). The theatre tasks were designed to fulfil the criteria for creative tasks, as described by Willis (1996) and the present study investigated to what extent theatre could promote language learning within such a task-based approach (e.g. Ellis 2003, 2009; Shekan 2003; Samuda & Bygate 2008).

The main study was quasi-experimental in design and investigated whether two types of theatre tasks could function as viable instructional packages. The theatre tasks were either a theatrical adaptation of an existing story (Adapted Play) or an original story based on one of three provided themes (Original Play). These two tasks were distinguished by the different amounts of conceptual creativity that they required, with the Original Plays identified as more difficult due to their greater creative demands. Three aspects of these tasks were analysed: 1) the process of collaboratively devising a play; 2) the effects of task difficulty on the language produced in the task performance; and 3) the students' reflections on their engagement with the tasks.

The implementation of these tasks occurred during regularly scheduled Oral Communication (OC) classes at a high school in Japan. With a counterbalanced design, groups of six to seven students performed one of the tasks in the first study and then,

after a period of ten weeks, performed the other task. Either task consisted of approximately 100 minutes of planning and rehearsal, spread out evenly over four class periods, and culminated in a staged performance during a fifth lesson. The data compiled for analysis was taken from audio and video recordings of both group work in class and the final performances of each group, as well as post-task surveys administered to each student individually after each study.

The main findings of this analysis were: (1) students in the Adapted Plays produced more fluent and syntactically complex language while students in the Original Plays produced less complex but more accurate language; (2) the Adapted Plays featured more use of overt narration which influenced the fluency and complexity of those plays; (3) student reflections from their post-task surveys indicated that the collaborative element of the tasks increased intrinsic motivation for completing the task; and (4) less initial demands on conceptual creativity in the Adapted Plays appeared to free up time later in the process to compose longer stories, though the frequency and quality of language related talk did not differ noticeably between the two play types.

Based on these findings, two points can be argued. Firstly, the Original Play tasks put increased demands on students' conceptual creativity. In relation to this, the provided content of the Adapted Play tasks acted as an 'embedded scaffolding' (Shapiro, 2008). Secondly, theatre, envisioned as a creative task within a TBLT framework, satisfied the criteria for a task (Ellis, 2003) but raised issues regarding the constructs of planning and report found in the 'task cycle' of Willis' (1996) pedagogical framework.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Theatre has a certain power to engage both its audience and its participants. For those who have worked through the process of preparing for and putting on a performance, it is an experience like no other. A certain collective anticipation builds between members of a production as work progresses from early scenes to final 'run-thru' rehearsals. For all of the tension, anxiety, and uncertainty that grows as preparation steams along, the feelings of relief, accomplishment and satisfaction after a public performance are something that most performers would seldom deny. A question to be asked, then, is: can theatre also provide the same high level of engagement and accomplishment to participants who wish to learn a language through experiencing theatre? More importantly, can this engagement, this intrinsic motivation one finds within the theatre process, foster language development and does it offer opportunities for learning that are unequivocal in other activities? These veins of inquiry motivated the current study.

This thesis describes the details of an investigation that blended two distinct threads of research that have heretofore seldom been linked: theatre and task-based learning and teaching (TBLT). Theatre combines the basic activity of role-play with public exhibition. A theatrical performance is a live representation of human interaction and this makes it ideal for educational objectives for an important reason: it provides learners with a chance to create and interact with worlds and situations that would normally be unavailable to them. Moreover, this interaction is free of the risks and consequences of real-life interaction. As a result, the process of theatre can create a comfort zone for its participants, a place that helps participants free themselves of their inhibitions and build greater confidence and self-esteem. Whether conceived as a teaching approach in its own right, or as an activity to be implemented within a given pedagogical framework, theatre offers its participants a unique learning environment.

TBLT is a pedagogical approach to language learning that developed out of existing teaching methodologies that share a communicative focus. Motivated by empirical evidence, in particular from within second language acquisition (SLA) research taking cognitive and interactionist perspectives, tasks are employed to provide learners opportunities to develop their linguistic knowledge and abilities by using that language

purposefully to accomplish a communicative goal. Tasks help learners accomplish this because they represent authentic situations and interactions that students would encounter in the real-world outside of the classroom. Rather than simply teach learners linguistic knowledge to be gradually applied to daily social transactions, TBLT seeks to use those same social transactions to raise awareness of linguistic features that the learners can then assimilate with their existing knowledge. In doing this, TBLT is a more student-centred, meaning-focused approach which can be distinguished from the more teacher-fronted, lecture style of instruction once common, and in present times still pervasive, in many learning contexts around the world.

Theatre and TBLT seem mutually beneficial and concordant in their aims. The mutual focus is on the communication of meaning. Therefore, the current study combined these two approaches through an exploration of theatre as task-based learning. Two distinct but similar devised theatre tasks were designed and implemented in a first year English Oral Communication (OC) course at a high school in Japan. For this thesis, I use the term 'devised theatre' to refer to the fact that the content for a given performance, and by extension the language production of that performance, was generated by the performers themselves, not a separate playwright. In an initial study, and in a subsequent repeated study several months later, groups of five to seven students undertook the basic task of generating a short play of three to five minutes in duration by one of two approaches, which were distinguishable from each other by the presence or absence of *available content* as a task condition: 1) they selected an existing and well-known story and adapted that work for live performance (*available content*); or 2) they selected one of three provided themes related to unit topics in their textbook, and created an original play based on that theme (*no available content*). In the mode of TBLT, students were afforded more autonomy in their work and were charged with orienting each other to the task, managing the work load, and completing the task in English with minimal overt intervention from the teachers. There was a consistent meaning-focus to their activity, as students had to decide between themselves the best way to convey the plot of their story to an audience through dialogue and action. At the same time, the processes of both writing

and rehearsal offered them opportunities to focus on specific grammatical and lexical issues when they arose.

This thesis is structured as follows. This chapter introduces the study and outlines the major issues and motivations involved. Chapters two and three survey the available literature on theatre and tasks, respectively, to establish theoretical bases for the study. Chapter four provides the research design and methodology for the study. The results of the data analyses are covered in chapters five through seven. Chapter five describes a qualitative analysis of process data from two case studies, chapter six provides both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the task outcomes, and chapter seven discusses the findings from a qualitative analysis of post-task feedback. Finally, chapter eight summarises the results of this study, situates them within existing SLA research, and discusses their theoretical and pedagogical implications.

In order to set-up the relevant literature to be covered in the next two chapters, this chapter provides the following: 1) a brief background to the current study; 2) an explanation of its objectives; 3) a personal statement explaining the researcher's own position; and 4) a brief summary of the current study's significance.

## **1.1 Background**

The present study investigated the implementation of theatre within a task-based pedagogical framework described by Willis (1996), a methodological realisation of task-based instruction which organises learning into cycles of pre-task, task, and post-task activity. Heretofore, these distinct fields of scholarship and pedagogy have rarely been linked. The motivation to link them came from my experience with English language teaching in Japan.

In the previous twenty to thirty years, Japanese middle schools and high schools have seen a shift in focus towards the promotion of more communicative activities in English classes and an increased emphasis on developing the English communicative ability of Japanese teenagers. As globalisation has elevated English to a lingua franca of Asian business and politics, Japan has implemented several successive educational reforms, beginning with the establishment of the government sponsored Japan English Teaching

and Exchange Programme (JET) in 1985 (McConnell, 2000). Early on, such reform was conceptualised and undertaken in an effort to elevate the position of Japan in the global economy and use English as a means of maintaining and promoting Japanese culture (Seargent, 2009; Hashimoto, 2009). More recently, as Ogura (2008) and Stewart (2009) discuss, the focus has shifted to government plans to cultivate more Japanese nationals with “practical [English] communication abilities” (MEXT, 2003, paragraph 6, cited in Stewart, 2009). The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, Sports, and Technology's (MEXT) 2003 plan in particular is meant to better address the gap between Japanese students' knowledge of English as an academic subject studied for comprehensive examinations and their actual ability to use the language functionally (Ibid.).

Both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and TBLT have garnered increasing interest within Japan in tandem with this educational reform. At an earlier stage in this reform, CLT's focus on language learning through communication seemed ideal to achieve the aims of the reform, not only in Japan, but in other East Asian countries that share similar educational traditions and aims with Japan, such as South Korea and Taiwan. However, as Butler (2005) explains, implementation of communicative approaches has encountered difficulties in these educational contexts (see also Butler & Iino, 2005; Tahira, 2012). More recently, TBLT in particular has garnered the interest of some educators in Japan. However, out of continuing experimentation, some authors have discussed, or even questioned, the adaptability of TBLT and CLT approaches within Asian contexts (Carless, 2004, 2007, 2009; Butler, 2011; Nishino, 2011; Kotaka, 2013). Carless makes a number of criticisms of the ‘strong form’ of TBLT and argues that a ‘weak form’, also described as task-supported language teaching (TSLT) (from Ellis, 2003, also Samuda & Bygate, 2008) is a preferable alternative for educational contexts that retain a strong focus on assessment by comprehensive examinations. In this variation of a task-based approach, tasks are used in tandem with more traditional, teacher-fronted classroom activity. Additionally, others, such as Sato (2010, 2011), contend that students in Japan, with their current institutional constraints, simply lack exposure to the language in their classrooms, let alone their daily lives, for their language development to align with the expectations of TBLT.



From a classroom perspective, much of the focus in the Japanese context has been on the implementation of communicative activities. Within classrooms in Japan utilising native speakers as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) (a practice expanded by the establishment and growth of the aforementioned JET program), games and other forms of play have often been implemented in lesson plans. In this vein, role-play has also often found a place in communicative pedagogy. For example, Butler's (2005) study discusses role-plays as one of the communicative activities used in primary school classrooms in Japan and Taiwan. However, the extent to which these role-plays fulfil a communicative objective or have a primary focus on meaning is open to question. Furthermore, the implementation of role-plays has scarcely been studied in a TBLT framework. For theatre in particular, this is surprising when one considers that theatre is, at its heart, essentially all about meaning and communication. As Elam (1980) argues, from a semiotic perspective, everything in theatre signifies something. The spoken language used in theatre is no exception.

Theatre has a long pedigree in cultures around the world and, as a result, what constitutes theatre is quite varied. For the current study, I draw upon my previous years of work in the performing arts, as well as my undergraduate education in theatre studies, to define theatre in the simplest possible terms I know: theatre is a narrative (drama) performed by actors for an audience. It is an aesthetic pursuit, meaning that as an art form, it is ultimately meant to be appreciated and enjoyed by others. Some authors highlight theatre's unique ability to make use of an expansive variety of communicative forms (Elam, 1980), some propose connections between cognition and the empathetic ability required to perform theatre (Hart, 2006), while others discuss art in general as an inherent instinct with a particular adaptive power in our evolution (Dutton, 2009). Regardless of the view one takes, it is easy to acknowledge the rich possibilities that theatre represents for learning.

The immediacy of a theatrical performance means that its events unfold in real-time. The mode of theatre is essentially narrative. However, what distinguishes this form of narrative is that the author of the text does not directly communicate with an audience, as is the case with written narratives such as literature (i.e., novels, essays). In theatre, the

performers communicate on behalf of the author, and the primary means of communication is the spoken word. Non-linguistic visual and auditory elements can assist in this communication, but fundamentally the physical action and spoken language of the actors must carry the largest burden of the drama and the meaning to be conveyed to an audience. As a result, unlike purely print-based narratives such as novels and short stories, writing for the theatre is primarily concerned with the composition of dialogue.

This process of theatre-making matches well with the critical features and aims of a TBLT approach. Whether the process focuses on the interpretation of an existing text or the devising of a new one, participants must reckon the form of the language being used with its intent, that is to say, its function within the context of the narrative. In this way, a primary focus on meaning is coupled with consistent attention to form. Additionally, theatre has a clear non-linguistic outcome: the performance itself. The process of making theatre offers the opportunity for extended and purposeful interaction between participants as they progress from conceptualisation to rehearsal to performance of a play.

## **1.2 Objectives**

The current study was principally concerned with tasks from a pedagogical perspective and studied the implementation of tasks in intact classrooms by establishing two research objectives. The first objective, stated most simply, was to investigate how a group of learners, collaborating to devise an original work of theatre, oriented themselves to the task and managed their work on the task. The nature of peer interaction in this task orientation was of principal interest, but analysis was not concerned exclusively with interaction built around the discussion of the target language, as would be the case for language related episodes (LREs) (Swain, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 2002). Instead, peer talk about language was given equal focus to peer talk about content creation, as the devised theatre tasks put considerable demands on learners' conceptual creativity in comparison with other types of tasks such as information gap or opinion gap tasks. Thus, in partial deference to ethnography and case study research, a qualitative analysis of the task cycle used selected participant groups as illustrative examples of the extended process involved in making theatre. Attention in this analysis was paid to how students composed their

original stories and formulated them into the L2 for public performance. As with all qualitative research, the ability to generalise results from this analysis was partially sacrificed for the benefit of obtaining a richer description of the participants' experience with the tasks by focusing on a smaller subset of the total data set. Partial triangulation of this analysis was provided by a qualitative analysis of student post-task feedback. This feedback data was administered via prepared feedback questionnaires (see Appendix 6) individually for each student for both studies and the analysis of this feedback allowed for salient features of the student responses to be compared to the process data to discern if other participants reported similar features in their own reflections on the tasks.

The second objective of the current study was to analyse the language production of the students' final performances of their devised plays and situate these results within existing SLA research on pedagogic tasks. One condition of a devised theatre task, that of available content, was altered to create two similar but distinct versions of the task. These two alternative forms were then analysed for any differences in measures of language production to ascertain if either variation focused learner attention differentially on the complexity, accuracy, or fluency of their output. This portion of the current study utilised a quantitative research approach and compared the results for every group involved in the study. To supplement this cognitive focus, the final performances were also compared for their narrative structure in terms of the use of different narrative strategies employed in the stories that the student groups devised. Additionally, the overall theatrical quality of these performances were rated by independent raters.

### **1.3 Personal Statement**

Before I began a career in language teaching, I was involved for almost ten years with work in the performing arts, particularly theatre. Though I decided on a change of careers eventually, the experiences I had in that field remained significant to me years after the fact. As I taught English and continued to develop a language teaching approach that suited the needs of my students, I was more and more convinced that the performing arts had a valid and valuable place within a language teaching curriculum. To me, the process of reading a script, analysing the scenes and characters therein, and proceeding through a

process of rehearsal offered a unique experience with language. I developed a few short theatre projects for my ninth grade students in Japan, and both my own observations, and student feedback obtained from those projects, further encouraged me to explore other ways of using theatre in my English classes.

After three years of undertaking such projects with my middle school students, I naturally sought out relevant research in the area only to find out that the available literature specifically on theatre and language learning was scant at best. There were the expected how-to manuals directed towards teachers, along with a number of publications about a sister discipline, process drama. Yet there was a dearth of academic inquiry within applied linguistics related to conventional theatre. As my experiences with my students seemed both positive and productive for their learning of English, as well as their attitude towards learning English, I wanted to increase theatre's representation in academic scholarship. As a result, I conceived of this research study.

The devised theatre tasks used for this main study were a result of three years of prior work I conducted with ninth year middle school students in Japan. Over the course of those three years, I designed theatre projects as end of the term consolidation activities. These theatre projects were envisioned as creative writing activities involving groups of five to seven learners and each group collaborated on the composition of a play script as well as the production elements of the final performance of that play script. These creative writing and performance projects, in particular the basic procedural details, were the basis for the devised theatre tasks of the current study. As a result, the overall time frame, the number of students in each group, and the basic demands of the devised theatre tasks were all determined by the precedent of these earlier theatre projects.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

While theatre, and by extension various other forms of role-play, has found application in language teaching over the years, from a research perspective, there is much investigation that can still be done. This research could not feasibly take place in an experimental setting as the collaborative nature of theatre and the interaction between

performers and audience during the performance make aspects of the experience difficult to replicate in such a setting.

I wanted to explore the nature of a devised theatre task, that being a task in which learners collaborate on the writing and performance of an original play, and observe the differences in student interaction and language production if I altered one feature of task design. These results could be used not only to offer a richer description of the task outcomes for tasks based on theatre practice, but they could also be used to further the discussion in the literature about how devised theatre tasks and their prominent task design features, such as the demands they make on conceptual creativity, can effect: 1) how students orient to and carry out the tasks; 2) how these conditions effect student production; and 3) how the tasks are perceived by the students. This knowledge, in turn, can provide information useful for a pedagogical implementation of theatre, influencing procedural choices, material selection and creation, and syllabus design.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW - THEATRE

The literature review for the current study is divided into two chapters. This chapter discusses the relevant literature related to theatre. The next chapter discusses research related to tasks. In this chapter, the discussion is separated into three main sections. The first section provides a background discussion of theatre, with attention paid to the aspects of theatre of particular relevance to pedagogy. The second section moves this discussion to a theoretical rationale for implementing theatre-based activities in education. The third section reviews relevant studies that investigate this implementation in L2 learning contexts. The chapter ends with a summary of these discussions and sets up the discussion of theatre as a pedagogical task, a topic which is covered in the next chapter.

### 2.1 Background

As this study is concerned with the implementation of theatre, this chapter starts with a discussion of theatre itself. I offer the standing acknowledgment that, given its sizeable pedigree in the arts and the many forms it has taken throughout its history, there will be prominent exceptions and stern challenges towards any attempt to classify it succinctly. The purpose of this section is ultimately to delineate theatre from other activities that share similarities, such as role-play and classroom drama.

One account of the origins of theatre locates its roots in rituals (Pickering, 1981). These rituals likely involved origin stories specific to a group of people; a mythology preserved through active engagement and representation. Other accounts situate the roots of theatre in simple story telling, like an elder recounting a great adventure to a tribe's children. Within time, perhaps, these rituals' participants, or elder tribesmen, might have conceived of presenting these stories for their own sake, to be enjoyed by others. What these necessarily contrived examples point to is the essence of what takes place in theatre: a narrative. In the case of theatre, this narrative is told through live performance. The culture of classical Greece called these live action narratives 'drama' (Cheney, 1972).

Drama is a useful place to begin a delineation of theatre, since, at least for the history of European civilisations, theatre's conceptual origin, not to mention some of its key terminology, originates in its emergence in ancient Greece (Brockett & Hildy, 2008). Though later development in theatre modified the meaning and structure of drama well beyond its original parameters, the key features of drama remain: action and narrative, along with the tension between forces in the narrative that drives that action. Conceptualised in this basic way, drama is a structured narrative that is 'enacted' through live performance. The close relationship between drama and theatre is due, historically, to the former's dependence on the latter as its medium of presentation. Drama was written to be performed. In ancient Greece, a theatre was the designated space for people to view a drama. As theatre has been sustained and developed in the many centuries since then, the nature of this space, in both the conceptual and architectural senses, has undergone considerable development and evolution. Yet in spite of this, the basic need for a 'space' to perform a drama has always remained. As Hatcher (2000) remarks, "Theatre is both the arena for the action [the drama] and the sensory experience of that action." (p. 7) The experience of viewing that action, that narrative unfolding on stage, is what Wright (2010) refers to as a "witnessed present" (p. 6). Limon (2010) views theatre as a performative grammar, a set of rules that the performers agree to and that the spectators try to bring order to in order to understand what they are viewing; an interaction that he considers the 'chemistry' of theatre. The centrality that the interaction between performers and audience assumes in all of these views emphasises its importance.

This admittedly perfunctory survey of theatre history allows us to extract its critical features: performance, narrative, and interactive space. Performance involves the performers, the narrative they perform, and the preparation necessary for that performance. In essence, live performance is the medium for presenting drama. The interactive space is the designated place for performance, typically referred to as a stage, and the arrangement of spectators and performance elements around that stage. Thus, space and time are the mode of engagement for the drama (see Hutcheon, 2006, for a discussion of modes of engagement). To contrast this with a written narrative, events that unfold over time in a novel are framed without the temporal restriction found in



performance. As readers read a text, they can imagine the events in their minds, as well as leave and resume the narrative, at whatever particular pace suits them. In performance, however, the narrative action is bound by the temporal quality of physical action and speech and these unfold before an audience in real time. This is the ‘witnessed present’ that Wright discusses.

To be clear, this identification of theatre’s core components is not meant to contribute to the literature on theatre and performance theory. Rather, it seeks to establish a definition useful for the purpose of implementation in a educational context. A wide variety of performative pursuits exist in the world, and this definition of theatre does not connote them an inferior or derivative status. It merely distinguishes theatre from them in a more practical way. To clarify the position of the current study further, while I acknowledge that dance and physical movement, along with music and song, can all be utilised to make theatre, as indeed they were in ancient Greek dramas, this study is concerned with performed narratives involving spoken language.

In all of its various forms, theatre is fundamentally a particular type of role-play and shares many of the same features. However, there are other activities and pedagogical approaches derived from role-play that, while also sharing many of these same features, are still distinct from theatre as described here. The previous discussion of theatre’s essential components provides a useful means of explaining the practice of theatre, since implementation of theatre in educational contexts has often involved certain theatre practices specifically rather than the full process of theatre. Theatre practices are the various components that collectively constitute the process of making theatre. This process entails all of the associated role-plays, improvisations, rehearsal games and techniques, methods of textual analysis, acting techniques, and, if applicable, design and production elements, that help the process culminate in a performance (e.g. See Perry, 2001; Mackey & Cooper, 2000; Lewis & Rainer, 2005; Baines & O’Brien, 2006; Millard & Richardson, 2006; and Watson & Luton, 2006 for examples of these rehearsal techniques and processes). I qualify these various techniques as theatre practices with my rationale based on three criteria: 1) in their original environment, they function as parts of the process for making theatre rather than as stand-alone approaches in their own right;

2) they share theatre's mode of using live action and speech in the creation of counter-factual events; and 3) the underlying purpose of their use is not for psychological or sociological intervention but rather for artistic and aesthetic goals. If an implementation of any of these theatre practices, outside of the process of theatre, do not satisfy these criteria, then their use does not constitute theatre.

This description of theatre and theatre practices is useful for it removes many of the complications that arise with cross-disciplinary exchanges of theory and technique. One could make the case, as I have here, that role-play, or counter-factual play, is the larger category under which most, if not all, of these practices fall. That being recognised, it must be said that this study does not seek to ultimately regard theatre as a fundamentally separate medium of activity, it merely wishes to acknowledge that it exists along a continuum of engagement shared by activities involving some manner of 'role-play'. However, it is well beyond the scope of this study to establish a full rationale for such a continuum, let alone reason out the placement of the various uses of theatre practices along that continuum. It will suffice to say that an aesthetically motivated performance of role-play such as theatre, meaning a performance done not simply 'for its own sake', but for the participants' and audience's mutual recognition of it as a performance, represents one distinct polarity along this continuum which theatre occupies.

In terms of this continuum, a separate and broad pedagogical approach based around 'drama' has been developed in the past thirty to forty years: classroom drama (e.g., Wagner, 1998; Podlozny, 2000; Mages, 2008). This form of role-play involves students and their teacher creating a dramatic situation together and exploring this mutually created context through improvisation and occasional prepared performance. With every step of the process, the story and its dramatic tension are moved closer to a potential resolution. With this use of a narrative, or drama, as the central feature to the approach, classroom drama seems quite similar to theatre on the surface. The strong reliance on improvisation in role and the use of techniques such as 'hot seating', where a participant answers questions from the other participants while maintaining the perspective of their role out of scene, are examples of theatre practices employed outside of theatre. The employment of these practices is part of what gives classroom drama its strong similarity

to theatre. However, as its proponents have pointed out in numerous publications, classroom drama is not theatre (Hornbrook, 1999). Therefore, for the present study, I recognise that classroom drama, particularly in its process-focused variations, can offer valuable insight into the potential effects of using theatre practices in other forms of imaginative role-play. At the same time, there are three main reasons why my study does not incorporate literature on classroom drama more extensively. The first reason is that classroom drama eschews public performance (Kao & O'Neill, 1998), which in turn causes the nature of the process to shift from a product-focus to a process-focus with the engagement with the process as an end in itself. This removal of public performance as an objective separates theatre and classroom drama plainly. The second reason is that classroom drama, in most of its forms, has no artistic underpinning. In theatre, this bond between performance and artistic expression are unified. In classroom drama, there is no underlying aim of achieving or appreciating the craft of constructing characters, conflicts, and narrative (one partial exception to this is 'creative drama', e.g. see McCaslin, 1996, and Burke & O'Sullivan, 2002). The third reason regards the status of current literature on classroom drama. As an emerging field in its own right, classroom drama has been conceptualised and discussed using various names and variations in technique over the past few decades. Mages (2008), in her meta-analysis of classroom drama, identifies thirty eight different names that have been used for this pedagogical approach in one form or another. Given this emergent nature of the field, it is difficult to synthesise results with theatre when such numerous theoretical and methodological distinctions and variations exist. Moreover, as both Mages and Podlozny (2000) shed light on, research methodology within the discipline has been equally beset by inconsistencies.

## **2.2 Rationale for Theatre in Education**

With a description and delineation of theatre established, attention can now turn to its implementation in educational contexts. Much of the available literature on theatre identifies its potential for education in terms of facilitating psychological and sociological development, drawing on its fundamental similarity to child play. Perry (2001) provides a view that links theatre with play as he opines, "The theatre event, with its rituals, roles,

unspoken rules and infinite strategic variation is essentially grown-up play, and even an apparently passive audience joins in the game by suspending its disbelief and pretending not to see that the drama woven around is deception” (p.52). This mutual suspension of disbelief is the backbone of theatre and the experience of the drama that is performed offers considerable potential for education. On this point, Byram and Fleming (1998) offer the following rationale:

“Drama as an art form works paradoxically by bringing participants closer to the subject through emotional engagement but at the same time preserving a distance by virtue of the fact that the context is make-believe. The actors in the drama can be likened to ‘participant observers’ who are engaged in the social world and yet are distanced enough to be able to reflect on the products of that engagement. This is all the more so in drama contexts because the world has been created by the participants themselves. When properly conceived and taught, drama involves looking beyond the surface actions to the values which underlie them, and as such it provides an ideal context for exploration of cultural values, both one’s own and other people’s.” (p. 143)

Fundamentally then, drama, as with other forms of role-play, have the potential to offer contexts otherwise unavailable to its participants. These make-believe contexts activate participants’ knowledge of various social situations and allow for interaction with these situations. In this vein, drama is, as Perry argues, a form of play similar to that with which children engage during their development. From the perspective of biology, Brown (2009) observes, in discussing the commonalities between human play and the play of other animals, “playful interaction allows a penalty free rehearsal of the normal give-and-take necessary in social groups” (p. 32) Thus play involves an interface with the social environment and this play that Brown observes in animals functions as a test of the social structure, that is to say, the values and norms of the society (or social group) that the individual inhabits. Rubin (1980), representing a discussion of play properties from the standpoint of child psychology, offers the observation that, “Because of the voluntary, intrinsically motivated character of play, and because it occurs in a relatively pressure-free

environment, young children are able to try out new actions with familiar objects or in familiar situations with a minimum of anxiety” (p. 70).

Role-play is similarly enacted in a state of lessened anxiety as it emulates, but does not constitute, real-world environments. In this sense it is akin to imaginative play activities in which young children engage, including fantasy play and socio-dramatic play.

Smilansky (1968, cited in Rubin, 1980) claims that socio-dramatic play contributes to a child’s development of cognition, creativity and social skills in a manner that is purported to “lessen the egocentric nature of preschool thought and to provide opportunities for empathetic and cooperative skill development” (Rubin, 1980, p. 74). Rubin explains Smalinsky’s view by stating that this move away from egocentric thought happens when fantasy play is shared with other people, thus prompting role-taking and role-playing.

The ‘risk-free’ interface with the social environment, that is to say, with the ‘real-world’, that role-play provides has often been a motivation for its use across many disciplines. In simplest terms, to borrow the view of play from Brown, the ‘play’ of role-play is similar to a child’s fantasy play in that it is a ‘rehearsal’ of whatever situational context the role-play is meant to represent. In one respect, role-play allows for participants to experience contexts otherwise unavailable or impossible. Role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons and many video games and board games all represent one possible manifestation of this, as ordinary individuals in contemporary society can assume the roles of imaginary individuals and interact with an imaginary world. In another respect, one of perhaps greater interest to many educators, role-play allows for participants to experience a situation likely available to them in real-life in some form, but without the real-life consequences. Regarding this latter respect, Van Ments (1999) remarks that this ability to rehearse interaction within a context modelled on the real-world has long been recognised for its educational potential and he offers examples including games such as go and chess, as well as games that provide context-specific roles to assume such as war simulations and business games common in business management schools, as evidence of this historical pedigree.

Psychologist Russ (1993) opines that play involves divergent thinking and affective processes of both thinking about and experiencing affect-laden associations. Role-play

takes this a step further. Most basic definitions of role-play (e.g., see Ladousse, 1987) conceptualise the activity as assuming the perspective of someone else and behaving in a manner consistent with the role-player's knowledge and assumptions about this new perspective. In colloquial terms, this is what people refer to as 'stepping into someone else's shoes'. As Van Ments (1999) posits, "Much of our behaviour in interpersonal interactions is governed by our assumptions about our own role, other peoples' roles, and the way we perceive these roles" (p. 10). In this way, he is alluding to the affect-laden associations that Russ describes. As an instructional medium, Van Ments further opines that such an exploration of these assumptions, "...can be used at different levels to teach simple skills of communication to show how people interact and their stereotyping of others, and to explore deep personal blocks and emotions" (p. 10).

In tandem with this sociological aspect, the potential for creativity, implied in Russ' mention of divergent thinking, is another valuable link between play and role-play. This is particularly the case for theatre given its artistic underpinnings. In discussing the process of creativity, Russ establishes a theoretical rationale for linking play and creativity by postulating that "pretend play is important in developing creativity because so many of the cognitive and affective processes involved in creativity occur in play" (Russ, 2003, p. 292). She identifies divergent thinking as a primary cognitive process concurrent in play and creativity. As for affective processes, Russ observes, "Both the ability to think about affect-laden fantasy and the capacity to experience emotion are important in creativity" (p. 292-293). As Russ points out, this latter aspect of creativity has been underrepresented in research, as most researchers have focused on the cognitive aspects of creativity. As she posits, the activity of developing a 'broad repertoire of affect-laden associations' would facilitate divergent thinking since, as she notes citing Isen et al (1987), adding emotion to thinking widens the process of finding associations.

Returning to the cognitive dimension of creativity, Guilford (1968) proposes that "divergent thinking is a matter of scanning one's stored information to find answers to satisfy a special search model" (p. 105). He also opines that creativity uses transformation abilities that allow an individual to alter their knowledge into a new configuration (Russ, 1993, p. 5). While Guilford views creativity, in terms of divergent thinking, as the ability

to elaborate on solutions, Mednick (1962) suggests that (semantic) associations made in the mind have differing strengths. He proposes that individuals with less creativity have fewer, stronger connections between semantic concepts such that stimulation will lead to the selection of concepts that share close or stereotypical associations. Contrastingly, he reasons that individuals with more creativity weaken those associations and ‘flatten the field’ to allow more equal access to both close and remote associations. Drawing on the views of Dietrich (2004), Fink et al. (2007) explain,

“...that creativity requires a variety of classic (frontal lobe demanding) cognitive abilities such as working memory, sustained attention, or cognitive flexibility. Creative thinking involves, among others, the ability to break conventional rules of thinking or to develop new strategies. Moreover, producing novel ideas by combining already stored knowledge elements presumably also involves working memory, which is conceptualised as the ability to temporarily maintain information in mind upon which concurrent information processing takes place.” (p.69)

Thus, if play is central to the development of creativity, as some researchers such as Russ claim, then all of the cognitive abilities that Dietrich describes for creativity would be activated during play as well. By extension, this denotes that activities involving theatre would have the potential to similarly tap these cognitive abilities and this potential to utilise and develop those abilities, in response to the creative demands of theatre practice, represents another potential benefit for learner development when theatre is applied to educational contexts. This being stated, however, studies concerning theatre and drama have largely focused on the psychological benefits for motivation, engagement and affect as well as the potential for sociological development described in the earlier Byram and Fleming citation. As a result of this focus, the more cognitive side of theatre, especially regarding creativity, has received comparatively little attention in the relevant research literature. This topic will be discussed more in the next chapter on tasks.

As an example rationale for theatre in education, Smith (1984) offers the following benefits for language learners in his manual on applying the 'theatre arts' to language teaching:

- fosters greater engagement and motivation
- provides exposure to diverse L2 input, facilitating discourse awareness
- assists self-awareness of habits and inhibitions
- facilitates development of greater control over language production and language comprehension faculties
- fostering of interpersonal relationships and communication skills, coupled with increases in the skills of observation, empathy and coping strategies
- provides a safe environment for experimentation

(adapted from Smith, 1984, pp 1-22)

Authors discussing L1 learning contexts echo many of Smith's listed benefits, including 1) improved engagement and motivation; 2) improved self-esteem, self-awareness and confidence; 3) improved social awareness, interpersonal communication skills and empathy; 4) lower inhibitions and the creation of a more comfortable learning environment; and 5) the development of moral and spiritual values (O'Neill *et al.*, 1977; Stern, 1980; Crookall, 1984; Morgan & Saxton, 1988; Sam, 1990; Kitson & Spiby, 1995; Wagner, 1998; Stinson & Wall, 2003).

Some authors, such as Smith for L2 contexts and McCaslin (1996) for L1 contexts, have focused more on the creative (i.e. artistic) demands of both theatre production and performance as aiding not only the development of language production and language comprehension abilities, but the development of nonverbal communicative ability, and increased skill in textual and contextual analysis, observation and imitation. All of these purported benefits are not limited solely to applications of theatre practices in other contexts. To wit, authors who focus on theatre practice as a distinct course of study, i.e. *theatre (drama) studies*, (see Cassady, 1996; Mackey, 1997; Mackey & Cooper, 2000; Baines & O'Brien, 2006, for examples of this course of study) or those who focus specifically on



actor training for the theatre (for example, see Mast, 1986; Caltagirone, 1995; McGraw & Clark, 1996; Dixon, 2003) posit most, if not all, of the aforementioned benefits for the study of theatre itself. However, these authors put a much greater emphasis on how the various practices function in relation to actual theatre production rather than any alignment with broader educational aims.

Within the wider category of 'imaginative role-play' discussed earlier, various authors working with different interpretations of role-play (i.e. improvisational role-play, games based on theatre practices, simulations, scenarios, and classroom drama) claim role-play is beneficial for language learners since it can provide exposure to authentic language situations that offer the opportunity to do two main things: 1) use language spontaneously and meaningfully (e.g., Maley & Duff, 1978; Scarcella, 1980; Jones, 1982; Shaftel & Shaftel, 1982; DiPietro, 1987); and 2) negotiate meaning in order to create content and sustain interaction (Kao & O'Neill, 1998).

Studies involving theatre are often difficult to interpret given that the respective definitions for theatre found in such studies often appropriate certain theatre practices for other purposes. Furthermore, due to the occasional conflation of the terms 'drama' in the theatrical sense and 'drama' in the classroom drama sense within the literature, many studies that identify theatre as the area of investigation are, in fact, regarding these related disciplines within role-play and not theatre specifically. Nevertheless, as an intervention technique, applied theatre has been the focus of some studies, though systematic studies are in short supply. For example, Theatre in Education (TIE) is an established teaching intervention in the UK and involves a theatre group either visiting or taking up temporary residency in a school and offering performances of theatre that feature an element of audience interaction. The underlying aim is pedagogical and theatre is employed as a medium of instruction for subject specific topics (i.e., history, social studies), conflict resolution and self-awareness, or simply to learn about acting and stagecraft (Catterall, Chapleau & Iwanga, 1999).

Denman et al (1996) examined a TIE intervention devised as a health education programme about HIV and AIDS. The study used pre-tests and post-tests to gauge the knowledge level of HIV and AIDS for around seven hundred students aged thirteen to

fourteen attending schools in Nottinghamshire, UK. Around two thirds of these students were a control group who received no TIE intervention, and the authors report post-test knowledge gains only for specific points within the overall curriculum (e.g., HIV and AIDS can be contracted from receiving a blood donation) and some gains in attitudes on questions where students would be expected to agree, but perhaps had not in the pre-test (e.g., “It is too risky to have sex without a condom”).

In a broader application of TIE (Unalan et al., 2009), a group of four medical student volunteers in Turkey created dramatised versions of headache scenarios and performed them for a lecture of forty-nine medical students. They then followed these performances with a presentation of how to diagnose a headache and ended with a group discussion about the performances. While over ninety percent of the students who attended the lecture reported, in a post-task survey, that they agreed that the performances helped make the topic easier to understand, relevant questions on a subsequent course final exams taken by these students showed no deviation from their overall performance on all questions of the examination. Furthermore, the authors acknowledge that no control group was used in their study.

From a perspective of participation effects on achievement, researchers working for the Imagination Project at UCLA (Catterall, Chapleau & Iwanaga, 1999) examined theatre as a part of student involvement with arts programs in general. Results taken from the United States Department of Education’s National Education Longitudinal Survey of 1988 (NELS:88) for involvement in the arts were referenced against standardised test scores from within that survey for the same students. In their study, which covers the span within the NELS:88 for 1988, 1990, and 1992, they report that teenage students involved with the arts performed comparatively better at all three of the development stages. For theatre specifically, no spoken language skills were assessed by NELS:88, so the researchers selected reading proficiency data as the variable. They compared proficiency results for groups of students from low socio-economic status (SES) households with either no reported involvement in theatre or a high level of involvement. They report that students who were highly involved in theatre (drama club, etc...) consistently performed better than those not involved in theatre, with nine percent more

gaining high reading proficiency at the eighth grade level and twenty percent more gaining this level by twelfth grade. The authors acknowledge that the connection between theatre and the literacy skills necessary for theatre was likely influential in this result. Additionally, for this comparison they only look at students from low SES backgrounds. Therefore, it is not possible to tell whether these results would be mirrored or become less pronounced in higher socio-economic brackets. The latter case was true, in their report, for low SES students and the relationship between the students' involvement with music programs and their mathematics achievement. While music increased the probability of achieving highest math proficiency (on standardised tests) for high SES students by twenty percent, involvement in music increased this probability for low SES students by almost fifty percent. They also report some modest increases in indices of self-concept, empathy and tolerance, but they acknowledge that their instruments of analysis may not be measuring intentional aspects of music and arts programs in general (i.e., music education is not designed to teach mathematics achievement).

To return to an earlier topic, if it is taken as given that creativity and the arts are strongly associated, then experience with the arts can be said to encourage creativity. Yet as Beghetto and Kaufman (2007) argue, creativity itself has generally been regarded from a product oriented focus with the result that external judgment contributes to the measure of this creativity. As they discuss, less attention has been paid to the process of creativity from a developmental standpoint. In contrasting creativity as innovation (in how it is recognised by others) with creativity as personal development (in how the individual recognises the innovation and its meaningfulness), the authors propose the "mini-c" creativity to reflect this intrapersonal shift (p. 73). More pointedly, they argue, "The everyday creativity experienced by students as they learn a new concept or make a new metaphor is given short shrift..." (p. 75).

If we focus more on the personal meaningfulness of mini-c creativity, then, drawing on the views of Runco (2005), whom Beghetto and Kaufman reference, we would not overlook the effort and potential of those individuals whose creativity has not been (or would not predictably have been) acknowledged by the greater society around them (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007, p. 74). In such a focus, then, the role and nature of creativity

in education, especially for aesthetic media, becomes a more relative affair. For example, in this study, theatre projects were undertaken by Japanese high school students studying English in rural Japan. If we base creativity merely on a “little-c” product focus, then the performances they made would, in most cases, achieve little serious regard in the greater community as “great” works of art and evidence of creativity. However, if you think of their devised plays in terms of their ability at theatre, relative to both the similar demographics of their school’s student population and their own experiences prior to the projects, the creativity observed in these projects can be properly recognised as innovation for these individuals. Consequently, increases such as those noted in the Imagination Project at UCLA, could find a possible parallel with the moments of ‘mini-c’ creativity that occur during involvement with an artistic, creative task. This represents another potential developmental benefit of using theatre. By facilitating, or even necessitating creativity, students could develop their interlanguage through moments in which their linguistic solutions to given circumstances represent innovation in their interlanguage. Thus creativity, as a construct in language learning, could widen its conceptual boundaries by including moments of divergent thinking and innovative language use, relative to a given student’s ability, that potentially stretch a learner’s interlanguage by increasing the range of associations and the relative strengths of those associations in comparison to one another.

## **2.3 Theatre and L2 Learning**

For language learning contexts, one potential implementation advantage that theatre has is its long pedigree as an art form, and by extension of this, its versatility. As discussed in section 2.1, theatre itself fundamentally requires very little for its implementation: one only needs participants, a ‘text’ (i.e. a narrative intended for performance), an audience, and a place for the participants to perform that text for the audience. Therefore, additional knowledge of the disciplines of acting, directing, or theatre production are not essential to the process. Certainly, such knowledge and production elements enhance the experience and bring those involved closer to the realisation of an artistic, aesthetically motivated performance, but a lack of this

knowledge, or of other presentation elements, does not inhibit theatre from being accomplished.

Despite this potential ease of logistical implementation, it is somewhat surprising that studies of theatre applied to L2 learning contexts are still in noticeably short supply. One reason for this could be due to theatre's typical placement within the larger tradition of literary studies (i.e. as a part of English literature), rendering it more as textual analysis exercises within that L1 context. Another reason for this could be a lingering preconception, among many, that theatre is an extensive undertaking that requires specialist knowledge. One could imagine teachers having a similar view towards an application of cinema or television practices if they felt that they lacked appropriate knowledge of camera and editing technology and techniques. A final reason for this might be due to a lack of a consistent methodology, or alternatively, an over dependence on a methodology that affords multiple interpretations, such as action research (see Burns, 2010, for a fuller discussion of action research). What follows is a review of the most relevant research found regarding the application of theatre in L2 learning contexts within any SLA research framework.

As Bellevue and Kim (2013) concur, the available literature on theatre (and classroom drama) is mostly descriptive reports, position papers, and teacher resources. So consequently, actual research studies are notably sparse. For example, Elgar (2002) provides a description of three playwriting projects she undertook with intermediate level tertiary students in Brunei, but limits the scope of her paper to a position regarding drama activities, a description of the projects' methodology, and a brief synopsis of each story composed. Fukushima and Fujimoto (2009) similarly investigate scripted theatre for tertiary level L2 Japanese learners, yet they only offer one bit of data, a student's self-reported result of improved test performance, when discussing potential positive treatment effects. Lauer (2008) provides a detailed description of both the process and final outcome of an extended project where tertiary students of German collaboratively adapted a German language novel for performance as a play. While his insight and description of the adaptation process is commendably detailed, discussion of language learning processes, such as treatment performance effects, are limited to anecdotal

observations within the description. For example, Lauer's observation that the act of memorising the lines of a play facilitates increased automatisisation of target language features is not substantiated with any actual data.

Two further studies investigate the use of Shakespeare. Aita (2012) describes a group of EFL learners in Macedonia rehearsing and performing *The Twelfth Night* but largely limits his discussion to a position paper. Cheng and Winston (2011) offer what is primarily a position paper as well, drawing particularly on Guy Cook's views of the importance of language play in language learning (see also, Cook, 1999), but they do offer a brief qualitative discussion of student interview data that points to an apparent strong correlation between the empathetic and imaginative opportunities of theatre and greater emotional and personal involvement with lesson content. They also report student perceptions of cultural empowerment, which in itself suggests positive effects on learner agency as well.

As a review of these selected examples illustrates, a majority of the available literature either works within a similarly limited methodology or functions as a statement of a position on theatre and drama, or discussion of its potential efficacy or implementation (e.g., Matthias, 2007). That being stated, in the research regarding classroom drama, there are also studies that feature public performance and artistic aims that are more in line with theatre (e.g., see Sam, 1990), but they also share a tendency towards position papers and descriptive reports common in classroom drama research as well. Those limitations notwithstanding, the benefits for L2 learners that theatre and classroom drama share have also informed a number of qualitative studies on classroom drama specifically. The findings of these studies include positive effects on learner affect (e.g., see Piazzoli, 2011 for a study regarding language anxiety), learner motivation (Dicks & LeBlanc, 2009); and growth of intercultural knowledge and awareness (Piazzoli, 2010).

However, despite the prevalence of research with limited empirical relevance, a few systematic studies of theatre do exist. Ryan-Schuetz and Colangelo (2004) discuss a pilot study at Notre Dame University that involved eleven students studying Italian who participated in a full-scale, ten week theatre production workshop. Unofficial pre-tests and post-tests were given and indicated a positive trend for some of the students, though

the time frame of the project was questioned as a potential non-factor. Student motivation and their positive reviews of the workshops were significant in the authors' opinions. Certainly long-term exposure to a language in an immediate and immersive environment could be beneficial to learner interlanguage development as well, and their report does indicate additionally that two students who were not concurrently enrolled in any other Italian language study both showed improvement on their oral proficiency and reading post-tests. That being stated, it is unclear from their research if the reported test improvements, validated with t-tests of their test results, were a result of the theatre workshop itself or if the improvements were due to other work the students undertook for their overall study of Italian. This is due, in part, to a lack of a control group or counterbalancing of different treatment groups and also a lack of ethnographic information regarding individual participants and their degree of language exposure outside of the workshop. Nevertheless, the improvement of the two students who had no other Italian course enrolment at least suggests that their results might be strongly linked with the workshop. This admission is to be tempered with acknowledgement that the analysis of data was restricted to a) informal pre-tests and post-tests; b) limited qualitative discussion of student and staff interviews; and, c) discussion and samples from workshop feedback questionnaires.

Qualitative analysis of interviews and feedback questionnaires also constitute the main data sources of Raquel's (2011) study. This study discusses the experience of Hong Kong university students participating in a full-scale theatre production. Forty-two students and twelve university staff took part in an interdisciplinary production of a stage musical. The author uses a Vygotskian inspired socio-cultural framework to investigate the suitability of theatre as a language learning method within the Hong Kong context. Qualitative analysis of student and staff interviews and post-production feedback questionnaire responses indicated that enjoyment was a common motivator for students. Coupled with this, dissatisfaction with previous English study or negative effects from that prior study led some of the participants to seek out a different learning environment, like theatre production, in order to practice their English. The results showed that theatre contributed to the students' sense of achievement and confidence and she concludes from this that

theatre could be a practice that is compatible with Hong Kong students. While this study is useful in the way it identifies learner affect as an important variable in learning through theatre practice, since the study focused on this dimension, it lacks descriptive statistics. In addition to this, the added factor of musical performance, makes it more difficult to synthesise the results with other theatre studies, especially those studies that focus only on spoken language.

Carson (2012) used a very similar research framework, coupling drama-based approaches with task-based learning (TBL), and her study arguably has the closest resemblance to the current study of any available study, at least in terms of task design. Groups of students in an EAP program at a university in Ireland were given time during lessons totalling five hours to prepare for a fifteen to twenty minute public performance. Of key interest in relation to my study is the design feature of this task that leaves the creation of the scripts to the students themselves and allows for either an original work or an adaptation of an existing work to fulfil this task requirement. This is, in essence, the same delineation of task outcomes that the present study investigates: original versus adapted scripts. However, analysis and discussion of student outcomes for these devised theatre performances are restricted to post-task student feedback questionnaires and are principally aligned within a qualitative approach that considers issues of agency, identity and autonomy. As a result, it is unclear, a) whether or not both possible outcomes were selected by the participating groups; b) what the linguistic features of student output were; and c) whether or not there were measurable differences in this output (or indeed between the findings for agency, identity and autonomy) between the possible task outcomes. Thus, while her focused and reasoned discussion of learner feedback commendably helps to fill gaps in the research regarding both learner interaction during collaborative theatre tasks and learner evaluation of these theatre tasks, as well as investigating theatre in a task-based framework, her paper consequently and understandably offers no language production data or results for a discussion of issues outside of those relating to learner affect.

These last three studies on theatre share some similarities in either research design or participants with this study, but are distinguishable by several important factors. To



begin, Carson (2012) uses theatre in a TBL framework but her study was in an English speaking country. This ESL setting has the advantage of access to the target language outside of class and is, consequently, a mode of English study that facilitates immersion due to its ESL and not EFL classroom context. Ryan-Scheutz and Colangelo (2004) also involves an ESL context while Raquel (2011) describes a study that took place in an EFL context, Hong Kong, yet the different frameworks and aims of these studies make comparisons difficult. All of these studies feature extensive processes (ranging from several weeks to several months) of theatre practice that build towards a final performance. However, none of them investigates the actual language produced either during task outcomes or during the interactive discourse of the processes that lead to those outcomes. Furthermore, none of these studies identifies possible task design effects from the theatre tasks they use. Similarly, while interviews and post-task surveys are used as data collection instruments, none of these studies observe or offer rich descriptions of the processes involved. Like the others, Raquel's study involved a final performance, but it also featured live musical accompaniment and singing. The interdisciplinary nature of her study is fascinating in its own right, but the major role that musical performance plays in the rehearsal process and resultant product reduces this study's comparability to the other studies of theatre. Finally, all three of these studies involve students at tertiary institutions. While this is quite common as a consequence of who typically conducts research and the student participants typically available to them, the current study focuses on students of secondary school age and therefore fills a gap in the L2 applied theatre literature. Furthermore, outside of Carson's study, no other studies exist that investigate devised theatre, and her study lacks a focus on language production. The current study specifically looks at students' language production in devised theatre tasks and therefore fills a gap in the literature.

All of these papers, descriptions, and full or partial studies reflect a state of affairs that is indicative of an emerging area of inquiry, one that still lacks any real consistency in its methodology. One can hope that continued interest in theatre and drama will result in more methodologically sound studies, ones that lend themselves better to generalisability and replication, which is an observation that echoes the suggestions of Podlozny (2000)

and Mages (2008) in regards to L1 theatre and drama studies. Regarding this methodological inconsistency, task-based research offers a potential solution. By using tasks to explore pedagogical interventions, researchers have at their disposal both a pedagogical framework to implement theatre in a language learning context and a research framework for investigating the effects of that intervention. For this reason, discussion in this literature review turns to tasks in the next chapter.

## **2.4 Chapter Summary**

Theatre, as a particular form of role-play, has been implemented in various ways across educational contexts including L2 learning contexts. As an art form, theatre has the potential to create contexts for interaction and communication otherwise unavailable in a standard classroom. Position papers and studies have advocated for theatre, and other forms of role-play, due to their shared ability to positively influence intrinsic motivation, participant engagement with the activity, and learner affect. Additionally, some authors have claimed that experience with the participant-created contexts of role-play has the potential to promote better interpersonal communication skills, social and cultural awareness, and the ability to use language spontaneously and meaningfully. The three studies discussed in more detail at the end of Section 2.3 all dealt with extended theatre processes and all three of them similarly reported students' perceived increases in either motivation, confidence, language ability, or a combination thereof. Certainly, one thing most papers on theatre share in common is the inclusion of these benefits. In spite of this, systematic studies of theatre, particularly those regarding either what learners actually do during the process of theatre practice or the language that learners produce as an outcome of theatre practice, are still in short supply.

To fully understand the potential that theatre has to foster learner development in language ability, more research needs to focus on not only the details of the process itself, but also on the actual language that theatre leads students to produce. Additionally, the performing arts provide ample opportunity for creativity, and this creative aspect of theatre, particularly in cases such as devised theatre in which learners are responsible for content creation, has also largely been overlooked in the available studies on theatre and

L2 learning. The current research project was conceived to fill these gaps in the literature. One way in which these aspects of theatre practice can be investigated more systematically is to implement them within an empirically motivated pedagogical framework envisioned specifically for L2 instruction. One such framework is task-based learning and teaching (TBLT), which is the subject of the next chapter.



## CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW - TASKS and TBLT

The previous chapter discussed the critical components necessary for theatre and surveyed the relevant literature for both a theoretical rationale for the use of theatre in educational contexts and for studies that investigated the implementation of theatre within L2 learning contexts. This chapter, which constitutes that second half of the literature review, has pedagogic tasks as its primary focus. This portion of the literature review is divided into three sections. The first section defines the construct of a task and discusses the implementation of tasks in language learning classrooms, particularly in regards to the task-based pedagogical framework of Willis (1996). The second section discusses, more extensively, the primarily cognition-focused second language acquisition (SLA) research which informs much of TBLT. The third section surveys available studies, primarily within this SLA theoretical framework, that have the closest relevance to the current study. This chapter then concludes with a summary of these sections that synthesises this field of research with the previous chapter on theatre and summarises the key theoretical and empirical motivations for the research design and methodology of the current study.

### 3.1 Pedagogic Tasks

As many authors have pointed out (e.g., Robinson, 2011a), tasks originated in language pedagogy. In the time since early conceptualisations of tasks (e.g., Long, 1985; Crookes, 1986; Prabhu, 1987; see also Ellis, 2003 and Samuda & Bygate, 2008 for reviews), there has been growing research interest into tasks as a means of matching pedagogic aims with appropriate real-world demands that students are likely to encounter. Ellis (2003) offers a consolidation of task descriptions from various authors and identifies six critical features for a task:

1. It is a work plan
2. It involves a primary focus on meaning
3. It involves real-world processes of language use.

4. It can involve any of the four language skills.
5. It engages cognitive processes.
6. It has a clearly defined communicative outcome.

(adapted from Ellis, 2003, pp. 9-21, 86-95)

Building off these features, Samuda and Bygate (2008), foreground language use as the driving force behind tasks:

“A task is a holistic activity which engages language use in order to achieve some non-linguistic outcome while meeting a linguistic challenge, with the overall aim of promoting language learning, through process or product or both.”

(Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 69)

This study adopts this working definition of tasks provided by Samuda and Bygate, as their critical concept of holistic learning more clearly exempts activities that might share some task-like similarities such as contextualised drills. From a pedagogical perspective, tasks are employed, fundamentally, with the objective of making language learning lessons more communicative. This is based on a view, clarified by Ellis (2013), that states,

“The theoretical rationale for TBLT lies in the claim emanating from SLA that language learning is best achieved not by treating language as an ‘object’ to be dissected into bits and learned as set of ‘accumulated entities’ (Rutherford, 1988), but as a ‘tool’ for accomplishing a communicative purpose. In other words, ‘learning’ does not need to precede ‘use’, but rather occurs through the efforts that learners make to understand and be understood in achieving a communicative goal.” (p. 2)

Here Ellis is indicating a major point of departure that task-based approaches make from more traditional language teaching methodology, a shift in focus that Kuiken and Vedder (2007) describe as a movement away from learning how to use language and

towards a focus on learning by using language. Ellis further describes this shift in developmental focus by stating,

“...[TBLT] provides opportunities for consolidating partially acquired language and acquiring new language not by designating linguistic items as ‘targets’ for learners to study and master but by facilitating the social and cognitive processes of ‘picking up’ language while they are communicating.”

(Ellis, 2003, p. 3)

Ellis (Ibid.) remarks that the execution of a task’s work plan takes into account both the procedures for designing the task and the expected participation of both teachers and students. As he summarises, various frameworks of task implementation all share three basic phases: pre-task, (during) task, and post-task, though he states that only the ‘task’ phase itself is required for task-based teaching. In this way, the pre-task and post-task phases are not obligatory but, as he notes, can provide opportunities to augment the task and “...serve a crucial role in ensuring that the task performance is maximally effective for language development” (p. 243).

The task phase itself is seemingly self explanatory: participants attempt and complete a given task. It is the *raison d’être* for any task-based lesson as this task provides the context for meaning-focused communication to occur. That being stated, an implementation of TBLT can invest the task itself with a complex procedural structure. This matter will be discussed a little further on in this section. Prior to that, both the pre-task and post-task phases will be briefly described.

Broadly speaking, the pre-task phase affords participants the opportunity to prepare for the task itself. Ellis (Ibid.) consolidates existing literature and describes four principal ways in which the pre-task phase can frame the subsequent task phase: 1) by performing a similar task; 2) by providing a model performance of the task; 3) by engaging in “non-task” preparation activities such as brainstorming or making a mind map; or 4) by giving time to participants to strategically plan for the task (p. 244-249). This construct of

planning, especially in terms of pre-task (strategic) versus during task (online) planning, will be given more attention in the next section of this chapter.

While the pre-task phase primes students for language use, the post-task phase allows learners the opportunity to reflect on the task, potentially try it again under the same or differing conditions, and focus attention on form. Willis (1996), for instance, in her pedagogical framework for task-based instruction, sees this post-task phase as the chance for learners to focus on accuracy (form), given that, for her, the task itself has the underlying objective of fostering development of fluency and communication strategies (Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2003). Ellis (2003, 2013) takes an alternative view and argues that such attention to accuracy (focus on form) can occur at any phase of a task-based lesson. Moreover, as he points out, a focus on form can be made the focus of a task itself, through structuring the task around a ‘consciousness raising activity’ to draw attention to form (Ellis, 1991; Willis & Willis, 1996).

With the general purposes for the pre-task and post-task phases discussed, attention can now return to the task itself. In terms of task procedures, Ellis presents a more general view of a task as simply the activity undertaken by learners, whatever the procedural requirements might be. Willis (1996), on the other hand, gives more shape to task procedures by introducing three steps within what she calls the *task cycle*. In this cycle, students first attempt the task (after completing the task’s respective pre-task phase), then work within their groups to plan a public report about their attempt of the task, and the cycle finishes with a selected number of the groups (or, in some cases, all of them) presenting these reports to the class. These three steps of the task cycle are called *task*, *planning*, and *report*, respectively. In this framework, Willis views the task itself differently from the planning and report of the task. She posits that the task itself differs from the planning and report due to the nature of planned language. Consequently, while the task focuses learners on fluency and the spontaneity of their language production, the planning and report are designed to promote greater accuracy, and possibly complexity, of their language production due to the condition of the report being presented publicly. In other words, the knowledge of a public report will motivate the students to shift some of their attentional focus towards the accuracy of their output. The planning for this report,



then, allows students to revise their task outcomes for presentation and “create anew, experiment with language and compose with the support of their group, teacher, dictionaries and grammar books” (Willis, 1996, p. 55). Thus, while an attempt of the task was undertaken with minimal intervention, the planning for the report affords a group of students the opportunity to seek assistance from outside of their collective language knowledge (to include assistance from the teacher or more capable peers).

The presence of planning and report stages for each task in a sequence of tasks is, of course, what motivates Willis (1996) to use the term ‘cycle’. The progression from task to planning to report is repeated for every task within the overall lesson. Willis and Willis (2007) refer to this potential series of task cycles as a *task sequence*. Each individual task in the cycle generates a sequential series of stages that are repeated until all tasks have been completed. Complications arise, however, when one attempts to implement a task within this cycle that shares both of the following characteristics of devised theatre: 1) a long and variable time frame for the process involved with completing the task; and 2) a public performance itself as the outcome of the task. To be clear, an extended process during the task is not necessarily problematic by itself. However, it becomes problematic when the public presentation of student generated content (i.e., a drama) is realised in the outcome of the task itself and not the report stage that follows it.

To explain, one could potentially simplify the process of devised theatre and arrive at the following task-based implementation:

#### Pre-task

brainstorm and discuss relevant themes for a devised narrative

#### Task sequence

generate the narrative (task cycle)

rehearse the narrative (task cycle)

perform the narrative (task cycle)

### Post-task

reflect and evaluate performances

focus on salient language features from the performances

In such an implementation of theatre within TBLT, the function of the planning and report stages for the rehearsal and performance phases would not necessarily be intuitive from the perspective of language pedagogy given that, when aligned with a framework such as Willis', they duplicate intended functions. To explain, attempting a rehearsal of the script and then planning and reporting on that rehearsal would make sense if this task sequence was a theatre workshop and not a language lesson. In such a procedure, performers would be interested in discussing performances choices and receiving feedback prior to an actual public performance. Similarly, if students publicly perform their narratives as the task in itself, it is not clear precisely what function the additional planning and report stages are meant to have. Yet if the function of the planning stage of a theatre task cycle is to revise task outcomes for public report, what is the function of theatrical *rehearsal* within the same sequence of task cycles? Although the process of rehearsal could be conceived as a task in its own right, in the greater process of devised theatre, it has a task-specific function which is essentially the same as Willis' planning stage: to revise the product and focus on the accuracy (control) of its presentation. Given this similarity, a primary motivation for the planning of a report and the presentation of that report is already provided by the task itself. Consequently, much of the motivation for allocating class time for planning and report becomes potentially redundant. In such a case, then, one would need to consider the rehearsal for the performance to be the planning for the report, and the performance as the presentation of the report. This is in done in spite of the fact that in Willis' framework, the report is intended to be a reflection and reworking of *prior* task outcomes. This reconfiguration of a devised theatre task within Willis' framework would look as follows:

### Pre-task

brainstorm and discuss relevant themes for a devised narrative

### Task cycle

generate the narrative (task)

rehearse the narrative (planning)

perform the narrative (report)

### Post-task

reflect and evaluate performances

focus on salient language features from the performances

This procedure for a devised theatre task does not settle the matter regarding the need for planning and report within a task cycle. It simply realigns those components of the task cycle with existing procedures from the process of devising theatre. What this procedural reconfiguration does not accommodate are subsequent planning and report stages *after* the public performance.

The above discussion is largely about the challenges of implementing theatre within a specific task-based framework. Other authors such as Ellis, mentioned previously, have a less strict procedural framework in mind. While tasks with simpler procedures, as well as tasks of short duration, are accommodated with less effort into a framework such as Willis', a project such as devising theatre likely would require a less confining procedural framework.

Regardless of the particular framework or methodology employed, implementation of TBLT cannot involve simply substituting tasks for other classroom activity. The discussion of pre-task and post-task options previously points to how tasks are designed, selected and sequenced to ensure optimal conditions for language development. Ellis

(2003) provides eight principles to guide the teacher through the implementation options relevant for task-based lessons:

1. Ensure an appropriate level of task difficulty.
2. Establish clear goals for each task-based lesson.
3. Develop an appropriate orientation to performing the task in the students.
4. Ensure that students adopt an active role in task-based lessons.
5. Encourage students to take risks.
6. Ensure that students are primarily focused on meaning when they perform a task.
7. Provide opportunities for focusing on form.
8. Require students to evaluate their performance and progress.

(pp. 276-278)

As Ellis himself comments, his principles are meant to merely guide teachers and he states that he does not believe “it is possible to prescribe methodological choices, given the lack of knowledge about which options are the most effective” (Ibid., p. 278). In this way, Ellis is only outlining the types of decisions that should inform a teacher’s methodology, rather than describing a particular method such as Willis does. If tasks are meant to draw from real-world procedures and interactions, then they can obviously cover a wide range of activities and language requirements. Simple social transactions, such as asking for directions, and more complicated social interaction, such as participating in a structured debate, are equally tasks so long as the primary focus during the task is, as Ellis advises, on meaning and that opportunities for a focus on form are provided as well.

As more sophisticated social transactions will make greater demands on learners’ linguistic resources, selection of tasks with a level of difficulty appropriate for a given group of learners would seem the most crucial of Ellis’ eight principles, given that the remaining seven will greatly depend on the students’ ability to meet the linguistic demands of the task. To control for this, implementation of level appropriate tasks can be achieved, according to Ellis, by the teacher either utilising the option for a pre-task phase or by the teacher working more directly with the students to build a collaborative dialogue and undertake the task together. In good practice, both proper preparation and

scaffolding would ensure that the appropriate level of task is selected and that students are able to manage the task to completion. However, as will be discussed further on in this chapter, evaluating task difficulty can become a more complicated matter when a group of students share the same L1. Additionally, there are tasks, such as devised theatre, in which the language necessary to complete the task (the script for a play) is not the same as the language necessary to engage in the process for the task (e.g., managing a discussion, giving opinions and feedback, evaluating options and providing rationale for choices). Moreover, the demand for conceptual creativity in devised theatre, and the varied manner in which it can influence task process, obfuscates whether or not a given task's difficulty would prohibit students from sufficiently orienting to the task, engaging with it, and further developing their language ability from it as a result. For any sort of task that involves an extensive and collaborative creative process, then, it would seem necessary to properly sequence tasks and scaffold learners in the necessities of group work and collaborative interaction prior to any more extensive and demanding task being undertaken. This will also be further discussed in the next sections.

### 3.1.1 TBLT in East Asian contexts

The above discussion of implementation raises the additional issue of what happens when an implementation of a task-based approach is localised for specific learning contexts. As mentioned earlier, TBLT is built on the belief that communicative activities can be utilised and sequenced in such a way as to maintain a meaning-focus whilst providing opportunities for focus-on-form. The assumptions of TBLT are that learners' development of language ability will be better served by allowing that knowledge to be built from using the language rather than explicit instruction of learning how to use the language. Yet such an approach can encounter obstacles when a particular context does not widely employ the manner of student-centred, meaning-focused pair and group work that is common in TBLT. This is especially the case in regards to East Asian contexts in which comprehensive examinations are the centring mechanism behind government mandated curricula, as authors such as Carless (2007, 2009) and Sato (2010, 2011) have

pointed out. The communicative objectives inherent in task design do not always bear fruit in EFL classrooms where traditions and institutional constraints make less communicative methods such as Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) more attractive. PPP is a middle ground position between grammar-translation methods and communicative approaches that nevertheless stops short of actually capturing the essence of communication that tasks and TBLT are meant to facilitate, namely, the functional use of language in context rather than contextualised practice.

One issue with implementation is the relative centrality that tasks either do or do not assume in a syllabus. As Sumuda and Bygate (2008) explain, implementation can take one of three basic forms. In “strong form TBLT”, tasks are the basis of study and a syllabus is built solely around these tasks. In “weak form TBLT”, or task-supported language teaching (TSLT), tasks may be selected with discretion to complement a course of study. Finally, “Task-referenced Language Teaching” (TRLT) is a middle ground position in which tasks are the means of learner assessment but teachers are free to use tasks and non-tasks at their own discretion to prepare for assessment. In contrast to this, Ellis (2013) identifies only TBLT and TSLT, and remarks that this echoes, to a certain extent, the same division of strong and weak forms also found in CLT, which most authors have identified as a precedent and influence on TBLT. As Samuda and Bygate (2008) remark, opinions vary widely on the role of tasks in school curriculums and, ultimately, the form a task-based approach takes will rest on the individuals responsible for syllabus design and their views on how tasks can facilitate learning.

Carless (2004, 2007) based his views on teacher interviews and classroom observations. Key insights from his studies include the variability of task-definitions adopted by the teachers to match their individual teaching beliefs and the difficulty they had in implementing tasks in their classrooms. One such manifestation of teacher beliefs he observed were the modifications of tasks into more form-focused exercises. Certainly the situation Carless brings to light is an important critique, one that has found echoes in other Asian contexts as well (e.g. see Littlewood, 2007). Yet one is left to wonder if the critique is a fair one, given that much of what he reported on was not necessarily accurate implementation of task-based instruction due to the differences in teachers’

interpretations of tasks in his study. Additionally, Carless is discussing TBLT and advocating TSLT as an alternative for his EFL context of Hong Kong. A principle focus of his argument is the contention that pedagogical decisions must take into consideration the teacher-led, examination focus of Confucian heritage educational contexts. As a result, Carless posits that tasks work better as a complement to more formal, form-focused instruction. As an alternative perspective on the same problem of implementing TBLT in Asian EFL contexts, Sato (2010, 2011) bases his views, regarding TBLT in Japanese schools, on more practical observations: students lack the time and resources, as well as sufficient exposure to the language, to develop their language ability through a task-based approach. Here, his appeal is to an economy of means, where he reasons that the time required to acquire language from a task does not allow for all of the course objectives (i.e. linguistic knowledge) to be adequately covered for assessment via comprehensive examinations.

Communicative teaching approaches, of which TBLT can be considered, share much of the same state of affairs as approaches associated with theatre, with those approaches including applied theatre and classroom drama. To explain, both TBLT and theatre practices posit a paradigm shift in the way lessons and syllabuses are designed. Whether content is delivered through tasks or 'dramas', both approaches mark a move away from teacher-centred, form-focused instruction towards purposeful, functional, and interactive student-centred learning built around the intrinsic motivation of productive communication. Also, as both approaches have shown, implementation often reflects the beliefs of particular teachers regarding the nature of learning, and both approaches have various views regarding their tenets, critical features, and interpretations regarding implementation. To be certain, the state of affairs that finds task-based approaches encountering obstacles to successful implementation is not unique to East Asian learning contexts, nor is a curricular focus on assessment by comprehensive examination solely the property of Confucian heritage educational practices. While the current study does not seek to address these issues of implementation in favour of any one particular strand, it does aim to contribute to the understanding of how task-based implementation of theatre in an East Asian EFL context such as Japan can be achieved and what the expected

results might look like if we consider a holistic devised theatre task that is based off of creativity and student-generated content. In accomplishing this, the current study can also provide a detailed account of a ‘strong form CLT’ task implemented into an otherwise largely lecture-driven, examination-focused learning context.

I now turn attention to the theoretical rationale and empirical support for tasks and TBLT.

### 3.2 Tasks and Second Language Acquisition Research

One primary way in which learners are purported to ‘pick up’ language is through interaction during a task. For Long (1985, 1996), this interaction is pivotal to language acquisition as interactants work to achieve comprehensible input and output through negotiation of meaning. As Foster and Ohta (2005) summarise,

“In these negotiations, problem utterances are checked, repeated, clarified, or modified in some way (lexically, phonologically, morphosyntactically) so that they are brought within the optimum  $i+1$  level. The value in these negotiations, especially in group work, is that they can provide  $i+1$  input which is made-to-measure for individual learners and their current interlanguage level.” (p.405)

To a great extent, pedagogic tasks in TBLT are envisioned with this meaning-focused interaction between participants in mind. However, Long’s construct of *negotiation for meaning* (NfM) is not the sole source of classroom interaction available during work on a task. Ellis et al (2001) discuss teacher led meaning-focused interaction that occurs without the identification of a ‘problem utterance’. In these cases, the motivation is rooted in a teacher, or other interlocutor, desiring to direct the listener’s attention more towards specific forms without this shift in attention relying on a communication breakdown as a prompt. This more strategic employment of meaning negotiation can also be initiated by a native speaker or, potentially, a more proficient L2 learner. Foster and Ohta (2005) similarly point to collaboration itself as a valuable means for learners to address knowledge gaps.



Irrespective of the source and motivation for the shift in focus, this focus-on-form (Long, 1991) is an essential part of TBLT (Ellis, 2013). The crucial point Ellis stresses is that the task itself maintains a primary focus on meaning while allowing for learners to attend to form within the context of task performance. In this way, form is mapped to meaning. To put it more simply: in TBLT, grammar instruction is contextualised. It is not treated as separate knowledge (or a skill) to be first acquired and then later proceduralised (i.e., in the manner and order described in an early conceptualisation of skill theory by Anderson, 1983).

This view of interaction discussed above carries a marked cognitive focus, as interaction is chiefly conceptualised as the acquisition of knowledge (or schema) and the ways in which the brain processes this information. Thus *attention*, in terms of a learner's propensity for *noticing* certain features of the language (Schmidt, 1994, 2001), is seen as a crucial part of acquisition. Much research in SLA regarding tasks (e.g. Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1997; Robinson, 2001) has investigated the ways in which different features of tasks can facilitate attention to different aspects of information processing and their resultant effects on language production.

This attentional aspect of language processing, involving the relation between working memory and attention, has received considerable focus within cognitive approaches to SLA research. In a consideration of task design, some researchers (e.g. Skehan, 1998; Robinson, 2001) point to the ways in which tasks, by the features of their design, influence how learners variably allocate attentional resources in order to meet the particular demands of different tasks. Motivating this research is an understanding that the ways in which different tasks predispose different outcomes would provide support for deliberate task selection and task sequencing in order to meet given pedagogical objectives. For this area of research, an influential model of language production and comprehension is the serial processing model proposed by Levelt (1989, 1999). In this model, language production is described as a serial process of three components: the conceptualiser, the formulator, and the articulator. The conceptualiser initiates an utterance by establishing of a goal for communication and then, through first macro-planning, and then micro-planning, it sends subdivided portions of this message to the

formulator. This formulator first morphosyntactically, and then phonetically, encodes each portion of the message as it receives it from the conceptualiser. When this dual encoding is completed for a given portion of the message, it is sent to the articulator which renders the phonetically encoded plan into actual speech. This process works in the given order, and once the conceptualiser sends information to the formulator, that, in turn, is sent to the articulator, the various phases of the process can work in parallel. Thus as a speaker is articulating part of a message, his or her mind is already processing both the content and then form of the next part of the message for articulation.

### 3.2.1 Task design features and their effects on language production

Levelt's model of L1 oral language production informs two prominent hypotheses for L2 language processing that differ in their interpretations of how this processing model controls language production. The first hypothesis is a model of L2 language processing known as the Limited Attentional Capacity (LAC) model proposed by Peter Skehan (Skehan, 1998, 2003, 2009; Skehan et al, 2012). In this model, Skehan proposed that increased task difficulty, which refers to various design features of tasks that make greater processing demands, will require more attentional resources. The need to allocate attentional resources in order to complete more difficult tasks is the result of L2 learners lacking true parallel processing ability to support a dual mode system that employs both rule-based and exemplar-based systems of language processing (Skehan, 1998). Importantly, Skehan draws on the views of VanPatten (1990) and proposes that these attentional resources of working memory are limited and spring from a single pool. As a consequence, increased attention to the greater demands of more difficult tasks will be at the detriment of attention to other areas of task performance. As Skehan explains,

“Processing-based analyses of tasks are concerned with their information-processing load, and effectively focus on the difficulty of the task. The assumption is that more demanding tasks consume more attentional resources simply for task transaction, with the result that less attentional resources are available for a focus on form.”

(Skehan, 1998, p. 97)

As a result, he initially posited that there would be a trade-off between fluency and complexity (Skehan, 1998). However, more recently he predicts that more difficult tasks will result in a trade-off between complexity and accuracy, with one being attended to at the expense of the other (Skehan, 2003; Skehan et al., 2012). This trade-off occurs because increasingly difficult tasks will tax attentional resources to the point where there will not be enough attentional capacity to attend to both simultaneously.

For Skehan, the implication of this focus is that identifying the difficulty of tasks (in terms of their variant demands on cognitive load) can inform the selection of tasks to match pedagogical objectives. His LAC model favours appropriate task selection that alternates focus between the complexity, accuracy and fluency of output, to help foster interlanguage development by first pushing the limits of that interlanguage, and then pushing control of that interlanguage. Thus, he claims that, through task-based research, we can identify which tasks predispose learner attention towards either features of their output, discourse features, or particular language structures, or a combination thereof.

More recently, Skehan (2009) proposes and extends (Skehan et al, 2012) his framework for organising the various influences of task design features on second language performance. In contrast to his earlier classification system (e.g., Skehan, 1998), this framework is based more deliberately on Levelt's model of speech production with the stages of "conceptualiser", "formulator - lemma retrieval", and "formulator - syntactic encoding" all matched with respective stage-specific influences that Skehan classifies as "complexifying / pressuring influences" and "easing / focusing influences." (Skehan et al, 2012, p. 184). This means of classifying task design features is empirically motivated and for Skehan better identifies the specific stages of language production that are affected by certain contrasts in task design. This framework essentially identifies influences on task performance and the potential to lead students to either further develop their underlying interlanguage (through increasing task difficulty) or facilitate better control of their current interlanguage (through decreasing, or "easing" task difficulty). However, Robinson (2011a) points out that this newer framework does not provide a metric for

sequencing tasks based on these influences and also notes that Skehan has not offered a means of relating these influences to real-world equivalents of task performance.

Robinson (2001, 2005, 2007, 2011b) himself offers an alternative hypothesis for L2 language processing, one that also draws on Levelt's model, which he calls the Cognition Hypothesis (CH) for L2 learning. In this hypothesis, Robinson proposes that "...breakdowns in 'action control', not capacity limits, lead to decrements in speech production and learners' failure to benefit from the learning opportunities attention directing provides" (Robinson, 2011b, p. 12). This reasoning is based off of Cromer's (1974) earlier Cognition Hypothesis that proposes that L1 development results from cognitive and conceptual development. As a result, Robinson reasons that the degree of complexity involved in a task will have a direct effect on the language used to complete it, so that more cognitively complex tasks will push learners to use language that requires greater monitoring and control. He refers to task design features that facilitate this push as 'resource-directing'. Rather than being a trade off, detrimental effects from tasks are not due to their difficulty (task complexity) but due to constraints on learner ability to attend to the task. These constraints are called 'resource-dispersing' and refer to performative and procedural demands of the task that can divert learner attention away from language production. An important prediction of this hypothesis is that facets of language production can be attended to simultaneously, as they are proposed to draw from individual pools of attention. This is a counterproposal to Skehan's perceived 'trade-off'.

Robinson's hypothesis also favours a deliberate sequencing of tasks, but bases this sequencing on their increased cognitive complexity, rather than an overt alternation between task effects that favour attention to either rule-based or exemplar-based processing systems (as is the case for Skehan). As he explains,

"...task-based learning, sequenced according to the cognitive complexity...[ ]...leads to progressively greater attention to, "noticing", and elaborative processing and retention of input (Robinson 1995b; Schmidt 1983, 1990, 2001); progressively more analysis of the input *and* output occurring during task work (Doughty 2001; Muranoi 2000; Pica 1987),

and also progressively greater amounts of *interaction* which in part facilitate those attentional and analytic processes (Long 1996; Mackey 1999). That is, I argue both the cognitive processing, *and* interactive consequences of task sequencing decisions are mutually responsible for subsequent task-based language development.

(Robinson, 2005, p. 3)

Thus the reasoning of the Cognition Hypothesis is that the underpinning of any implementation of tasks should be to establish a progression through tasks of increasing complexity and increasing interactivity. Broadly speaking, Robinson bases this reasoning on the observation that L2 learning ‘involves some recapitulation of a sequence of conceptual development in childhood’ (Robinson, 2005, p.6). In this light, tasks can be sequenced so that resources are directed towards this function-form mapping of increasingly complex conceptual demands, leading to a situation, described by Robinson, where, “...forms may be currently known but not well controlled, or if they are unknown then attempts to complete the task may make them more salient and ‘noticeable’” (Robinson, 2011b, p. 15).

To assist this sequencing of tasks for syllabus (and test) design, Robinson proposed a triadic componential framework to provide a taxonomic means of identifying task features. In this framework, he proposes three dimensions of task design that have effects on performance: *task complexity*, *task conditions*, and *task difficulty* (Robinson, 2005, 2011b). These three areas are further subdivided on the criterion of whether the task design feature directs attentional resources towards more complex processes or disperses attentional resources from them. Task complexity addresses features of the tasks themselves, while task conditions and task difficulty address variable interactive demands and individual differences between students respectively. All three areas have variables that can be manipulated to push learner attention, and this framework establishes means of controlling for these variables through either an increase along the resource-directing dimension or a decrease along the resource-dispersing dimension. Both options are claimed to push more complex and accurate output. In respects to individual learner differences (task difficulty), the Cognition Hypothesis predicts that greater differentiation of task performance will be manifested as task complexity increases.

Both the Limited Attentional Capacity model and the Cognition Hypothesis offer similar but competing views for the role and limit of a language learner's attentional resources during task performance. Both models share the view that consideration of these resources, in terms of a task's demands on those resources, should inform task selection and the appropriate sequencing of tasks to reach overarching pedagogic goals. Both of these interpretations of Levelt's model of language processing for L2 production similarly support the importance of noticing and the directing of attentional resources to different aspects (i.e., complexity, accuracy, and fluency) of task performance. The principle differences between these two hypotheses are: 1) a disagreement over attentional resources having either a limited single-source capacity or multiple sources without such a limited capacity; and 2) the distinction Robinson makes between features of task complexity, task conditions, and task difficulty that either direct learners' attentional resources towards certain features or disperse them towards other factors involved with carrying out a task. Both hypotheses also make distinct predictions for the effects that task features will have on task performance. While both Skehan and Robinson agree that an increase in task difficulty will degrade fluency, Skehan proposes that this increase will result in learners prioritising either complexity or accuracy due to the limited capacity of their attentional resources. In contrast, Robinson's hypothesis proposes that this increase in difficulty, if it is a resource-directing feature of task complexity, will push both accuracy and complexity. Both views are in agreement, however, that increased difficulty in task conditions (the resource-dispersing dimension of task complexity for Robinson's taxonomy) will degrade all aspects of performance.

This study recognises the theoretical justifications of both of these hypotheses, and ostensibly does not seek to provide support for one over the other. However, in order to create hypotheses for quantitative analysis, this study aligns itself with the central tenet of Skehan's LAC model: that increasingly difficult tasks make greater demands on attentional resources and, given that attentional resources are limited, these increasing demands will result in a trade off between complexity and accuracy in language production. Additionally, as a provision of this alignment, this study follows Skehan's more recent proposal (Skehan, 2009, Skehan et al, 2012) that states that either increasing

or easing task difficulty (in this case for the conceptualiser stage) will result in a trade-off, favouring complexity and accuracy respectively.

What is left unresolved by this discussion are the effects that conceptual creativity has on language production. Earlier, Ellis' (2003) eight principles for task selection and design were discussed and task difficulty was identified as a prime concern for teachers. Skehan and Robinson address this concern by proposing, with alternative views, that task difficulty predisposes learners to focus attention on different aspects of their language. However, there are tasks, such as devising a play, in which the language necessary for a completed script is not the same as the linguistic knowledge necessary to *collaborate* on that script. As an example, devising a story about two people waiting for a bus when a random accident occurs can be completed with relatively simple language. However, to collaboratively compose that same story, through a process which includes the introduction and elaboration of ideas as well as the evaluation and selection of competing ideas, involves much higher level language skills. In such a case, while students may possess the linguistic knowledge to devise the play, they may lack the knowledge necessary to undertake such a task with others. The result of this duality is that task difficulty is not always strictly determined by the linguistic demands of the task. Ellis, amongst others, states that tasks are meant to optimise learner interaction during tasks to ensure opportunities for language development. What happens, then, when this interaction is either conducted in a context in which students share an L1 (which can alleviate the cognitive load of conducting a complicated task in the L2), involves collaboration on a task with heightened demands on conceptual creativity, or both? The next section discusses this question.

### 3.2.2 Learner interaction during tasks

Investigating the effects of task features on task performance can provide empirical support for selecting and sequencing tasks according to the ways in which task demands differentially direct learners' attention to the complexity, fluency, and accuracy of their output. However, such a focus diverts attention away from the beneficial interaction that

tasks and TBLT are structured to promote (and which Robinson mentions specifically in his CH). By foregrounding the effects that these task features have on the outcome of the task, rather than the effects they have on how participants actually undertake and accomplish the task, such research neglects how different tasks affect the quality of participant interaction and the potential learning opportunities that this interaction facilitates. Earlier in this chapter, the role of interaction was presented from a prominently cognitive-interactionist view (e.g., Long, 1985, 1996; Pica, 1994) that sees interaction as a tool for intra-mental processing. Yet as Foster and Ohta (2005) point out, sociocultural approaches to language learning view this same interaction as being fundamentally social and inter-mental. In this view, the learner is not separable from their environment and as a consequence knowledge is not constructed by an individual but rather is the joint property of both the learner and a given social context. Learners interface with this social context; and thus language is acquired through social interaction. This vein of research has focused on the ways in which peers support, scaffold, or otherwise collaborate with each other in order to create and sustain interaction. As Swain and Lapkin (2000) put it, drawing on the views of Vygotsky (1978) amongst others, “Language is understood as a mediating tool in all forms of higher order processing (e.g. attending, planning, reasoning) [and] furthermore, language derives its mediating cognitive functions from social activities” (p. 253-254). In essence, this view of language development, and by extension additional language development, claims that more advanced language is indicative of more advanced cognitive processes and, importantly, these advanced processes (and the language necessary to mediate them) are first accessed by the learner inter-mentally through either social interaction with more capable interlocutors, or through co-construction of knowledge with more level-equivalent peers.

Socially motivated and mediated collaboration has been researched using the constructs of *linguaging* and *language related episodes* (LREs) (Swain, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 1998, 2002). Put in simplest terms, linguaging is when language is used to mediate more cognitively demanding concepts (Swain, 2007) whereas an LRE is when “students reflect consciously on the language they are using” (Swain, 2001, p. 53). As some have pointed



out (e.g. Pica, 1996), communication breakdowns are not the only instances in which students negotiate meaning and in this sense LREs represent moments of peer interaction that could conceivably facilitate L2 development in the same manner that Long argues for negotiation for meaning (NfM), but without the narrower focus of communication breakdowns that is central to Long's construct (Foster and Ohta, 2005). Swain proposes that these episodes of language mediated cognition demonstrate that language output, and learner self-monitoring of that output, are crucial parts of the process of learning (Swain, 2007).

During collaborative dialogues on consensus building activities, student pairs or small groups use these LREs to access and construct the language knowledge that is necessary for them to arrive at one solution and complete a given task. However, such meta-linguistic talk does not, of course, constitute the sole topic of discussion for collaborative dialogue between partners. During work on a task, students collaborating with one another must also mediate the requirements of the task and their joint understanding of the task, as well as negotiate the division of labour for each group member. Within an ESL learning context, where participants are not assumed to all share similar L1 backgrounds, language talk and other task talk would likely both occur in the shared L2. However, in both EFL and bilingual immersion contexts (as with the English speakers learning French in the Swain and Lapkin studies), the exclusive use of L2 to mediate task work cannot be taken for granted. This issue of L1 use in an L2 classroom has promoted its own body of research within applied linguistics and, as one would expect, various opinions on the subject have been offered.

Nation (2003) for instance, would view such L1 use in an L2 classroom as an indication that the task is beyond the current level of the students. While he would allow for L1 to be used sparingly, such as when it serves as "a familiar and effective way of quickly getting to grips with the meaning and content of what needs to be used in the L2" (Nation, 2003, p. 5), he offers a number of suggestions to minimise L1 use. Of central importance is the issue of task difficulty, and for this he suggests choosing tasks which are manageable for the learners' proficiency level and also recommends: 1) pre-teaching certain target language and skills that are needed to undertake the task in the L2;

2) slowly building learners up to the necessary level through a series of graded tasks; and  
3) repeating tasks to familiarise the learners with the goals and procedures to make the process easier. Similarly, he also suggests fostering a learning environment that is conducive to natural L2 use by having learners discuss reasons for L2 avoidance, encouraging learners to monitor each other for L1 and L2 use during group work, and having the teacher further promote the value of using the L2 in class. All of these suggestions are made with the stance that L2 use should be maximised in the L2 classroom.

To be sure, maximal L2 use should be a consistent aim of any language lesson, but there may be times in which L1 use could serve a positive function outside of the sparing use for facilitating comprehension and task orientation that Nation advises. One example would be familiar enough to any teacher of high school English in Japan: for a vast majority of the students, their cognitive ability far exceeds their conversational ability in the L2. In such a case, access to more cognitively demanding tasks would require L2 knowledge (to mediate aspects of those tasks) that simply has not been learned or for which students have not received sufficient exposure and scaffolding to be adequately learned for spontaneous use. Thus, any desire to do a task that involves, for example, consensus building, evaluation and selection, argumentation, or conceptual creativity would first require considerable pre-teaching and practice with all of the linguistic features necessary to initiate, maintain, and conclude such interactive discussions. This makes intuitive sense from a procedural standpoint and minimises L1 use during the task, but it can preclude learners from tasks that have complex processes but comparatively simpler outcomes. One such example is devised theatre. The pedagogical aim of theatre in an L2 learning context would be the use of L2 in a performance. However, the language necessary for a productive performance, this being spoken dialogue combined with stage action, can be quite rudimentary and yet still remain an effective means of conveying a story to an audience. The process that generates that dialogue and action, however, would likely require considerably more complex language and mental processing. Thus the challenge for using theatre with younger or lower proficiency L2 learners is finding a way to bridge the gap between these differing language demands.

For some scholars, particularly those working from a sociocultural perspective on language learning, L1 use in L2 learning is viewed more favourably. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003), for example, opine that the “L1 can serve a number of functions, including enlisting and maintaining interest in the task as well as developing strategies and approaches to make a difficult task more manageable” (p. 760). Cohen (1994) reports that in an immersion setting in which the learners shared a L1, those learners had a preference for using the L1 when they dealt with more conceptually difficult tasks. Anton and DiCamilla (1998) find that learner use of a shared L1 served three primary functions: 1) it scaffolded assistance with the task; 2) it helped learners establish and maintain a shared perspective of the task’s procedures and goals; and 3) it allowed learners to externalise inner speech when engaging with more difficult tasks. Swain and Lapkin (2000) find similar functions for L1 use in their immersion study of English speakers learning French. In this study, the L1 was used to move the task along, to focus attention on lexical or grammatical features of the L2, and to engage in peer-to-peer interaction. For all of these researchers, amongst others, the L1 serves a more central position in L2 language development by allowing students to work on aspects of the task that would otherwise be beyond their means in the L2. Crucially, this facilitative use of the L1 is seen as beneficial to L2 learning.

In short, a healthy compromise would seem to be the best course of action. Clearly, as those in line with Nation’s views would agree, the focus of L2 learning should be the use of the L2. Yet at the same time, when a shared L1 is available, learners would have an enhanced ability to support each other and co-construct their language knowledge when such cognitive processes would be otherwise inaccessible or infeasible when done in the L2. While the ultimate goal should be for students to one day manage such interaction solely in the L2, discouraging students from using their shared L1 to assist each other with a task might remove the benefit that such collaborative dialogue can offer for their language development.

Swain has noted that collaborative writing tasks in particular seem conducive to collaborative dialogues (Swain, 2007; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). This makes sense when one considers that writing tasks lack the temporal pressure of spoken language tasks since

learners have the ability to consciously monitor their output prior to committing any language to written form. This written language can be subsequently revised and modified without the target audience's awareness that this revision has occurred given that all that is communicated to the audience is the final form and not any of the intermediary variants that one might hear in extemporaneous speech. By this reasoning, then, while speaking task types typically favour less collaborative dialogue and more meaning negotiation due to their extemporaneousness, writing affords learners the opportunity to engage more in collaborative problem solving and, as Swain contends, this collaboration is a source of learning (Swain, 2007).

This section has discussed two broad threads of research that provide a theoretical rationale for situating theatre in a TBLT framework. On the one hand, from a cognitive perspective, research regarding language production (task outcomes) looks into how certain features of task design predispose learners to differential attention to the complexity, accuracy and fluency of their output. Such studies can identify how task features affect this attention and this information can inform a sequencing of tasks that addresses learner needs and pedagogical objectives. The current study investigated this issue of task design features for devised theatre. On the other hand, from a socio-cultural perspective, peer-supported learning offers the opportunity for learners to mediate their cognitive processes and accomplish more difficult tasks than they might be capable of completing individually. In particular, collaborative writing tasks are posited as a type of task that predisposes learners to more collaborative dialogue that would facilitate such co-construction and development of knowledge. On this matter, the current study investigated collaborative writing and how two similar but distinct devised theatre tasks fostered such collaborative dialogue about language. These areas of research have informed a number of studies within applied linguistics. The next section turns attention towards some of these studies that have relevance to devised theatre tasks.

### **3.3 Relevant studies**

The discussion in the previous sections provided a survey of both the theoretical rationale for tasks and TBLT and discussed their implementation and some of the issues

that can arise, such as the use of L1. Also covered was the theoretical motivation behind two hypotheses regarding task design features, Skehan's LAC model and Robinson's CH. Carrying all of these threads forward, this section looks at two areas of research with particular relevance to the current study. The first area of research to be covered is task planning and the second is narrative tasks.

### 3.3.1 Task planning

Planning time, as a task feature, has attracted considerable interest from SLA researchers, as evident by numerous studies (e.g., Mehnert, 1998; Rutherford, 2001; Wigglesworth, 2001; Yuan and Ellis 2003; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005; Gilabert, 2007; Guara-Tavares, 2008).

Regarding oral production, Ellis (2009) synthesised results from nineteen studies that controlled for planning time, a construct he identifies as 'strategic' planning. A vast majority of the studies (around ninety percent) show strategic planning to have a positive benefit for fluency; certainly in the case of the temporal dimension but possibly in the repair dimension as well (p. 493). However, as Ellis notes, when proficiency is factored, some studies show or imply more fluency benefits for advanced learners (Wigglesworth, 1997; Tavokoli and Skehan, 2005; Ortega, 2008; all cited in Ellis, 2009) while others show more benefits for lower proficiency learners (Kawauchi, 2005; Mochizuki and Ortega, 2008; both cited in Ellis, 2009). In addition, task complexity, planning time length, and the type of planning all seem to play a role in benefitting fluency. In contrast, results for complexity and accuracy are more mixed and consequently more complicated to synthesise. Some generalisations that Ellis draws from these studies are: 1) there is evidence that strategic planning effects grammatical complexity more than lexical complexity; and 2) both task planning variables and task condition variables fail to show conclusive evidence for beneficial effects on complexity across studies. In terms of accuracy, Ellis' synthesis can only offer the suggestion that learner proficiency, task type and planning type may all influence the effect of planning on accuracy. In sum, for the

nineteen studies featuring strategic planning, fluency receives the clearest benefit from planning while results for accuracy and complexity are largely mixed.

In relation to the studies reviewed by Ellis, Johnson et al (2012) survey the literature on task planning studies in relation to both L1 and L2 writing and make two insightful observations. First, they state that L1 research on planning time indicates general increases for fluency and some positive effect, possibly indirect, on morphosyntactic complexity. Second, they observe that recent studies on L2 writing performance have sought to align themselves with cognitive models of performance from SLA, namely Skehan's LAC and Robinson's CH, since prominent models of writing, such as Kellogg's (1990, 1996), who drew on the view of working memory of Baddeley (1996, 2007), do not predict for morphosyntactic complexity. This transition between models is notable since much of task performance research is based on Levelt's model of speech production, and so the LAC and CH infer cognitive processes principally for spontaneous speaking tasks.

Ellis and Yuan (2004) draw from Kellogg's model and investigate the effects of task planning on the composition of written narratives under two planning conditions: pre-task and online. They report that pre-task planning pushed fluency (syllables per minute) and complexity (number of different verb forms used), while online planning helped increase accuracy in the number of error-free clauses produced. They interpret these results through Kellogg's model and propose that pre-task planning promotes the formulation system, while online planning promotes the monitoring system. In addition, free writing (no task planning) had detrimental effects on all areas of performance.

The attention that task planning has received in the literature raises the question of how to accommodate the construct of planning in tasks that feature both an extended period of planning time and a culminating, prepared public performance as core characteristics of their design. Here I am referring to tasks such as presenting a seminar, or, as is the case with the current study, devising and performing a play. Both involve the end-product of public exhibition which features oral language that has been prepared and rehearsed in advance in written form (to variable degrees). For these types of tasks, there is a phase in the process where participants transfer between two modes of

communication: from written language to spoken language. This is a step that is not present in the writing model of Kellogg (1996), nor is it typically present in speaking tasks used in oral language production research (i.e., participants in such studies are not usually instructed to write out their entire script and then commit it to memory for later recitation).

In terms of defining this task feature of written preparation for a public performance, categorising this transfer (from the writing phase to the oral performance phase) is potentially problematic. To pick up an earlier thread from this chapter, consider again Willis' (1996) pedagogical framework for task-based teaching. In her design, tasks involve three components: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus (post-task). In the task cycle itself, three successive stages are described: the task itself, planning, and report. For Willis's TBL framework, the planning stage actually happens after students have attempted the task and thus planning, in this case, refers to planning for the report in the task phase. Therefore, as a report, it is not strictly a performance of the task itself (or even a reprisal of the previous performance). Instead, the report is done when students have completed the task already and have planned out what parts of their respective results to share with the class, or as Willis writes, "The report stage is when groups report briefly in spoken or written form to the whole class on some aspect of their task..." (p. 55).

This framework presents problems for where to place the written composition and public performance phases of a devised theatre task in respect to one another. If the live performance is considered the fundamental step in the process, this framework renders this performance, and not the composition of a text for that performance, as the (primary) 'task'. Thus, in Willis framework, this performance would actually precede both the 'planning' and 'report' stages in the task cycle. As a result of this, the planning and report stages would involve post performance selection of certain features from their public performance to report to the class. In other words, in such a task framework, students would perform the whole play for the class and then plan out and report to that same class. This would not make sense, intuitively, unless somehow the prior performances of the task were exhibited publicly to a different audience than the class.

Otherwise, repetition of the public performance that was previously undertaken during the task would not constitute 'reporting' on the task, it would simply be repeating the entire task again. Moreover, would such a report involve the artistic performance, or merely a commentary on the performance, or perhaps a combination of the two? More fundamentally, such division of the task disregards the transfer from written to spoken form as part of the preparation (i.e. planning) for the task of public performance. Moreover, if the performance of the entire play were not to be completed, then the outcome of the task itself would be unrealised. Thus, if the public performance (of the entire play) itself is the goal of the task, and this is recognised by the students as the outcome as well, then the process leading to performance - from conception to early formulation to revision to final formulation, all of which are prior to that performance - must be considered collectively as strategic planning (in the sense of Ellis, 2005, 2009). This being the case, it would represent planning time taken to a certain extreme, but concurrently it would align itself better with models of written production (such as Kellogg, 1996) rather than with a model of spontaneous language production, even though the ostensibly prepared language production of the performance would still be carried out in real time rather than remaining static as a written manuscript.

While the above discussion of planning is ultimately a matter of implementation, from the perspectives of both designing a research instrument, and generalising the results of other studies involving planning time with the present study, this delineation of pre-task, task and post-task is important. If planning time is a task condition controlled for in the research design, how would one operationalise planning time for a prepared public performance? Would it be solely a period of planning afforded prior to the composition of the text, or, as I have argued, would the composition of the text be considered as part of task planning as well (and thus maintain a stronger alignment with other writing tasks)? Much of this discussion hinges on the importance I have attached in the current study to maintaining the entire process of devising (writing, rehearsing, and performing an original play) as a single task with the outcome of a prepared public performance. For this task, then, planning time as a construct can not exclude instances of planning that do not relate principally to language production. As both van den Branden and Verhelst (2006)



and Kuiken and Vedder (2007) similarly observe, planning time can be used by learners to attend to other aspects of the task besides either the form or the content (meaning) of their output. This includes the organisational planning necessary to create the structure of written compositions such as narratives. Additionally, if a devised theatre task requires learners to create an original storyline, populate that story with characters, and design and enact a plot structure centred around some central tension, or tensions, that drive the plot, then surely a good amount of planning time will need to be devoted to the generation of this content prior to its rendering as dialogue within a play. On this topic, attention in this review needs to be given to studies that involve narratives and the demands that they impose on learners.

### 3.3.2 Narrative tasks

The current study investigates the alteration of task features and their effects on the performance of devised theatre tasks. Devised theatre tasks culminate in the performance of a written narrative that is collaboratively devised by the performers. Narrative, as a mode of communication, involves a broad range of factors, including the intended medium for the narrative, its intended audience and purpose, its genre, and its structure. By and large, studies within SLA have focused on a narrower view of narratives. A good example of this is the *narrative retelling* task, featured in a number of studies (e.g., Foster and Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1997). In such studies, a narrative is basically a simple reformation of provided input. Students are shown a sequence of events conveyed through a series of pictures or a video clip and asked to retell that sequence of events as a spontaneous narrative. The format of such tasks is justified for their implementation in experimental settings, but it renders the creation of a narrative as a simple matter of transfer. Moreover, many of these studies deal with oral narratives delivered either extemporaneously or with only a minor provision of planning time (e.g. five to ten minutes). What is missing from such studies are elements of a narrative that would normally be of concern to writers, namely, the overall structure of the story, the characters within that narrative, their personalities and objectives, and the conceptual planning

necessary to accommodate all of these aspects of the narrative within the process of writing.

In regards to this coordination of both narrative structure and content, one task feature isolated for investigation in the current study is the demand for conceptual creativity. In the case of devised theatre, two broad paths are available for students to take. One path would be adaptation, and the process of devising an adaptation would prompt students to either follow (to a certain extent) the plot structure of the source material or, alternatively, to invent a new story line incorporating existing plot elements from that same source material (such as locations and characters). The other path would be to devise an original story and invent all of the necessary elements for that narrative. In either case, this matter of story generation is not solely preoccupied with content generation, but with procedural organisation as well. By extension of this duality, work on a devised theatre task would require attentional resources to focus not only on language but on conceptual creativity and task management as well. L2 studies that focus on the alteration of this task feature are essentially non-existent. However, some recent studies of narrative tasks have investigated features of task difficulty (or complexity) that share similarities to conceptual creativity. Two particularly relevant studies from this vein of research will now be discussed.

Tavakoli and Foster (2011) look at narrative complexity and narrative design for oral performance. They examine the difference between narratives that have a loose or tight narrative structure, meaning whether or not they can be told in more than one logical way, and the difference between narratives that are inherently simple or complex, meaning whether or not they contained both foreground and background information. This first distinction, of loose or tight narrative, improves upon the more limited range of narratives used in previous, similar studies. The results of this study suggest that narrative tasks have predictable effects on task performance: 1) tighter narrative structures push accuracy while looser narratives push syntactic complexity; and 2) narratives with only foreground events favour neither accuracy or complexity, while narratives with additional background events push both. As the authors discuss, these findings replicate similar findings regarding storyline complexity (Tavakoli & Skehan,

2005) and tighter narrative structures (Foster & Skehan, 1996; Skehan & Foster, 1997), though it is important to note that neither of these latter studies by Foster and Skehan controlled for this loose-tight distinction.

A study by Kormos (2011) investigates a narrative feature for written tasks that is similar to the loose-tight distinction in the Tavakoli and Foster study. In her study, task design is controlled for whether or not student writers had control over devising the plot of a written narrative retelling. Students receive one of two prompts. In one task, subjects receive a six panel comic strip that formed a linear, coherent storyline. In the other task, subjects receive six unrelated pictures and must conceive a storyline that includes all of these elements. For both tasks, once the materials are distributed, they have 30 minutes to write a narrative in English of at least 150 words. Two groups are used in this study: a group of Hungarian L2 learners and a group of native speakers of the same age range (tertiary students). Both sample groups were split in half, with each half performing one of the two tasks. Results showed no significant differences in linguistic (lexical) or cohesive changes between the sample groups. However, as a between-treatment effect, removing the conceptual demand of devising a story line prompted more use of abstract vocabulary and expressions of temporal and connective relations for the L2 learners and native speakers. Generalising from these results, Kormos claims that existing narrative structure prompts students to use more elaborate syntactic encoding for these provided elements within a storyline. Importantly, Kormos argues that if the task requiring subjects to devise a storyline is considered the conceptually more complex task, then the results of her study run counter to the prediction of the Cognitive Hypothesis, given that, in her study, the easier task produced the marked increase in syntactic complexity. Regarding writing, Kormos opines,

“It also needs to be considered that due to the fact that writing is often a less time-constrained activity than speaking, the resource- dispersing dimension of task complexity might play a different role than hypothesised for speaking tasks. Unlike in speech, students do not need to simultaneously plan and linguistically encode their message when writing, and therefore L2 writers can focus on one stage at a time. Nevertheless, the

limitation of attentional resources might influence writing processes, especially in an L2.” (p. 151)

Following this vein of inquiry suggested by both Tavakoli and Foster and by Kormos, the current study further investigates the effects of conceptual complexity in narrative composition. In particular, this literature review began with a discussion of theatre and creativity and Kormos’s study is one of the few that directly incorporates some element of creative thinking into the writing process by comparing it with a similar task that restricted student’s conceptual creativity. Considered together, the two studies highlighted here have relevance to the present study. In Kormos’ study, providing a fixed storyline prompts students to include those fixed elements into their narratives and establish the relationship of events. This condition is similar to a devised theatre task that involves adaptation of an existing story into the form of a drama. In Tavakoli and Foster’s study, both the tightness and complexity of the narrative structure have observable effects on task performance. However, as task conditions, both are harder to control for in devised theatre tasks. The extent to which a devised play will be tight or loose in its narrative structure and feature either only foreground information, or a combination of foreground and background information, will largely depend on the story being devised and not on whether the devising is of a purely original work or an adaptation of an existing story. However, in both adaptations and original works, it would be insightful to know if the conditions required to devise these distinct types of plays had different influences on both the process of devising and the language production that is the result of those processes.

### **3.4 Chapter Summary**

Interest in theatre, theatre practices, and drama and their potential as the basis for a pedagogical approach spurred a notable amount of literature aimed at defining what these activities were and the possible implications for their implementation into L1 and later L2 contexts and research. In a similar manner, interest in tasks and their potential as the basis for a pedagogical approach spurred interest from SLA researchers to use tasks as

both an instrument of study and a subject of study. This study is conceived as a merger of these two threads of inquiry.

A survey of the literature relevant to this current study indicates that although interest in theatre, theatre practices, and drama has steadily increased in recent decades, especially for L2 settings around Asia, there are still significant gaps in the literature. While the studies regarding the implementation of theatre, classroom drama, and other forms of role-play are plentiful enough, too few of them move beyond stating positions, ascribing theoretical benefits, and providing descriptive reports intended for teachers. Much is yet to be done to investigate theatre within more established applied linguistics research threads, and while a few studies I indicated do adopt an established framework, such as a sociocultural approach, or TBLT based on more cognitive-focused views, there are few if any studies that seek to use theatre as means of empirical evidence or counter-evidence to current claims and hypotheses regarding task design features and language production. This is not to say that the areas of learner affect, agency, and motivation are not significant facets of the language learning experience; it merely seeks to acknowledge that studies about theatre with a prominent language production focus are virtually non-existent. That being stated, existing hypotheses that seek to predict the relationship between task features, attentional resources, and task performance are mixed and far from conclusive for supporting one model over others.

Given the facility of pedagogic task research, implementing theatre within a task-based framework offers an opportunity to investigate the ways in which this distinct form of activity engages learners in both process and product. Placing theatre within a TBLT framework also allows us to more fully investigate issues of attentional resources and task design features. Theatre, and devised theatre in particular, present novel means of affording students greater agency and autonomy within class, which can provide a fresh context to assess the actual state of learners' interlanguages. Finally, implementing theatre within a task-based framework in intact classrooms provides the opportunity to observe the interface between theory and practice. Tasks in these settings have pedagogical value to both the teachers and the students, they are undertaken in their

intended context, and student experiences with tasks, and their reflections on them, can maintain a feedback loop with the theory that informs tasks.

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methods followed in the current study. A mixed methods design was used for an analysis of the implementation of devised theatre tasks in Japanese high school EFL classrooms. Two variations of a devised theatre task, an Adapted Play and an Original Play, were created by altering the task condition of available content. The Adapted Plays featured more available content than the Original Plays in terms of story lines, characters, and settings. Three complementary analyses were undertaken to achieve a triangulation of data sources. The first part was a qualitative analysis of audio and video recordings of process data. This analysis focused on two case studies, one from each task condition, and provided thick descriptions of their interaction. The second was a quantitative analysis of student outcomes for both task conditions. This analysis examined students outcomes in terms of the effects that design features of the task (i.e. task conditions) had on language production. The last was a qualitative analysis of student feedback. This analysis provided descriptions for dominant salient themes that emerged from the data.

The first section states the research questions that informed the current study. The second section describes the participants in the main study. The third section provides details for all of the measures used in analysis. The fourth section covers the procedures for the main study. This section also includes a description of the design and results of several trial tasks which had an impact on the design of the main study as well as a detailed explanation of a post-hoc qualitative analysis carried out on the language production data. The fifth and final section summarises this chapter.

### 4.1 Research questions

I designed two devised theatre tasks by altering the task feature of *available content* to produce an Adapted Play task and an Original Play task. A comparison of these two task conditions was analysed in order to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What were the salient features of interaction during the process of devising the plays and what were the differences in these features between the two task conditions?
- 2) What were the differences in task performance between the two task conditions in terms of:
  - a) general measures of complexity, accuracy, and fluency; and,
  - b) overall theatrical quality of oral performance?
- 3) How do students perceive the experience of carrying out and completing devised theatre tasks?

*Predictions for quantitative analysis (Research question 2):*

First, concerning the increased amount of available content in the Adapted Plays versus the Original Plays, I hypothesised that this additional content would lessen the conceptual creative demands of the task (similar to Kormos, 2011) and afford students more opportunity to turn attentional resources towards composition and performance. As a result, I predicted that Adapted Plays would feature more fluent and syntactically complex writing than the Original Plays. Conversely, as the Original Plays would place additional resource demands on conceptual creativity, I predicted that they would feature simpler syntax with greater accuracy.

Second, in relation to part (b) of question two, adaptations of existing stories would involve condensing existing longer stories into a much shorter format to allow for a performance of no more than five minutes (as stipulated in the task design). As a consequence, the Adapted Plays would have characters, settings, and story lines already available for use. This existing narrative detail would ease the burden on composition, as discussed in the previous prediction. Therefore, students would have more attentional resources to devote to rehearsal and preparation for performance. As a result, I predicted that the Adapted Plays would be rated higher on average than the Original Plays by



independent raters who evaluated the plays holistically for theatrical quality of their oral performance.

## 4.2 Participants

### Student Participants

This study took place at a private high school in Japan. I conducted the research as part of my teaching duties at this high school. These duties included instruction of all first year (tenth grade) English Oral Communication (OC) courses. English is a mandatory subject for all students at this institution. All students must take a reading and grammar based course, entitled *English I*, along with the OC class in their first year of high school.

Students matriculate to this institution from a number of regional middle schools within a roughly 25km radius, although around ten percent of students come from more distant school districts in the same prefecture. Student selection is based upon the results of their individual entrance applications and their performance on an institution-specific entrance examination. Prior to matriculation, as per the government prescribed national curriculum for middle school English study, all students will have completed a minimum of five years of prior EFL study: two years in primary school as an adjunct or elective course, and three years in middle school as a compulsory subject. I did not obtain ethnographic data beyond this, so a value for prior English study outside of formal schooling was not established. The student population itself was entirely comprised of boys and girls between 15 and 16 years of age, with ethnic Japanese representing a clear majority (over 95%).

Students are assigned to homeroom classes which are balanced in composition to create equivalent populations. The first year student body consisted of seven homeroom classes during the time of this study, with six of the homerooms designated as the ‘general studies’ track (Japanese romanisation: *futsuu*) and the remaining homeroom designated as the ‘math/science studies’ track (Japanese romanisation: *risuu*). Enrolment in either track is based upon student preference and subject to availability and relevant requirements. However, both tracks attend the same English course. Additionally, while other core

content courses were streamed into two or three strands based on ability, and consequently featured students from different homerooms together, English courses were not streamed by proficiency so each homeroom attended English classes together. Out of the seven available OC classes, four were randomly selected for participation in this study. The results of the selection were three general track classes and the math/science track. The mean ratio of boys to girls was roughly sixty to forty.

Student participation in the study was voluntary and informed consent was obtained with a translated explanation of the information and a translated consent form (see Appendix 1) which the students signed if they wished to participate. Ethics committee approval from my host university, Victoria University of Wellington, was also achieved prior to the study commencing. Out of 154 students, four students did not give consent. This left a sample size of 150 students for the study. Participation in the study was voluntary but participation in the actual classroom activity was not voluntary as the devised theatre tasks undertaken were planned as part of the OC course of study. In cases where students opted out of the study, their feedback questionnaires were collected but not used. Additionally, any recorded audio-visual data which involved non-participants were edited to remove their contributions from the recordings. However, quantitative and qualitative data that contributed to composite values from the groups' task outcomes were analysed and calculated without omissions as there was no information within those outcomes that identified a particular selection of output as a specific student's contribution.

### Teacher Participants

This study was designed to take place within intact high school level EFL classrooms in Japan. Therefore, as the researcher for this study, I was also the principal teacher in the OC lessons in which the study would take place. This occupational arrangement allowed me access to intact classrooms. Two additional teachers served as co-teachers in the lessons, but neither one of them was directly involved in the design or implementation of the devised theatre tasks. Acknowledging that these tasks had to function as normal

lessons, both I and my co-teachers conducted our shared teaching duties as per usual. We interacted with students and assisted them as we would in other lessons. However, in order to maintain a greater level of student autonomy during work on the tasks, we refrained from overtly pushing students toward certain outcomes predicted or expected by the design of the tasks. Given that we were firmly integrated into the research setting, traditional 'etic' objectivity was not the primary motivation for my conduct during the research study. I worked to maintain the quality of student-teacher interaction I normally exhibited in other lessons, those unrelated to this study, in order to keep the environment of the classroom and its procedures as consistent as possible throughout the school year and to avoid drawing attention to the research.

### **4.3 Measures**

This section is divided into two parts as the study employed a mixed methods design. The qualitative analysis of the devised theatre task cycle, covering process and feedback, will be described first. This is followed by a description of the measures used in the quantitative analysis of task outcomes in terms of language production.

#### **4.3.1 Qualitative measures (task process data)**

##### **Off-task talk**

Students do not isolate themselves from their daily lives when they enter a classroom. As a result, it is fair to assume that, during a task, a portion of their interaction will not have much, or any, relevance, to the task they undertake. In the current study, off-task talk was operationalised as instances of interaction in which students interact and discuss topics with no direct relation to the task. For example, for one of the case studies selected for systematic analysis of their task process, a stretch of roughly two minutes during the first day of the task was devoted to a discussion of a television program some of the group members had watched the previous night. While in-depth analysis of this portion of student talk could provide evidence to support an argument that this diversion actually

had relevance to the task at hand, the current study avoided such instances of analysis. Therefore, once all off-task talk had been coded, it was removed from the data.

### On-task talk

On-task talk was operationalised as any student talk that focused on aspects of the task. This focus could be achieved in one of three ways. Firstly, student talk could centre around orientation to the task and management of the work on the task in order to complete it. Secondly, student talk could focus on the generation of content for the story the group devised. Lastly, student on-task talk could focus on target L2 language selected for use in the task. This last instance, that of meta-talk about the linguistic features of learner output, is what Swain (2001; Swain & Lapkin, 2002) proposes to be the construct of a language related episode (LRE).

This last aspect of on-task talk was measured in two ways. Firstly, it drew on the studies of Swain and Lapkin (Swain, 2001; Swain and Lapkin, 1998, 2002) in its classification of LREs as having a focus that was either form-based or lexis-based. Form-based LREs are instances of meta-talk where students discuss either spelling, morphosyntax, or discourse, while lexis-based LREs are when students either seek vocabulary or select between several possible items (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p. 326).

In tandem with this form or lexis classification, the current study also drew on the qualitative analysis from Foster and Ohta (2005) to operationalise LREs, from a sociocultural perspective, in four ways: co-construction, other-correction, self-correction, and continuers. Definitions for these four variations of peer support are provided below.

*Co-construction* is when learners work together to create language output (typically during writing). By constructing the utterance together, the learners are able to achieve language production that they could not otherwise achieve individually.

*Other-correction* is when a learner is corrected by his or her peer.

*Self-correction*, in contrast to other-correction, is when a learner initiates a repair of his or her own language production and occurs without prompting from anyone else.

A *continuer* is when a learner encourages another to continue speaking and also to show interest in what is being said.

(adapted from Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 420)

Coupled together, LREs were coded for all of these interactive aspects. Examples of each are provided within selected extracts from the audio transcripts of group interaction during task work and are described in detail within the analysis found in chapter five.

#### 4.3.2 Quantitative measures (language production data)

Figure 4.1 below summarises the general measures of language production (task performance) used in this study and provides an operationalisation for each measure.

*Figure 4.1 General measures of language production used in the main study*

measure	operationalisation	referenced studies
<b>complexity (syntactic)</b>	clauses per AS-unit	Foster and Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1997; Yuan and Ellis, 2003; Sangarun, 2005; Elder and Iwashita, 2005; Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005; Guara-Tavares, 2008, Kormos, 2011
<b>complexity (syntactic)</b>	sub-clausal AS-unit %	<i>measure specific to this study</i>
<b>complexity (syntactic)</b>	tokens per AS-unit	Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 1998; Scott & Windsor, 2000; Norris & Ortega, 2009
<b>complexity (lexical)</b>	< 2k BNC / COCA %	based on Vocabulary Profiler (VP) work from Laufer & Nation, 1995; Meara, 1993; Cobb & Horst, 2001
<b>accuracy (general)</b>	error free AS-unit %	Foster & Skehan, 1996; Mehnert, 1998; Wolfe-Quintero et al, 1998; Evans et al, 2014

measure	operationalisation	referenced studies
accuracy (general)	mean length of error-free AS-unit	Halleck, 1995
accuracy (error type)	grammatical errors per AS-unit	Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 1998; Kuiken and Vedder, 2007
accuracy (error type)	lexical errors per token per AS-unit	Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 1998; Kuiken and Vedder, 2007
fluency	tokens	Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 1998

## Complexity

Lexical complexity was operationalised as the percentage of word types that fell within the first two thousand most frequently encountered words in the British National Corpus (BNC) and Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The measure of <2k BNC/COCA % was a measure based off of research from Laufer and Nation (1995) and was computed using the online Vocabulary Profiler (VP) Lextutor ([url= http://www.lex tutor.ca](http://www.lex tutor.ca)) based on Laufer and Nations's research. The value for this measure represents the percentage of the total tokens for each play that fall within a list of the two thousand most frequently encountered English words and is based on the frequency of these words within the BNC and COCA corpora. To check for consistency with the results of the VP, texts were entered into the profiler twice in random order. No aberrant results were obtained from this process, so the data was treated as reliable.

Syntactic complexity was operationalised as three measures of performance. For each script, the mean number of clauses per AS-unit was calculated by first identifying every independent and dependent clause and AS-unit, and then dividing the number of clauses found by the number of AS-units identified. This provided values for the measure of clauses per AS-unit. As a supplement to this measure, a better reflection of the conversational nature of the language in the theatre scripts was desired. Therefore, the number of AS-units without a clause were divided by the total number of AS-units in the text to calculate the ratio of sub-clausal AS-units. This measure, specific to this study, allowed for an assessment of the number of AS-units that featured ellipsis and incomplete or interrupted production. A third measure of syntactic complexity, the mean length of

AS-unit, was calculated by dividing the number of AS-units by the total number of tokens in the text. These calculations provided values for the measure of tokens per AS-unit.

## Accuracy

For this study, accuracy was operationalised in two ways. First, in terms of general accuracy, the percentage of AS-units that were free of grammatical or lexical errors was calculated. Lexical errors referred to the use of a wrong collocation or improper use of a particular lexical item based on the semantic value that item holds for the given propositional content. Grammatical errors were the omission of necessary particles, incorrect use of particles, subject-verb disagreement, improper conjugation of tense and syntactic errors such as an improper word order. Additionally, incorrect use of irregular forms of verbs or plural nouns were treated here as grammatical errors rather than lexical errors unless the noun or verb in question was inappropriate for semantic content of the AS-unit. This analysis provided values for the measure of error free AS-unit %. To supplement this measure, the mean length of all AS-units that were free of errors was calculated to obtain values for the measure of mean length of error-free AS-unit.

While some researchers (e.g. Shekan, 2003; Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998) claim that the ratio of error-free units is a good general measure of accuracy in task performance, Kuiken and Vedder (2007) point out that such a measure might be more useful with advanced learners and recommend a further distinction of errors by type for less advanced learners. Therefore, as this study dealt with low proficiency learners, ratios of errors per AS-unit for both grammatical and lexical errors were calculated for each group as well, following the method of identification described above. This analysis provided values for the measures of grammatical errors per AS-unit and lexical errors per AS-unit.

## Fluency

Prepared speech differs from spontaneous speech and given the artistic nature of theatrical performance, certain features of fluency, such as pauses, false starts, or rate of speech, may be representations of deliberate performance choices rather than breakdowns in fluency. For this reason, typical measures of fluency that are employed in research on spontaneous speech have less applicability in the current study. Therefore, fluency was aligned with measures for writing tasks (see Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998) and was operationalised as the total number of tokens produced (for each transcript of group performance). This value of tokens was calculated by entering the transcribed data into LexTutor (explained above) and double checked with a manual count for each script.

## Overall theatrical quality of oral performance

As the devised theatre tasks were meant to function as lessons in a regular language classroom, and conceivably represent a portion of the students' classwork assessed for marks, teachers would naturally be quite interested in the results of the theatre tasks as artistic performances. Additionally, objective measures of fluency were insufficient for assessment of theatrical performance due to the different ways in which fluency is manifested in prepared speech. Therefore, two independent raters provided a subjective evaluation of student performances. In order to keep their ratings independent, they worked separately. Both were provided with training necessary to sufficiently complete their evaluations. In order to comply with ethics requirements for confidentiality, I provided the two raters with only the audio recordings extracted from the video taken of the student performances.

Raters were asked to listen to each performance and provide a holistic score that rated each performance as an artistic performance. This holistic rating was the overall score. Raters understood this to mean the degree to which they found a performance enjoyable and the extent to which they felt the performance satisfied their expectations for a piece of theatre. They also understood that each score was a composite score for the group



performing. Therefore, they made no assessment of individual students' performances. In order to assist me with further analysis, I asked the raters to provide a short rationale for each score that could be referenced later.

For all independent ratings, a six point Leikert scale was used (from zero to five). Once the independent rating process was completed, the resulting data was compiled and tested for inter-rater agreement using a weighted Cohen's kappa. This instrument provided a more comprehensive statistic than a simple kappa for rater agreement as it accommodated ratings that were not identical between the raters but still close in value. This test of inter-rater agreement was run using IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the weighted Cohen's kappa was 0.387 indicating a 'fair' level of inter-rater agreement.

#### **4.4 Procedures**

This section has three parts. The first part describes the procedures, and results, of four theatre tasks that were trialled prior to the main study and discusses how these trials informed the design of the main study. The second part describes the implementation of the devised theatre tasks. The third discusses the post-hoc methods of analysis used for the qualitative analysis of task outcomes.

##### **4.4.1 Trial Tasks**

Starting three months prior to the main study, several pilot tasks were conducted to achieve two primary objectives:

- 1) gauge the feasibility of implementing theatre tasks within a standard lesson format at the host institution
- 2) gauge the effectiveness of proposed data collection instruments, including audio/video recording and feedback questionnaires.

What follows in this subsection are descriptions of the procedures for each of these trial tasks and a summary of the influences that the results for each task had on the design of the main study.

#### Trial Task One: *First line provided*

##### Description

In this trial task, participants from four classrooms attempted a short devised theatre task. The concept and procedures for this task were taken from Burke and O'Sullivan (2002). Students made groups of three and picked one of three interrogative sentences provided to them: "What's that sound?", "What are you doing?", or "Did you bring the money?". The selected sentence became the first line of dialogue for a short drama built around a story associated with that first line. Students had twenty minutes to compose and rehearse a drama of no more than one to two minutes in duration. This period of task work was half of a normal lesson. In the subsequent lesson three days later, students performed their dramas in front of the class.

##### Results

This trial task showed how difficult it was to obtain quality data with a minimal recording set-up and random selection of participants. The classroom provided too much ambient noise and the high number of groups (about 13-15 per class), combined with the availability of only a single camera, made coverage of all groups (even in rotation) too difficult.

The observed interactions in class, a few of which were recorded with the camera, showed some promise for the larger research task. A simple feedback collection instrument was used. This consisted solely of a box within which students provided undirected personal reflections regarding the task. The results of this feedback collection suggested that students needed the option to provide feedback data in Japanese as writing feedback in English limited the scope of their task reflections.

## Trial Task Two: “*Who’s on first?*”

### Description

In this task, pairs of students worked with an existing script, in this case a transcription of the comedy sketch “Who’s on First?” by Laurel and Hardy which was split into two halves. One class of participants from the main study (n=37) divided themselves into pairs and each pair was given either half of the Laurel and Hardy script. Each pair first rehearsed for twenty minutes with their half of the script and decided on gestures, movement, and intonation to include in their interpretative performances. This took place as half of one lesson period. In the subsequent lesson, for a further twenty minutes, pairs with each half of the script would form groups and share and discuss their performance choices and decide on what they thought the most appropriate performance choices were in light of access to both halves of the script.

### Results

As with the previous trial task, the same limited recording ability and large number of groups proved detrimental to quality video and audio recording. After the experiences of First line provided and “Who’s on first?”, I evaluated my budget options and acquired two additional video cameras and seven digital recorders.

This trial task had a moderate amount of success so far as general student involvement and motivation were concerned, but the script’s language proved to be beyond most students’ grasp. This was surprising as I had selected the Laurel and Hardy comedy sketch precisely for its relatively low demands on vocabulary and grammar. Even so, while the students were able to read the scripts aloud proficiently, they displayed considerable difficulty in analysing the scene, particularly in regards to understanding the play on words that contributed to the scene’s humour and structure, and making articulation choices accordingly.

### Trial Task Three: *Pros and cons of cellphones*

#### Description

This trial task involved a merger of other scheduled class coursework with a devised theatre activity. All participants from the main study attempted this task. As a pre-task stage, students completed a worksheet derived from content in their course textbook which required them individually to think about the good points and bad points for cellphones. This task took place over half of one lesson period (for twenty-five minutes). In the next lesson, either two or three days later depending on the class, students made groups of two or three and shared their worksheet outcomes with each other. Then, each group was asked to select one point, either good or bad, to serve as a theme for a short presentation. This presentation would not be a simple explanation of the selected point, but rather a short scene that demonstrated the selected point through an invented episode.

#### Results

The primary purpose of this trial task was to do a trial run of a devised theatre task with an increased number of recording devices. The number of cameras increased to three, and seven digital recorders were also included and placed between members of randomly selected groups. The increased camera coverage was beneficial to a limited extent as it allowed, at the least, for video reinforcement of audio data for a larger number of groups. That being stated, less than half of the groups recorded for audio were also video recorded. Random selection of groups still left large portions of the classroom unobserved. This problem was solved, in the main study, when I set group size at six to seven students in order to better reflect the size of a typical professional actor ensemble that would work on devised theatre. This decision had a positive effect on data collection: with seven digital recorders available, and students situated in three columns with two groups to a column, every group in each class would be covered by video recordings as well as audio.

This trial task involved skit creation and performance as the second phase of a larger theme-based task sequence. This priming for the task and then subsequent work on the task differed from the intended task design to be employed in the main study, as the latter did not involve overt pre-task priming with content selected from the participants course textbook. However, as a devised theatre task that was arguably more restrictive on students' conceptual creativity than the First line provided trial task, student motivation and feedback was still generally positive, though the short length of most performances (30 seconds - 45 seconds) did not perhaps fully illustrate to the students the potential challenges inherent in devising longer performances.

#### Trial Task Four: *Script Analyses*

##### Description

One small group (n=6) volunteered for this trial task. The task involved two sessions, one session per week, with each session lasting twenty-five minutes. For this task, students made pairs for the first session. They 'cold read' a provided scene selected from Burke & O' Sullivan (2002). 'Cold reading' meant to approach reading a script in a performative way but without any prior preparation or research. In that way, the reading was considered to be 'cold'. After the initial read-through and comprehension check, they were asked to perform the scripts with appropriate emotional choices, but were also instructed to enunciate every syllable as /ma/ instead of the actual syllables. In this way, they would concentrate on the stress patterns of what they were speaking more than the pronunciation.

In the second session, students were split into two three-person groups and given a different selected script. This time, they were once again asked to cold read the script. Then they had a short discussion about what the scene was about and what their respective characters were saying. After this discussion, they were asked to apply some of the ideas from that discussion to their interpretive choices for performing the scene.

## Results

This trial task was more about task appropriateness than data collection methodology, so the single camera with microphone was sufficient for a single group of six students. While students were able to participate in these task sequences, they had similar problems as in the “Who’s on first?” trial task. Namely, analysing the language of the scenes proved to be very time consuming and markedly difficult. This was likely due to unfamiliar language, but a lack of theatrical experience also hindered their progress. Moreover, teacher involvement was critical at every stage of both sequences. This result had the potential to make more autonomous group work in the main study problematic as the teacher would need to be more directly involved with each group for the duration of the task.

Figure 4.2 summarises the trial tasks.

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*Figure 4.2 trial tasks information*

trial task	target task type	participants in total	data collection method
<i>First line provided</i>	devised	n=150	2 video cameras
<i>“Who’s on first?”</i>	scripted	n=37	2 video cameras
<i>Pro and cons of cellphones</i>	devised	n=150	3 video cameras 7 digital recorders
<i>Script analysis</i>	scripted	n=6	1 video camera with external mic

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The results of the trial tasks allowed for a few necessary modifications to be made to the main project. Firstly, I realised that my data collection methodology would need to be modified in order to assure I achieved the desired full coverage of students in each classroom. Therefore, I kept the 3 cameras and 6 recorders set-up, but arranged for classes to use the study area in the school’s library. This allowed enough space between

groups to ensure better recording quality for each group. It also allowed for a more practical amount of space to capture two groups with one camera; thus I was able to record all six groups in every class. As I had asked students to remain at the same tables (as much a need of classroom management as a preference for data collection), three groups from each class were foregrounded in each batch of videos. This set-up ensured, at the very least, that I had three groups from each class sufficiently recorded with both audio and video equipment.

Secondly, due to the difficulties students had with the two 'scripted theatre' tasks, I needed to modify the task design to keep it feasible time-wise within the course calendar for the school year. As students had achieved some success with their creation of shorter 'original' skits in the devised theatre trial tasks, I felt that this 'creative writing' style of theatre activity would be most productive for the amount of time allotted for the project. I did want to maintain a point of comparison similar to scripted versus devised distinction, so I re-imagined the scripted project as an adaptation of an existing story. The reasoning was simple enough: even though it could not completely remove the creation of original content from the task sequence, and thus bear a stronger similarity to the scripted project, adaptation of an existing story did remove the necessity of creating a whole original story line. In a sense, the plot, rather than the text, was the 'script' provided. I felt this maintained enough of a distinction between the two types of devised theatre task to make them useful for comparison.

In addition to these points, one further observation fuelled my decision to alter the design of the theatre project. The size of each class is around 38 or 39 students per class on average. The trial tasks informed me that, given student unfamiliarity with theatrical practices in general, coaching such large classes on techniques of acting would be too great of a time consumption; especially since the goal of the research was to have a project task that culminated in a public performance.

In summary, the trial tasks allowed me to see that a scripted theatre task, similar to the 'script analysis' sequence, was likely infeasible with my students' existing experience and language knowledge. In addition, time constraints and student struggles with provided scripts motivated me further to replace this scripted task sequence with an adapted story

task sequence (described in the main study below). This had a further benefit of conceptualising both task variations as similar consolidation activities for the Oral Communication course for which they were intended. Finally, time constraints reduced the number of lessons allotted for each devised theatre task from seven to five.

#### 4.4.2 Main Study: Devised theatre tasks

##### Group Membership

For each task, students in each of the four classes formed groups of six to seven members. Following normal class procedures established for the Oral Communication course as a whole, students selected their groups on their own. The larger than usual group size was selected to reflect the researcher's conceptualisation of a typically sized theatre performance ensemble. Per an institutional request, group membership was changed and students formed new groups for the second study.

##### Task design

I conceived of the devised theatre task to follow the three phase (pre-task, task cycle, and post-task) pedagogical framework outlined by Willis (1996). Willis, as well as Willis & Willis (2008) describe a *creative task* (alternatively called a *project task*) as one possible variant of task type (p.154). These devised theatre tasks can be regarded as open, two-way, convergent, creative tasks (Ellis 2003). I designed these tasks to work "as is" within intact classrooms and the pedagogical aim of their implementation was consolidation of previous study. To this end, the tasks were meant to provide students with a novel opportunity to use some of the grammatical and lexical knowledge they had developed in three years of English study at middle school.

These tasks follow a very minimal interpretation of devised theatre. The essence of performer-centred collaborative work on an original play, as described by Oddey (1994), has been retained while the more extensive aspects of the process she suggests have been



removed due to time constraints and a desire to simplify the process for easier implementation within a series of fifty minute lessons.

The design features of the devised theatre task will now be discussed. First, they will be related to Willis' (1996) framework and then described in terms of procedural requirements. Figure 4.3 shows how the theatre tasks were designed to fit within that framework.

*Figure 4.3 Task design of a Devised Theatre Task*

task cycle	pre-task	task cycle	post-task
	1) selection of theme or source of adaptation 2) brainstorming of ideas and allocating roles	<i>task</i> 3) collaborative writing of the play  <i>planning</i> 4) rehearsal and revision of the play  <i>report</i> 5) public performance of the play	6) evaluation of the performances 7) class discussion of outcomes 8) feedback questionnaires

One concession that needed to be made with this design concerned the feasibility of conducting student reports during the task cycle and conducting language focus during the post-task phase. With a task cycle of shorter duration it would make sense to have students attempt the task and then plan their reports on attempting the task within the same single time frame (as implied in Willis' framework). However, the planning phase of the task cycle covered around 100 minutes and was evenly divided over four lesson periods at an interval of one lesson per week. Furthermore, the report of the planning phase in this task design was the performance of the theatre scripts that each group composed. Coupled together, the need to devote time at the end of the task cycle for a further report regarding each group's reflection on attempting the task was beyond the available time allotted for the study within the overall OC course. Furthermore, in light of the previous discussion in chapter two, Willis' framework does not afford an 'easy fit' for

theatre tasks. As a result, implementation of theatre in this framework was affected by my interpretation of how the final public performance could fit within Willis' cycle.

Figure 4.4 below shows the lesson schedule for the devised theatre tasks. OC classes were held twice a week for each class. In the main study, one class per week was designated as a devised theatre task lesson, either for half of the lesson (for days 1-4) or the full lesson (for day 5). As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the planning phase was spread out over four lessons, with the planning phase itself divided equally into two lessons for composition and two lessons for rehearsals. The fifth lesson was devoted to both the performances of the plays (the report phase) as well as the post-task language focus and student feedback questionnaires.

*Figure 4.4 Devised Theatre Task Procedures by lesson*

	<i>day one</i>	<i>day two</i>	<i>day three</i>	<i>day four</i>	<i>day five</i>
<b>First half of lesson</b> <b>(25 minutes)</b>	other classwork	other classwork	other classwork	other classwork	performances
<b>Second half of lesson</b> <b>(25 minutes)</b>	composition	composition	rehearsal and revision	rehearsal and revision	performances peer evaluation task surveys

As the above figure shows, the 100 minutes which was allocated for task preparation was split evenly over four days, with the entire fifty minutes of the fifth day allocated for performances. As implemented in the current study, these designated days occurred once a week for five consecutive weeks. As the OC classes were held twice a week, the other class in each week was devoted to other course activity. The first study was conducted over five weeks during September and October. Following the conclusion of the first study, normal course activity was resumed on order to ensure necessary focus on other curricular objectives. After this ten week period, the second study was conducted from mid January to early February. A summary of this information is provided in Figure 4.5 on the following page.

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Figure 4.5 *Devised Theatre Tasks Schedule*

First Study	NORMAL COURSE WORK	Second Study
09/2012 - 10/2012 (five weeks)	10/2012 - 01/2013 (ten weeks)	01/2013 - 02/2013 (five weeks)

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In addition to this schedule, several supplemental worksheets were distributed to the students as homework (see Appendix 3). These worksheets were meant to provide some scaffolding for the students during the initial stage of the tasks. However, as they were designed as homework, no class time was allocated for the students to work on these worksheets. In the analysis of task process (Chapter Five), the worksheets were not discussed unless the students explicitly used them or made reference to them during their collaborative work.

#### Available content

Similar to the distinction of task complexity found in both Kormos (2011) and Carson (2012), the task condition of available content was manipulated to produce two similar but distinct devised theatre tasks: the Adapted Play and the Original Play. Available content is operationalised as the provision of existing story elements (characters, setting, story lines, etc...) for learners to utilise in their compositions based on their selection of existing story lines on which to base an adaptation. Descriptions for both variations of the devised theatre task are shown in figure 4.5 below. Copies of the explanatory handouts given to the students are provided in Appendix 2.

The overall design of the task shared some affinity with the two studies mentioned above (and in the literature review). The design of Carson (2012) featured the same distinction of adapted versus original story lines, referred to as Adapted Plays and Original Plays respectively in the current study, but her study did not control for treatment. Kormos (2011) discussed narrative re-telling writing tasks that featured an

alteration of the amount of storyline provided by either a cartoon strip or a series of pictures. In the former study, student groups had a choice of which type of story they wish to compose. In the latter study, participating groups were provided either with pictures that provided minimal content for the story or with cartoons that provided a greater amount of content for the story. In this sense, Kormos controlled for demands on conceptual creativity. In relation to Carson's study, I retained the distinction of two theatre task variations but removed the option for learner groups to choose either play type and instead selected a counterbalanced design that afforded participants the opportunity to do both. In terms of Kormos' study, I also maintained the distinction of creative demands between the two task conditions by altering the amount of available content. This was achieved by one of the tasks, the Adapted Play, featuring pre-existing story details, in particular the basic plots, on which students could base their writing. In these respects, the current study can be seen to be complementary with both Carson's and Kormos' task designs.

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*Figure 4.6 Procedures for the Adapted Play and Original Play*

Task	Procedures
ADAPTED PLAY  (available content)	<p>Students form groups of 6-7. As a group, they select an existing story for which the content is familiar to everyone in the group, such as <i>Cinderella</i> or <i>Momotarou</i>. Then, they collaborate to write an adaptation of that story in English with a target duration of 3-5 minutes. They then rehearse and perform this drama.</p> <p>As a note: No actual versions or summaries of famous stories are provided in class. Students must consolidate their own knowledge of the story's details.</p>
ORIGINAL PLAY  (no available content)	<p>Students form groups of 6-7. As a group, they select one of three themes provided by the teacher that are based, albeit loosely, on themes from their Oral Communication textbook. These three themes are:</p> <p>1) travel; 2) shopping and leisure; 3) school life</p> <p>Students then collaborate to write an original story in English based on the selected theme with a target duration of 3-5 minutes. They then rehearse and perform this drama.</p>

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## Data collection

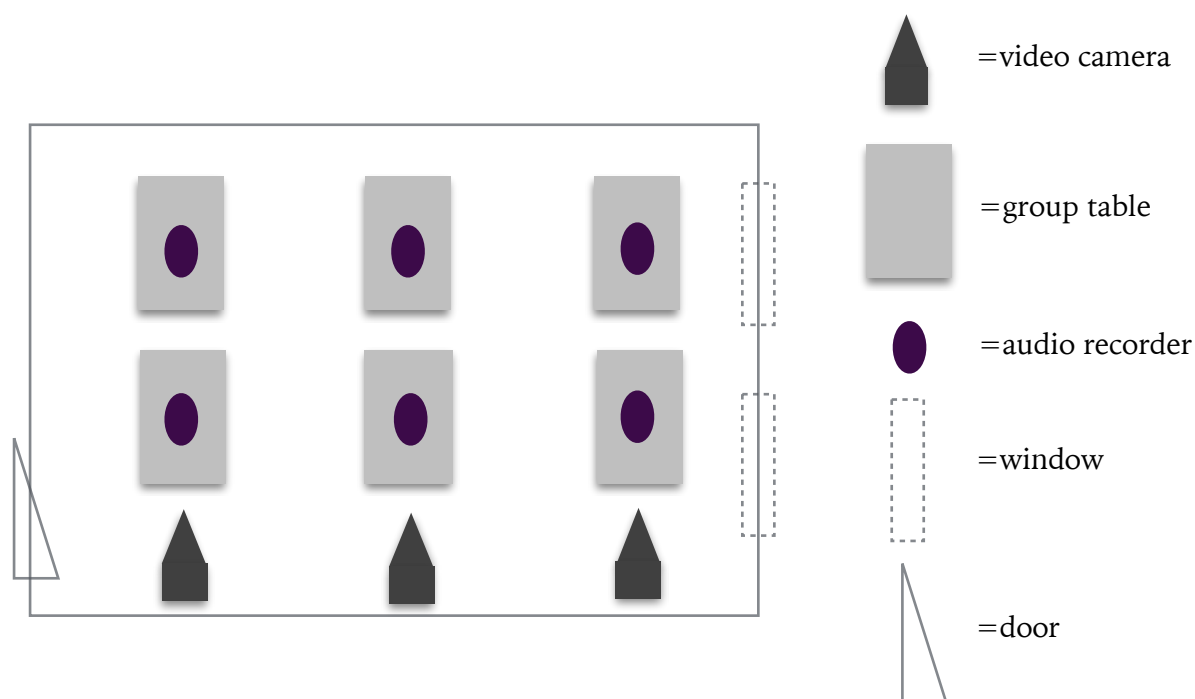
Data was collected from all classroom activity related to the devised theatre tasks. This included video and audio data of group work done during class time, video and audio data of each final performance, and student responses on all task-related worksheets and post-task feedback questionnaires. I placed a digital audio recorder in the middle of each group for all collaborative work done in class. For this classwork data, video recordings were used as a means of verifying aspects of student to student interaction that were ambiguous in the audio recordings. For the task outcomes data, both audio and video recordings were made to track spoken language on stage with actor movement. The feedback data involved two questionnaires, both with ranking and short response questions and an open-ended prompt for students to individually offer reflection on their experiences with the devised theatre tasks. Names were retained in order to track certain feedback to elements of either the classwork or the play performances, but all identifying information remained confidential and students featured in data analysis were assigned pseudonyms.

Data collection procedures remained consistent for both studies. The classes allocated for theatre tasks were conducted in a assigned class room within the school's library. This allowed the recording devices to be set up prior to class time. Tables and chairs were arranged into three columns of two. One group sat at each table and each group was assigned one digital audio recorder that was placed in the centre of each table. One digital video camera was used for each column of two groups, each camera covering two groups simultaneously. This setup is summarised in the diagram shown in Figure 4.7 on the facing page.

## Transcription

Written transcripts of each group's performance were produced from the audio and video recordings of these performances. I transcribed each performance by listening to the audio recording made for each performance and when ambiguities arose, I consulted the

Figure 4.7 Diagram of data collection setup for each classroom



final draft of the play scripts that each group provided prior to performance. This transcription involved linguistic details to the AS-unit level. Given the spoken language and conversational nature of the dialogue featured in the devised theatre tasks, the AS-unit (Foster, Tonkin and Wigglesworth, 2000) was selected over the T-unit and C-unit given the AS-unit's ability to count common features of conversation, such as sub-clausal and elliptical utterances, as viable units for analysis. Under the recommendations of Foster et al., the AS-unit allows for these typical discourse units to be included in syntactic analysis of learner output.

## Analysis

### Task process

Analysis of task process was conducted using two select case studies. These two case studies were selected because they represented what can be considered a low-average undertaking of their respective task conditions. This sampling was chosen in order to focus attention on the foreseeable limitations on student performance due to task design

and, in connection to these limitations, to highlight implementation issues that teachers could potentially face when attempting a similar theatre task. This analysis drew primarily on the studies of Swain and Lapkin (1998, 2000, 2002) Wigglesworth and Storch (2003), and Foster and Ohta (2005) to classify participant interaction during work on the task within a sociocultural framework. For each case study, audio and video recordings of all four days of task process, covering a span of roughly one hundred minutes in total, were analysed and coded initially for on-task and off-task talk. Once this delineation was achieved, attention focused on episodes of on-task talk in which either task orientation, story content, or language were discussed by members of each group. Once the episodes of on-task talk about language were identified, they were transcribed and then translated into English when necessary. The remaining on-task talk was described in detail via a narrative summary for each day of group work. Within the narrative summaries, descriptions of selected language related episodes (LREs) are provided within the narrative at the time that they occurred. For both case studies, each student was assigned a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality.

### Language Production

Once all performance data was transcribed, analysis was conducted for every measure listed in section 4.3.2 of this chapter. From both studies combined, the initial study and the repeated study, the data for six groups' performances (out of forty-eight total) were of an insufficient quality for analysis and were therefore discarded. This resulted in nineteen groups in the first study and twenty-three in the repeated study. Consequently, out of the 150 participants, the first study featured 120 participants while the second study featured 143 participants.

Once all values for each sample group were compiled, each treatment (task condition) was checked for normality of distribution for each dependant variable using the Shapiro-Wilk test provided with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of this test showed that around a third of the data did not show normality in distribution, so for a comparison of means, the Mann-Whitney U mean rank test was selected. This test is

considered to be a non-parametric equivalent to the *t*-test and can be used when the assumptions for the *t*-test are not met, as was the case in the current study for normality of data (Field, 2009). The data was entered into SPSS and this software package was also used to run the Mann-Whitney tests. The confidence interval for this analysis was set at 95%.

Values for both conditions were initially compared separately by study. As the sample sizes for the two studies were both small and disproportionate when analysed separately, the data sets were collapsed into one set and analysed together. This decision was justified by a comparison of the means for each measure across both studies that indicated consistent trends in the data. Table 4.1 below shows a comparison of values for measures for both treatments separated by study. As the table indicates, the higher values for each measure remained consistent with treatment across both studies. Thus, collapsing of data afforded a larger sample size for analysis with the result that certain salient trends in the data reached statistical significance.

*Table 4.1 Comparison of values for language production measures between studies*

Study One measure	Adapted n=9		Original n=11		Study Two measure	Adapted n=12		Original n=10	
	mean	SD	mean	SD		mean	SD	mean	SD
tokens	131.9	23.1	79.45	27.7	tokens	141.6	33.7	118.7	36.1
clauses / AS-unit	0.81	0.12	0.68	0.14	clauses / AS-unit	0.81	0.17	0.66	0.14
sub clausal %	0.26	0.15	0.34	0.13	sub clausal %	0.29	0.13	0.35	0.14
overall	2.6	1.5	1.6	0.92	overall	2.2	0.71	1.9	1.5
error free %	0.72	0.13	0.76	0.09	error free %	0.68	0.13	0.81	0.14
avg. length error free	3.5	0.39	2.8	0.31	avg. length error free	3.2	0.72	3.4	1.4
gram. err	0.29	0.16	0.32	0.16	gram. err	0.38	0.21	0.25	0.21
lex. err	0.13	0.7	0.14	0.07	lex. err	0.19	0.12	0.09	0.07
BNC-COCA <2k	0.97	0.02	0.98	0.03	BNC-COCA <2k	0.96	0.02	0.95	0.05



While reliability for the measure of fluency (tokens) and lexical complexity (*BNC - COCA <2k*) were established by mechanical means, the analyses for the measures of accuracy and complexity were not subjected to an inter-rater reliability check. While such a practice would have further validated the respective analyses, the proficiency level of language production was of a low enough level that little ambiguity arose in identifying grammatical errors, lexical errors, and clauses.

## AS-Unit

As student groups composed plays which were comprised largely of dialogue, as opposed to expository writing, for example, a unit of analysis was sought that could accommodate and include for analysis utterances which displayed features of spoken conversation, such as ellipsis and interrupted speech. The AS-unit, as proposed by Foster, Tonkyn and Wigglesworth (2000) is “a single speaker’s utterance consisting of *an independent clause, or sub-clausal unit*, together with any *subordinate clause(s)* associated with either” (p. 365). The following three examples below demonstrate the possible inclusionary range for the AS-unit:

- | Oh poor woman | (1 sub-clausal unit, 1 AS-unit)
- | I have no opportunity to visit | (1 clause, 1 AS-unit)
- | it is my hope :: to study crop protection | (2 clauses, 1 AS-unit)

(cited from Foster et al, 2000, p. 366)

Coding of AS-units proved to be unambiguous for the student-devised plays for two main reasons: 1) with very few exceptions, individual turns within dialogues were performed distinctly from one another with little if any overlap, reflecting a consistent performance choice on the part of the students; and, 2) students performed their plays, with very few exceptions, as they were written and preserved the structure. This latter point allowed reference to the final written draft that each group submitted prior to performance. As a consequence of these two reasons, coding of AS-units was less

complicated than for extemporaneous speech as there was virtually no overlap of speaking and an intended structure for each utterance already existed in written form. Therefore, independent coding and inter-rater reliability were not pursued for this portion of the analysis.

#### Post-task student feedback

After completion of the devised theatre tasks, all students filled out feedback questionnaires individually. The feedback sheets followed established patterns for feedback instruments used in the OC class and the final forms for both versions were selected to ensure a smoother integration with existing classroom procedures, rather than pilot a completely new questionnaire. That being stated, as mentioned in the section discussing the trial tasks, the open response reflection question from the questionnaires was piloted during those trial tasks.

Given the relatively low level of student L2 proficiency, and a shared native language that I am also proficient in, I allowed students to provide responses on the feedback questionnaires in Japanese. All feedback sheets were collected after the final day of the devised theatre tasks for both studies. I transcribed all responses to open questions into a word processor and translated them manually myself. Once I completed the translations, I gave them to a colleague, a native speaker of Japanese fluent in English, and had him check my translations for any errors or ambiguities. These checked translations then became the post-task data set. To maintain confidentiality, a pseudonym was used for every student whose responses were included in the analysis.

Analysis of student feedback was undertaken to establish an 'emic' view (e.g., Quinlan, 2011; Uusitalo, 2001) of the devised theatre tasks. This perspective allowed for the analysis to be informed by the concepts that had meaning to the participants as reflected in their personal descriptions of the tasks. The feedback was analysed and the salient themes and features that emerged were identified and substantiated with further analysis of the data for those themes.

This method of interpreting the data was influenced by my familiarity with not only the student groups, but also their process of completing the task and the results of their task performances. As the main teacher for this class, an objective qualitative analysis of this data would have been infeasible. While I acknowledge this limitation to my study, the research is framed as classroom-based research precisely to allow me, as both teacher and researcher, to obtain greater access to the participants and to the processes involved in carrying out the tasks.

#### 4.4.3 Post-hoc qualitative analysis of task outcomes: *Narrative strategies*

Details of a given text, when performed on stage, are conveyed through a performer's actions and words. As a result, there are limitations on how details of the narrative, including exposition, can be handled in comparison to other forms of written narrative, such as the novel. Other forms of written narrative communicate directly to the audience and, as a consequence, narrative details and expository information can be integrated directly into the narrative. This luxury is not available in theatrical performance as, for the most part, the only language available to the audience is communicated by the writer indirectly through the actions and speech of the actors involved in performing the story. Thus, even a simple matter, such as relating a sequence of events in a temporal relationship to one another, involves a separate strategy in theatre.

These narrative details and expository information required students to make certain choices regarding the form their narratives took. This form was conceptualised in this study as narrative strategy and was defined as the means by which narrative details and expository information were conveyed within the text of the play. This narrative strategy could take one of four proposed forms:

---

Figure 4.8 Four forms of ‘narrative strategy’

strategy	description
<b>narrator</b>	story featured an on-stage persona separate from the in-scene action who conveyed information about the story and addressed the audience directly
<b>character as narrator</b>	story featured a character in-scene who conveyed information about the story and addressed the audience directly
<b>embedded narrator</b>	story featured a character conveying information in-scene without addressing the audience directly; this information would already be known to the speaker and any listeners in-scene; thus the information was for the audience’s benefit and not the characters’
<b>dialogue emergent</b>	story featured no overt narration and information about the story emerged solely from the dialogue between characters

---

Within any narrative composed for theatrical performance, the authors can employ any combination of these strategies. The default mode in contemporary performance (including television and film as well) arguably favours more naturalistic, authentic dialogue. As a consequence, the *dialogue emergent* strategy is the baseline that authors use when they craft a theatrical story. For evaluative purposes, analysis looked for instances in which the authors employed strategies in addition to this default mode of character to character dialogue. What follows is the rationale for each of these operationalisations. Description begins with the most overt form of narration, the use of a narrator.

- Narrator

A narrator, as the title implies, narrates the action on-stage from a position off-stage or removed from the scene and is not strictly operating as a character in the story, although in some instances, they may take on the persona of someone related to the story, such as a fellow inhabitant of the story’s setting. As theatrical performance normally is an indirect communication between playwright and audience through the words and actions of the performers, the use of a narrator is an instance in which the author can more directly communicate to the audience. Excerpt 4.1 shows an example of a narrator.

---

*Excerpt 4.1 Example of Narrator*

1       A:     Let's go to USA.  
2       B&C:  Ok!  
3       D:     Good idea.  
4       NAR:  The family going to the USA.  
5             They look at the view.  
6       B:     Oh, beautiful!  
7       NAR:  The arrived in USA [and] child disappeared.  
8       A:     Where is my grandchild?  
9             I'm worried.  
10       B:    We are in trouble.  
11       NAR:  Child was found.  
12       C:     Where is this?  
13       NAR:  The child is in Mexico.  
14       A:     In Mexico?  
15             We will fly to Mexico by [plane]  
16       B:     Wow.  
17       D:     It can't be.  
18             Good for you.  
19       A:     I'm relief.  
20       NAR:  Family found the child.  
21             But leave to USA but enjoyed in Mexico.  
22             End.

---

Excerpt 4.1 above shows an example of a story that featured a narrator. The role designated by 'NAR' in the play-text stood separate from the in-scene action. From a structural standpoint, the delineation between narrator and other characters was easy to distinguish during performance.

- Character as Narrator

Similar to when a story makes use of a narrator out-of-scene or off-stage, a playwright can have a character from the story itself function as the narrator. In this case, the character would provide

information to the audience from within the scene. Excerpt 4.2 shows an example of this.

---

*Excerpt 4.2 Example of Character as Narrator*

...

14	D:	I'm straw house.
15	G:	This is a pig.
16		I want eat you.
17		No. Blow.
18	A:	Oh my god!
19		Stop it!
20	E:	I'm wood house.
21	G:	This is a pig.

...

---

In this example, lines 14, 15, 20, and 21 were all addressed to the audience rather than other characters while both D and G remained in character within the scene. The performance here featured no costumes or props, so students solved this visual limitation by having characters identify themselves or other characters directly to the audience during performance. In this strategy, then, the role of the narrator was not a distinct character but was a function shared by one or more of the characters during the story. Thus the characters themselves provided information of key plot elements, such as the material of the houses and the identity of other characters.

- Embedded Narrator

In contrast to a narrator or character as narrator, a playwright can communicate narrative and expository details to the audience without the necessity of a performer addressing the audience directly by embedding a narrator within a scene. In such a case, a character would either speak aloud to themselves or to another character but, strictly speaking, such speech, and the information they convey, would be unnecessary within the logic of the scene as the characters involved would already share mutual understanding or awareness of them. Therefore, instances of an embedded narrator are when a character is

providing information to themselves or another character, but for the sake of the audience, not the plot. Excerpt 4.3 shows an example of this narrative strategy.

---

*Excerpt 4.3 Example of Embedded Narrator*

...  
4       A:     Oh. What is that shining bamboo.  
5             I'm trying to cut it.  
6             Wow.  
7             There is a little cute girl in bamboo.  
8             I take her to my house.  
9       B:     Who is the cute girl?  
10      A:     There was her in bamboo.  
...

---

The above example provides a contrast between embedded narration and detail that emerges from dialogue. In lines 4-8, character A was, in essence, narrating her own actions aloud to herself. While she did not address the audience directly, but instead remained focused on her actions within the scene, the expository detail she provided would not be strictly necessary as she would already be aware of what she was doing, what she found, and what she decided to do. Therefore, such a strategy of providing story details in this manner was classified as “embedded narrator”, since the narration and the individual providing the narration were ‘embedded’ in the scene. Furthermore, while it did not involve the character addressing the audience directly, the information conveyed was provided for the audience’s benefit. From a practical standpoint, such an instance of an embedded narrator was likely necessary for the audience as there were no scenic elements or props to establish the bamboo grove, the knife she used, nor the little girl she found within the bamboo.

In contrast to this, the subsequent scene (starting with lines 9-10) back at her home involved information that emerged from the dialogue as in this case, character B had no knowledge of the information that A shared. As a result, the information was not just for the audience’s benefit but also for the other character. Therefore, such an example was not classified as an embedded narrator.

- Dialogue Emergent

If a playwright does not wish to communicate more overtly with an audience by means of some form of narrator, the result is a play that relies on story details ‘emerging’ from the dialogue between characters. In this way, details necessary to understand and follow the story are provided indirectly to the audience. There are instances in which one character could explicitly share information with another character that is of use to the audience. Such an instance would still qualify as dialogue emergent so long as, within the logic of the story, the character being addressed does not already know the information. Excerpt 4.4 shows an example of this narrative strategy.

---

*Excerpt 4.4 Example of Dialogue Emergent*

1	A:	I want to become rich.
2	B:	Okay.
3		You touch first thing is very important.
4		So, go trip with it.
5	A:	I see.
6		Ouch!
7		What’s this?
8	C:	Straw
9	A:	I want it.
...		

---

In this excerpt, several key plot details are provided. Character A’s motivation to become rich, B’s explanation of how to become rich, and C’s identification of the straw. In both of these scenes, the information exchanged was not mutually understood by both characters, nor did any of the characters address the audience directly to provide the information. In this way, information important to the story is gradually revealed only through the dialogue between characters. Thus, narrative detail was allowed to “emerge” from the action of the story rather than be overtly indicated for the audience’s benefit.



As a closing note to this section of the methodology, the process of embedding a narrator in the dialogue acted as a substitute for an external narrator. Much of the interpretation of what qualified as an ‘embedded narrator’ instead of ‘dialogue emergent’ or ‘character as narrator’ depended on my familiarity with both the students’ compositions and the performances of those compositions.

## **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology used for this study. The devised theatre tasks used in this study were described and shown to be based, in part, on the results of earlier trials of several prototype versions of the tasks. The participants, measures, and procedures used in the current study were described in detail. Operationalisations for all measures used were discussed, and a full descriptive explanation of a specific methodology was provided for the post-hoc analysis of narrative strategies as this operationalisation represents a contribution that this thesis makes to research on student generated narratives. The next three chapters discuss the results and findings of the analyses outlined in this chapter. Chapter five covers the qualitative analysis of process data, chapter six covers student task performance and chapter seven covers the qualitative analysis of post-task student feedback surveys.



## CHAPTER FIVE: TWO CASE STUDIES OF GROUPS DEVISING PLAYS

This chapter provides an overview of the process involved in completing the devised theatre tasks used in the current study. One group was selected from each task condition: Adapted Play and Original Play. These two groups comprise the data set for the qualitative analysis described in this chapter and both serve as illustrative and representative of the quality of student work and their management of the tasks, not their resultant language production in the final performances. This analysis is structured as follows: the first section gives an overview of the relevant research methods and procedures for the tasks. The second section provides a narrative summary, followed by transcripts and discussion of relevant extracts of language-related student peer talk, for both task conditions individually; first the Adapted Play group, and then the Original Play group. The chapter continues with a synthesis of both of these analyses and concludes with a brief discussion of the task outcomes for these two selected case studies in comparison to the outcomes for the rest of the groups in the study. This final section sets up the analysis and discussion of task outcomes covered in chapter six.

### 5.1 Summary of relevant methodology

This chapter addresses Research Question One:

Research Question One: What are the salient features of participant interaction during the process of devising plays and what, if any, are the differences in these features between the two task conditions?

In chapter four, the devised theatre tasks used in the current study were introduced and explained. Student groups each spent roughly one hundred minutes composing and rehearsing their plays prior to performance. This period of preparation time was distributed evenly over four lessons, with one lesson occurring each week for four consecutive weeks. The intended procedure for the devised theatre tasks divided this preparation time evenly in half: script composition in the first half and rehearsal in the

second. Clearly, groups will vary in their procedural orientation to the tasks, therefore, this division of time was not strictly enforced. As per task instructions discussed with the students prior to the tasks commencing, student outcomes were expected to be in English (see the instruction sheet in Appendix 2) while task process featured no such specification on expected language use.

The methodology chapter introduced the concepts of *linguaging* and *language-related-episodes* (LREs) (Swain, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 1998, 2002) and drew from the approaches taken by Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) and Foster and Ohta (2005) to analyse the interaction observed in both case studies within a Vygotskian inspired framework. This framework for analysis looked at instances in which students supported each other as they co-constructed their language knowledge and language output. The four principle classifications used in this analysis, taken from Foster and Ohta, were: *co-construction*, *other-correction*, *self-correction*, and *continuer*. Case studies were used for this analysis to allow for rich description of the processes by which students devised their plays and the details of the interaction prior to and after each episode of peer-supported language talk. Case Study One was taken from the second (repeated) study, while Case Study Two was taken from the first (initial) study.

The analyses of both case studies follow an identical pattern. I provide a narrative summary of all the collaborative work each group engaged in during class time prior to the performances of their plays. This collaborative work is referred to henceforth as *devising*. Within the analyses, certain LREs that transpired during the process of devising the plays are discussed at the moments within the narrative that they occurred. For these instances, each LRE and its transcription are incorporated and analysed within the flow of the narrative. Each extract features the original transcript on the left, written with romanised Japanese, and the English translation in italics on the right. For each case study, participants were given pseudonyms.

## 5.2 Case Study One: An Adapted Play

This case study was chosen from the second (repeated) study. Across all extracts in this case study, the participants' turns are indicated by the first letter of their name. Therefore, B = Bernie, G = Gus, M = Mike, R = Ray, J = Jack, D = Dan, C = Caleb, MB = Ms. Bee (teacher), and MR = Mr. Reid (teacher). Within the narrative summary itself, the names are provided in full.

### Day One

Bernie's group arranged their desks in a circle and immediately began a discussion about potential source material for their adaptation. Several stories from *anime* (Japanese animation) or *manga* (Japanese comic books) series were suggested and talked about until around two minutes into the discussion, when Gus offered the idea of doing *Three Little Pigs*. Mike expressed reluctance at doing this story, saying *mecha mendokusai* (*I can't be bothered*). At this point in time, Ms. Bee dropped by the group, listened to some of their ideas, and offered her opinion that *Three Little Pigs* might be a feasible story to do. When she was asked if there was a role for everyone, she helped them work out a way to involve all seven members of the group. Their joint solution was to have the houses themselves be speaking roles and everyone seemed to like the idea and were clearly amused by it. This prompted them to imagine what one of the houses would say. When Caleb began to speak in English, saying, *I am mugiwara [straw]*, the group started to laugh.

Once the laughter had subsided, they eventually resumed discussion of other possible stories to adapt. This indicated that the group was not yet completely committed to the idea of doing *Three Little Pigs* yet, despite the assistance and encouragement from Ms. Bee just moments before. At five minutes in, Bernie brought the group back on task and said they really needed to choose a story. He talked specifically about the task requirements and offered the opinion that they should choose a shorter story given that they only had five minutes for the performance. Gus began to write everyone's name on the group information sheet while the others continued to think of possible stories for adaptation. Several more manga series were mentioned, and everyone in the group joked about

aspects of each of those stories that they found interesting. They expressed interest in performing certain bits from those stories.

After a further three minutes of such discussion, Jack suggested the comic book *Slam Dunk*, which prompted Bernie to suggest they pick a story that had already finished, as he said, *mada owattenai manga kibishii... owatenai no wa saisho dou naru ka wakaranai kara kibishii* (A comic is tough if its still going... with an unfinished one it's tough since how would we start it?). Thinking on this, Jack agreed that such a story would be difficult, so the group started a fresh discussion of stories that had already finished and, over the next few minutes, several more anime and manga series were mentioned and excitedly discussed and joked about. While it was clear that the boys really enjoyed the stories they brought up, the discussion shifted to off-task talk frequently. At around eleven minutes in, Bernie was worried about their progress. Shortly after this, Ms. Bee stopped by again to check on their progress. After listening to the current status of their selection process, she once again suggested *Three Little Pigs* to the group. This further mention of *Three Little Pigs* prompted the boys to consider several other well known stories, including *Cinderella*, *Kaguyaime* (*Princess Kaguya*), and *Pinocchio*. Each one of these was mulled over, although when Ms. Bee briefly summarised the plots of both *Kaguyahime* and *Pinocchio*, it was clear that the group were not all that familiar with either story, particularly the latter.

At around seventeen minutes into the devising, Mr. Reid stopped by and made sure that they understood the expectations for the story. He specifically pointed out that it would be all in English, be no more than five minutes in duration, and that everyone needed to have a speaking part. After checking their understanding of these expectations, he reminded them to write down everyone's name and character name once they decided on a story. He then left them to resume devising. This exchange prompted the group to concentrate on choosing a story quickly. At that moment, two stories, *Three Little Pigs* and *Princess Kaguya*, were mentioned again, but discussion stalled for over a minute until Jack suggested *Hanasaka Jisan*, Mike suggested *Shiizuka-chan* and Dan suggested *Crayon Shin-chan* (all three are popular manga series). These ideas were quickly dismissed by other members in the group, however, for being too long, and Ray admitted that he was not familiar with the *Crayon Shin-chan* comic book series at all.

Sensing the groups indecisiveness, Ms. Bee returned, shortly after the twenty minute mark, and advised them that if they did not pick a story, they would not be able to complete the project on time. She went on to suggest again how one of their original ideas, such as *Three Little Pigs*, could be adapted into a story by having the story start with the three pigs introducing themselves, as they had discussed earlier. The group talked this over again for around a minute and ultimately Bernie admitted to Ms. Bee they could not decide between *Three Little Pigs* and *Princess Kaguya*. Ms. Bee nodded and told the group to vote right at that moment. Their vote favoured *Three Little Pigs* four to three and she told them to fill out the information sheet and then left them so she could attend to another group.

In the last three minutes of the first day's work, everyone began to work out their characters in the story. Following an earlier suggestion they heard from Ms. Bee, they decided to have the three houses in that story be speaking parts as well, and assigned one group member per house. This gave the seven person group seven distinct roles: pig one, pig two, pig three, straw house, wood house, brick house and wolf. At this point in the process, the bell rang signalling the end of lesson one.

## Day Two

After the teachers briefly reminded everyone in the class of the schedule for the next three lessons, the groups got back together and continued work on their stories. In Bernie's group, the source story and potential characters had been identified but not everyone had been assigned a specific role yet. As Jack and Caleb discussed this, the rest of the group sat idle and amused themselves. After several minutes without any further progress, Bernie urged them to pick up the pace, saying, *narration kimenaito dame dakke* (we were told we need to decide our narration).

They decided to follow the suggestion from Ms. Bee (from day one) and began the story with the three pigs introducing themselves. Extract 5.2.1 shows the initial stage of this work.

---

Extract 5.2.1 Case study one: LRE 1

B	San..sanken no ie no toujou.	Thr-.. [the] three houses come on stage.
J	Chigau yo.	No, that's wrong.
B	Chigau no? Ah! Tsukuru no ka, sanbiki?	It's wrong? Ah! They make the houses, the three [pigs]?
G	Ja, mazu ie tsukuru. Ie tsukuru.	Ok, first, making the houses, making the houses.
	Sanbiki ga ie wo tsukuru.	The three make their houses.
M	"Make house"	Make house.
G	"Make" janakute, "build" da ne.	It's not 'make', it's 'build'.
B	Tateru.	[to] build.
M	Daccha.	[That's] so.
B	"Make" wa chigau. Tsukuru no ne.	'Make' is different. It's 'tsukuru'.
G	Un.	Yeah.

---

In this extract, Bernie and Jack were discussing the first scene while Gus prepared to write the dialogue. Towards the end of this extract, Mike heard the verb *tsukuru* and said *make house* aloud as his translation. Gus corrected him and told him that *build* was the right translation. What is interesting about this extract is that, technically speaking, both students were right. Bernie and Jack were using *tsukuru* (*make*) with *ie* (*house*), even though a different verb *tateru* (*build*) was more appropriate for the noun *house*, just as *build* collocates with *house* in English. As a result, Mike was not in the wrong here, as he provided the correct literal translation of the verb phrase *ie wo tsukuru* (*make a house*). It was not until Bernie then mentioned the verb *tateru* that the correct Japanese form for *build* was said. Even then, he went on to explain simply that *make* had a different meaning without him or anyone else acknowledging that Gus' Japanese was also at fault. This example of other correction from both Bernie and Gus resulted in Mike noticing his apparent mistake, even though, essentially, he had been right about his translation of *tsukuru* (*make*).

Gus wrote down this plot point in Japanese while the others discussed the next part of the story. They soon discarded the idea of having the wolf watch from the background and decided to have the houses introduce themselves prior to the wolf's entrance. The composition stalled at around seven minutes in and Ms. Bee dropped by to check on their



progress. When she realised that they had chosen to follow her idea of having the characters introduce themselves, and saw that Gus was writing narration in Japanese first, she advised them on how to go about composing this part of the story. The group had assumed that they would use narration to tell the story, but Ms. Bee told them that the narration was not strictly necessary as it would not be translated. Such narrative detail only served as a summary of the basic plot and action and was not the dialogue they would speak. From this explanation, the group realised that they could compose the story using only conversation.

After the above discussion finished, Ms. Bee left the group alone to continue with their story. Since they had formulated the first scene of the story with the teacher's help, the other members turned their attention to what came next in the story while Gus and Dan worked to write down the lines that the teacher had helped them with (that she has suggested before). A few moments later, at around the twelve minute mark of the lesson, the others in the group shifted to discussing how the characters would be arranged on stage and what kind of actions they could do to show the building of the houses. At this time, Bernie checked on Gus and Dan's progress and tried to help them catch up with the ideas the rest of the group were generating. As their discussion continued, most of the group eventually worked together to construct the next few lines of dialogue. Their exchange is shown in Extract 5.2.2 below.

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*Extract 5.2.2 Case study one: LRE 2*

G	Koko no bunsho de.	<i>This sentence here.</i>
M	Eh, nani?	<i>Uh, what?</i>
G	Bunsho! "Me too" made ittandeshou.	<i>The sentence! You stopped talking at 'me too'.</i>
B	[...] Isshou ni tsuk-	<i>[...] Let's build toge-</i>
M	-Me too sou omou.	<i>-Me too [I] thought so.</i>
G	Watashitachi mo sou omou.	<i>We thought so too.</i>
B	Ja, sorezore tsukurou to itte...	<i>So, he says, 'let's make individually...'</i>
G	Sore zore tsukurou tte do you imi? [indistinct]	<i>What do you mean by 'let's make individually'? [indistinct]</i>
B	Ma ii ya, sore de.	<i>No it's fine like that.</i>

G	Eeto.. sore zore nan dakke?	<i>Uhm... what comes after 'individually'?</i>
M	Me too. Ok Let's go.	Me too. Ok let's go.
J	Let's go.	Let's go.
B	-Ok, let's go.	-Ok, let's go.
R	-Let's go.	-Let's go.
M	Ok. let's go.	Ok. Let's go
B	Sa...ikou... tte. Sa, ikou de ii sore?	<i>Ok...he says 'let's go'. Ok, is that ok, 'let's go'?</i>
M	Let's go.	Let's go.
B	Let's..build.	Let's...build.
G	Let's build?	Let's build?
B	Un. Let's build house.	<i>Yeah.</i> Let's build house.
M	Ah. Let's build house.	Ah. Let's build house.
G	Let's build. Let's to do iu imi?	Let's build. <i>What does let's mean?</i>
M	Isshou ni janai?	<i>Isn't it 'together'?</i>
B	Isshou ni?	<i>Together?</i>
D	Let wa...shiyoun da.	Let is 'shiyoun da'.
M	-Sa, shiyoun. Nani nani shiyoun.	<i>-So, let's do it. Let's do something.</i>
B	Sa, tateyoun wa let's da ne.	<i>So, let's means 'tateyo'.</i>
G	Ok?	Ok?
M	Ok. Let's ...build... my house.	Ok. Let's...build... my house.
B	House de... ok,ok.... Soko de Caleb ga deru...	<i>After 'house'... ok,ok, Caleb makes his entrance...</i>

Several portions of this extract offer interesting examples of collaborative language construction. Towards the beginning, when Gus asked Bernie what *sorezore* (*individually*) was in English, Bernie did not appear to know but waved off Caleb when offered a dictionary. Gus attempted to ask the next group for the translation but did not appear to get an answer. They pressed on without translating that word and Mike suggested *me too* and *let's go* as the next lines of dialogue, even though the phrase they were saying in Japanese had a different meaning (i.e. *tsukurou* would actually be *let's make*). Several others repeated this phrase but soon Bernie was of the opinion that this choice was not right. He seemed to be recalling the previous conversation about *make* versus *build* and suggested that *let's build* was the right translation. Gus repeated this tentatively, but after Bernie said the sentence again with *build*, Mike seemed to realise that Bernie was likely right and repeated it in agreement. At this point, Gus wanted to clarify his own understanding of

the sentence and asked them what *let's* meant. Bernie thought *let's* was the same as *isshou ni (together)*, and he could perhaps be forgiven for this as *let's \_\_\_\_ together* was a phrase from the course textbook and he might have been confusing the two parts of that expression. Dan joined in the conversation at this time and said it was *shiyou da*, which was correct without being completely accurate, as *shiyou* means *let's do*. After Bernie heard Mike and Dan confirm the translation, he realised that *let's* was used with *tateyou (let's build)*, which at last prompted Mike to produce the correct translation. In the end, they arrived at the correct translation by a rapid sequence of co-construction: Mike made an error in translation, the others noticed this and corrected him but also made an error in doing so, their error in turn was noticed, and finally, Mike self-corrected his own error as a result of this discussion.

As Gus finished writing the new lines of dialogue with Dan's help, the others moved on to discussing the entrance of the wolf character and enjoyed a few jokes about the exaggerated ways in which that character could act. It was clear that they found the wolf to be an amusing part of the story. After the fourteen minute mark, Gus had finished writing down the opening scene and with help from Bernie and Dan, the groups' attention turned to continuing the scene with Straw Pig building his straw house. As shown in Extract 5.2.3, this promoted to Ray, playing the part of the straw house, to ask about the correct translation for *wara (straw)*.

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*Extract 5.2.3 Case study one: LRE 3*

R	I'm... mugiwara	I'm ( <i>wheat</i> ) straw.
B	Mugiwara janee.	It's not wheat straw.
	Mugiwara no ichime.	It's a part of wheat's gang.
	<i>[note: this appears to be a pun]</i>	
R	Mugiwara no ichime nobosu no?	The boss of the wheat gang?
B	{-indistinct-}	{-indistinct-}
R	{-indistinct-}	{-indistinct-}
G	Ii jan.	That's good enough.
	'Strow'. Su-to-rou.	Strow. Su-to-rou.
R	Strow?	Strow?
G	Shiraberu waku kedo...	Well, you could look it up.

R	'I....strow house...?'	I... strow house....?
G	Sou, sou.	<i>Yeah.</i>
B	Ah. Strew?	Ah. Strew?
R	Stew?	Stew? (mishears)
	(Ray waves for Mr. Reid.)	(Ray waves for Mr. Reid.)
	Nanka, sutorou wa....?	<i>What is sutorou....?</i>
MR	S-T-R-A-W.	S-T-R-A-W (spells it out)
B,G,R	"Straw"	"Straw"
J	Tte nani? Wara?	<i>What's that? Straw?</i>
B	Wara.	<i>Straw.</i>
	Tsukuruzou kara, tsukuru yo.	<i>Since I going to make it, I make it.</i>
R	Honto ni 'straw' dake?	<i>Is it really just 'straw'?</i>

---

In this extract, the group discussed the first house (Straw House) and the mention of *mugiwara* (straw) led Gus to offer an inaccurate pronunciation of the word *straw*. The way he sounded out the syllables suggested the possibility that he was accessing the Japanese loanword *sutorou* which is an approximation of the English word within the limitations of the Japanese kana (phonetic syllabary). In other words, there are no consonant clusters such as /str/ in Japanese, nor does Japanese seem to typically transliterate the low back vowel /a/ with the corresponding kana, showing instead a tendency to use an /o/. At any rate, Ray's response to Gus suggested that he was unsure of the accuracy of Gus' pronunciation. Bernie joined the language discussion at this point and offered an alternative pronunciation with a different vowel sound, closer to /u/. Ray was not satisfied with either version and called for Mr. Reid, who provided the group with the correct pronunciation, which they all repeated. Here was an instance in which the group was unable to overcome a knowledge gap collectively through peer support and co-construction of language. As the expert, the more capable other, Mr. Reid was able to provide the group with the necessary information.

As Bernie and Gus worked to catch up to that point in the story with their written script, the others returned their attention to the wolf's first appearance in the story. After a short discussion of the source story, they decided that the wolf should enter after all three houses had been built. This led to a discussion of the other two houses, but for several minutes the talk drifted off topic. Right before the nineteen minute mark, Bernie

advised them that they should consider not writing the story with Japanese narration first to save time. He also said he wanted to do it all in English because it would be more interesting that way. Though unclear from the recording, he was apparently referring to just writing an English script without any plot notes or stage directions in Japanese. The group mulled this over and, at around the twenty one minute mark, as shown in Extract 5.2.4, they managed to pull together once again and discussed the building of the other two houses.

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*Extract 5.2.4 Case study one: LRE 4*

M	Uhn. Zennin tatta kara da.	<i>No. It's from when everyone's there.</i>
B	Ah. s-,... Ah, sou da. Douji shinkou.	<i>I se-,... I see. At the same time.</i>
G	Bamen wa douji shinkou. {indistinct} (while writing) Wood house.	<i>The scene is at the same time.</i> {indistinct} (while writing) Wood house.
B	Ki. Renga.	<i>Wood. Brick.</i>
G	Renga nani?	<i>What's brick?</i>
D	Renga?	<i>Brick?</i>
R	Re..re...rego house	<i>Le..Le..Lego house.</i>
D	Rego house?	<i>Lego house?</i>
B	Sugu owattenda omae!	<i>You're done so quickly!</i>
G	Bu..bu....	<i>Huff...huff....</i>

The extract continues after six turns.

G	'Ikko no ren' wa do iu?	<i>How do you say 'one brick'?</i>
M	Buro...	<i>buro...</i>
B	...buri...	<i>...buri...</i>
M	...buroku	<i>...buroku</i>
B	...buriku	<i>...buriku</i>
M	Brock.	<i>Brock.</i>
B	Brick house.	<i>Brick house.</i>
M	...brock house?	<i>...brock house?</i>
G	Eh... 'brock' wa chotto...hoka no imi da.	<i>Eh... block means... something else.</i>
B	Brick house.	<i>Brick house.</i>

---

In the first part of this extract, no one appeared to know the right translation for *renga* (*brick*) when Gus first asked, but as the others joked about the idea of a Lego house, it was apparent that Gus had an idea of the translation in mind as he began to pronounce the initial ‘b’ sound. It would appear that he wanted someone else to say the word to either confirm what he was trying to recall or to help him get the right pronunciation out. A few turns later, he reformed his question to ask what a single *ren* (*brick*) was in English. At that time, both Bernie and Mike seemed to have roughly the same idea in mind, but Mike’s choice of *block* was determined by Gus to not be the word they were looking for. This prompted Bernie to repeat his choice of *brick* as confirmation of this opinion. In this manner, Gus was able to interact with his fellow group members, check his language knowledge, and arrive at the correct translation together.

At this point, several members of the group discussed having the story start at the brick house instead. This suggestion prompted laughter as the others pointed out that, without the other houses, the pigs would have no where to run to and the story would end too quickly. An excited discussion followed that resulted in the group realising their story had yet to reach the part where the wolf appeared. This discussion is shown in Extract 5.2.5 below.

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*Extract 5.2.5 Case study one: LRE 5*

B	Ki, wara kara kite.. datte, toujou shichau.	<i>When wood, straw come, that’s when you enter.</i>
G	Kore ohkami?	<i>This is the wolf?</i>
C	Watashi wa ohkami da, nan dakke?	<i>What’s after ‘I am a wolf’?</i>
J	I am...	<i>I am...</i>
M	...I am wolf.	<i>...I am wolf.</i>
C	Kore kara nigeyou, nigeyou! Kowashichau yo....kawashichau yo. Kimi wo Tabechau yo!	<i>Run away now, run away! I’ll crush you... I’ll crush you. I’ll eat you up!</i>
B	Eh?	<i>Huh?</i>
C	Datte, buta tabetai. Da kara, kimi wo tabechau	<i>Well, I want to eat pig. So, I will eat you up.</i>
B	...I am hungry.	<i>...I am hungry.</i>
G	Sou da. buta tabetai kara ne.	<i>Oh yeah. Because you want to eat pig.</i>

	(growling noises)	(growling noises)
	{indistinct}	{indistinct}
B	Wolf...wolf... I am wolf de...	wolf...wolf... I am wolf <i>then</i> ...
	I am wolf. I am hungry.	I am wolf. I am hungry.
M	I'm very hungry.	I'm very hungry.
B	I'm very hungry.	I'm very hungry.
C	Watashi wa.... buta ga tabetai?	<i>I want... to eat pig?</i>
B	Sou.	<i>Yeah.</i>
C	Watashi mo nanka,anata ga hoshii.	<i>I, you know, want you.</i>
	(laughter)	(laughter)
	{indistinct}	{indistinct}
	(laughter)	(laughter)
	Ore wa omae ga hoshii.	<i>I want you.</i>
	Kite Kureru.	<i>Come here.</i>
G	... I want...eh...	... I want...um...
B	I'm hungry. Onaka suiteru tte	I'm hungry. <i>He says he's hungry and</i>
	de, I'm very hungry.	<i>then, I'm very hungry.</i>
G	Very to mow ii?	<i>With very as well?</i>
B	Totemo onaka tsuteiru ne.	<i>He's really hungry.</i>
M	Break house.	Break house.
G	Mou, nanka, ie wo kowasanai ne.	<i>You know, you're not breaking the house.</i>
	I will... nanka... nani nani	I will... <i>like...what's 'do something</i>
	<i>shitai wa?</i>	<i>something'?</i>
J	Want.	Want.
M	-Want.	-Want.
B	I want...	I want...
M	...nani nani shitai	... <i>do something.</i>
	Eating pig.	Eating pig.
G	Want - went.... do chi dakke?	What- went... <i>which is it?</i>
D	W-A-N-T. 'Went' no hou wa 'E'	W-A-N-T. 'Went' <i>is the one with 'E'.</i>
	da ne.	
B	Want... have de ii ka?	Want... <i>is have ok?</i>
G	Have dakke?	Have, <i>is it?</i>
M	Eat no hou ni suru?	<i>Should we use eat instead?</i>
B	Eat?	Eat?
G	Tsugoi taberu kanji janai, eat?	<i>[with] eat, don't you get a strong sense of taberu?</i>
B	Dou darou....	<i>I'm not sure...</i>
	{indistinct}	{indistinct}
G	Ja... I want to eat pig.	<i>Ok...I want to eat pig.</i>
B	[Caleb] ga yutara, ...yutara...	<i>After [Caleb] says that...says that...knock-</i>

	kon kon tataite	<i>knock on the door.</i>
M	Ohkami...	<i>The wolf...</i>
C	Ohkami wa gomen kudasai tte, anata wo kudasai. (laughter)	<i>The wolf says, "I beg your pardon", then "I want you." (laughter)</i>
J	Chigau sore!	<i>That's not it!</i>
G	Kon K-... Knock knock dakke?	<i>Knock -kno... It's knock knock?</i>
B	Shiran—	<i>I don't kn-</i>
C	(to someone in the next group over) Dochira sama wa eigo de?	<i>(to someone in the next group over) What's 'who is there' in English?</i>
B	Oi, yakushite! Gomen kudasai.	<i>Hey, what is it, 'I beg your pardon'.</i>
G	Gomen kudasai...	<i>I beg your pardon...</i>
M	Excuse me!	<i>Excuse me!</i>
G	Ah, sou ka!	<i>Ah, oh yeah!</i>
B	Excuse me tte	<i>He says, 'excuse me'.</i>
C	(holding an electronic dictionary) Oo, deta! (reading) May I come in?	<i>(holding an electronic dictionary) Here we go! (reading) May I come in?</i>
B	Ii jan, ii jan.	<i>Nice, nice</i>
M	Sore icchau na.	<i>So, you say that.</i>
G	Koko ireba ii kana. Haite ii desu ka, kore?	<i>Maybe it's ok here. This, can I put it here?</i>
B	Excuse me, sa, mo okashikunae? Mou atteru jotai da.	<i>Uhm, 'excuse me' isn't strange? I feel like we already said it.</i>
C	Hello? May I come in?	<i>Hello? May I come in?</i>
J	Sore ii.	<i>That's good.</i>
M	...tte ii.	<i>...That's good.</i>
B	Tte Ohkami...ja ohkami	<i>The wolf says that...ok...the wolf...wolf</i>
M	-Ohkami	<i>-The wolf,</i>
	mecha friendly jan?	<i>he's really friendly, isn't he?</i>
R	"Dare da?".... yutara ee kana.	<i>Maybe one could say, 'Who are you'?</i>
C	Dare desu ka, dare desu ka ...dare deshou? Anata wa dare desu ka wa?	<i>Who are you, who are you, who could ...it be? And who might you be?</i>
J	Who a-... who are you janai?	<i>Who a-... Isn't it who are you?</i>
M	Who are you?	<i>Who are you?</i>
B	Who are you.	<i>Who are you.</i>
C	Who are you?	<i>Who are you?</i>
	{indistinct singing begins}	<i>{indistinct singing begins}</i>



This particular extended extract had two notable instances of language talk that occurred in succession. The first half of this conversation closely resembled Extract 5.2.4 in that an initial incorrect translation of a target phrase was not noticed or challenged until later on. The group was discussing what the wolf would say when he talked to the first pig, and the target they wanted, as Caleb insisted, was *buta tabechau* (eat [a] pig). Despite this, Bernie suggested that the wolf should say *I'm hungry* and explained this in Japanese. Mike repeated this idea and added his own embellishment of *very*. Caleb seemed to ask Bernie if what Gus was writing was the same as what he had suggested, and as he improvised more dialogue, Gus began to translate *tabetai* (want to eat), getting as far as *I want* before Bernie repeated the earlier line. Gus checked his understanding of what he heard by asking if *very* was necessary and Bernie told him that it was because the wolf was very hungry. A few moments later, Gus appeared to pick up his earlier thought and again tried to translate *tabetai* (want to eat) but started with *will* instead of *want*. This prompted him to finally ask the others how to say *-tai* (want) in English. Immediately Bernie, Mike, and Jack all provided him with the correct answer and further assisted him when he could not remember how to spell it. In this way, Gus maintained Caleb's suggestion for a line of dialogue and, even though others in the group constructed an alternative line for the wolf to say, he stuck with the original and eventually got the group to help him co-construct the target language he was looking for.

A similar case of multiple alternatives for a target phrase occurred moments later when they were deciding what the first pig would say in response to the wolf. Caleb wanted the pig to say *dochira sama?* (who is it?) and when no one offered the English for this, he turned around to ask someone in the next group. Bernie thought they should use *gomen kudasai* (an expression similar to *I beg your pardon* that is used when one stands before someone's house) and asked the group to translate it for him. Mike thought it was *excuse me*, which would technically be correct as an alternative, although the word *sumimasen* is usually given as the translation for that expression. When Gus heard Mike's translation, he realised that this was the right one, but at that point this particular thread of the episode was left unresolved as Caleb soon came back to the group with his classmate's dictionary and read out the result of his search. What he had found in the dictionary was a

completely different phrase, *may I come in*, which would make sense pragmatically given the context of the story. The group liked the sound of that, and Bernie then made the observation that having the wolf say both *excuse me* and *may I come in* was perhaps too much. Finally, Caleb's original suggestion of *dochirasama* (*who is it?*) was finally translated collectively by Jack, Mike and Bernie after Ray suggested the very informal version of that expression *dare da* (*who are you?*).

This sequence of events demonstrated that as a group, it was very likely that no one had learned *dochirasama* in English, nor realised that the target form was very similar to an expression they already learned in English with almost the same meaning. Additionally, in the same vein of polite language, the earlier portion of this conversation indicated that no one had known the more polite form of *excuse me* (that being *I beg your pardon*), but since both the Japanese and English pairs of expressions differed only in register and not meaning, this gap of knowledge provided no obstacle to their devising of dialogue and thus they carried on without resolving this gap.

As the above extract showed, they devised the dialogue for the wolf's encounter with the straw house at the same time that they decided on the content for that scene. While Gus wrote these new lines of dialogue down, the group invented a couple of humorous scenarios for what the wolf might say in response, including the idea that the wolf could pretend to be the pig's father. While this idea amused them and generated some excited laughter, Gus interrupted them and asked how to spell the 'are' of *who are you*. This brought the group back to focus on the script and the scene after the straw house. Extract 5.2.6 shows the details of their work at this point.

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Extract 5.2.6 Case study one: LRE 6

M	futsu iu, are. (laughs)	Say it normally. (laughs)
D	Who are you?	Who are you?
M	Sou.	Yeah.
B	I am wolf tte...	He says I am wolf...
	{indistinct}	{indistinct}
	I will...	I will...
C	Omae wo tabeteru.	I'm eating you.

B	I will have you.	I will have you.
C	Anata o tabeteyaru	<i>I'm going to eat you.</i>
B	Omae... anata wo tabeteyaru okashii jan?	<i>Hey, I'm going to eat 'you' isn't strange?</i>
M	You... eat.	You... eat.
R	Nani nani wo... kisama yokune?	<i>Something something.... is kisama not good?</i>
C	Kisama?	<i>Kisama?</i>
R	Kisama wo tabeteru?	<i>Eat Kisama?</i>
C	Doko no akuma? (laughter) (consulting dictionary) kisama.....	<i>Where is this devil from?</i> (laughter) (consulting dictionary) <i>Kisama...</i>
G	Detekonai ne. Toriaezu anata ni shiyoushi.	<i>You won't find it. So let's go with 'you'.</i>
B	Anata...anata....	<i>You...you...</i>
M	'Eat' wa?	<i>And 'eat'?</i>
G	Eat?	<i>Eat?</i>
M	Taberu.	<i>Eat.</i>
G	Nandemo ii kedo.	<i>Anything's ok but....</i>
B	Nan...nande 'have' no?	<i>Wh...Why 'have'?</i>
G	Taberu tte mo ii demo... dochidemo ii.	<i>'Taberu' is also ok but... they're both ok.</i>
B	Dochidemo ii yaku?	<i>They're both the same translation?</i>
G	Taberu koto ga wakaru.	<i>You know it's about eating.</i>

---

In this extract, Caleb devised his next line of dialogue in Japanese as *omae wo tabeteyaru* (*I'm going to eat you*). Although he was using a somewhat irregular register of both formal and informal Japanese, the main idea of *taberu* was translated by Bernie as *have*. This is a correct translation of the word but Mike wondered if *eat* was the better choice, even though the grammar he used to express that was both rudimentary and incorrect. However, as the group was looking for a translation of a rarely used (and rude) Japanese second person pronoun *kisama* (*you [informal]*), Mike asked Gus again about *eat*, indicating that he wanted clarification about his understanding of the word. In response, Gus supported his peer by telling him that both were fine in this case. Bernie listened to this and seemed to have had a similar uncertainty as well, for he proceeded to ask Gus why they were using *have* instead of *eat*. Gus once again helped his peers by telling them that both were fine since they both were understood to be about the same thing. In such a

way, both Bernie and Mike were able to consolidate their knowledge of that lexical feature with Gus' assistance.

After finishing the dialogue discussed in the previous extract, they decided to have the first pig scream "oh my God!" and "Run away" and run to the next house. Then, as they looked over their progress up until this point, several members of the group wondered if they could fit the whole story into five minutes. Mike offered his opinion that the speaking parts would go quickly and that they should be fine. Both Jack and Dan laughed when they looked at how long the script had become. At this point in the process, with the story roughly one third finished, the bell sounded and lesson two ended.

### Day Three

Group work resumed after Mr.Reid explained the schedule for the last two lessons of work prior to the performance day and reminded everyone of the expectation that each group would have their story finished in time to rehearse it during either this lesson or the next (fourth and final) lesson. As the previous lesson for this class had run an extra five minutes over the planned allotment of time, this lesson was abbreviated to twenty minutes. Due to a technical glitch, the recording of Bernie's group for this lesson commenced around three minutes into the lesson. Gus resumed his primary writing duties for this lesson as well. In the previous lesson, the group had left off with the wolf trying to eat Pig One so they resumed the composition of the story at this point.

Ms. Bee came over to help the group, and upon reading over everything they had written so far, she tried to help them by suggesting that Pig One should say aloud that he is going to run to Pig Two's house. This prompted her to ask what the characters' actual names were. The group informed the teacher that the pig characters did not have names. Upon hearing this, the teacher had a short discussion with them about why names for the pigs might be a good idea. She told them that if the pigs had no names, then they could not say to whose house they were running. The boys shared a few jokes about potential names, mostly based around play-on-words in Japanese, but they eventually picked three Japanese names for the pigs. With this settled, the teacher continued reading their script

and noticed that the first pig was running away to the brick house. This meant that the wood house seemed to be missing from the middle part of the story. Several of the group members explained that they had combined the straw and wood house scenes together because they did not think they had enough time to have the wolf visit all three separately. The teacher assured them that they would be fine time-wise and encouraged them to include a scene with the wolf, the wood house, and the first and second pig. As they nodded in agreement, she asked them to write down this next scene and reminded them that they needed to be ready to rehearse next lesson. They acknowledged this and began to devise the scene with the wood house as the teacher listened in. This discussion is shown in Extract 5.2.7 below.

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*Extract 5.2.7 Case study one: LRE 7*

MB	Dakara, the wolf want to eat me de ii deshous	<i>So, 'the wolf want to eat me' should be fine.</i>
B	Eh?	<i>Huh?</i>
MB	Ohkami wa watashi wo tabetagattenda.	<i>The wolf wanted to eat me.</i>
C	Soshite..anata wo tabetai.	<i>And now...I want to eat you.</i>
G	The wolf eat.... want to..e-	<i>The wolf eat.... want to..e-</i>
C	-Oh no!	<i>-Oh no!</i>
G	To?	<i>To?</i>
MB	Want to eat me.	<i>Want to eat me.</i>
	(Ms. Bee turns to talk to the next group)	(Ms. Bee turns to talk to the next group)
M	De... because help.	<i>Then...because help.</i>
G	Eh?	<i>Huh?</i>
M	Because help.	<i>Because help.</i>
G	'Because' nani?	<i>What's 'because'?</i>
M	Na..naze.	<i>Wh-why.</i>
G	Chigau.	<i>Not that.</i>
M	Dakara? Dakara.	<i>So [causal linking word]? So.</i>
G	Dakara.	<i>So.</i>

---

In this final extract selected for analysis, Ms. Bee had come by to help them progress with their dialogue. The target meaning they sought was something along the lines of:

*the wolf wanted to eat me, so, please help(me)*. Ms. Bee worked with Bernie and Caleb on figuring out the correct form of that line of dialogue as Gus waited to write it down. At this point, Ms. Bee carried on a separate conversation with some of the group while Mike helped Gus with the writing. When Mike suggested *because help*, it seemed he was making a direct translation of *dakara tasukete (so, help me)* only he did not seem to know that *so* was the correct word to use in that particular case. It is unclear if Gus was not aware of what *because* meant or that he was unsure of Mike's translation of it, but in either case, his request for clarification prompted Mike to self-correct and use another word with a similar meaning. Gus affirmed this choice by repeating it, and they carried on writing from there.

As that extract showed, they slowly worked out what Straw Pig would say to Wood Pig as an explanation for what happened. Ms. Bee had provided them with the line of dialogue *the wolf want[ed] to eat me*, and explained what it meant in Japanese. As the group voiced their approval of this, she encouraged them to keep going and not waste too much time finishing their story, and left them to carry on.

When Gus offered an idea for the next line, *please come in*, he realised that they could simply go back to the previous scene and use the same dialogue for the wood house scene as well and he told this idea to the group. Mike agreed with this idea, and he helped Gus copy those lines of dialogue by reciting them several times. As those two worked on that, the others resumed discussion of the next scene at the brick house. Dan suggested an alternative idea of Pig Three inviting the wolf in for tea time. As they discussed this idea and shared a few funny jokes built around it, the conversation drifted off topic for several minutes as they suddenly thought about lunch instead. Bernie and Gus brought the group back together and asked for assistance with the lines for the the wolf's visit to the brick house. The group, particularly Ray and Dan, briefly wondered if an idea such as having tea time would work and get a laugh, but the others in the group quickly dismissed it. Instead, they settled on following the established dialogue pattern from the wolf's previous visits to the straw and wood houses.

As Gus copied the previous bit of dialogue, Mike realised that with two pigs, the pronouns in both *help me* and *the wolf wanted to eat me* would need to change to the

plural. After fixing this, he came to the next lines of dialogue and similarly suggested *come my renga's [brick] house* but immediately self-corrected to just *come my house*. Perhaps he thought it was good enough since, at that time, he said aloud *futsuu ni, my house de ii ka* (*normally, [just] my house is good?*). From this point, the dialogue they wrote down mirrored the first two scenes, but the group asked Caleb, who played the wolf, if he wanted to say anything different. When Caleb began to recite the same lines as before, Gus and Mike gave up on generating new dialogue and stuck with copying the wolf's existing dialogue from the first two scenes. However, Bernie pointed out that, in following the original story, the wolf would not enter the house from the front door. The group then remembered that the wolf needed to enter through the chimney. This also prompted a joke about how the pigs would get in the same house, and they laughed about the possibilities for this.

Just after the sixteen minute mark of the recording (at around the nineteen minute mark of the allotted time), Mr. Reid brought the class to order and explained the schedule for both the final day of preparatory work as well as the fifth day when performances would be made. He informed everyone that they would have a small portion of the next lesson available to work on completing their stories, but he reminded them that, at the very least, they were strongly advised to rehearse their stories during the last ten minutes of that final lesson. With this explanation finished, the bell rung shortly after and class was dismissed.

#### Day Four

As the fourth lesson commenced, groups were reminded that they would be expected to rehearse their stories for at least the final ten minutes of the lesson, with the option of presenting a trial run of their performance to another group to obtain feedback. For rehearsal purposes, the students were allowed to make crib sheets (or *kaningu shiitou*; *crib sheets*) to assist them with their lines during rehearsal. Bernie's group reconvened and quickly began preparing their crib sheets. As they worked frantically to copy down their individual parts and practice them, Ray had some difficulty with pronunciation similar to

what he had in lesson two (Extract 5.2.3). Mr. Reid came by when called and helped Ray with the pronunciation for “straw” once again, telling him that it was the same sound as ‘straw’ in ‘strawberry’.

Work on the crib sheets continued for almost four full minutes. As each group member copied down their lines, they practiced reading each line several times. During this time, various members wondered about the order of the dialogue. For example, Gus asked Dan when he was supposed to deliver his line, *I’m planning to build my house*, which prompted Jack, playing the part of the wood house, to ask when his line was to be said as well. Both Mike and Bernie told him he should say it after Gus had finished building the house. This discussion quickly turned to the final few lines of the story, which had yet to be written. They quickly decided on the Japanese *chan-chan* (an onomatopoeia suggesting the finale of a song).

As the group finished the story, the group saw no need to find a translation for the line *chan-chan* that they had decided on. They hastily decided to have one of them play the part of the pot that the wolf eventually falls into after climbing in the chimney. With that decided, the group resumed their focus on finishing their crib sheets. A minute or so later, they decided to try a read-thru. Jack was anxious about his part and what lines he had to say in the performance. Others were similarly unsure about the timing of the dialogue, so at the seven minute mark of the lesson, Bernie suggested that they simply stand up and try it out. For the next three minutes, the group slowly did a read-thru of their story, making effort to give their speech some theatrical affectations. As their story currently stood, they planned to include a song, apparently connected to the *Three Little Pigs* story in some way, although from the recording it was not clear how it was connected to their story. After they finished their read-thru, they decided to simplify the performance and abandon doing the song.

Right before the ten minute mark, Ms. Bee asked for everyone’s attention and explained how the optional group-to-group “dress rehearsal” would be carried out. If two groups were ready, they could take turns performing their stories for each other and receive some quick feedback. As it happened, all six groups in this class felt ready to try a trial run with another group. Bernie’s group talked to a neighbouring group and everyone agreed to



share performances. His group decided to go first. With the use of their crib sheets, they slowly made their way through a dry run of their story with tentative staging and gestures, pausing at several intervals to make spot decisions regarding blocking along the way. The trial run of their story took approximately three and half minutes to complete. Their partner group offered some brief feedback on the story. After receiving this feedback, they sat down and watched the other group perform a read-thru of their own play. Bernie's group seemed to enjoy the other group's performance and complemented the girls on their English. After both groups thanked each other and joked further about the performances, Mr. Reid brought the class to order and told them to be ready for their performances next week. While crib sheets would be allowed, he encouraged them to work on memorising at least some of their lines so they that they could make a compelling performance for the audience with their voices and bodies. As Mr. Reid and Ms. Bee wished everyone good luck, the bell rang and the in-class devising process was finished.

## Day Five

On the final day of the devised theatre tasks, each group, in random order, presented their plays in front of the class. As described in chapter four, the performances only involved the participants and their scripts. There were no costumes, props, or scenery employed by the students in their performances. Bernie's group went second and managed a performance that was full of energy and had a commendable level of rehearsed blocking. Each member of the group had also memorised all of their lines of dialogue, so no crib sheets were in use during the performance. Figure 5.1 on the next page shows the transcript of their performance. As a note for this figure, slight hesitations and variances in pronunciation are not noted in the transcription.

Figure 5.1 Case study one final performance: Three Little Pigs

Characters: B= straw pig; G= wood pig; M= brick pig; R= straw house, pot;  
J= wood house; D= brick house; C= wolf

1	G	I'm a pig.			Come on.
		You're a pig.		B	Thank you.
	M	I'm also pig.		C	May I come in?
	B	We are brothers.		G	Who are you?
	M	I'm planning to build my own		C	I'm wolf.
		house.			I'll eat you.
	G	Me too.		B,G	No. oh no.
	M	Okay.			(B&G run away)
		Let's go.			(at brick house)
10	B	Let's go.	40	M	I cook dinner.
	C	I'm a wolf.		R	I am pot.
		I'll eat pig.		B,G	Help me.
	B	I build straw house.		M	What happened?
	R	I'm straw house.		G	The wolf want to eat me.
	G	I build a wood house.		M	Okay.
	J	I'm wood house.			Please come in my house.
	M	I build a brick house.		B,G	Thank you.
	D	I'm brick house.		C	May I come in?
	C	May I come in?		M	Who are you?
20	B	Who are you?	50	C	I'm wolf.
	C	I'm wolf.			I'll eat you.
		I'll have it.		M	No, no!
	B	No.			(wolf tries to enter house)
		Oh my god.		D	I'm very very strong.
		I have run away.			I'm very very strong house.
		Help me!		B	Where is wolf?
		(Pig One runs to wood house)		M	There.
	G	What's happened?		C	That is chimney.
	B	I the wolf wanted to eat.			(Wolf falls in the pot)
30	G	Okay.	60		It's very hot.

As the transcript of the performance shows, the distribution of dialogue, with no overlap between characters, favoured the participants who played the parts of the four characters who were actually present in the source material (i.e., the three pigs and the

wolf). This gave Bernie, Gus, Mike and Caleb a majority of the dialogue in the play, but the three participants playing the parts of the houses, Ray, Jack and Dan, remained on stage for their respective scenes and posed in certain ways to suggest the shape of a house. In comparing the spoken performance on day five with the previous four days of devising the play, the group had obviously spent time outside of class working on stage blocking and memorising dialogue since their final performance was a marked improvement over what they rehearsed in the latter half of day four.

As for uptake from the process, Ray pronounced the word *straw* accurately during the performance, demonstrating that the *languageing* in Extract 5.2.3 (and further clarification with Mr. Reid again on day four) was productive. The issue of *make* versus *build*, discussed by the groups in Extracts 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, seemed to have been resolved as Bernie, Gus and Mike all correctly chose *build* during the performance. In Extract 5.2.7, Ms. Bee had suggested they use the line *the wolf want[ed]to eat me*. In the performance, it appeared that Gus was able to recite the line as written, in effect preserving the omission of the verb ending in Ms. Bee's suggestion. However, Bernie seemed to have misremembered the line and thus his utterance *I the wolf wanted to eat* showed that, while he did not preserve the proper grammar as far as where to place himself as the object of the sentence, he did correctly produce the past tense of *want*, which Ms. Bee had actually not provided in her example during that LRE. The matter of selection between *have* and *eat*, discussed by Bernie, Gus and Mike in Extract 5.2.6 was seemingly left unresolved as the dialogue devised for the wolf (Caleb) used both words. *Eat* was far more consistent and Caleb used *have* only the first time when he spoke the line *I'll have it*. In this case it seemed he had simply forgotten the line as it had been written, as further analysis of the video showed slight hesitation with his first few lines of dialogue. This reasoning is based on the fact that the subsequent scene at the wood house used the same dialogue as the first scene, and in that next scene, Caleb spoke the right words: *I'll eat you*. In this way, he self-corrected his own speech during the performance.

## Summary

Over the course of four lessons, constituting around one hundred minutes of work time, this group was able to select a story, complete a stage adaptation of that story in English, and rehearse it several times prior to performance. The initial selection of *Three Little Pigs* took over twenty minutes of discussion to achieve, yet once that story was selected, the group was able to complete the composition of their script in under an hour of work time. Analysis of the process data yielded no indications that any member of the group had individually completed additional work on the play outside of the scheduled class time (the time in between lessons up through day four), nor did they appear to use the supplemental worksheet for this task (see Appendix 3) as they devised their play. During the devising of the play, this group adopted the approach of translating as they devised, rather than devising their version of the story, or at least a complete outline of the plot, entirely in Japanese first prior to translation.

During devising of the story, the students supported each other by co-constructing meaning and target language. On this point the process of this Adapted Play case study showed a lot of consistency. First of all, the individual who took on the writing duties for this group (Gus) was involved in essentially every LRE discussed here, while amongst the other members, it was primarily the other two students who sat closest to him (Bernie and Mike) who contributed the most to the discussions about target language. While the group as a whole was much more evenly engaged in content creation, Ray, Jack, Dan and Caleb were typically involved in talk about language only when their respective characters' lines were being discussed. As a consequence of this, out of these four members, Caleb contributed the most to the selected LREs due to his prominent role as the wolf.

Secondly, all of the prominent LREs, these being the ones that occurred in the process and were analysed in this section, featured a lexical focus. This is, perhaps, not all that surprising as a survey of the target language they devised suggested that they were only able to devise the story with fairly simple syntax. This simple grammar, in turn, shifted focus to the most salient feature relevant to devising their story: appropriate vocabulary.

Lastly, no one contributor, besides the teachers (Mr. Reid and Ms. Bee), stood out as a truly more capable other, although at times several members of the group, particularly Gus, acted as a more capable peer and supported his peers as he wrote down the ideas he was hearing. Gus is an interesting case in particular since his responsibility puts him in direct interaction with language on two levels: oral and written. It seemed at times that he wanted to check his own understanding but initiated these episodes by asking for assistance rather than clarification. Mike seemed to benefit the most from this language talk as his willingness to help with the English dialogue, in spite of the evidence of gaps in his knowledge, was reciprocated by the others who supported his learning and their own by correcting his errors or scaffolding him to self-correct.

Perhaps the most telling feature of the LREs in this case study was how little of the overall time they represented. All of the task management and content creation that was described in the narrative summary was handled in the group's shared L1. The exceptions to this were, quite naturally, the moments of interaction when they were specifically discussing target L2 dialogue. Typically the group would translate as they went and beyond the LREs provided here, the other translations prompted no extended discussion or episodes of peer support with co-construction of knowledge. In fact, as the narrative summary strongly suggested, the members of the group were mostly preoccupied with crafting their story, and for this objective they remained engaged with the task and actively listened to each other, supported each other, and offered their own ideas in an attempt to get the story together in a way that was entertaining. This consistent engagement should not be downplayed in favour of assigning more importance to the amount of language talk and peer support of language knowledge that occurred during the entire process of the task. Clearly, as will be further discussed in chapter seven, the intrinsic motivation that the group found in this task was very likely key in sustaining their engagement and developing learning opportunities.

All of their collaborative work culminated in a performance that showed evidence, in both the memorisation of dialogue and in the smooth transitions and stage blocking, that the finished product had been rehearsed additionally outside of class time prior to the day of performance. Within the performance itself, several language issues highlighted in the

extracts appear to have been addressed as, for the most part, the students either produced the correct target language in their speech or, as with the example involving Caleb, they self-corrected over the course of the performance.

### 5.3 Case Study Two: An Original Play

As with the previous case study, this section presents an analysis of the process of devising a play, in this case a play with an original storyline. This case study was chosen from the initial study. Selected LREs are incorporated and analysed at the points in time in which they occur within the narrative summary. Each extract features the original transcript on the left, written with romanised Japanese, and the English translation *in italics* on the right. Across all extracts, the participants' turns are indicated by the first letter of their name. Therefore, H = Helen, S = Sara, J = Joan, A = Amy, N = Nancy, T = Trish, MB = Ms. Bee, (teacher) and MR = Mr. Reid (teacher). Participants' names are provided in full within the narrative summary itself.

#### Day One

Once the explanation of the devised theatre project was finished, students formed their groups and began devising their plays. Within the first minute of discussion, when Helen asked for everyone's vote on one of the three themes available (travel, shopping & leisure, or school life), the consensus was unanimous: school life. After confirming this with everyone one more time, she asked the group to brainstorm some words, per the teachers' recommendation to make use of the bottom half of the information sheet for this task (see Appendix 3), to help generate story ideas. After a minute of this, they had come up with teacher, student, test and club.

At this point, just over two minutes into the devising, Mr. Reid dropped by the group and checked their understanding of the task. He told them that since they had a topic now, it would be good to think about what kind of story they were doing, i.e., who it was about, where it took place, and so on. Once he left to check on another group, they took a minute to decide who would write for the group and Helen volunteered in the end. Four

minutes in, group talk began to drift off-task so she encouraged the group to think about the situation for the story. The initial idea, jointly proposed by her, Sara and Amy, was to build a story around students taking a test. Several vague plot ideas were put forth by the group and were considered during the next few minutes; including a situation in which a student could not locate the place to take the test and another situation in which a student mysteriously disappeared during the test. As they mulled over these ideas, Mr. Reid dropped by again quickly to remind them to write down their names on the group information sheet along with each member's character once they decided. When he left them to continue, their talk drifted off-task once again as one of the members began to tell a funny story about her uncle.

Sara and Helen tried to bring the group back on-task by imagining a story where a student tried to cheat by looking at a more capable student's answers during a test. The others seemed to think the idea was interesting and the group began to discuss what kind of roles there could be for each of them. For whatever reason, Amy said she wanted to be a chair. This joke prompted the group to laugh and once they fell silent, talk drifted off-task once more as several of them discussed what they wanted to eat for lunch. After a minute of such conversation, at around the nine minute mark, Helen brought them back to focus on the task and asked them if they had other ideas. Ms. Bee came by at this time and, upon learning that the group had selected school life but had not yet devised a story, she asked them specifically where the story took place. By which she meant, was it in the library, the classroom or during club activity? She advised them to think about a situation in one location and work on the story from there. She left to attend to other groups and the group fell into silent thought for a while until one of them began to talk off-task about a gift she had received from her parents.

As that off-task story came to an end, Helen followed up on Ms. Bee's advice and asked everyone where their story should take place. She then asked for confirmation of their current idea of a test in the classroom. The group continued to mull over this idea, but once again alternative ideas did not seem to be forthcoming as talk drifted off-task easily. Sensing this, Helen and Sara asked everyone to start a discussion about taking a test and Sara offered many students sitting on the chair as the start of their story. Before they

could develop their script from this idea, the teachers called for order for the entire class and took around two minutes to give them some quick advice on writing their plays. They then reminded the class that writing a complete plot synopsis first in Japanese was not strictly necessary as they could build a story out of conversation as they went along. They also reminded everyone of the schedule for the next three lessons and the target date for the performances. Finally, if students were having trouble, they encouraged them to look at the optional worksheet that was handed out (see Appendix 3) and see if the answers they had written about their own life experiences with the topic could help them generate ideas for their stories.

Once this advising was over, at around nineteen minutes into the lesson, Helen's group returned to work and had a look at the optional worksheet. When they thought about the questions that were asked, regarding the kind of experiences they had personally had with the topic of school life, the group looked over their sheets and shared a few laughs as they realised that none of them really had any unusual experiences with taking tests. Trish explained that she had fallen asleep once during a test, but had never tried to cheat on a test. The others nodded their heads and admitted similar experiences. This lead Helen, Sara, and Nancy to wonder if any of the ideas they had come up with so far were really sufficient for a story. As they thought about that quietly, Mr. Reid brought the class to order once again, reminded them of the plan for the next lesson, and then dismissed the class once the bell rang.

## Day Two

Mr. Reid made a couple of announcements to the class, including the expectation that each group would have a basic version of their story worked out by the end of the lesson, after which work resumed on the plays. From her efforts on the first day, Helen appeared to have become a leader of sorts for the group and called for everyone's attention. She checked to see if the group was fine with the story idea they had from the previous project day and when they gave a muted response of agreement, she asked them for a possible title. Sara offered sleeping test time as an idea, but Nancy wondered what kind of story it



would end up being. She suggested a story in which a student could not concentrate during a test. At this point, about three minutes into the lesson, Helen and Joan both agreed that a test might not work well as a situation for their story. The others have fallen silent in thought but quickly began to talk off-task about some of their friends so Helen wondered if they had any English to use for such a story. Amy, who had expressed the desire to be a chair the previous day, thought that someone should sit down on her and she could cry in pain. While this made the group laugh, the idea was not pursued further. Sara suggested that someone could say *I'm sleepy* during the test and then fall asleep. The group laughed a bit at this idea and Trish thought that maybe the teacher monitoring the exam should fall asleep as well. Helen and Nancy then wondered what the students would do in that situation. Helen asked what a student would say and Sara thought a student could shout excuse me to try and wake the teacher. Nancy offered an alternative idea for the situation at this point, suggesting that maybe a student could ask another student to take the test for them.

It was at this point when the group realised that there were not so many opportunities for conversation in a situation involving a test. They began to have an off-task conversation about a couple of TV series everyone had watched the night before, and this held the group's interest for a couple of minutes. Finally, and at almost the same time, Helen, Sara, and Nancy all suggested they should abandon the test idea and switch to a story about club activities instead. Trish suggested using the school festival and while the rest listened on, she and Nancy briefly retold an anecdote about an actual event at the school festival that had involved them. During this talk, at around ten minutes into the lesson, Ms. Bee came by and checked on their progress so far. When the group told her that they had yet to decide on a storyline, she tried to help them by inventing a situation to begin a possible story, such as a father and mother making a lunch for their child and having a conversation with that child about what they would do at school that day. She used this example to explain to the group that straight narration was not vital for their story. Instead, they could make the story with only conversation, such as in the situation she had just described. The group nodded and voiced their understanding. After Ms. Bee left them to resume their work, progress soon stalled as they tried again to generate a story

idea. Finally, Trish brought up her previous story from the school festival, something involving an untimely injury, and offered the suggestion that a similar situation during club activity might make for a good story.

Helen liked this suggestion and asked the group what club they should use. Over the next few minutes, the group named different clubs at their school and enjoyed a few laughs about the ways in which some of the clubs went about their practices. Helen seemed to sense that this was a more fruitful area for a story, and suggested they officially abandon the test idea for a story centred around a school club. The others agreed and Nancy suggested they use the tennis club since they had the amusing custom of calling out *faito, faito* (a neologism used to encourage an athlete taken from the English loan word *fight*) over and over again throughout each practice, which they could act out in the play. The others began to imagine what else could happen during tennis practice and, using Trish's suggested plot point, Amy suggested that a key club member should have an accident of some kind. Nancy liked this idea and added the suggestion that the club captain might be injured but still able to win a tournament. This idea seemed to rouse the group into more animated discussion, and they each added their own ideas to augment the basic idea, such as what kind of accident would happen and how long before the tournament that accident should occur. Trish suggested that a student could be hit by a car while trying to save a puppy in the road, and this made the others laugh.

This new story idea seemed to invigorate the group, and around twenty minutes into the lesson, Helen and Sara worked together to get ideas from the group about how the story should be structured in terms of scenes. They eventually decide to start the story at the end of tennis practice, where there would be an announcement that the captain had been injured and the rest of the team would need to train hard without her. The group then imagined that they could use gestures to show some of this practice happening and then the next scene would be the day of the tournament. Arriving at this point in the plot outline, Helen began to write down the basic synopsis of their story in Japanese. The rest of the group were distracted for a few moments by some boisterous noise from the group next to them. When they returned to focus on their work, Nancy wondered if the captain should unexpectedly come back on the day of the tournament and be able to compete.

Trish laughed at this idea and the others agreed with her that such an entrance would be very timely. It was at the point that Ms. Bee called for everyone's attention, explained the schedule for the next lesson, and dismissed class.

### Day Three

When the group reconvened for their third day of work on their story, something unexpected happened. Helen had started the day's devising by announcing that the end of club practice was the first scene. This mention of club practice produced an excited response from Nancy, who reminded the group of the school assembly that they had all just attended earlier in the day. As they began to recall the details of the assembly together, Trish reminded them of a particular presentation from that assembly when they had all heard a real-life story of a high school girl who had been approached by a strange man in the evening while she walked home from after school club. Suddenly the whole group began to talk excitedly about that story. Although some of the details were indistinct from the recording, as they recalled the story, the man first tried to lure away the girl but, meeting resistance, eventually tried to attack her. However, she was able to use self-defence martial arts to fight her way free and escape.

The group really seemed to find this story interesting and when Ms. Bee came by, at around four minutes into the lesson, the group informed her that they were going to do a story based on that incident in place of some other accident that they had discussed the previous lesson, such as a student being struck by a vehicle. Ms. Bee seemed to laugh in surprise at this, but quickly encouraged them to use the idea. She reminded them, once again, that they could avoid narration and simply set up the situation with dialogue as the students walked home from practice. Helen and Sara began to improvise the general details of such a conversation in Japanese, imagining the students saying farewell for the day, praising each other, and so on. Ms. Bee approved the idea and offered them some specific examples of the type conversation she had in mind, including let's go home together, it's hard for us to practice, and I think so, too. She checked to make sure they

understood what she meant by making the story with conversation, and when they responded affirmatively, she then left them alone to continue.

At around ten minutes in, some of the group waited for their ideas for the story to be written down and began to talk idly about other topics as they listened to Helen and Sara. For the next few minutes, as shown in Extract 5.3.1 that follows, they worked slowly to write the dialogue for the first scene.

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*Extract 5.3.1 Case study two: LRE 1*

H	Finish club? Finish club?	Finish club? Finish club?
S	Club activity tired ne.	Club activity tired.
H	Tired ne.	Tired.
S	Tsukareta ne.	<i>I'm tired.</i>
H	Bukatsu no sensei ga..	<i>The club teacher says...</i>
S	Good job. See you again.	Good job. See you again.
H	Eeto, Otsukare tte nani?	<i>Uhm... what's 'that's enough for today'?</i>
[...]		
S	Now...Now... Club activity	Now...Now... Club activity
[...]		
	Ima...Ima owatta. Nanka, owari ni? Let's finish? Kyou renshu wa...	<i>Now... Now we're finished. Something, like at the end? Let's finish? Today, practice is...</i>
H	Eeto... today..today's...today's practice... chotto ne, yaku shitakatta ga muzukashii. Dou sureba ii, watashi ga?	<i>Uhm... today..today's...today's practice... this way to translate it is a little difficult. What am I to do?</i>
S	(to A & J) Eeto, sore, bunshou dekinaizou.	(to A & J) <i>Uhm, here, we can't do this line.</i>
A	<i>[indistinct]</i> ni shirabera ii wa	<i>If you look for it in [indistinct]</i>
H	Eeto... kyou no.. today's practice...	<i>Uhm... today's...Today's practice...</i>
J	Renshuu wa owari desu.	<i>Practice is over.</i>
H	Is finish?	Is finish?
J	-Finish.	-Finish.
S	Un. Yes.	<i>Yeah. Yes.</i>
H	Is finish tte ii no?	<i>It's ok to say is finish?</i>
J	...Is finish.	...Is finish.
S	Let's finish... our English class...	Let's finish... our English class...
J	-Is finish	-Is finish
	Nan tte, koko wa? <i>[in the dictionary]</i>	<i>What did it say here? [in the dictionary]</i>

H	Nai... Today's...	<i>Nothing...Today's...</i>
S	...tte, yuwanakatta?	<i>...didn't someone say that?</i>
	Sore, kinou dakke?	<i>Like was it yesterday?</i>
J	Eh?	<i>Huh?</i>
S	Chuugakkou no toki sa, jigyou ga hajimaru toki are, sutaruto wa.	<i>Like, in junior high school, when the lesson began, the start.</i>
J	Yatta.	<i>We did that.</i>
N	Yatta, yatta.	<i>We did that, we did that.</i>
J	Are...	<i>That...</i>
N	Let's start English class.	<i>Let's start English class.</i>
S	Sou, sou.	<i>Yeah, yeah.</i>
N	-English class.	<i>-English class.</i>
A	Let's start our English class.	<i>Let's start our English class.</i>
N	Shall we mitain datta ne.	<i>It was like 'shall we'.</i>
S	Un... de, kore jigyou ga owarimasu to mo iu ne. Da kara bukatsu mo..	<i>Yup... and this is said when class is over as well. So, with clubs as well...</i>
	Let's finish our club activity.	<i>Let's finish our club activity.</i>
H	Ii jan, sore. Let's finish... nandemo hayaku...	<i>That's good, isn't it? Let's finish.. whatever quickly...</i>

---

The extended length of this extract is necessary in order to fully capture the process of knowledge co-construction that occurred as they group worked on the dialogue for the first part of their story. For the first minute or so of this discussion, Helen and Sara worked together on the English translation while the others alternated between listening in and drifting in and out of off-topic talk. Both Helen and Sara were looking for a way to say in English what Japanese students would normally say at the end of their practices. Helen seemed to have both practice and club as translations for *bukatsu* (*club activity*) (both were technically correct as usage depended on whether or not a sport was involved). Sara seemed to be certain of *club activity* since she said it multiple times. Neither one of them recognised the incorrect grammar they were using with the verb *to finish* yet they still sounded unsure of the output they offered each other. At this point, Sara asked for the assistance of the others and while Joan was aware of what they wanted to say in English, she did not know how to answer Helen's question about whether it was required and simply repeated *is finish* twice without conviction.

As chance would have it, Sara suddenly recalled the expression *let's finish English class*, which she explained she thought she remembered hearing the day before. She then went on to explain that she remembered a similar expression in junior high school, *let's start English class*, and several others remembered hearing that as well, including Amy, who recited the more accurate *let's start our English class*. This exchange was important since Sara had earlier tried to translate a similar expression *ima owata* (*we're finished*) as simply *let's finish* to convey the same meaning. This brief interchange with her peers allowed her to work out a possible expression in English to use at the end of practice, one that included *let's*, *finish* and *club activity*. Therefore, by seeking the support of others and thinking about the ensuing discussion they had, Sara was able to achieve a target utterance she struggled to think of on her own.

When the first scene had been finished, Sara asked Amy what happened to her leg and this prompted an off-topic conversation about her accident the day before. Sara listened for a while then turned back to check on Helen's progress. When they reached the point of the story when the club's coach was to warn the students to be wary of suspicious individuals in town, Helen asked Joan to look up the word *henshitsusha* (*pervert*) in her dictionary. Extract 5.3.2 shows the details of this exchange.

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Extract 5.3.2 Case study two: LRE 2

H	Oshirase nan dakke?	What's 'announcement'?
S	Eh...	Uh...
H	Be careful! Chui mo shite ne. Be careful henshitsusha... (to A) Henshitsusha shirabete ne.	Be careful! <i>They give a warning</i> . Be careful of <i>suspicious persons</i> . (to A) <i>Look up 'suspicious person'</i> .
S	Demo sa...crazy...	Well...crazy...
H	Crazy man? (laughs)	Crazy man? (laughs)
J	Un. Crazy man. (A hands H her dictionary)	Yeah. Crazy man. (A hands H her dictionary)
H	Nandemo dettenai.	<i>I don't see anything</i> .
A	Eh? (Helen gives back the dictionary)	<i>Huh?</i> (Helen gives back the dictionary)
H	Dettenai.	<i>I don't see it</i> .
A	Eh?	<i>Huh?</i>

	(A types something and then hands the dictionary back to H)	(Amy types something and then hands the dictionary back to H)
H	(reading) Pah-varuto	(reading) Pah-varuto
J	Crazy?	Crazy?
H	Demo, crazy man ni shiyou?	<i>Well, should we use crazy man?</i>
S	Crazy.	Crazy.
H	Be careful crazy man ni shiyou?	<i>Should we use be careful crazy man?</i>

---

In this extract, no one in the group had the knowledge of how to translate *henshitsusha* (*degenerate; pervert*) but they all were familiar with the English word *crazy* which seemed roughly equivalent in their minds. Helen wanted to use the actual translation for *henshitsusha*, but upon encountering difficulty with pronouncing the word *pervert*, she quickly changed her mind. From this, it would seem that everyone in the group thought that *crazy man* and *degenerate/pervert* were close enough in meaning to further justify the switch. Of equal interest in this extract is the fact that the group collectively had a gap in their knowledge and failed to recognise the incorrect use of *be careful* in the dialogue they wrote. One of two options would have provided a quick and suitable fix: either keep *be careful* as a separate imperative clause and add a second sentence such as *there is a crazy man (in town)* or simply switch *be careful* with *watch out [for]*. It would seem that neither option occurred to them, and regrettably, when Ms. Bee stopped by later to check their progress, this particular sentence was glossed over without the error being noticed. Therefore, in this case, a lexically-themed episode of language talk did not result in a member of the group stretching their existing interlanguage through co-construction of meaning. Instead, Helen consolidated her knowledge with the group, and upon encountering the target language for the first time, quickly avoided it.

At this point, around fifteen minutes in, Helen needed to cough too much and so while she cleared her throat, she asked Joan to look over the dialogue while she explained the plot they had written so far. Joan thought everything looked fine and gave the paper back. They picked up the story where they left off and worked out the next scene where two students were walking home together. This work is shown in Extract 5.3.3. below.

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Extract 5.3.3 Case study two: LRE 3

H	Student ichi wa, ikimasen ka?	<i>Student one says, shouldn't we go?</i>
S	Eeto... could you...	<i>Uhm... could you...</i>
H	Could you?	<i>Could you?</i>
S	Could you...ride-	<i>Could you... ride-</i>
H	Chigau yo.	<i>That's not right.</i>
S	Nan dakke? You...your house?	<i>What is it? You...your house?</i>
	Let's go home with me.... Sure.	<i>Let's go home with me... Sure.</i>
	Today's homework...	<i>Today's homework...</i>
H	Today's homework is... today's homework....	<i>Today's homework is... today's homework...</i>
S	Un. Ii ne.	<i>Yeah. Nice.</i>
H	Today's homework is...?	<i>Today's homework is...?</i>
	Seito ni ga, 'What is today's homework?'	<i>Student two says, 'What is today's homework?'</i>

The extract continues a few turns later:

H	Ja... what is...	<i>Ok...what is....</i>
S	It's English homework.	<i>It's English homework.</i>
H	Eh, it's...	<i>Uh, it's</i>
S	It was?	<i>It was?</i>
H	It is... It's? It is? Dochi?	<i>It is... It's? It is? Which one?</i>
S	It's... It was... was janai yo.	<i>It's... It was... It's not was.</i>
	It's English homework.	<i>It's English homework.</i>
H	It's English and Japanese datte yokune?	<i>It's English and Japanese, isn't also good?</i>
S	Un.	<i>Yeah.</i>
H	Kore mijikai kana. Mou nikko no bunshou ni suru?	<i>I wonder if this is short. Should we do two more sentences?</i>
S	Me too. Oh no!	<i>Me too. Oh no!</i>
H	Seito ichi...	<i>Student one...</i>
S	A lot of homework.	<i>A lot of homework.</i>
H	Oh no?	<i>Oh no?</i>
S	Oh no. A lot of... sore de ooisugiru nan to iu?	<i>Oh no. A lot of... how do you say 'that's too much?'</i>
H	'A lot of homework' de ii?	<i>Is 'A lot of homework' ok?</i>
S	Un.	<i>Yeah.</i>



H	( <i>writing</i> ) A lot of homework	( <i>writing</i> ) A lot of homework.
S	Ni bun mo yoku kana. A lot of many...	<i>Maybe two is also good. A lot of many...</i>
H	Ii ja ne. Tonikaku, koko seito ni ga...	<i>It's fine. Anyway, here student two...</i>
S	Ganbatte. Faito.	<i>Do your best. Fight.</i>
H	Eh... Oh no, a lot of homework.	Eh... Oh no, a lot of homework.
S	Ganbatte Faito?	<i>Do your best. Fight?</i>
H	Eeto...	<i>Uhm...</i>
S	I'm help you.	I'm help you.
H	I'm help you.?	I'm help you?
S	Eeto... May I help you?	<i>Uhm... May I help you?</i>
H	Eh...	<i>Uh...</i>
S	Testudateagemashouka?	<i>Shall I help you?</i>
H	May I help you?	May I help you?

---

In this extract, one can clearly see the way in which Helen and Sara supported each other as they worked on the English dialogue for their story. As far as the storyline was considered, they had reached a decision with the group that two students should go home together after club practice had finished. Following the teacher's suggestion from earlier in the lesson, they further decided to have the two students have a short conversation as they walked home from school. So, in this extract, Helen first conceived of the opening line of dialogue in Japanese. From the five turns that follow, it appeared that neither Sarah nor Helen could think of the more direct translation that they sought. Sara might have been trying to translate a different expression with her use of *could*, or possibly she was mistranslating the Japanese in her mind. In either case, she soon abandoned that phrase and offered *let's go home with me*. As she did not later self-correct this, and moreover, Helen did not correct this either, it would appear to be a shared gap in their knowledge that they worked around by constructing a phrase with a roughly equivalent meaning and pragmatic function. From this point, they switched strategies and formulated conversation in English without first doing so in Japanese. To elicit Sara's assistance, Helen repeated the phrase *today's homework is* several times as a continuer. As they thought about student two's response, Helen asked Sara for clarification on whether *it is* or *it's* was more appropriate. Thinking aloud, Sara seemed to think the question had to do with verb tense, but nevertheless she decided that *it's* was the right choice.

They both worried if the conversation was too short and decided to add a few more lines of dialogue. Sara continued in her attempts to create English dialogue without first making the sentences in Japanese and then translating. When she thought of *a lot of homework*, she shifted to other-correction and asked Helen if they should expand that phrase to include *many* as well, but Helen told her she thought the sentence was fine as it was. While there was no audible evidence that Helen acknowledged the ungrammaticality of *a lot of many*, she nevertheless avoided writing down that construction. From this point, she continued to spur on Sara to think of more dialogue but she signalled uncertainty with Sara's line *I'm help you*. Sara seemed to acknowledge this error and immediately offered the phrase *may I help you*. While this was not the most appropriate translation, what she then told Helen was the Japanese meaning (*shall I help you [with it]?*) would be closer to the L1 meaning of *tetsudateagemashouka*, Helen seemed satisfied with Sara's self-correction and they progressed onward with the story from then.

As Helen and Sara finished writing down that scene, the others in the group mulled over when the mysterious attacker would appear. Ms. Bee stopped by again and looked over their script so far. She made some further suggestions for things the students could say and then listened as Amy and Nancy explained the climax of the story where one of the girls fends off the attacker with martial arts. The teacher suggested that the young student should say something like *don't touch me* or *help me* first. This prompted the group to discuss how the fight ended and also, as shown in Extract 5.3.4 below, how to say self-defence in English.

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*Extract 5.3.4 Case study two: LRE 4*

MB	Da kara, student one ga, I just learned goshinjutsu today toka...	<i>Therefore, student one says something like, I just learned goshinjutsu today...</i>
H	Ah...	Ah...
MB	Goshinjutsu eigo wo tsukaeba ii ne.	<i>It'd be good to say 'goshinjutsu' in English.</i>
H	Hai.	Yes.
A	Goshinjutsu nan dakke? (looks it up in the dictionary)	<i>What is 'goshinjutsu'? (looks it up in the dictionary)</i>
MB	Self nan darou.	<i>Self something.</i>
H	I learned...	<i>I learned...</i>

MB	Self.. nantte, Shinjutsu?	Self... <i>what is it, shinjutsu?</i>
N	Nai	<i>I don't see it.</i>
H	Nan to iu no? Today I learn...	<i>How do you say it?</i> Today I learn...
S	Today I learned...eh... I...	Today I learned...eh...I...
A	-Atta!	-Here it is!
H	Nan dakke? Learned to do iu imi?	<i>What is it? What does 'learned' mean?</i>
A,N	(reading) Art of self defence.	(reading) Art of self-defence.
MB	Defence ka? Self-defence.	<i>It's defence? Self-defence.</i>
H	Today I learn...	Today I learn...
MB	Learned.	Learned.
H	Learned.	Learned.
MB	The art...	The art...
H	The... ar-...art?	The... ar-...art?
MB	Art.	Art.
H	Art.	Art.
MB	Art of... nani?	Art of... <i>what?</i>
N	Self-defence.	Self-defence.
A	Defence.	Defence.

---

The role and influence of the teacher, Ms. Bee, a more capable other, was shown in this extract. As the extract began, Helen was explaining the plot of their story while Ms. Bee checked their script. Ms. Bee then reminded them of the important plot detail of the self-defence martial art which, in the real-life story this was based off of, the student had apparently just learned earlier that day. So, from this idea, she suggested that they should mention it explicitly, but it was clear that her support for the students could not provide them with the language for the entire target sentence as even she seemed unaware of the complete translation for *goshinjutsu* (*a form of self-defence martial art*). In this case, the specifics of the story being recalled resulted in something similar to other-regulated knowledge co-construction for both Ms. Bee and the students. Nevertheless, this extract demonstrated what kind of language output a few brief moments of teacher-led intervention produced.

As both Ms. Bee and the rest of the group recited the chosen dialogue so Helen could write it down, Mr. Reid brought the class to order, made a quick announcement about the schedule for the final lesson of devising, and then dismissed everyone.

## Day Four

While the others listened on, Helen began the final day's work by briefly recapping their story so far. Ms. Bee dropped by and heard the latter half of the synopsis. She gave the group her opinion that the story was not finished and suggested, by way of an example, that one of the students could say something like *I call a policeman* during the climax of the story when the other student was fending off the attacker. The group thought that was a good idea and talked about that part of the story after Ms. Bee left them to continue their work. Extract 5.3.5 shows the details of this work.

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### Extract 5.3.5 Case study two: LRE 5

J	I call /di/ policeman.	I call /di/ policeman.
H	I called... I call?	I called... I call?
J	I call policeman? Called?	I call policeman? Called?
H	Police. Call. Ii yo. Police.	Police. Call. <i>It's fine</i> . Police.
	Today...I learned the... art of	<i>And then...</i> Today...I learned the...
	to naru... Don't touch me.	art of... Don't touch me.

The extract continues after five turns.

	I call policeman. Tsugi wa?	I call policeman. <i>What's next?</i>
	{indistinct}	{indistinct}
	I call policeman de, nani?	I call policeman, <i>then what?</i>
J	I call policeman...	I call policeman...
S	Hurry up, policeman.	Hurry up, policeman.
N	Hurry up!	Hurry up!
H	Hurry up.	Hurry up.
	Seito ni...	<i>Student two...</i>
S	Hurry up! Hurry up! Hurry up!	Hurry up! Hurry up! Hurry up!
H	Eh... Hurry up policeman de ii no?	<i>Uhh... So, 'Hurry up policeman' is ok?</i>

The extract continues after four turns.

N	Hurry up, koko, demo nanka sa.	<i>Here, 'hurry up', but you know...</i>
H	Un. Kaketa.	<i>Yeah. It's written down.</i>

N	Atashi konai [indistinct] toka sa.	<i>I don't come [indistinct] or whatever.</i>
H	Eh? Basho toka kaita hou ga ee kana. 'Place is' mitai na...	<i>What? Maybe it's better if we wrote the place. Like, 'Place is'.</i>
J	Sou desu.	<i>Yeah, like that.</i>

The extract continues after 11 turns.

H	Place is nani?	Place is <i>what</i> ?
S	Place is... my house is before.	Place is... my house is before.
H	My house is before?	My house is before?
S	Near my room.	Near my room.
H	Chigee na! Near... near park toka, ii?	<i>That's not it! Is something like 'near... near park' ok?</i>
S	Un... near...	<i>Yeah...near...</i>
H	Demo, this is...I am policeman. Please...eh...ah! Hurry up, policeman! The place is near park tte ii kana?	<i>But, this is... I am policeman. Please...eh...ah! Is it ok to say, 'Hurry up, policeman! The place is near park'?</i>
S	0...1...1.	0...1...1.
H	Near park...	Near park...

In this extract, there were several successive short episodes of target language co-construction. At the start, Joan attempted to say *I called policeman* but her pronunciation of /-ed / prompted Helen to clarify if she meant the past tense or present tense of *call*. Joan seemed somewhat confused by this and repeated both options back to get Helen's opinion. Helen then corrected the error and carried on writing the script. This other-correction was done without any further acknowledgement that the target sentence they devised was not an appropriate use of the present tense given the context in which it was spoken.

In the next part of the extract, four different members briefly contributed, or repeated to reinforce approval of, possible dialogue. While *hurry up, policeman* might not be considered a severe error of usage, Helen did try to engage in other-regulation by asking the others if such a phrase was acceptable. A few turns later, when several of the group members resumed the discussion, it turned out that she was not concerned with the grammaticality of the sentence, but whether it was enough for the character to say given

the situation. They figured out that they needed the student to tell the policeman where she was, and Helen seemed to think the construction would follow the Japanese form, as she said *place is*, which would be a direct translation of *basho wa (the place [is])*. Sara responded to this prompt for ideas by trying to generate content directly in English. Helen questioned her suggestion of *place is... my house is before* without identifying any error in particular as the source of her confusion. Sara then self-corrected by using an alternative phrase which, as Helen's reaction indicated, moved further away from what they needed. Helen then finally finished the sentence with her own suggestion, and, after twice checking if it was suitable, wrote it down and proceeded to the next part of the story.

Helen reread the story back to everyone with the new dialogue and after the group fell silent in thought, Joan had the idea that the policeman should say something complimentary to the students since they had defended themselves from an attacker. As Extract 5.3.6 shows, by working together, they came up with a final line of dialogue that they all seemed satisfied with.

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*Extract 5.3.6 Case study two: LRE 6*

H	Ah. Koko de yareba ii, great?	<i>Oh. Would it be good to say 'great' here?</i>
A	Oo, ii ne. Policeman, great.	<i>Ooh, nice. Policeman, great.</i>
H	Policeman, "oh great!"	<i>Policeman, "oh great!"</i>
N	Oh great!	<i>Oh great!</i>
J	[name of school] wa... very great.	<i>[name of school] is... very great.</i>
H	Ah, ii ne. Great.	<i>Oh, nice one. Great.</i>
J	[name of school]...is very great.	<i>[name of school]... is very great.</i>
N	...is very great.	<i>...is very great.</i>
H	Ja, mazu, oh great, oh great.	<i>So, first, oh great, oh great.</i>
	[...] Jigyō ga subarashii ne. Eeto...	<i>[...] Class was great. Uhm...</i>
	wonderful.	<i>wonderful.</i>
A	Oh great! Dekai wa, sore.	<i>Oh great! That [word] is big.</i>
J	Yutteru?	<i>You're saying it?</i>
H	Policeman.	<i>Policeman.</i>
A	Policeman ga iu no?	<i>The policeman says it?</i>

The extract continues after four turns.

H	Policeman mo futari ni suru?	<i>Should we do two policeman?</i>
N	Ah, sou da ne.	<i>Oh, that's an idea.</i>
H	Sou, policeman ichi ga, "oh great".	<i>So, policeman one says, "oh great"</i>
	Hai. [...]	<i>Yes. [...]</i>
J	Nani wo?	<i>What?</i>
H	[name of school]...	<i>[name of school]...</i>
J	[name of school] is... [...]	<i>[name of school] is... [...]</i>
	Is?... Is de nani?	<i>Is?... What's after 'is'?</i>
H	[name of school] is... subarashii.	<i>[name of school] is... wonderful.</i>
J	Wonderful. Won-	<i>Wonderful. Won-</i>
N	-[name of school]	<i>-[name of school]</i>
	student...	<i>student...</i>
H	Ah, ii ne. School....	<i>Oh, nice. School...</i>
J	Student...	<i>Student...</i>
H	Student... are? Fukusukei ni suru?	<i>Student...are? Should we make it plural?</i>
	Students are...	<i>Students are...</i>
N	Very wonderful.	<i>Very wonderful.</i>
A	Eh? Wonderful yutteru?	<i>Huh? You're saying 'wonderful'?</i>
H	Un. Great demo...very...wonderful.	<i>Yeah. Or great [is ok too]... very... wonderful.</i>

At the start of this extract, several of the students follow Helen's suggestion to have someone say *great* to the students and eventually, after input from several members, they settled on *[this] high school's students are very wonderful*. This extract, in particular, illustrated how the process of devising dialogue could, in fact, involve several students collectively supporting each other with language construction for an extended span of time by offering reactions and repetitions as a form of positive recognition of the contribution, and making further suggestions for the given target sentence. At the end, Helen seemed to sense a grammatical issue and asked about the use of the plural for this sentence, which led to her support her own learning, and the rest of the group, by suggesting that it might be better with a plural subject.

With the addition of that dialogue, the story was nearing completion. Helen read through the second half of the story again for everyone and, after hearing how it ended,

Joan suggested that the character of student one needed to say something when the attacker first arrived as well. This prompted Helen, Sara and Joan to quickly devise a line of dialogue for that character to say. Extract 5.3.7 shows the details of this work.

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*Extract 5.3.7 Case study two: LRE 7*

H	'Sore, ja', eigo de nan to iu?	<i>How do you say 'sore, ja' in English?</i>
S	See you again.	See you again.
H	(trying to get Joan's attention) Sore ja, nan dakke?	(trying to get Joan's attention) What's 'sore ja'?
S	Goodbye.	Goodbye.
H	Un, sore wa bye bye.	No, that's bye bye.
S	See you.	See you.
H	Sore mo bye bye.	That's also bye bye.
	(to Joan) Ne, ne. Wakata no?	(to Joan) Hey, hey. Do you know it?
J	'Sore ja'?	'Well then?'
	(J looks up something in her dictionary)	(J looks up something in her dictionary)
	[...]	[...]
	Well, I must be going.	Well, I must be going.
H	Sore ni suru?	Should we use that?
	Kaku, bunsho.	I'm writing the sentence.
	(preparing to write)	(preparing to write)
	Goodbye....	Goodbye...
J	I must be going.	I must be going.
H	Well, I must be going.	Well, I must be going.
	Ok.	Ok.
N	I must be going.	I must be going.
H	Ah, machigatta. Gomen. Ii yo.	Whoops, I messed up. Sorry. It's ok.
	Arigatou.	Thanks.
	[...]	[...]
	(reading) Thank you. Well, I must be going.	(reading) Thank you. Well, I must be going.
S	See you.	See you.
H	Kore ii, kana? Seito ichi ga 'Thank you. Bye bye' mitai na.	Is this ok? Student one says something like 'Thank you. Bye bye'.
S	Goodbye.	Goodbye.
H	Seito ichi serifu oi ne.	Student one has a lot of lines.

---



In this extract, Helen once again initiates an LRE with her group by asking for the translation of *sore ja (well then)*. In Japanese, an unfinished expression starting with *well then* would have the same sort of implied meaning as it would English, namely that the person speaking wanted to end the conversation and be on their way. Sara offered three different suggestions for an equivalent in English, but Helen corrected her by pointing out that *goodbye* and *see you* both meant something else and then asked Joan for help again. Joan could not offer a translation and consulted her dictionary to find the expression *I must be going*. Helen seemed to think that this was sufficient and wrote it down while Nancy looked on and then read the expression from the dictionary again for her. Sara seemed to anticipate the next line of dialogue and tried to offer *see you* one more time as a possibility, but after Helen thought the character should just say something like *bye bye*, Sara self-corrected and used another one of her previous suggestions, *goodbye again*. In this collaborative episode, it seemed as if Sara was trying to find a good fit for the language she initially uttered. However, Helen seemed certain that the expression they were looking for was different and corrected Sara accordingly several times.

With those additional lines added in, Helen called for everyone's attention and talked about distributing parts for each student. As they had already decided, everyone in the group was involved in the opening scene where the students were finishing practice. After that point, two of the characters had a majority of the remaining dialogue, and Helen noticed that the character of the attacker actually had no dialogue at all. With less than ten minutes left in the lesson, they hurried to figure out something that they could have the attacker say. This devising of that dialogue is shown in Extract 5.3.8 below.

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*Extract 5.3.8 Case study two: LRE 8*

H	Ne, dou suru? Fushinsha nanka yuwaseru?	<i>Hey, what should we do? Have the suspicious person say something?</i>
J	Kawaii gyaru.	<i>Cute girl.</i>
H	Oh. I look cute girl.	<i>Oh. I look cute girl.</i>
J	Look cute girl.	<i>Look cute girl.</i>
H	Oh. Go home.	<i>Oh. Go home.</i>
J	Kawaii tte.	<i>He says, 'cute'.</i>

H	You... very cute.	You... very cute.
J	Eeto, you are... very beautiful.	<i>Uhm... you are... very beautiful.</i>
H	I love you.	I love you.
J	Ojisan to dokka ikanai? (laughter)	<i>Won't you go somewhere with an older man?</i> (laughter)
H	Go to...?	Go to...?
J	Go to...	Go to...
H	Doko ka... Where?	<i>Where?...Where?</i>
J	Oshokuji?	<i>Dinner?</i>
S	Go to home together.	Go to home together.
J	Nanka to iu kana. Ocha?	<i>I wonder what he should say. Tea?</i>
H	Ocha shiyouse? Eeto...	<i>Let's have tea. Uhm...</i>
S	Let's go together.	Let's go together.
J	Ee... kisaten ni chotto ikitai.	<i>Uh... I kinda want to go to a cafe.</i>
H	Go to... kisa.	Go to... <i>cafe</i> .
J	{indistinct}	{Indistinct}
H	Ja, so shiyouse? (reading) I know you can do it. Nani kore? Oh no! A lot of homework. Kore ni, fushinsha... sore dake de ii kana.	<i>Well, shall we do it that way? (reading) I know you can do it. What's this? Oh no! A lot of homework. Here, the suspicious person... I wonder if just this is fine.</i>
[...]	[...]	[...]
	Fushinsha nani? You are cute?	<i>The suspicious person [says] what? You are cute?</i>
J	Un.	<i>Yeah.</i>
H	You are cute. Let's go... Let's go nantoka... Let's go with me. Iya da to yutte kara no? Let's go... kisaten.	<i>You are cute. Let's go... Let's go something. Let's go with me. And then it's from when you say, 'no way!' Let's go... tea shop.</i>
J	Kisaten ka coffee shop?	<i>Tea shop or coffee shop?</i>
H	Eh. ja, let's go drink tea together.	<i>Uh. Well, let's go drink tea together.</i>
J	Famiri resu.	<i>Family restaurant.</i>
H	Let's go... famiri resto.	Let's go... /famiri resuto/.
J	Family restaurant.	Family restaurant.
H	Famiresu.	/famiresu/
N	Nande famiresu to omatta no?	<i>Why did you think of family restaurant?</i>
H	Let's go famiri resu together.	Let's go /famiri resu/ together?
J	Family resu tte, family restaurant? restaurant?	<i>You say '/famiri resu/', [that's] family restaurant?</i>
H	Famiresu. (laughs). Famiresu. Eh, koko, seito ni ga.... sorry...	<i>/famiresu/. (laughs) /famiresu/. Uh, here, would student two say like... 'sorry...</i>

	sorry, not mitai na?	sorry not?
J	[...]	[...]
H	Eh de, sorry, I'm not mitai ne.	<i>Uh, then, something like 'Sorry, I'm not'.</i>
J	Sou?	<i>Like that?</i>
H	Eh? I'm sorry. I'm high school student mitai na?	<i>Huh? Something like 'I'm sorry. I'm high school student?'</i>
J	Doushite?	<i>Why?</i>
H	Kokosei da kara iya.	<i>She says 'no way' since she's a high-schooler.</i>

---

In the first half of this extract, the group devised some dialogue for the attacker to say but no one acknowledged the ungrammaticality of the language they constructed. They were able to try out a few ideas directly in English when they became stalled, and Helen repeated the unfinished line of dialogue as a continuer to encourage the others. Yet it would appear that, in the moment of devising that dialogue, they were unable to come up with a full translation of what they wanted to write. In order to complete that sentence, Helen read through the scene again and then worked out a couple of alternative ideas aloud. Joan vocalised no preference and simply wondered about what kind of cafe to say. Helen then managed to devise a perfectly acceptable sentence, *let's go drink tea together*, but Joan wanted to change the location and thus did not offer support for Helen's construction. Helen, in turn, voiced a little uncertainty about the suggestion but appeared to defuse such criticism by joking about the sound of the Japanese abbreviation of the loan word *famiresu* (*family restaurant*).

As they worked to finish the attacker's dialogue discussed above, Mr. Reid dropped by and gave them encouragement about their progress and then spent a few moments reminding them about the expectations for the performances in the following week and urged them to rehearse the story some in class while all of the group members were already gathered together. As he left them to carry on, Helen, Sara and Joan had a look at the scene with the attacker one more time. As Extract 6.3.9 shows, they finally decided on a last additional line of dialogue for student one to say to the attacker prior to calling the police for help.

H	You are cute. Let's go together.	You are cute. Let's go together.
S	(to self) Don't worry you can do it.	(to self) Don't worry you can do it.
H	Eh?	What?
J	Kyou, itsumo yori hayaku kaeru yo... I'll be come back home early from to class today.	Today, I'm going home earlier than usual. I'll be come back home early from to class today.
H	I have to... I have to... go home early de ii? (writing) I have to...	Is I have to... I have to... go home early ok? (writing) I have to...
J	Early. Today.	Early. Today.
H	Ok.	Ok.
S	Early.	Early.
H	(reading) I have to go home early.	(reading) I have to go home early.
J	Ne. Kochi iinagara... kochi iu toki wa... (Mr.Reid calls for quiet)	Hey. While she says this... when she says this... (Mr.Reid calls for quiet)

---

In this extract, the group attempted to add a last little bit of dialogue to the story while some of the group copied their lines from Helen's paper. Helen again arrived at the attacker's dialogue and this prompted Joan to suggest an alternative. However, as Joan first devised a line in Japanese, she had difficulty translating it into English. Helen sensed the ungrammaticality of Joan's utterance, but rather than correct her, she supported her by recasting a simpler alternative sentence form based on expressing obligation. While this alternative was not directly related to Joan's previous utterance, in the context of the scene, it made sense to suggest it as a pragmatic means of parting ways. Joan then acknowledged her support of this suggestion by reminding Helen to add *today* to the sentence. Sara also repeated *early* as Helen wrote down the sentence. However, when Helen read back what she had wrote, *today* was not used and Joan did not seem to pursue the matter further, instead turning her attention to the next part of the dialogue.

As Helen wrote down what they had discussed, Ms. Bee called for everyone's attention in the class and told them the schedule for the next class, which would be the performances. The teachers had decided to give everyone five minutes of final prep time on the day of performances for last minute rehearsals, but Mr. Reid advised them to be

ready to perform at the start of class at any rate as there would be little time for them to make crib sheets, memorise their lines, or work on blocking. With that announcement finished, class was dismissed.

## Day Five

As with case study one, this group's performance occurred on the fifth day of the devised theatre tasks. The order of group presentations was randomly determined, and Helen's group went fourth. Despite the difficulties in settling on a storyline during the first two days of devising the play, this group performed their play with their dialogue committed to memory. They evidently had also managed to rehearse at some point in time before this day, as they employed a variety of stage blocking in their performance that had not been discussed during class time. Finally, they settled on four of the group members doubling roles, so that there would be enough characters to fill out the scenes. The performance overall was good considering the short amount of time they took to complete the dialogue once they finally settled on a suitable plot. That being stated, a lack of sufficient rehearsal was evident at a few moments, particularly during the transitions between scenes, as the girls had to whisper and surreptitiously gesture to one another to move the play along. Additionally, voice levels faltered now and then as either the individuals in question had a bit of trouble reciting their lines or, as in the case of Nancy, she clearly found her role amusing and had trouble delivering her dialogue without laughing. Figure 5.2 on the following page shows the transcript of their performance. As with the first case study, words were not phonetically transcribed and slight hesitations in speech were not indicated.

Figure 5.2 Case study two final performance: School life theme (after-school club)

Characters: H= student 1; S= student 2; J= club member, policewoman 1; A= club captain;  
N= club member, suspicious man; T= club member, policewoman 2

1	A	Come here.	H	Sorry!
		Let's finish our practice.		I have to go home early...
	HSJNT	Thank you very much.	20	S
	A	Good job.		Don't touch me!
		Be careful crazy man.		Please help me!
	HSJNT	Thank you.		Today I learned the art of self defence.
		See you.	H	I will call policeman.
	H	Let's go home with me.		Hurry up, police man.
	S	Sure.		Place is near park.
10	H	What is today's homework?	T	Let's go.
	S	It's English and Japanese.	J	You students are very wonderful.
	H	Oh no!		
		A lot of homework.	30	HS
	S	I know you can do it.		Thank you.
		(a suspicious man appears)	H	Well, I must be going to home.
	N	You are cute.	S	Good bye.
		Let's go forest together..	H	Bye bye.

In reviewing the final performance for the group, both Helen and Sara's more active and consistent roles in the construction of target language (throughout the selected LREs discussed previously) was evidenced by the fact that they assumed the on-stage duties of the two characters with the most dialogue in the play. The final version of the play maintained the basic content and dialogue that they had devised, with a few exceptions. First, in Extract 5.3.8 (briefly recapitulated in Extract 5.3.9), Helen and Joan had discussed what to have the suspicious man (played by Nancy) say to both Student One and Student Two. However, none of their ideas made it into the final script as Nancy said the line *let's go forest together*. Either Nancy used the target structure *let's go [somewhere] together* and simply improvised the location, or this revision was made outside of class between day four and five. Additionally, in the second scene (after the club had finished) Sara said to Helen, *I know you can do it*. This line of dialogue was actually spoken by Sara to

herself in Extract 5.3.9 as Helen was writing a different part of the story. It would appear that Sara had written this line down at some point in time after Extract 5.3.3, since later on in Extract 5.3.8, when Helen read over the script out loud, she came to that utterance and briefly asked *nani kore?* (*what's this?*) but then carried on reading without further inquiry.

The performance itself showed mixed results as far as the uptake of peer-supported language knowledge was concerned. In Extract 5.3.1, the group had mulled over what to say when a practice finished. The final line that they decided on, *let's finish our practice*, was the result of the extended discussion shown in that extract. The line of dialogue *be careful crazy man* similarly remained intact from the form it took as a result of the languaging shown in Extract 5.3.2. However, they retained this dialogue without any member of the group acknowledging the grammatical issues it had. In Extract 6.3.3, Helen and Sarah had collaborated to think of a sympathetic or supportive response that Student Two could say to Student One when they talked about homework. That extract had left the matter unresolved, as the two were not successful in co-constructing a suitable utterance. However, as discussed in the previous paragraph, Sara eventually overcame this gap during performance by saying *I know you can do it*. The line of dialogue regarding self-defence martial arts, co-constructed with Ms. Bee in Extract 5.3.4, found its way into the performance intact and Sara managed to pronounce the expression from memory with notable hesitation. In this instance, the jointly constructed utterance seemed unwieldy and difficult for her to say with any fluency. The dialogue that Helen, Sara, Joan and Nancy had devised to end the scene with the suspicious male attacker (discussed in Extracts 5.3.5 through 5.3.7) were preserved with the grammatical errors still intact. In these cases, while the peer support available in the LREs helped them to use their conceptual creativity to devise dialogue and fill out the scene, they were not able to further acknowledge gaps in their grammatical knowledge at the same time. Finally, as noted previously, the dialogue of the attacker, discussed in Extracts 5.3.8 and 5.3.9, was in the same form in the final performance as it was in those extracts save for the location used in Nancy's second line. As with the rest of that final scene, minor ungrammatical

aspects were not recognised and corrected, either by Nancy herself, or by one of her peers, indicating gaps in their knowledge that peer support could not help fill.

## Summary

In the span of roughly one hundred minutes spread out over four weeks, this group of six girls managed to craft an original story with a clear sequence of scenes despite the considerable setbacks they had deciding on the details of that story. Their initial idea of basing a story around students taking a test left them unable to devise a basic storyline, but it took until the second lesson for them to make a switch to a different context for their story. Even with a seemingly more fruitful subject matter selected, it was the chance occurrence of a school assembly a few hours before the third day of devising that ultimately helped them decide on the details of their story. This sequence of events left them with less than forty minutes to write all of the dialogue for their play. With this procedural limitation, they were able to complete their story but were not able to rehearse the story at all during the lessons. Additionally, in contrast to the group in Case Study One, this group, along with three other groups in their same class, were not sufficiently prepared on the fourth day to practice their plays in front of another group and thus they were unable to exchange feedback.

In terms of collaboration, the narrative summary made it clear that the division of labor became somewhat unbalanced once work turned to devising English dialogue. As with case study one from this chapter, the devising of dialogue was primarily overseen by the group member who was writing down the script (Helen) and the one or two of her fellow group members who were sitting closest to her (Sara and Amy, primarily, across the four days). One point of contrast for this group was that the roles for each student to play in the story did not seem to be so firmly set, or at least, the matter was seldom discussed during devising of the dialogue. Consequently, unlike with the other case study group, the members of this group did not always take part in devising English dialogue for their own character. In fact, it was primarily Helen and Sara who took the story ideas of the group and, based on each scene in the story, tried initially to work out some appropriate



dialogue while still involving the other's when possible. Helen, in particular, continually used her reading and re-reading of previous dialogue or unfinished dialogue as continuers aimed at eliciting confirmation or alternatives from her fellow members. In spite of this effort, however, this particular group had instances in which two separate conversations, one on-task and one off-task, were occurring at the same time. Given that the students involved in the off-task talk, Amy and Nancy, still offered suggestions or reactions to certain dialogue choices, the other group members seemed able to pay attention without always taking an active role in the devising of English dialogue. Finally, one student in the group, Trish, actually made no contribution to the LREs at all, even though she had been more actively involved in devising the storyline. In such a large group, this sort of experience had to be expected for some of the groups, especially if the group failed to effectively manage and balance the workload. It would be too simple, perhaps, to conclude that the time pressure that the group faced, towards the end of the task, facilitated such a workload imbalance, but such a factor as a limited amount of time to devise English dialogue might have at least been partially responsible for how the workload was distributed during the final two days of devising. Additionally, as the first two days of work demonstrated, the procedures and scaffolding (via teacher guidance and the supplemental worksheets) were insufficient for the needs of this particular group.

Case study one showed almost exclusive use of the L1 outside of discussion related specifically to target language, and this case study showed similar trends. Additionally, the LREs in case study two were also primarily discussions of lexis and these LREs occurred as dialogue was improvised and then either corrected, further refined, or cast aside in favour of alternatives. A few grammar-based LRE's also occurred, but the initiations of these particular episodes were not strictly tied to the acknowledgment or correction of an error. As with much of the devising, such LREs occurred when one of the group members expressed uncertainty about the appropriateness of a particular utterance for the intended situation they wanted to enact. In such a case, the line of dialogue in question was simply repeated back to the original speaker with a rising intonation, such as in Extract 5.3.5 when Helen repeated Sara's utterance *my house is before* [the target

utterance was most likely *in front of my house*]. The results of these moments of co-construction were typically self-correction on the part of the original speaker.

#### 5.4 Discussion

These two case studies illuminate some noticeable differences in the process by which the groups either adapted a story into a play or devised an original play based on a selected theme. For the Adapted Play group, selecting a suitable story dominated the early part of the devising process. However, once the story was chosen, progress on the actual script remained steady over the course of the next two lessons (around one hour of work time in total). Though the exact details of how the story played out were not agreed upon in advance, the group was able to invent content and then appropriate dialogue in small chunks at a time. In contrast to this, the Original Play group took a considerably greater amount of time to decide on a basic storyline for their play. In fact, their eventual plot was the result of two factors: 1) their initial idea of basing a story around students taking a test did not produce much in the way of a plot or dialogue; and 2) the idea they ultimately decided on only came to them after they had heard a similar story during a school assembly earlier in the morning on the third day of the devising. Consequently, this group only had around forty minutes over the last two days of devising to complete their play and had no in-class time remaining to rehearse their performance.

In the Adapted Play task, three or four students were typically involved in discussing both the English and Japanese forms for a given line of dialogue. Though the occasions in which most or all of the students were involved in the same LRE did not occur, nor would they likely occur given the number of people in each group, individual involvement was more evenly distributed. This allowed various members of the group to each support the others and receive support when constructing utterances. Contrastingly, for the Original Play task, the additional demands on conceptual creativity seemed to have an effect on the Original Play group as a majority of the English dialogue devising was left to two students. While participation in content generation was more evenly distributed, for language related discussions the consistent participation of just those two students

limited the opportunities for others to be involved with and benefit more from co-constructing language knowledge with their peers. It was unclear from the process data as to whether or not the others in the group simply lacked the language ability to contribute more to the LREs that were observed, but at the very least, the process data confirmed that the others were typically present and involved more equally in the creation of the storyline than in the creation of the English dialogue. Nevertheless, the LREs themselves were not noticeably different in breadth or topic from the Adapted Play group, although the Original Play group did engage in at least two grammatical LREs, compared to the complete lack of such LREs in the Adapted Play group.

One prominent feature of both case studies has, until this point in the discussion, been left understated. This feature is the important role that the teachers played in both case studies. While the selected LREs for each case study feature either myself (Mr. Reid) or my co-teacher (Ms. Bee) somewhat minimally, we were both certainly present and involved with the groups. As we tended to follow our normal routine of splitting our supervision between halves of the class, the two case studies discussed in this chapter happened to feature my co-teacher to a greater extent. For my part, though I did stop by to check on these two groups, a majority of my guidance and advising in these classrooms was directed at other groups. Nevertheless, from the narrative summaries of each case study, it became clear that the teacher played an important role in not only solidifying certain choices regarding story lines, but also in providing guidance for devising the dialogue. This is in addition to the assumed duties of managing time and keeping students on task. In assisting the students with their stories, two potential influences could be identified. First, the advice to craft a story using dialogue instead of relying on overt narration may have contributed to the more rudimentary target language of both groups. In retrospect, this idea seems sound enough considering both groups' apparent collective language abilities. Second, in offering suggestions for how a story's plot could be conveyed with dialogue, the teachers actually provided the groups with some of the language that they used in their final scripts and performances. These instances showed that in socially mediated cognition, the role of the expert, being the more capable other, was important to the learners' progress.

In regards to the first matter, the teacher explained to both of these groups that a traditional, literary style of narration was not strictly necessary as a story could be crafted using dialogue alone. This advice by itself could be partly responsible for the more rudimentary language that the students devised. To explain, overt narration would involve direct communication of all of the details of the story, including not only what the characters say, but how they speak, what their actions and motivations are, and so on. In a narrative told through the mode of theatre, on the other hand, much of this information could be conveyed by the visual component of live performance, i.e. actions, movement, body language, facial expressions, and so on. Moreover, the temporal coherence of a written narrative, meaning the explicit connection of actions and speech in a specific temporal sequence, would also involve descriptive language that would be unnecessary in theatre as the live performance itself would feature a temporal component by virtue of it happening in 'real time'. While neither group explicitly expressed an understanding of this concept, the quality of the scripts they devised did suggest that they understood intuitively, to some degree, the story telling that was possible in the theatrical mode. As a result, they concentrated their efforts on a mix of simple dialogue with appropriate gestures and blocking, and left much of the detail of their story lines unexpressed with language. This aspect of devising narratives for theatre was important to recognise as it limited, to a certain extent, the language output of the students given that they did not have to devise much in the way of exposition to complete their stories.

For the second matter, the teachers were also responsible for generating examples of possible dialogue that were actually incorporated with the scripts. Without this involvement, it would be hard to predict if these two case studies would have been capable of devising all of the English dialogue for their stories on their own. Both case studies had instances in which my co-teacher in particular supported the students by generating examples of dialogue as a means of guiding them forward in their stories. One could argue that this assistance was important for the completion of both stories as it freed the students to direct attention towards other parts of their story, even though the actual amount of dialogue that was generated for the students was no more than about fifteen percent in either case study. This state of affairs is not that surprising if one

considers both the lower proficiency level of the students and the temporal constraint of only one hundred minutes for devising the play. Moreover, it was quite possible that most of the students in these case study groups have had little experience with creating narratives in English, let alone theatrical narratives.

Several topics from the literature review chapters are relevant to the discussion here. First of all, there is the matter of task planning. Recall that Willis' (1996) framework for task-based pedagogy features planning as a phase that occurs after the task itself has been attempted. The narrative summaries presented in this chapter raise an issue about this construct of planning. As I argued in the literature review, the outcome of a theatre task is the performance itself. So, all of the process covered in this chapter must be viewed as planning for that performance. Importantly, this is planning that occurs *prior* to attempting the task, not as the next phase of the task cycle. Both groups exhibited variations of how such planning would be carried out, with the Adapted Play group generating dialogue in the process of devising their play while the Original Play group chose to devise an outline of their whole story prior to creating dialogue. In either case, the process was much more intricate and expansive than the notion of planning that Willis promotes. Additionally, the purpose of the planning phase in Willis' framework is to shift student focus from fluency towards accuracy as the subsequent report phase of the task cycle is a public report about a given group's attempt of the task. In the case of devised theatre, however, the necessity of this shift is contestable as the task outcome of a public performance itself would, arguably, already shift learner attention to form if such reallocation of attentional resources were to be expected from this shift. However, as both case studies lacked sufficient rehearsal in their respective processes, this shift of attentional focus was likely minimal as the LREs discussed in this chapter were primarily lexical. As a result, it is hard to accurately predict from these case studies if the rehearsal phase of the devised theatre tasks did, in fact, shift learner attention to form.

Secondly, in regards to how planning time was used, case study one (the Adapted Play) mixed content creation, English translation, and even some performance rehearsal, in their devising process prior to their rehearsals of the whole story on the fourth day. The Original Play group took a more compartmentalised approach and decided the story first,

then the dialogue. Presumably, if they had given themselves time, they would have then rehearsed individual lines and worked out stage blocking only after the script was finished. If these two groups are any indication, it is possible to expect some groups to more fully integrate rehearsal into the script writing phase of the devising process. In this case, it would be more difficult to delineate different tasks within that sequence in a way which is analogous to other groups who adopt a less integrated and more distinct sequence of planning, writing, and then rehearsing. In sum, the process of devising theatre itself is nebulous and the shape it takes will largely depend on: 1) how a particular group of participants decides to go about their devising (which indicates their preferences); and 2) how the task is implemented and scaffolded to match students' needs and ability. On the one hand, this supports a decision to leave clear delineations of phases in the task planning process unpronounced in the task design so that certain participants' inclinations (and also the resultant creative process) are not restricted as a result. On the other hand, it seems clear enough, from the two case studies presented in this chapter, that the learners would have benefitted from a more deliberate and stricter series of milestones within the process of task planning, particularly for the Original Play (case study two). That being said, part of what was being observed with those two groups were not issues of language construction but of content generation. This means that a portion of the uncertainty, and the strangled routes that the groups took to arrive at their final plays, are, simply put, two examples of the creative process in action.

The motivation for this discussion is due, in part, to the dominant presence of certain types of narrative tasks in SLA research. For example, in many oral narrative tasks, such as those mentioned in Ellis (2005), as well as Tavakoli and Foster (2011), it is clearer to see what is and is not the task since such tasks only involve a single mode of communication: speaking. Writing tasks, not surprisingly, similarly feature just one mode. This has the advantage of a clear distinction between planning time, in which a participant can prepare for the eventual extemporaneous speaking task to follow, and the act of attempting the task itself by speaking. Narrative writing tasks, such as those featured in Kormos (2011), similarly feature a single mode of communication, but as she herself acknowledges, the lack of temporal constraints on output in comparison to

speaking tasks makes the process of extemporaneous writing less dependent on simultaneous processing for various aspects of language production, such as accuracy and complexity.

Devised theatre expands this degree of freedom in writing, the freedom to separate planning from execution, and extends it to a speaking task. This rehearsed speech is a mode of communication that is rarely studied, especially in cases like the current study in which the task outcomes are not only predetermined and the result of a lengthy devising process, but they are prepared for and presented for an aesthetic purpose as well. As both of the case studies (and the *Three Little Pigs* group in particular) demonstrated, the process of writing can also involve extemporaneous speech as various members improvise potential dialogue, even to the extent of adopting the mannerisms of their characters to aid their improvisation. This essentially creates both a process and a task that can equally involve both modes of communication, given that the final speaking task begins as a type of extemporaneous narrative writing task. Therefore, given the similarities it shares with pure writing tasks, it is better to regard devised theatre as a long process of extemporaneous collaborative writing that not only culminates in a spoken performance of prepared language, but also affords students the opportunity to separate or combine the planning and execution of target language in whatever way they see fit in order to complete the task.

In the end, what matters most is the learning opportunities that the tasks offer. In chapter three, Ellis' (2003) guidelines for task implementation were discussed. The guidelines were meant to inform the teachers' decisions regarding task implementation to ensure optimal conditions for language development. Primarily, successful implementation will depend on matching the language level of the students with the demands of the tasks, though the other guidelines are also important in maximising L2 use. What follows now is an evaluation of the L2 learning opportunities for both case studies as framed by Ellis' guidelines. Table 5.1 that follows shows these guidelines with an analysis for each case study sorted by columns.

As the table shows, the learning opportunities for both case studies were roughly the same in terms of 1) developing and appropriate orientation to the task; 2) ensuring that

students took an active role in the task; 3) ensuring a primary focus on meaning; 4) providing opportunities for focus-on-form via meta-linguistic discussion (LREs); and 5) requiring students to evaluate their own performance and progress. Although the issue of whether or not to provide narration muddled the issue at first, by the latter half of the process, both case studies understood that they could craft plays using what they knew about English conversation. As the devised theatre tasks were student-centred collaborative tasks with convergent goals, both the content of the plays, and the management of its creation, were largely up to the students. This ensured that the members of both case studies maintained active roles in the process and the performance.

*Table 5.1 Evaluation of language learning opportunities for both case studies*

<i>guideline</i>	<b>Case Study One- Adapted</b>	<b>Case Study Two-Original</b>
Ensure an appropriate level of task difficulty.	Demands of the task were to be mitigated by the availability of content to use in devising the play.	As no existing story would be available as content to use during the devising of the play, two pre-task worksheets (see Appendix 1) were used to encourage brainstorming of content and relevant language prior to work on the task.
Establish clear goals for each task-based lesson.	While this group was unable to fully follow the established task schedule of two lessons for composition and two lessons for rehearsal and revision, they were able to take part in rehearsals during lesson four.	This group was unable to meet the set goals of composition for two lessons and rehearsal and revision for two lessons. In the end, composition took until the end of lesson four as content (storyline) generation was not settled until lesson three.
Develop an appropriate orientation to performing the tasking the students.	From the pre-task discussion, which included an overview of the task instructions (see Appendix 1), students were made aware that this project challenged them to tell a story using language they already knew.	Same as for case study one. The primary difference would be that, unlike the adapted play, in this project the students would be creating an original story using language they have learned.



<i>guideline</i>	Case Study One- Adapted	Case Study Two-Original
Ensure that students adopt an active role in task-based lessons.	While teachers circulated to provide support when needed, it was up to the students to manage and complete the task.	Same as for case study one.
Encourage students to take risks.	The group nominated many possible stories for adaptation. Both teachers, but especially Ms. Bee, tried to support their selection of a story that interested them.	Within the limits of the themes available for selection, students were encouraged to use their imaginations and invent an interesting and entertaining performance.
Ensure that students are primarily focused on meaning when they perform a task.	Work on composing dialogue consistently drew attention to the meaning (and the story line) of their dialogue.	Same as for case study one, though the process often showed signs of meaning and plot (as well as scene structure) receiving equal attention.
Provide opportunities for focusing on form.	The devising of dialogue, and the LREs that were generated, focused largely on lexical matters, though spelling was occasionally addressed as well.	The devising of dialogue, and the LREs that were generated as a result, focused more on lexis than grammar.
Require students to evaluate their performance and progress.	Students completed post-task surveys about their own work, and also evaluating their peers' performances and provided brief commentary for them.	Same as for case study one.

In reality, group size likely had an adverse effect on participation as both case studies showed evidence of three or four members from each case study taking on a majority of the work load. Meaning remained primary for both groups as the purpose of the tasks was to tell a story through theatre. Opportunities for students to focus on form, a vital part of TBLT, were somewhat mixed. While students had to consistently map meaning to form in their scripts, collaborative dialogues regarding the L2 largely focused on lexis and not form. This was partly due to the reduction of the rehearsal phase in both case studies. Lastly, evaluation was a built-in part of the task design. Both case studies completed post-task feedback surveys and also provided evaluations and feedback for the performances of their peers.

As for the remaining four guidelines, the evaluations were more mixed. Certainly, and most crucially, the tasks were difficult for the students to complete. This is evidenced by the narrative summaries of task process for both case studies in this chapter. In particular, both case studies showed difficulty in the collaborative creation of content. This was especially the case for case study two, as they needed over half of the allotted time (around sixty minutes of the one hundred minute total) to settle on a story line for their selected theme and begin the devising of dialogue. While case study one similarly showed initial difficulty in selecting the source material to adapt, once the matter was settled, they were able to begin devising their play after around twenty to twenty-five minutes of initial discussion. Given these early struggles with content generation, neither group was able to follow the established procedural guidelines for the task. While chapter four mentioned that this schedule for the tasks was flexible and not a strictly enforced parameter, both groups had to allocate extensive time to content development. This had the effect of reducing in-class rehearsal time for case study one and completely removing it for case study two. The reduction or omission of rehearsal time consequently reduced the amount of class time available for the additional focus on accuracy (form) that rehearsal was meant to facilitate. That notwithstanding, the performances for both case studies suggested, to varying extents, that additional rehearsal did occur outside of class time as both groups managed to memorise their lines and act out on-stage blocking that they had not worked on during class time.

While the learning opportunities were there, for the most part, in both versions of the devised theatre tasks, the process data analysed in this chapter indicates that there was a mismatch of task and ability for both of the case studies. To be certain, more exemplary groups were present in both treatments, groups who indeed managed more productive processes in devising their plays within the task design as given. However, the two case studies discussed here were chosen specifically because, being more representative of a 'baseline' undertaking of their respective tasks, they show that less capable or organised groups within both treatments likely required far more scaffolding than the current task designs provided. This was especially the case for the Original Play, as that case study struggled to generate a useable story idea in spite of the availability of the pre-task

worksheets to assist them with this step of the process. Additionally, while the available content of the Adapted Play task lessened this creative burden initially for case study one, they still struggled as much as the other group in moving forward when constructing actual scenes and dialogue. Moreover, for these groups, most of the devising process was carried out in the students' shared L1. This dominant presence of L1 in peer interaction was one of the primary concerns raised by the teachers interviewed in Carless' (2007) study. As socio-cultural views of language learning see L1 use as a way to mediate more cognitively difficult tasks during collaborative work, the amount of L1 used in the case studies reflects the difficulty level of the tasks for the students. While the L1 mediated their process and helped them co-construct target language, for groups of such ability, the level of L1 use was quite high, and to minimise this and optimise learning opportunities, it would be necessary to provide more scaffolding, and even overt training, both in the creative process of devising theatre and in collaborative interaction in the L2.

## 5.5 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented an analysis of two case studies, one Adapted Play group and one Original Play group. The process data for both of these case studies were described in extensive detail in order to provide a fuller picture of the collaborative work that devised theatre tasks entailed. Narrative summaries and analysis of selected LREs were given for both case studies and the findings from this analysis suggested several key features of devising theatre. Firstly, the process itself is highly variable and the possibilities for procedural orientation to the task make it difficult to fully predict what language learning opportunities are available during theatre devising. However, for the Original Play case study in particular, more deliberate scaffolding, primarily in terms of procedural orientation and establishing milestones, is required. Second, with lower proficiency learners, much of the collaborative construction of language knowledge that does occur can be expected to happen in the students' shared L1 if a given context is similar to the current study. Lastly, with this level of student, both content creation and language production may depend, to an extent, on the teacher's direct involvement to ensure

productivity within the group. With these points being stated, the next matter to consider is whether or not the differences observed between the two processes had an impact on language production in the final performances. This is the focus of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX: LANGUAGE PRODUCTION IN THE FINAL PERFORMANCES

This chapter is divided into four parts, providing, in order: 1) the results for the quantitative analysis of task performance through the use of general measures of complexity, accuracy and fluency; 2) results for the task-specific measure of the overall theatrical quality of performance; 3) the findings for the qualitative analysis of the task-specific measure of narrative strategies; and, finally, 4) a summary of the results and findings discussed in this chapter. The data sets used for these analyses are provided in Appendix 4 (language production data) and Appendix 5 (transcripts of student plays) respectively.

### 6.1 Summary of Relevant Methodology

This chapter addressed research question two, which is as follows:

*Research Question Two:* What are the differences in language production in the final performances between the two task conditions in terms of:

- a) general measures of complexity, accuracy and fluency;
- b) overall theatrical quality of oral performance; and,
- c) the use of narrative strategies?

Two methods of analysis were used to answer this research question. The first method, for parts (a) and (b), was a quantitative analysis of both the general measures of complexity, accuracy and fluency, and the task-specific measure of the overall theatrical quality of oral performance. Values for each measure of complexity, accuracy, and fluency were calculated using the transcript data from all of the groups' final performances and these results were separated by treatment for comparison. As discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.4.2, given that between-treatment comparisons of results, when conducted separately for each of the two studies, displayed consistent trends by treatment for the higher value within each pair of means, the data from both studies were collapsed into a single data set for analysis. For the measure of overall theatrical quality of oral

performance, two independent raters rated an audio recording of each group's performance, and these ratings were compiled and similarly separated by treatment for comparison. The second method, for part (c), was a qualitative analysis of the final performance transcript data for each group's use of narrative strategies in their devised plays. Each play was examined for the presence of any combination of the four types of narrative strategy introduced in chapter four: narrator, character as narrator, embedded narrator, and dialogue emergent.

## 6.2 Language production: complexity, accuracy and fluency

Figure 6.1 provides a summary of the measures of task performance used in this study.

*Figure 6.1 Language production measures used in the current study*

area	measure(s)	
<b>complexity (syntactic)</b>	clauses per AS-unit	sub-clausal AS-unit %
<b>complexity (lexical)</b>	1st 2k BNC/COCA %	
<b>accuracy (general)</b>	error-free AS-unit %	average length of error free unit
<b>accuracy (error type)</b>	grammatical errors per token	lexical errors per token
<b>fluency</b>	tokens	

As described in the methodology chapter, a between-treatment comparison was achieved for each measure with the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U mean rank test using SPSS. The desired confidence interval was set at 0.95, resulting in an alpha of  $p < .05$  for statistical significance. The results for complexity, accuracy and fluency are each summarised separately at first, in that order, and then synthesised in the subsequent discussion. Effect sizes for these non-parametric tests are provided (see Grisson & Kim, 2012, for a full discussion). Complete data sets for both treatment groups can be found in Appendix 4.

### 6.2.1 Complexity

Table 6.1 below shows the the descriptive statistics compiled for the three measures of complexity.

Table 6.1 Descriptive statistics: complexity

<i>measure</i>	Original Plays ( <i>n</i> = 21 groups)		Adapted Plays ( <i>n</i> = 21 groups)	
	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>
clauses per AS-unit	0.669	0.135	0.807	0.141
sub-clausal AS-unit %	0.345	0.131	0.26	0.12
<2k BNC/COCA	0.96	0.041	0.964	0.02

The means and standard deviations were very similar for the measure of <2k BNC/COCA but appeared divergent for the other two measures. These differences in means were checked for statistical significance and the results of those tests are summarised in Table 6.2 that follows.

Table 6.2 Mann-Whitney U results: complexity

<i>measure</i>	<i>treatment</i>	<i>mean rank</i>	<i>rank sum</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig ( p =)</i>	<i>“effect size”</i>
clauses per AS-unit	<i>original (n=21)</i>	16.12	338.5				
	<i>adapted (n=21)</i>	26.88	564.5				
				107.5	-2.843	0.004*	0.2438
sub-clausal AS-unit %	<i>original (n=21)</i>	25.4	533.5				
	<i>adapted (n=21)</i>	17.6	369.5				
				138.5	-2.065	0.039*	0.3141
1st 2k BNC/COCA %	<i>original (n=21)</i>	22.5	472.5				
	<i>adapted (n=21)</i>	20.5	430.5				
				199.5	-0.529	0.597	0.4524

The descriptive statistics for the three selected measures of complexity showed greater syntactic complexity for the Adapted Plays, due to both a higher rate of clauses per AS-unit and a lower rate of sub-clausal AS-units. Contrastingly, there was no discernible difference in lexical complexity as both treatments were within a half percent of each other. These values were compared with the Mann-Whitney U test and the results of those tests indicated statistical significance for both measures of syntactic complexity, with the difference in clauses per AS-unit in particular achieving significance at the  $p < .01$  level. Expectedly, the slight difference in lexical complexity yielded no statistical significance. These results indicate two observable trends in student language production: 1) student groups used more full clauses and multi-clause utterances in the Adapted Plays while, conversely, student groups used sub-clausal utterances more frequently in the Original Plays; and 2) these significant variations in full clausal and sub-clausal use were achieved with the same level of lexical complexity.

#### 6.2.2 Accuracy

Table 6.3 on the facing page shows the the descriptive statistics compiled for the four measures of accuracy. Out of the four measures, *grammatical errors per AS-unit* showed the closest equivalence between treatments. Additionally, the results for *lexical errors per AS-unit* and the *average length of error-free AS-units* were quite similar. Only the remaining measure, *error-free AS-units*, showed divergence.

Between-treatment results were checked for statistical significance and the results of those tests are summarised in Table 6.4 on the following page.



Table 6.3 Descriptive statistics: accuracy

	Original Plays (n= 21 groups)		Adapted Plays (n= 21 groups)	
	mean	standard deviation	mean	standard deviation
error-free AS-units	78.333	11.629	70.619	12.913
avg. length of error-free AS-unit	3.135	0.677	3.327	0.558
grammatical errors per AS-unit	0.201	0.14	0.271	0.172
lexical errors per AS-unit	0.081	0.047	0.133	0.086

Table 6.4 Mann-Whitney U results: accuracy

measure	treatment	mean rank	rank sum	U	Z	Asymp. Sig (p =)	“effect size”
error free AS-unit %	original (n=21)	25.24	530				
	adapted (n=21)	17.76	373				
				142	-1.976	0.048*	0.322
avg. length of error-free AS-unit	original (n=21)	18.88	396.5				
	adapted (n=21)	24.12	506.5				
				165.5	-1.384	0.166	0.3753
grammatical errors per AS-unit	original (n=21)	18.79	394.5				
	adapted (n=21)	24.21	508.5				
				163.5	-1.434	0.152	0.3707
lexical errors per AS-unit	original (n=21)	18.05	379				
	adapted (n=21)	24.95	524				
				148	-1.824	0.068	0.3356

Descriptive statistics for the four selected measures of accuracy showed a greater degree of accuracy in the Original Plays for general accuracy (error-free AS-units) and both lexical and grammatical accuracy. The mean length that AS-units reached before an error

occurred was roughly equivalent, though the Adapted Plays had slightly higher values. These differences in means were compared using the Mann-Whitney U test, as shown in Table 6.4. The results of these tests indicated statistical significance for the percentage of error-free units, while the differences observed in the other three measures were not significant. Therefore, from the perspective of task performance, student groups in the Original Plays produced more accurate language overall. However, these student groups in the Original Plays did not produce error-free AS-units of a significantly greater size than the groups in the Adapted Plays, nor were their separate rates for grammatical or lexical accuracy significantly less than that of their Adapted Play counterparts.

### 6.2.3 Fluency

As explained in the methodology chapter, the nature of fluency in devised theatrical performance is a complicated matter, since the performance that a given audience observes features language that is prepared rather than spontaneous. Thus, fluency as a task performance measure in the current study differs from typical task condition effect studies (e.g. pauses, repetitions, false starts etc...). The selected measure of total number of tokens is discussed in this section, while the task-specific measure of overall theatrical quality of oral performance, a separate measure designed to account for the special nature of fluency in theatre tasks, is discussed separately in the next section (6.3). Table 6.5 below shows the descriptive statistics compiled for the measure of fluency.

Table 6.5 Descriptive statistics: fluency

	Original Plays (n= 21 groups)		Adapted Plays (n= 21 groups)	
<i>measure</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>
<b>tokens</b>	98.143	37.019	136.048	27.807

As the above table shows, there was a stark contrast between-treatments for the mean number of tokens in the final performances. This difference was checked for statistical significance and the result of that test is shown in Table 6.6 on the next page.

Table 6.6 Mann-Whitney U results: fluency

measure	treatment	mean rank	rank sum	U	Z	Asymp. Sig (p =)	“effect size”
tokens	<i>original</i> (n=21)	15.12	317.5				
	<i>adapted</i> (n=21)	27.88	585.5				
				86.5	-3.372	0.001*	0.1961

As the descriptive statistics for fluency indicated, there was a substantial difference in the length of the plays, with the Adapted Plays averaging almost thirty percent more words per play than the Original Plays. The Mann-Whitney U test conducted for these values showed that this difference in means was statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

#### 6.2.4 Summary of results for complexity, accuracy and fluency

The results of the Mann-Whitney U tests showed statistically significant differences for *clauses per AS-unit*, *sub-clausal AS-unit %*, *error-free AS-unit %* and *tokens*. The differences for the remaining measures showed no significance. In sum, the Adapted Plays showed a treatment effect for syntactic complexity (*clauses per AS-unit*, *sub-clausal AS-unit %*) and fluency (*tokens*) while the Original Plays showed a treatment effect for accuracy (*error-free AS-unit %*).

Skehan (1998, 2003) predicted that as task difficulty increased, there would be a trade-off between complexity and accuracy. Regarding this trade-off, a post-hoc correlation test was conducted on the statistically significant measures of fluency, syntactic complexity, and (general) accuracy using the non-parametric Spearman rank test in SPSS to compare

values across treatments. The results of this test, shown in Table 6.7 below, indicated a very significant inverse correlation between complexity and accuracy in the current study.

These results provide further support for the LAC prediction of a trade-off between complexity and accuracy as task difficulty increases. Additionally, no significant correlations were detected for either fluency and complexity or fluency and accuracy. This further suggests that any predicted trade-off for these theatre tasks excludes fluency as a possible contributing factor.

*Table 6.7 Results of Spearman's rho*

		<b>tokens</b>	<b>error free AS-units</b>	<b>clauses per AS-unit</b>
<b>tokens</b>	correlation coefficient	1.0	-.016	.217
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.918	.163
	N=	42	42	42
<b>error free AS-units</b>	correlation coefficient	-.016	1.0	-.542
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.918		.001*
	N=	42	42	42
<b>clauses per AS-unit</b>	correlation coefficient	.217	-.542	1.0
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.163	.001*	
	N=	42	42	42

### 6.3 Overall Theatrical Quality of Oral Performance

As a means of measuring the theatricality of final performances, independent raters were asked to rate audio recordings of each group's performance and give a rating on a six point scale (0 to 5) for their evaluation of the overall theatrical quality of oral performance. This task-specific measure of fluency was operationalised as each rater's holistic composite of a given group's audibility, intelligibility, use of prosodic features and emotive delivery, all of which would be products of sufficient rehearsal. Table 6.8 shows the descriptive statistics for this measure, while Table 6.9 shows the results of the Mann-Whitney U test performed on this data set.

Table 6.8 Descriptive statistics: overall theatrical quality of oral performance

<i>measure</i>	Original Plays ( <i>n</i> = 21 groups)		Adapted Plays ( <i>n</i> = 21 groups)	
	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>standard deviation</i>
overall theatrical quality	1.762	1.221	2.476	1.219

Table 6.9 Mann-Whitney U results: overall theatrical quality of oral performance

<i>measure</i>	<i>treatment</i>	<i>mean rank</i>	<i>rank sum</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig (p =)</i>	<i>“effect size”</i>
overall theatrical quality	original (n=21)	18.05	379	148	-1.837	0.066	0.3356
	adapted (n=21)	24.95	524				

The descriptive statistics showed a higher mean rating for the Adapted Plays, although both treatments averaged ratings on the bottom half of the six point rating scale. This result suggested that, across both treatments, neither independent rater found the vocal performances to be particularly strong examples of theatre. This, in itself, is not a striking result as few, if any, of the participants in the current study had experience with theatrical performance, let alone artistic performance in another language. The results from the Mann-Whitney U test for this measure indicated no statistical significance for the overall theatrical quality of oral performance, though both the U and Z values, along with the value for p, suggested that the difference in means was approaching significance. It is possible that the the ability for the raters to view the performances would alter some of their evaluations, but in doing this, the focus of the ratings would shift from the linguistic element of the plays to the non-linguistic elements. Considering that the devised theatre tasks in the current study were envisioned to assist language development, and not the development of theatrical ability in particular, such a shift in focus was not adopted.

The results from the quantitative analysis of task outcomes showed significant treatment effects for fluency, syntactic complexity and general accuracy. Additionally, the differences in independent ratings between-treatments approached significance. From these results, one can see that altering the task feature of available content pushed differentiating language production for the two versions of the devised theatre task.

#### **6.4 Post-hoc qualitative analysis: Narrative strategies**

Further investigation of the performance transcripts for each group provided an additional salient feature in the data that could potentially explain the observed differences between treatments. This salient feature was the differences in the use of various narrative strategies in the plays. This matter was investigated by means of a post-hoc qualitative analysis. The methodology for this analysis was provided in section 4.4.3 of chapter four. What follows in this section is: first, an analysis of narrative strategies; and secondly, a discussion that synthesises these findings and then relates them to the previous results reported in this chapter.

##### **6.4.1 Summary of relevant methodology**

Writing a play involves a particular set of challenges for an author. As discussed in Hutcheon (2006), the mode of engagement that theatre favours involves an indirect communication between author and audience. Unlike in a novel, for instance, details of plot, character and setting must be conveyed in the unfolding real-time of theatrical performance. As a consequence, many of these details must be established through the speech of actors, since it is not possible for the author to simply provide exposition and narrative detail during and between interactions between characters. Similarly, this limitation of theatre makes it cumbersome, if not impractical or even infeasible, to simply explain a character's thoughts to an audience in prose.

To address this limitation on the communication of plot and character details, authors for the theatre can employ a variety of narrative strategies. As the methodology chapter established, student groups would likely employ one of four dominant strategies:

narrator, character as narrator, embedded narrator, or dialogue emergent. A summary of these strategies, explained in more detail in chapter four, is provided below.

---

*Figure 6.2 Narrative Strategies*

Narrator:	story employs a character out-of-scene who communicates information about the story directly to the audience
Character as Narrator:	story employs a character in-scene who communicates information about the story directly to the audience
Embedded Narrator:	information about the story is narrated to another character, or to the character his or herself, within the scene and without addressing the audience directly.
Dialogue Emergent:	information about the story emerges solely from the dialogue between characters.

---

#### 6.4.2 Analysis

A qualitative analysis was conducted to establish which of the four narrative strategies operationalised in this study were employed within both treatments and then these results were compared between treatments.

Overall, the data for the Original Plays showed a strong trend towards the narrative strategy of letting details of the plot emerge more naturally from dialogue (dialogue emergent). In contrast, the Adapted plays featured more plays that made use of either a character as narrator or embedded a narrator within a scene. The figure below shows the results of this analysis for adaptation strategy with the values for the statistically significant measures of fluency and syntactic complexity included for comparison.

Table 6.10 Summary of Narrative Strategies

treatment	adaptation strategy	n=	mean tokens	clauses / AS-unit
<b>Original</b>		21		
	Narrator	5	73.2	0.73
	Character as Narrator	1	106	0.68
	Embedded Narration	1	166	1.03
	Dialogue Emergent	14	101.6	0.65
<b>Adapted</b>		21		
	Narrator	5	155.8	0.94
	Character as Narrator	3	141	0.87
	Embedded Narration	3	139	0.84
	Dialogue Emergent	10	123.8	0.71

As an initial note, plays that employed a *dialogue emergent* strategy exclusively were counted under that category. In actual fact, all plays made use of the *dialogue emergent* strategy to some extent, but if another strategy was also employed in addition to this, those plays were categorised by the other strategy employed (i.e. *narrator*, *character as narrator*, or *embedded narrator*). Without exception, no play in the current study involved the use of more than two strategies.

Although the number of samples is low in some categories, the figure above suggests that, overall, the Adapted Plays had a roughly even split between using some form of overt narration and providing information solely within dialogue. The results from this analysis, when compared against the measures of fluency and accuracy, indicated that the Adapted Plays that used overt narration as a narrative strategy for adaptation resulted in more fluent and syntactically complex compositions than those that constructed their stories with the dialogue-emergent strategy alone. For the Original Plays, a majority of the groups selected this dialogue-emergent strategy (roughly two-thirds) while slightly less than half of the Adapted Plays similarly selecting this strategy alone. The sample size for both embedded narrator and character as narrator are too few to make many statistical inferences, though it would appear that the Original Plays that used a narrator did so at



the expense of more fluent language production while the Adapted Plays that used a narrator produced the most fluent (and complex) stories. The syntactic complexity for both treatments appeared slightly higher for overt narration over dialogue-emergent, with slightly higher results overall for the Adapted Plays.

## Narrator

The quantitative analysis of the student plays in section 6.2 yielded several important results. It indicated greater fluency and syntactic complexity for the Adapted Plays. It was possible that these results were linked with the use of overt narration in those plays. The findings in Table 6.10 indicated that this was not the case, however, as both treatments employed a narrator at the same frequency. That being stated, a comparison of descriptive statistics suggests that the use of narrator differed between treatments. These results are summarised in Table 6.11 below.

*Table 6.11 Use of Narrator*

<i>treatment</i>	<i>plays with a narrator</i>	<i>mean turns by narrator</i>	<i>% of tokens</i>
<b>Original</b>	5	3.3	33.7
<b>Adapted</b>	5	4.8	43.8

Findings indicate that roughly one in four plays for both treatments made use of a narrator. From the above information, although the number of samples is limited, we can see that the Adapted Plays with narrators relied on that mode of storytelling more than the original plays, both in terms of the number of turns involving a narrator and the ratio of tokens for the entire play that the narrator spoke.

Looking more deeply at each use of a narrator, a general trend emerged in the structure of these narratives. Namely, the use of a narrator in the Original Plays was more limited because these narrators typically provided only enough exposition to establish either the setting for a particular scene or provide a key piece of information about the characters. In

contrast, the narrators in the Adapted Plays took on the more traditional role of a narrator as the principle story teller, meaning that they established the background for the action and dialogue of the plays more extensively. In consequence, these plays took on a mode of engagement that was more analogous to reader's theatre, where a presenter performs a dramatic reading of a written narrative (such as a children's story). Consider the following two excerpts with the narrators' parts indicated by bold face:

---

*Excerpt 6.1 Original Play 14 - Love and Soccer (school life theme)*

1	NAR	<b>They are very love love.</b>
2	A	Miho, I love you.
3	B	I love you too, Peter.
4	NAR	<b>But this place is soccer ground.</b>
5		<b>He is soccer player.</b>
6		<b>She is manager.</b>
7		<b>He is a younger student.</b>
8	C	Please practice.
9	A	Who is he?
10	D	I'm Miho's brother.
11	E	What happened?
12	A	I... your...
13	D	Let's decide it with PK kick.
14	B	Oh no!
15		Oh supervisor...
16	C	What is it say?
17	A	I love.
18	B	I love, too.
19	C	Prohibited from love.
20	A	I'm sorry.
21	B	I'm sorry.

---

*Excerpt 6.2 Adapted Play 9 - Snow White*

1	NAR	<b>One day there is Snow White.</b>
2		<b>Her mother dead when she was child.</b>
3		<b>The new mother is not well for her.</b>
4		<b>Mother has special hair.</b>
5		<b>And nurse [xxxx].</b>
6	A	Mirror, mirror.
7		Who is the most beautiful woman?
8	B	Of course you are.
9	NAR	<b>But one day the mirror answered.</b>

10	B	Not you are.
11		The most beautiful girl is Snow White.
12	NAR	<b>Her mother made angry, Snow White ran away and her mother became monster.</b>
13	C	Do you become a friend?
14	D	Of course.
15	E	Let's eat together.
16	F	Let's go picnic.
17	G	Let's sing a song.
18	NAR	<b>Snow White had a good time.</b>
19		<b>But one day the [xxxx] went over for her.</b>
		[...]

---

As can be seen in these two excerpts, the narrator in Original 14 provided enough exposition to establish the scene in line 1 and lines 4-7, but did not narrate any of the subsequent action. The opening line of dialogue in that play was immediately reinforced by the next two lines of dialogue (lines 2 and 3) as the two lovers express their mutual love, but this pattern was not repeated again in the rest of the play. In contrast, the narrator in Adapted 9 began by providing exposition to establish the characters of Snow White and her step mother in lines 1-5, but then, starting with line 9, transitioned to narrating certain elements of the story that are then elaborated or built upon in the subsequent on-stage action (line 12 and lines 18-19). From a syntactic focus, this narration involved several brief adverbials, (but) one day and when she was a child, and used more elaborate coordination, as shown in line 12 where three short clauses have been strung together in one sentence. Compared with this, the narrator in Original 14 was limited to simpler clauses involving a copula, while in Adapted 9 the use of a narrator resulted in a relatively greater variety of verbs and propositional content.

The above examples provided some data to suggest that narrators in the Original Plays served a simpler function than in the Adapted Plays by merely providing exposition to establish the story of the play. However, not every Original Play involving a narrator consisted purely of exposition. In the excerpt below, the use of a narrator followed the form of Adapted 9 more closely.

---

*Excerpt 6.3 Original Play 7 - Lost Child (travel theme)*

1       A       Let's go to USA.  
2       B       Okay.  
3       C       Good idea.  
4       NAR    **The family going to the USA.**  
5               **They look at the view.**  
6       B       Oh beautiful.  
7       NAR    **They arrived in USA**  
8               **Child disappeared**  
9       D       On no.  
10              Where is my grandchild.  
11       C       I'm worried.  
12       D       We are in trouble.  
13       NAR    **Child was found ...**  
14       B       Where is this ..  
15       NAR    **The child in Mexico.**  
16       A       In Mexico?  
17              We will fly to Mexico by..  
18       D       Wow.  
19       C       It can't be.  
20       A       Good for you.  
21       B       I'm relief.  
22       NAR    **Family found the child.**  
23              **But leave to USA but enjoyed in Mexico.**  
24              **End**

---

In this excerpt, the narrator adopted a more 'storyteller' mode of presentation, narrating events in the story that the other characters either reinforce or expand within each scene. The on-stage characters decided to go on a trip (lines 1-3), a fact that was then reinforced by the narrator in lines 4 and 5 as the family's activity on the airplane were described. For the rest of the story, the narrator played a principle role in providing plot details by announcing the disappearance of the child (line 8), the location of the child (lines 13 and 15), and the resolution to the story (lines 22-24). In contrast to Original 14, all of the major action in Original 7 was primarily reinforcing the information that the narrator provided.

While Original 7 and Adapted 9 shared this feature of in-scene action reinforcing the out-of-scene narration of that action by a narrator, the other Adapted Plays followed a strategy that provided a balance between narration and action, rather than mutual

reinforcement of the same information. For example, in the excerpt below from Adapted 8, the narrator filled in the transitional information between the on-stage scenes but this not reinforce any of the in-scene action with further commentary.

---

*Excerpt 6.4 Adapted Play 8 - Alice in Wonderland*

[...]

11	B	Did you saw a white rabbit?
12	C	He went there.
14	B	Thank you.
15	NAR	<b>Dee and Dum was keep speaking.</b>
16		<b>Alice is ignore.</b>
17		<b>Alice was walking then she saw smoke.</b>
18	B	What's that?
19		I'm alice.
20		Please help me.
21	D	Oh, why?
22	B	I'm looking for a white rabbit.
23	D	He went there.
24	B	Thank you.
25	NAR	<b>She became lost.</b>
26		Alice find out a cat on the tree.
27	B	Oh cat, did you see a white rabbit?
28	E	I don't know.
29		Let's go Mad Hatter.
30	B	Thank you.
31	NAR	<b>Alice met Mad Hatter.</b>
32		<b>Mouse and white rabbit were holding a party.</b>

[...]

---

This mode of storytelling resembled reader's theatre. The mode of engagement was more true to written fiction, so the on-stage characters served primarily to bring the exchanges of dialogue to life. Ultimately, the story was built from what the narrator told the audience, as removing the narrator's lines from the play would make the story more difficult to follow, especially given the fact that this excerpt alone involved four different scenes with seven different characters whose identities were not always established by the narrator (e.g. the caterpillar was only indicated by the mention of smoke). This strategy of using a narrator and treating the play in the manner of a 'staged reading of a book' was

more emphatically demonstrated by the following adaptation of the Japanese legend *Momotarou*, shown in Excerpt 6.5.

---

*Excerpt 6.5 Adapted Play 19 - Momotarou*

[...]

6       NAR   After that grandmother took the peach.  
7           At that time fall the peach from grandmother's hand.  
8           Peach was broken and Peachtaro was born from peach.  
9           Peachtaro look at the grandparents were surprised.  
10          Peachtaro said...

A                           ...“wow. What's happened?”

11       NAR   Grandparents very injured  
12          Grandfather said...

B                           ...“We fought with Ohga.”

13          And we lost.

14       C       So we were very injured.

15       NAR   So Peachtaro decide.

16       A       Okay.

17          I decide to beat Ohga.

18       NAR   Grandmother said,

C                           ... all right.

19          Take this kibidango.

20       B       Good luck.

21       NAR   Peachtaro go to the Onigashima.

22          Between the way, he met dog, bird and monkey.

23          They said,...

D, E, F                   ...hey.

24       D       What you have in your hands?

25       A       I have kibidango.

26       E,F      Give me kibidango.

27       A       Okay.

28          But you must go to Onigashima with me.

29       D,E,F   No.

30       A       Yes.

31       NAR   So they arrive to Onigashima.

[...]

---

In this example, the dominant role of the narrator was clearly observable. The narrator transitioned from the start of the story to the next scene (Lines 6-9) and then mediated much of the ensuing action. The narrator explained the physical state of the grandparents (line 11) to set up the characters' ensuing explanation, indicated Peachtaro's choice of

action (Line 15) prior to him announcing that decision (Line 17), transitioned to the next scene (Line 21), introduced three supporting characters (Line 22) and transitioned from that scene to their arrival at Onigashima (line 31). Perhaps more so than Adapted 8, the storyline here would likely still make sense to an audience, although the loss of the narrator would also result in the loss of much of the information that was central to the Momotarou legend. It would seem, in this case, that the group felt that a majority of the information was best expressed explicitly by a narrator.

As the descriptive statistics indicated, Adapted Plays did not use a narrator any more than the Original Plays, but a difference that could be observed was that the narrators in the Adapted Plays provided a greater amount of narrative information than in the Original Plays. This was primarily due the mode of storytelling that the Adapted Plays featuring a narrator employed, which was a mode that resembled reader's theatre where the narrator played a larger role of 'telling' the story while the characters played the smaller role of 'showing' the story. While this finding was worthy of investigation by itself, as it provided information about how narrators functioned when that role was employed in a play, a large majority of the plays in both treatments did not feature an off-stage narrator. Regarding this feature, it would be useful to know how narrative and exposition were handled in all of the remaining plays that did not use a narrator.

### *Character as Narrator*

The use of an off-stage narrator provided some groups with a means of communicating certain plot and character details more directly to the audience. If an off-stage narrator was not desired, one similar option available was to have any one of the characters themselves function as a narrator while remaining "in character" within the scene on-stage. This option was chosen by only four groups, three of them Adapted Plays. As a side note, it should be mentioned that there were no plays that involved both an off-stage and on-stage narrator.

When characters acted as in-scene sources of exposition and narrative detail, they had a tendency to keep this information brief and declarative. Consider the following excerpts (6.6 - 6.9) compiled below.

---

*Excerpt 6.6 Adapted Play 1 - Three Pigs*

1       ABC   We are pig brothers.  
2             Today we are building my house.  
3             Let's start.  
4       A     My name is Ichiro.  
5             I build my house with straw.  
6       B     My name is Jiro.  
7             I built my house with wood.  
8       C     My name is Takuro.  
9             I built my house with brick.  
[...]

---

*Excerpt 6.7 Adapted Play 14 - Anpanman*

1       A     I am anpanman.  
2             I protect my town.  
3             I have to patrol.  
[...]

---

*Excerpt 6.8 Adapted Play 10 - Three Pigs*

1       A     I'm a pig.  
2             You're a pig.  
3       C     I'm also pig.  
4       ABC   We are brothers.  
5       B     I'm planning to build my own house.  
6       AC    Me too.  
7       B     Okay.  
8             Let's go.  
9       AC    Let's go.  
10      D     I'm wolf.  
11            I'll eat pig.  
[...]

---

*Excerpt 6.9 Original Play 4 - Where to Go? (travel theme)*

1       A     Today, Kanda got a lot of money.  
2             Her family give her a lot of money.  
3       B     Where do you go?  
4       C     I want to the sea.  
[...]

---



The most salient feature common amongst these four excerpts was that all four cases of a character as narrator occurred at the start of their respective stories. In both of the *Three Little Pigs* adaptations shown above, quite a bit of narrative detail was provided in this manner, with Adapted 1 introducing the important plot element of the three different building materials from the beginning. For Adapted 14, the lead character of the story (*Anpanman*) and his motivation in the story are provided. In Original 4, one of the characters establishes the important plot point of Kanda receiving enough money to pay for her and her friends to travel somewhere. None of these examples were particularly distinct from the others, so the most notable finding here was simply that, with one exception, the Original Plays did not employ this type of narrative strategy.

If addressing the audience directly was not selected as a strategy, groups still had one further option for overt narration. Instead of assigning someone the role of communicating details to the audience, the characters could provide information from within a scene without breaking the fourth wall. In this sense, certain details are embedded in the dialogue of a given scene. This strategy is the focus of the next section.

#### *Embedded narrator*

As the methodology chapter discussed, the strategy of embedded narrator might prototypically take the form of an aside, yet in this study such direct address of the audience would be classified as character as narrator. For this study, embedded narration was operationalised as instances in which a character spoke to themselves or to another character and conveyed information that would already be known and understood by the addressee. When characters were alone, this would manifest itself as that character essentially narrating aloud their own actions or thoughts. With dialogue, such information would be conveyed to another character in-scene, but as such information would already be mutually known, it would be done for the benefit of the audience.

In this study, findings indicated that only four plays chose this form of narrative strategy. Similar to the findings for character as narrator, those plays that chose an embedded narrator did not also make use of either a narrator or a character as narrator. This trend in itself suggested that the students in this study did not see these three

strategies as being potentially complimentary. Moreover, also mirroring the results for character as narrator, three of the four plays that used an embedded narrator were Adapted Plays.

In the first two excerpts below (6.10 and 6.11), the characters speaking were alone on-stage in their respective stories but neither one addressed the audience directly. Rather, they were both voicing their thoughts and commenting on their current activity. These instances are indicated by bold face.

---

*Excerpt 6.10 Adapted Play 3- Kaguyahime*

1	A	We will go to bamboo grove and take some bamboo to make dish.
2	B	Okay.
3		Goodbye.
4	A	<b>Oh. What is that shining bamboo?</b>
5		<b>I'm trying to cut it.</b>
6		<b>Wow.</b>
7		<b>There is a little cute girl in bamboo.</b>
8		<b>I take her to my house.</b>
9	B	Who is the cute girl?
10	A	There was her in bamboo.
11	B	We haven't child.
12	B	So let's take care of her.
13	A	Good Idea.
14		She was from Bamboo, so we call her Kaguya.
[...]		

---

*Excerpt 6.11 Adapted Play 4 - Seven Children*

1	A	<b>I'm hungry.</b>
2		<b>In winter, I can't get some food.</b>
3		<b>I know sheep family live near here.</b>
4		<b>I'm going.</b>
5	B	I go shopping so please wait for me at home.
6	CD	I see.
7	B	Don't open the door. Okay?
8	CD	Okay.
9		Bye.
10	A	<b>While mother is out, its good chance to eat kids</b>
11		I'm mother.
12		Open the door.
13	D	This voice is different.
[...]		

In these two scenes, the narration embedded within the ‘thinking aloud’ of the characters provided several important pieces of information about the plots of their respective stories. In the *Kaguyahime* adaptation, the plot point in question was the woman cutting open a bamboo shaft and finding a baby girl, which is an essential detail to the original story. Similarly, the wolf in the *Seven Children* adaptation established the characters motivation (hunger), the time of year (winter) and the identity of the other characters (sheep family) and commented on the situation once the mother left (Line 10).

In contrast to those two examples, the lone example of an embedded narrator in the Original Plays, shown in Excerpt 6.12, involved a quick establishment of characters in the form of a joke.

---

*Excerpt 6.12 Original Play 10 - Pet Shop (shopping & leisure theme)*

1	A	My birthday is coming soon.
2	B	Me too.
3	A B	Because we're twins.

[...]

---

The above exchange qualified as embedded narration simply because the twins would logically be aware of their mutual birthday approaching and would not need to comment on it in this manner and acknowledge something they already know: that they are twins. As a result, this humorous exchange was provided for the benefit of the audience. This is in contrast to the Adapted Play examples, which used an embedded narrator as an indirect alternative to having an actual narrator provide the same information. As indicated earlier, this was a strategy that the rest of the Original Plays did not consider.

If some manner of overt narration was not employed, the default narrative strategy available to groups was to have key plot points and relevant information emerge more or less naturally from the dialogue alone. This strategy is the focus of the next section.

## *Dialogue emergent*

Between both treatments, dialogue emergent narration was the primary strategy employed. To clarify, a majority of the plays mentioned and discussed above also contained scenes comprised solely or primarily of dialogue. In this sense, dialogue emergent could be regarded as the default mode that certain groups chose to augment with more overt narrative strategies. In stories comprised solely of dialogue, details important to the plot were integrated into the students' approximations of 'normal' conversation. The excerpts below (6.13 and 6.14) show examples of this information emerging throughout the course of dialogue.

---

### *Excerpt 6.13 Original Play 1 - Love and Shopping (shopping & leisure theme)*

1	A	Good morning.
2	B	Good morning.
3	A	It's a fine day so I want to go shopping with my family.
4	B	Nice idea.
5		Let's go shopping.
6	A	What shall I buy?
7	B	I bought new clothes because I am having a date with boyfriend.
8	A	Really?
9		I'm sad.
10	B	Okay.
11		I will give you new clothes.
[...]		

---

### *Excerpt 6.14 Original Play 2 - Birthday present (shopping & leisure theme)*

1	AB	We want to go shopping.
2	C	Okay.
3		But you have to go with Yui.
4	A	No no no.
5		We want only us.
6	C	Why?
7	AB	We want to buy a birthday present for Yui.
8	C	That's a good idea.
9		But watch out for cars when you cross the street.
10	B	Okay mom.
11	A	See you!

12		I want to buy clothes.
13	B	Yeah. Me too.
14	D	May I help you?
15	A	Yes.
16		We want to buy pretty clothes for my sister's birthday.
17	D	Okay.
18		How old is your sister?
19		And what color does she like?
20	B	She is sixteen.
21		She likes red.
[...]		

---

In both of these examples, the key plot points regarding the desire and reason to go shopping are established as the characters talk to each other. While more overt narration could have provided this information, both of these groups chose to let the details emerge as if they were an ‘organic’ part of the conversation. What is striking about these two examples is how fluent and complex these utterances were, particularly lines 3 and 7 of Original 1, when compared to the other lines of dialogue in the plays.

However, leaving details to emerge in the dialogue, rather than be established by some manner of overt or embedded narration, did not necessarily exclude explicit declaration of certain plot details by the characters. As the excerpts (6.15 and 6.16) below show, the inherent structure and conventions of a situation portrayed in a given scene often made the transfer of such explicit information to the audience possible without defying the in-scene logic. The most frequently employed of these “exposition friendly” situations involved a teacher, a senior ranking student, a coach, or even a king addressing a group of characters.

---

*Excerpt 6.15 Original Play 11- After Practice (school life theme)*

1	A	Come here.
2		Let's finish our practice.
3	BC	Thank you very much.
4	A	Good job.
5		Be careful crazy man.
6	BCD	Thank you.
7		See you.
[...]		

---

---

*Excerpt 6.16 Original Play 21 - New Students (school life theme)*

1	A	What's this?
2	B	I'm new English teacher.
3		And new student come to school.
4	C	Wow.
5	D	Wow.
6	B	Come in.
7	A	Who are you?
8	B	Students... please introduce yourself.
9	E	Okay.
[...]		

---

The two examples shown above indicate how the lack of overt narration to establish a scene did not prevent the deliberate communication of information essential to the plot. In Original 11, the sports club's leader addressed the others and established that the scene took place at school as club practice finished. Additionally, it also foreshadowed the appearance of a later character in line 5. In a similar fashion, Original 21 has the teacher speak to the student and establish that the story took place in an English class at a school and that new students had arrived in class. These types of scenes involving characters addressing other characters as they would in an actual real-world situations was more common in the Original Plays and can largely be ascribed to that task's design feature of 'school life' being one of the three themes available to compose a story about.

## Summary

Overall, this post-hoc qualitative analysis of narrative strategies yielded two important findings. First, the Adapted Plays made more frequent use of narrative strategies that featured more overt narration of key plot details. Collectively, just over half (or 52.3%) of the Adapted Plays featured a narrative strategy other than dialogue emergent, compared with only one third (33.3%) for the Original Plays. Second, when strategies were similarly employed by both treatments, as was the case with the use of a narrator, the Adapted Plays showed a trend towards slightly more extensive use of a narrator than the Original Plays. Although limited by the sample sizes available, narrators in the Adapted Plays

accounted for an average of over forty percent (43.8%) of the total tokens while their Original Play counterparts accounted for only one third (33.7%). Coupled together, these two findings suggest this greater use of narration was one explanation for the observed differences in the general measures of language production discussed in section 6.2 above. Given that the Adapted Plays were significantly more fluent compositions with greater syntactic complexity of AS-units, this was possibly due to the greater employment of overt narrative strategies that facilitated fuller clauses and multi-clausal utterances.

To investigate this possible effect, both treatment groups were collapsed into a single group for cross-treatment comparison. The top ten (roughly one quarter) most fluent plays from both treatments were compiled and ranked and then compared for their use of narrative strategies. This comparison yielded the following list:

*Table 6.12 Top ten plays by fluency*

rank	play	treatment	tokens	narrative strategies
1	<i>Momotarou</i> (#19)	Adapted	197	Nr, DE
2	<i>Three Little Pigs</i> (#10)	Adapted	183	CNr, DE
3	<i>Las Vegas</i> (#15)	Original	171	DE
4	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (#8)	Adapted	167	Nr, DE
5	<i>Pet Shop</i> (#10)	Original	166	EN, DE
6	<i>Birthday Present</i> (#3)	Original	162	DE
7	<i>Snow White</i> (#20)	Adapted	161	Nr, DE
8	<i>Cinderella</i> (#13)	Adapted	155	DE
9	<i>Princess Kaguya</i> (#3)	Adapted	146	EN, DE
10	<i>Three Little Pigs</i> (#21)	Adapted	145	DE

key: Nr= Narrator; CNr= Character as narrator; EmN= embedded narration; DE= dialogue emergent

As Table 6.12 shows, in terms of fluency, plays that made use of narrative strategies other than dialogue emergent showed only a slight majority in the top ten most fluent plays across both treatments (six to four). Furthermore, while the Adapted Plays were a clear majority on this list (seven to three), two of the three Original Plays on this list were amongst the most fluent plays in both studies, despite their exclusive use of the

dialogue emergent narrative strategy. This would suggest that the use of other narrative strategies besides dialogue emergent was not necessary for higher fluency to be achieved.

In contrast to this finding, a similar comparison was carried out with a cross-treatment comparison of the top ten plays ranked according to syntactic complexity (*clauses per AS-unit*). This comparison yielded results that are shown in Table 6.13 below.

Table 6.13 Top ten plays by syntactic complexity

rank	play	treatment	tokens	narrative strategies
1	<i>Momotarou</i> (#19)	Adapted	197	Nr, DE
2	<i>Three Little Pigs</i> (#10)	Adapted	183	CNr, DE
3	<i>Las Vegas</i> (#15)	Original	171	DE
4	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (#8)	Adapted	167	Nr, DE
5	<i>Pet Shop</i> (#10)	Original	166	EN, DE
6	<i>Birthday Present</i> (#3)	Original	162	DE
7	<i>Snow White</i> (#20)	Adapted	161	Nr; DE
8	<i>Cinderella</i> (#13)	Adapted	155	DE
9	<i>Princess Kaguya</i> (#3)	Adapted	146	EN, DE
10	<i>Three Little Pigs</i> (#21)	Adapted	145	DE

key: Nr= Narrator; CNr= Character as narrator; EmN= embedded narration; DE= dialogue emergent

After ranking plays according to their syntactic complexity, a clearer trend emerged regarding narrative strategies. Eight of the ten most syntactically complex plays from both studies featured either a narrator, character as narrator, or embedded narrator in addition to the dialogue emergent strategy. This finding would suggest that the use of overt narration, meaning a strategy of narration that involved more than just character-to-character dialogue, had a noticeable effect on how complex the language of those plays became.



## 6.5 Discussion

The alteration of the task condition of *available content* resulted in two different versions of the devised theatre task: Adapted Plays and Original Plays. The Adapted Plays had a provision of story content that was provided by the source material a given group selected for theatrical adaptation. This story content included characters, settings, and a plot to render into dialogue and action. The Original Plays lacked this provision of story content and, consequently, there was a greater demand for conceptual creativity as each group would need to invent a setting for their story, populate that setting with characters, and then devise a plot that they would subsequently render into dialogue and action. Out of the these variations, the Adapted Play was identified as the less difficult task.

The methodology chapter presented several predictions related to these varying task conditions: 1) the provision of available content (Adapted Plays) would lessen demands on conceptual creativity, afford students more opportunity to direct attentional resources towards composition and performance, and result in language production that was more fluent and complex, both lexically and syntactically; and 2) the lack of available content (Original Plays) would demand additional attentional resources for conceptual creativity and would result in language production that was less fluent and less complex syntactically, but more accurate. These two complementary predictions indicated the expectation of a trade-off in task performance between either greater complexity or greater accuracy, following the view of Skehan (1996, 1998, 2003, 2009). A third prediction concerned the theatrical quality of the performances as heard, rather than seen, and anticipated that the provision of content would similarly free attentional resources, as well as time, to be directed at rehearsal and preparation. As a result, it was predicted that the Adapted Plays would be rated higher overall for the quality of their oral performances.

With a statistical comparison of the qualities of language production in the final performance achieved, these two task conditions can be discussed in terms of how the different task features precluded, or facilitated, differential task outcomes. The results of the quantitative analysis in this chapter showed a significant treatment effect for syntactic complexity, general accuracy, and fluency. In regards to the three predictions discussed above, the first two were confirmed by these results. The provision of content in the

Adapted Plays resulted in performances that featured almost thirty percent more tokens than the Original Play (Table 6.5) , clearly showing that more attentional resources were available for fluency in the Adapted Play task condition. Additionally, the available content of the Adapted Plays pushed a higher ratio of clauses per AS-unit close, while, in contrast to this, the Original Plays in turn relied on a significantly greater ratio of sub-clausal AS-units (see Table 6.1). This simpler syntax in the Original Plays was coupled with a significantly greater ratio of AS-units that were free of errors, confirming that, for the measures used in the current study, the predicted trade-off between complexity and accuracy occurred. This trade-off favoured complexity in the less difficult task and accuracy in the more difficult task since more attentional resources were freed for language production in the less difficult task (the Adapted Play).

Beyond general accuracy and syntactic complexity, there were no significant differences for the rates of grammatical or lexical errors per AS-unit, which showed that treatment effects for accuracy did not extend to either an increase or reduction of errors in either category. Results for the average length of error-free AS-units were not significant as well, indicating that this accuracy was not more dependent on AS-unit length in either treatment. Therefore, the trade-off effect observed in the results was limited to either less accurate AS-units with more complex syntax or more accurate AS-units with simpler syntax.

There was also no significant difference in lexical complexity. A further analysis of the tokens that fell outside of the first two thousand most frequent words encountered in English (according to the BNC and COCA) showed that a majority of these words present in student outcomes were content-specific to the stories each group created (or adapted) and were predominately nouns. Examples of this include *peach*, *turtle*, *princess*, *poison*, and *monkey*. These results indicated that the greater fluency and syntactic complexity of the Adapted Plays were both achieved without significantly stretching the students' lexical knowledge. Likewise, the greater accuracy in the Original Plays was not due to any degradation of lexical complexity.

The third prediction, that the Adapted Plays would receive higher ratings for overall theatrical quality of oral performance, was not confirmed by the results of the analysis.

That being stated, the Adapted Plays did receive a higher mean rating, and the differences in ratings approached significance. This suggests that the raters found the oral performances of both treatments more or less equally effective as theatre, with the Adapted Plays showing a trend towards higher scores.

In short, students in the Adapted Plays wrote and performed longer plays that featured more complex syntax but also more errors. This observed trade-off between syntactic complexity and general accuracy supports the relevant predictions of Skehan's (1996, 1998) Limited Attentional Capacity model (LAC). Skehan predicts that more difficult tasks would demand more attentional resources to complete. In his view, if the complexity of language production were to be limited as a result of less attentional resources being available, due to those resources being diverted to the conceptualiser, students would employ simpler language over which they have greater control as a result. Conversely, easier tasks would free attentional resources for learners to focus on the complexity of output. In doing so, learners would use more complex language, and perhaps even stretch their existing interlanguage, to produce output over which they have less control. The current study bears out this prediction: the more difficult task, the Original Play, featured simpler syntax and the greater general accuracy observed with this simpler syntax indicated that students had greater control over their language production in that task condition. In comparison, the Adapted Plays were easier tasks, relatively, and pushed students to produce more full clauses and multi-clausal utterances rather than simpler clauses and more frequent sub-clausal utterances. In this case, the students demonstrated less control over this increasing complexity of their output, as reflected in their lower values for accuracy. Finally, the results of the non-parametric correlation tests (Table 6.7) provided further evidence of this trade-off, as there was a statistically significant inverse correlation between accuracy and complexity.

While the above discussion considered the results in light of the predictions made by Skehan's LAC model, these same results can also be compared with the predictions of Robinson's (2001, 2007, 2011b) Cognition Hypothesis. In brief, the CH predicts that as task complexity is increased along the resource-directing dimension, learner output will be pushed towards more complex and more accurate language production. Conversely,

increasing task complexity along the resource-dispersing dimension will have a detrimental effect on all three aspects of language production. For the results of the current study to align with these predictions of the CH, one must consider the more difficult task (the Original Play) to be the more cognitively complex task, since the exclusion of available content represented a resource directing rather than resource dispersing alteration to the task. Consequently, the CH predicts that the Original Plays would show increases in both complexity and accuracy, rather than a trade-off between the two. However, as the quantitative results discussed above already indicated, the opposite outcome actually occurred: it was the less complex task (Adapted Play) that pushed greater complexity while the more complex task (Original Play) pushed accuracy. Moreover, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the results for the correlation tests yielded a statistically significant inverse correlation between complexity and accuracy. This suggests that, for the devised theatre tasks in the current study, complexity and accuracy could not be pushed simultaneously. Thus, the CH's predictions about task complexity and language production would certainly not be expected for these tasks.

To expand this discussion, recall that the literature review in chapter three cited several studies dealing with either narrative structure or conceptual creativity in a narrative task. Tavakoli and Foster (2011) reported performance effects both for the tightness of narrative structure and for the complexity of storyline. As discussed in chapter three, the narrative task they used involved one of four prompts containing six pictures. These prompts differed in two ways: 1) two of the stories involved both foreground and background information, while the other two stories had only foreground information; and, 2) two of the stories could be told in only one logical way, while the other two stories allowed some freedom in the ordering of events. In terms of storyline complexity, their results showed a significant treatment effect: presence of foreground and background information pushed greater complexity. For the devised theatre tasks in the current study, there was no control for this task feature in the design of the devised theatre tasks. However, foreground and background information, as they were operationalised in Tavakoli and Foster's study, can be identified across both treatments. To explain, foreground information provides the main points of a narrative while

background information provides support for the main points (Tavakoli & Foster, 2011). Conceptualised in this way, foreground information would be the action that unfolds during the drama that an audience witnesses onstage. Background information, then, would be, essentially, information that is provided during this narrative that does not unfold in real time in front of the audience but rather is communicated to them during the action as narrative exposition. This reasoning qualifies the narrative strategies, observed in the task outcomes of the devised theatre tasks and analysed earlier in this chapter, as a means of conveying background information within a narrative. As a result, the presence of narration would normally signal the presence of background information and a more complex storyline, though this was not necessarily always the case. As the previous analysis of narrative strategies showed, there were instances in which the on stage action complemented or recapitulated a narrator's delivery of the story rather than functioning as the main narrative for which the narrator merely provided supplemental background information. Nevertheless, a majority of the plays that used overt narration (narrator, character as narrator, or embedded narrator) did so to set up necessary details about the characters and situation and setting they inhabited prior to the action of the on stage story commencing or continuing. Transitions between scenes, representing shifts in time and location, were similarly handled with overt narration and such instances can also be considered background information, since the time between scenes is not represented with action on stage.

Admittedly, such an appropriation of the storyline features of background and foreground information represents a far different state of affairs than with Tavakoli and Foster's study. In their study, they considered stories that potentially had dual story lines, but only one mode of communication: oral narrative retelling. Theatre, as discussed in chapter two, differs from this type of narrative retelling in that the author, or authors, communicate to an audience indirectly through performance. Therefore, elements of the story which they select for performance as action and dialogue will differ from elements of the story, including sequences of events, that are equally relevant to the plot but happen prior to or between the action observable on stage. Allowing these analogous operationalisations of foreground and background information yields similar results in

the data from the current study. Namely, the Adapted Plays featured more overt narration (background information) overall and, concurrently, they also featured more syntactic complexity. In this vein, they produce results similar to Tavakoli and Foster's study of storyline complexity.

Recalling another relevant study from chapter three, Kormos (2011) reported that, for upper intermediate learners, the use of predetermined content resulted in more lexical complexity in student writing than in the writing tasks without such predetermined content. However, both treatments in her study showed roughly equivalent levels for accuracy and syntactic complexity. In contrast, the results of the current study showed that the provision of available (predetermined) content, in the form of an existing story's plot and narrative structure, pushed more syntactically complex writing. As discussed, this had the trade-off effect of pushing accuracy in the task that did not make such content available for students to use. Finally, values for lexical complexity between the Adapted Play and Original Play treatments were roughly equivalent. Kormos posited that the lack of a trade-off between accuracy and complexity in her study might be due to the extended time available (30 minutes for both tasks for a 150 word maximum) for her participants to revise their narratives and direct more attentional resources towards accuracy later in the process. For her, this represents a potential difference between oral and writing tasks in terms of task design features and effects on task performance. In regards to the results of the current study, the difference in proficiency level and age of student may both be factors that account for results that differ from Kormos' study. All of the current study's participants were only 15-16 years of age and, with two exceptions, had only three years of full-time English study prior to the devised theatre tasks. Therefore, it is not expected that their lexical knowledge would be sufficiently diverse to demonstrate greater use of abstract concept words if a task provided them the conditions to do so. Similarly, their command and knowledge of syntactic structures will be more limited than tertiary students to a degree that increasing complexity beyond a simple clause or partial utterance would test the boundaries of their current interlanguage. As a result, while the students in Kormos' study were able to handle differing demands on conceptual creativity without compromising their syntax, the students in the current

study were largely unable to handle additional demands on the conceptualiser without sacrificing more complex syntax for more accurate formulation of simpler syntax.

Ultimately, neither Foster and Tavakoli's study nor Kormos' deal with a mode of narrative similar to theatre. Those two studies investigated oral narratives and written narratives, respectively, that involve conceptual creativity as a component of task difficulty. The narratives that both studies use as instruments involve a direct communication between the author and the audience. Theatre, in contrast, is fundamentally an indirect communication between the author and audience with the performance as the mediator between the two. Even in the case of devising theatre, where the authors and performers are the same people, the narrative that a given theatre troupe devises is nevertheless indirectly communicated to an audience through the portions of that narrative that the troupe chose to perform for the audience. Although a dramatic, life-like event could conceivably be told in its entirety through performance, if such an event was of a sufficiently brief nature to allow a full representation in real time, most narratives performed in theatre are moments selected from a much longer time line that includes the relevant events of every character's life that have a bearing on the plot of the narrative being performed. Therefore, fundamentally, composition for theatre is about recognising, and exploiting, the temporal limitations of live performance. These limitations force narratives with more complex or more expansive story lines to utilise various narrative strategies in order to adequately provide enough background information to support and sustain the narrative in the foreground as it progresses through time.

Given this necessity to understand that these limitations will have an effect on the language that is used in theatre, it is reasonable to expect that students unfamiliar with devising theatre might encounter setbacks as they construct their plays. For example, a narrative that works as an intriguing anecdote when told from one friend to another might not work as theatre if the action and dialogue are the primary means of moving that narrative along. Thus, if a given group imagines such a story, they may encounter difficulty when they realise that their narrative, when told through performance, produces a story that lacks depth or tension. Thus, the outcomes of devising are tightly bound to

the manner in which the devising unfolds and the final language production will reflect the relative complicatedness of the story being performed.

In regards to this process of devising, the two case studies in chapter five provided a detailed account of both group orientation to a devised theatre task and the talk about language that arose during devising of their plays. This extensive description and analysis of the process of devising offered two findings that potentially have relevance to the current discussion in this chapter. Firstly, the process of devising took noticeably different routes in the two case studies. The Adapted Play group that did *The Three Little Pigs* (case study one) managed to select their story within about twenty minutes. Once the story was selected, they proceeded to devise their version in under an hour of class time, progressing more or less steadily from scene to scene. This left them with a little under twenty minutes of class time during the fourth lesson to prepare and rehearse their story prior to performance. In contrast, the Original Play group (case study two) had considerably more trouble with settling on a storyline, despite the fact that they had decided on the theme for their story within the first two minutes of devising their play. This difference highlights one critical aspect of the construct of available content as it operated in the current study: in the Adapted Play, once the story to adapt was selected, little conceptual creativity was required as the source material already provided the necessary content (i.e., characters and storyline) to use in their story. This eased demands on each group member's conceptualiser and afforded them more time to work on creating the actual dialogue for the story. In stark contrast to this, in the Original Play, the selection of a theme led immediately to greater demands on the group's conceptual creativity as they were then charged with inventing a storyline and characters that related to that selected theme. These increased demands virtually ceased productive talk about dialogue or language until enough elements of a story were available to build around with dialogue. As the process data for the Original Play showed, the group tried hard to work with a very vague narrative built around a school-based situation. However, they soon abandoned their original story and brainstormed alternatives. Their chosen alternative produced more animated discussion, and also some rudimentary L2 dialogue was suggested as they went about crafting the plot for the new story. In spite of this, when



they arrived in class on day three, with only forty minutes of class time remaining, some lingering uncertainty with how their current story would unfold caused them to abruptly change the narrative arc for the latter half of their story. This prolonged content creation was done at the expense of language production, and consequently the group had to work hard to piece together dialogue in English and tell their entire story.

The second finding from the process data relates more specifically to the Original Play than the Adapted Play case study. As was shown in the analysis of LREs in both case studies, while both groups engaged in a roughly equivalent number of LREs in the process of devising, the LREs in the Original Play involved fewer members of the group than for the Adapted Play. As the subsequent discussion in chapter five proposed, one reason for this was likely the heavy constraints on time that the Original Play group faced as a result of taking over half of the devising time to construct a satisfactory storyline. Since time was at a premium, an observably larger portion of talk about English was restricted to the student who was the transcriber for the group, and her fellow group member who sat next to her. Together, these two seemed to demonstrate a greater proficiency at English than their fellow group members, and thus without the luxury of sufficient time for discussion, the other four members of the group created the story while those two worked on the English and led the discussions that dealt with writing the dialogue. While this might be seen as a regrettable turn of events from a teacher's standpoint, it is worth repeating that the rest of the group remained consistently engaged with the process of devising content, just as the *Three Little Pigs* group similarly did, and they supported each other's language construction when the opportunities arose. They simply had fewer opportunities to provide this support and contribute to language co-construction than the Adapted Play group had.

## 6.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed two devised theatre tasks that featured an alteration of the task condition of available content. By allowing students to select existing stories that were familiar to them and adapting them for a theatrical performance, the design of the Adapted Play task made content available for use and eased the demands for conceptual

creativity for the students. This, in turn, resulted in a less difficult task that pushed fluency and syntactic complexity on one hand and greater use of overt narration on the other. In contrast, the lack of available content in the Original Plays increased the demands for conceptual creativity for the students with the result that fluency and complexity were less than the Adapted Play, but accuracy was more. Qualitative analysis of the narrative strategies suggested a possible interaction between these features of language production and the use of overt narration. To further elucidate all of these results, student feedback from post-task surveys was analysed to establish salient themes from the students' own perspectives on the tasks. The next chapter reports the findings from this analysis.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: STUDENT PERSPECTIVES OF THE TASKS

The previous two chapters covered both the process of devised theatre, from the viewpoint of two case studies, and the differences in language production that arose between devised theatre tasks that differed by an alteration of the task condition of *available content*. This chapter looks at the devised theatre tasks from the student perspective by analysing how students reported their experiences of the tasks in their post-task surveys that were administered after the completion of the final performances for each study. This chapter is organised as follows: the first section summarises the relevant research methods for this analysis, the second section looks at the ranking and short answer questions, the third sections looks at the open-ended task reflection questions, the fourth section discusses the findings from this analysis, and the fifth section summarises the chapter.

### 7.1 Summary of relevant methodology

This chapter addresses research question three, which is as follows:

*Research Question Three:* How do students perceive the experience of carrying out and completing devised theatre tasks and what, if any, are the differences in the perceptions of the two treatment groups?

Students filled out feedback questionnaires individually after completion of the tasks. A copy of questionnaires one and two (respective to the initial and repeated studies) are provided in Appendix 6. They provided responses on the feedback questionnaires in Japanese. Both feedback questionnaires featured ranking questions, short answer questions, and one last open-ended question where students were prompted to write a short reflection about the project. I translated the short answer and open response task reflection questions from Japanese into English and then checked my translations for incongruities and ambiguities with a native speaker of Japanese who was also fluent in English. These responses were then analysed without a theoretical framework in order to

allow salient themes and features to emerge from the data. Pseudonyms were used for all participants. Once these themes were identified, responses were coded and sorted by those themes, resulting in the following headings: 1) enjoyment of the task; 2) positive aspects of collaborative work; 3) benefits of seeing the performances of others; 4) creative demands of the task; and 5) opportunities for language development. Each one of these salient themes will be now be discussed in turn.

## 7.2 Enjoyment of the task

The first salient theme that emerged from the data was the common student perception that the devised theatre tasks were enjoyable to undertake despite their difficulty. Question 1 from the first survey asked students to rank the enjoyability of the tasks. The results for this question are shown in Table 7.1 below.

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*Table 7.1 First Study - Question 1*

Did you find this project enjoyable?

	<i>not enjoyable</i>				<i>enjoyable</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=71)	0	1	16	25	29
Adapted Play (n=70)	2	2	10	23	33

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Responses for this question showed that both devised theatre tasks received generally favourable reviews in the initial study, with over forty percent respondents for both giving it a '5' and at least seventy percent giving the tasks a '4' or '5' for either task. The Adapted Play fared slightly better than the Original Play, receiving eighty percent of scores at '4' or '5' against seventy six percent.

Similar positive assessments of the tasks were found in the repeated study. Question 1 from the second survey replicated the same question from the first survey. The results are shown in Table 7.2 below.

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*Table 7.2 Second study - Question 1*

Did you find this project enjoyable?

	<i>not enjoyable</i>				<i>enjoyable</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=70)	1	10	24	16	19
Adapted Play (n=73)	0	2	13	30	28

---

For the second (repeated) study, the Adapted Play fared demonstrably better than the Original Play. Almost eighty percent of respondents rated the Adapted Play a ‘4’ or ‘5’ compared to only fifty percent for the Original Play. Additionally, responses giving a ‘1’ or ‘2’ for the Original Play were five times as many as in the previous study. Although group membership had changed after the first study, the individual participants did not change. Given the counterbalanced design of the study, students in the second study worked on the task condition they had not previously experienced during the first study. Therefore, it was possible to gauge if an order effect was evident in the students’ responses. Table 7.3 shows a comparison of enjoyment ratings between the two studies.

Table 7.3 Comparison of enjoyment ratings

Treatment	not enjoyable		enjoyable		
	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Original Play</i>					
study 1 (n=71)	0	1	16	25	29
study 2 (n=70)	1	10	24	16	19
change	+1	+9	+12	-9	-10
<i>Adapted Play</i>					
study 1 (n=70)	2	2	10	23	33
study 2 (n=73)	0	2	13	30	28
change	-2	0	+3	+7	-5

Between the two studies, the Original Play went from a ‘4’ or ‘5’ enjoyment rating of roughly seventy six percent in the first study to roughly fifty percent in the second study, while the Adapted Play maintained a ‘4’ or ‘5’ enjoyment rating of around eighty percent for both studies. Therefore, the Adapted Play received higher ratings across both studies. Since individual students had participated in the other task condition in the first study, there was a possibility of an order effect. For the ratings of ‘4’ and ‘5’, the increase in those ratings for those who did the Original Play first was only four percent while for those who did the Adapted Play first, the decrease in those ratings was around thirty percent.

Question 6 in both surveys was in open-ended short response question that asked students to reflect on their experiences with the tasks. In answering this question, a notably large number of students added further evidence of the enjoyment they felt undertaking the tasks. In particular, the opportunity to work together with classmates contributed to this enjoyment. As an example, Noah reported,

“Our group could work together and make a story, and we could also do an enjoyable presentation.” (Noah, task survey).

This response was representative of much of the feedback and it highlighted student recognition of both the enjoyment of the task and the enjoyment from collaborative work on the tasks found in other responses. As a further example Sophia wrote,

“It was great since we were able to work together and do it and have a fun performance.” (Sophia, task survey).

Emma similarly reported on the enjoyment of group work that the task provided, writing,

“It was really fun to work together with everyone and make one thing and perform it.” (Emma, task survey).

Olivia offered a similar sentiment when she wrote,

“We could make [it] really interesting, and we worked together well. The other groups were also so much fun. I want to do it again.” (Olivia, task survey).

It is clear from these responses that the collaborative nature of the tasks had a positive effect on these students’ enjoyment of the task. Regarding this positive effect of the devised theatre tasks, Liam remarked that he initially lacked motivation but by working with the others on the task he came to enjoy himself. He wrote,

“At first I thought I couldn’t be bothered, but while getting on with making the story and dialogue I came to feel it was fun. I could have a lot of fun working together with my group and so on.” (Liam, task survey)

Echoing Liam’s shift from a lack of motivation to active enjoyment, Mason reported a similar shift away from his initial uneasiness about the outcomes of the task. He reflected,

“Although at first I was worried whether we could do it properly, it was really fun. We were able to work together.” (Mason, task survey)

For Mason, he was able to enjoy the task when he realised that his group was able to work together and complete the task, which he had worried about when the task began. For another student, Isabella, the rehearsal aspect in particular was identified as enjoyable, as she reported,

“Doing things like enjoyably rehearsing with my group’s members, in the end we did a fantastic story and it was really fun.” (Isabella, task survey)

Other students reported enjoyment within group work on the writing aspect. For example, William wrote,

“Discussing things together, picking the story and completing it were really enjoyable. Although putting it into English was difficult and we worked quite hard, it was good that somehow we were able to finish it.” (William, task survey)

Ethan similarly acknowledged the difficulty of the task but likewise reported that working with a group made the task enjoyable, writing,

“Although we thought up the words in Japanese, putting them into English was difficult. Since our groups members enjoyed doing it, it was good.” (Ethan, task survey).

In these cases cited here, students identified a link between enjoyment from working on the task and enjoyment from working with others on the same task. In addition to this, some students even expressed a sense of accomplishment from completing the devised theatre tasks. Working on an Adapted Play, Ava reported,



“I was very glad that we all thought of a story in Japanese, translated it into English, and did it all from scratch and I have a big sense of accomplishment.” (Ava, task survey)

Ava mentioned her sense of accomplishment explicitly, and her reflection on this was of particular interest given that she actually gave the task a ‘1’ for enjoyment as an answer for the first question of the survey. In contrast, Michael did not mention a sense of accomplishment specifically, but he reflected,

“I was glad we could complete a single story by everyone concentrating together. It seems like I can make use of this experience in my later life.” (Michael, task survey)

The inference drawn from Michael’s response was that he found value in the task as a result of working with his group members on the task. This experience of collaboration, in turn, is something he felt might have utility at other times in his life.

As this discussion has shown, the devised theatre tasks were viewed as enjoyable by a large majority of the students and that the opportunity to collaborate with peers contributed to this enjoyment. This nature of this collaboration is the next salient theme to be discussed.

### **7.3 Positive aspects of collaborative work**

Collaboration is central to the devised theatre tasks as both versions of the task require a large group of students to collectively orient to the creative demands of the tasks and generate scripts in English. Therefore, given the central role that collaboration has in devising theatre, it is not surprising that students often associated enjoyment with this collaboration. In regards to the quality of this collaboration, Question 4 from the first survey asked students to rate the cohesiveness of their group. The responses for this question are shown in Table 7.4 on the next page.

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Table 7.4 First Study - Question 4

How well did your group work together?

	<i>not well</i>				<i>well</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=71)	1	2	16	26	26
Adapted Play (n=70)	2	4	13	18	33

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This question was meant primarily to gauge whether group cohesion was a potential issue to address in the implementation of devised theatre tasks, given that the group size (six to seven students) is not typical for TBLT. The near equal numbers of ‘4’ and ‘5’ answers for both tasks, roughly seventy three percent for both, suggested that students generally reported cohesion in their groups and thus viewed their collaborative work positively. Question 4 from the second survey replicated this question for the repeated study. Table 7.5 shows the responses for that question.

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Table 7.5 Second study - Question 4

How well did your group work together?

	<i>not well</i>				<i>well</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=70)	0	5	11	25	29
Adapted Play (n=73)	0	0	11	24	38

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In the second study, both treatments had similarly positive reports for the quality of collaborative work within groups. Overall, over three quarters of all students in both treatments reported a score of ‘4’ or ‘5’ which was nearly equivalent (i.e. slightly higher) than findings from the same question from the first study. On that point, Table 7.6 shows a comparison of the responses for this question from both studies.

Table 7.6 Comparison of group cohesion

How well did your group work together?

	not well			well	
	1	2	3	4	5
order= Original - Adapted					
study 1 (original) (n=71)	1	2	16	26	26
study 2 (adapted) (n=73)	0	0	11	24	38
change	-1	-2	-5	-2	+12
order= Adapted - Original					
study 1 (adapted) (n=70)	2	4	13	18	33
study 2 (original) (n=70)	0	5	11	25	29
change	-2	+1	-2	+7	-4

As the above table shows, the individuals who did the Original Play first rated their group work with the Adapted Play a little more favourably. At the same time, the individuals who did the Adapted Play first rated the Original Play slightly less favourably. Similar to the responses for Question 1, this overrode any possible order effect.

As individual students reported generally positive assessments for group cohesion, particularly when working on the Adapted Plays, it was useful to qualify these appraisals with more detail about the nature of the collaborative work undertaken. Question 5 from the first survey, which was replicated as Question 5 in the second survey, asked students to provide short responses for both the strong and weak points of their group work. The responses to these questions were almost exclusively in Japanese. Once a semantic gloss was achieved for each response, categories of responses were established and those that shared similar semantic content were grouped together into the same category of responses. For example, a response of ‘全員参加でできた’ (*zenin sankā de dekita*: everyone joined in) and a response of ‘協力してできたこと’ (*kyōryoku shite dekita koto*: we cooperated and did it) were treated as two responses from the same category of *able to cooperate / able to work well together*.

While other questions were chiefly concerned with task outcomes, Question 5 asked for student perceptions of collaborative work in large groups and thus allowed aspects with greater relevance to the procedural demands of the task to receive greater attention. In this vein, procedural concerns related to the ways in which students described their orientation to the task and the division of labour during the task. Considering the strong points that students reported, Table 7.7 shows a compilation of responses from both studies, ranked by the total number of responses.

For strong points, the ability for a given group to cooperate was the most common response from both the Adapted and Original Plays. Additionally, both tasks had a high number of responses for the ability to have fun and enjoy working together. For the Original Play, another common response was the ability of individuals within each group to share their ideas and opinions. While the Adapted Play had fewer responses for that category, this is not so surprising given the lesser creative demand of that task in comparison with the Original Play. As the Original Play task condition did require more creativity, it should be expected that sharing opinions and ideas would be more readily seen as a positive factor. In the previous section, the ability to collaborate with their peers was often indicated as a source of the tasks' enjoyability, and the findings here support this trend as around fifteen percent of respondents for both treatments listed the ability to have fun and enjoy working together as a group strong point. All in all, both task conditions elicited similar responses, with the most frequent categories indicating some manner of successful, enjoyable cooperation and task completion as the perceived strengths of group work.

While the above findings indicate generally positive assessment of collaborative work, given the difficulty of task demands, other aspects of group work were perceived as weaknesses rather than strengths. Question 5 from both surveys also asked students to report on the weak points they found for their groups. The responses for this part of these questions is compiled in Table 7.8.

Regarding perceived weak points, reports of insufficient or unproductive rehearsals, and of difficulty staying on task (i.e. 'goofing around'), were the only categories with equivalently high numbers of responses for both task conditions. In an interesting

contrast, the highest reported weak point for the Original Plays dealt with the final performance ('performance was not very polished or smooth') while the highest reported weak point for the Adapted Plays dealt with composition ('writing went slowly; writing took too long'). Both tasks provided responses for these other categories, only in fewer numbers. Additionally, students from both tasks reported an uneven division of labour as a weak point.

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Table 7.7 First Study and Second Study- Question 5

What were strong points for your group?  
*(note: multiple responses per individual permitted)*

Original Play

	number of responses		
	First Study (n=71)	Second Study (n=70)	total
(n=141)			
able to cooperate; able to work well together	11	18	29
able to share opinions, ideas	10	14	24
had fun, able to enjoy working together	10	9	19
made a good performance	7	7	14
created an interesting story	3	8	11
everyone contributed; everyone had a responsibility	8	2	10
tried our best; worked really hard	3	7	10
able to complete the story; cooperated and completed it	6	3	9
rehearsals were good; able to rehearse a lot	5	2	7
got things in order	3	3	6
group members helped each other	2		2
chose content quickly	2		2
story was easy to understand	2		2
not shy during performance		2	2

1 response each: gradually choosing content made it fun; did well with English;  
made a plan and followed it; able to say lines in English

## Adapted Play

	number of responses		
	<i>First Study</i> ( <i>n</i> =70)	<i>Second Study</i> ( <i>n</i> =73)	<i>total</i> ( <i>n</i> =143)
able to cooperate; able to work well together	13	12	25
had fun, able to enjoy working together	10	12	22
able to complete the story; cooperated and completed it	8	12	20
able to share opinions, ideas	3	13	16
everyone contributed; everyone had a responsibility	7	6	13
made a good performance	4	5	9
created an interesting story	7	2	9
rehearsals were good; able to rehearse a lot	1	5	6
chose content quickly	2	3	5
everyone remembered their lines	4		4
group members helped each other	2	2	4
work progressed smoothly		3	3
kept it simple; used everyday language	3		3
loud voices in performance	1	2	3
worked hard to make it interesting		2	
cooperation made it fun		2	2

1 response each: thought everything up together; loud voices during performance; somehow able to finish the project in the end;; wrote all of our lines; the content of the story, able to organise the work (Japanese: *matomari*); added our own ideas to the story; learned words I didn't know before

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Beyond these categories, Table 7.8 on the facing page shows that a small number of students reported weak points for a variety of categories. This indicates that, in contrast to the strong points reported for each group, assessing the weak points of their groups led students to consider a much wider array of issues, though the numbers of responses for many of these categories suggests that these perceived issues may have been a reflection of isolated struggles rather than general trends.

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Table 7.8 First Study and Second Study- Question 5, part two

What were weak points for your group? (note: multiple responses per individual permitted)

Original Play

	number of responses		
	First Study (n=71)	Second Study (n=70)	total
(n=141)			
performance was not very polished or smooth	9	9	18
insufficient rehearsal; unproductive rehearsal	8	4	12
trouble with getting things in order/organising	4	7	11
'goofed around'; wasted time	4	6	10
the story was short; more would have been better		8	8
writing went slowly; writing took too long	6	2	8
did not cooperate well; did not work together well	7		7
uneven division of labor	7		7
quiet voices in performance		4	4
work did not progress smoothly	4		4
the story was not that good/nothing special	3	1	4
few or no stage action or gestures	2	2	4
too many ideas made it hard to choose	2	1	3
became exhausted working on the project	1	2	3
forgot some lines; did not learn lines		2	2
unable to complete the story		2	2
stage action could have been better		2	2

1 response each: not everyone shared their opinion; used some Japanese in the performance; quiet voice during performance; the lines were too few; broke out laughing during the performance; used 'crib' sheets; did not cooperate well- did not work together well; uneven division of labour- left it to others to do; had to cover for an absent member; story was hard to understand; unexpected ad-libs in performance

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Regarding between-treatment differences for group weak points, the Original plays had more responses relating to the quality of performance and rehearsal, while the Adapted plays had more responses relating to the pace of the writing process and the division of labour within the group. Additionally, the Original Plays had more responses noting either organisation and getting started as weak points.

Table 7.8 First Study and Second Study- Question 5, part two (cont.)

Adapted Play

	number of responses		
	<i>First Study</i> (n=70)	<i>Second Study</i> (n=73)	<i>total</i> (n=143)
writing went slowly; writing took too long	7	8	15
'goofed around'; wasted time	6	5	11
insufficient rehearsal; unproductive rehearsal	6	6	12
uneven division of labor; left it to others to do	3	8	11
performance was not very polished or smooth	3	5	8
did not cooperate well; did not work together well	6	1	7
forgot some of the lines; did not learn lines	2	5	7
few or no stage action or gestures	2	3	5
trouble with getting things in order/organising	4	1	5
quiet voices in performance		5	5
work did not progress smoothly		5	5
became exhausted working on the project	3		3
voices too quiet during performance	3		3
discussions not very productive	3		3
too many ideas made it hard to choose, hard to start	3		3
the story was short; more would have been better	3		3
broke out laughing during performance	2	1	3
too shy during performance	2		2
use of crib sheets during performance	1	1	2

1 response each:

the story was not that good; story was hard to understand; one person spoke a lot in the performance; we were a noisy group; not enough discussion about content; the story was nothing special; spoke Japanese in the performance

Considering both strong points and weak points together, there were several findings of note that were conspicuous, not by their absence, but either by their low frequency of responses or a decidedly disproportional amount of responses for one of the task conditions. For example, despite the fact that portions of two class periods were ostensibly dedicated as time for rehearsals, there were very few responses from either task that chose any facet of the rehearsal process as a strong point for the group (seven responses for the Original Play, and six for the Adapted Play). In contrast, both plays had notable numbers of responses that indicated 'insufficient rehearsal; unproductive rehearsal' as a weak point (each had twelve responses).



Judging by the equivalent number of responses that negatively assessed both cooperative work and script creation, it was not surprising that some students had to deal with insufficient time for rehearsal. As this first round of plays was the first time any of the students had worked together in larger groups for an extended period of time during English class, it was natural for issues of task management, specifically regarding task planning and the efficient use of the allotted time, to influence how group work on the tasks was perceived. This also indicates that for a small portion of students, a little less than ten percent, additional guidance from the teachers and scaffolding were student needs that had not been met.

Concerning demands that the performances made on participants, infrequent student responses from the Adapted Play groups regarding specific aspects of performance suggested that these students were either satisfied with the outcomes of their collaborative work or placed significantly less value on performance quality as a reflection of task accomplishment. For instance, although memorisation of the play-text was strongly encouraged, in fact explained by the task instructions (see Appendix 2) as basically “a given” for theatrical performance, only four respondents from the Adapted Play indicated ‘remembering one’s lines’ as a strong point while only seven respondents indicated ‘forgot some of the lines; did not learn lines’ as a weak point. This demonstrates that, for the Adapted Play, students were much more focused on issues of group collaboration and script creation than on certain requirements of the performances.

In contrast to this, two of the most frequent responses from the Original Play for weak points addressed the performance itself. While both plays have roughly equal responses for ‘made a good performance’ as a strong point, this greater frequency of negative assessment of the theatrical performance seems to indicate that the quality of the performance obtained a higher value as an evaluative measure of task accomplishment for the students working on the Original Plays. In fact, the most frequent strong point response category from either task condition that dealt with theatrical performance aspects was that broad and unspecific response of “made a good performance”; with fourteen responses from the Original Play and nine responses from the Adapted Play. The number of responses in the category for the Original Plays in particular, compared to a

lower number from the Adapted Plays, further suggests the value of the performance for the students in the Original Play task condition. In both tasks, it might be reasonable to assume that the absence of theatrical scenery and costumes may also have contributed to what could fairly be described as a ‘workshop’ atmosphere. Overall, the responses of the students certainly indicated that performance matters were of secondary importance to how groups collaboratively wrote their plays. However, the responses for weak points suggested that artistic motivations were not absent from students’ minds, merely that for most respondents, these aesthetic aims were seemingly not realised in the completion of the tasks.

#### **7.4 Benefits of seeing the performances of others**

While some groups may have left certain artistic aims unfulfilled in their groups’ performances, the fact that other groups were undertaking the same task along side of them had positive benefits for some of the students. In particular, since each group had its own distinct mix of personalities, the results of collaborative work produced a variety of approaches to telling a story in the final performances. Consequently, a major theme that emerged in both treatments had to do with positive reflections that students made regarding the opportunity to watch other group’s performances. For example, Alex reflected on the process,

“To start off, it was fun. It was good that I saw other groups’ stories and that my group worked together successfully. Writing the story was tough, yet although it was difficult, the performances in English were quite interesting. Each group’s story was also really interesting.” (Alex, task survey)

For many students, the ability to watch and enjoy the performances of other groups was a highlight of the task. Jayden reported this sentiment plainly, writing,

“The stories the other groups made were interesting.” (Jayden, task survey).

Mia suggested there was a trade-off when he wrote,

“Making the story was tough but watching everyone’s performances was fun.” (Mia, task survey).

Another student indicated the individuality of each group’s performance as an additional appeal of the task. As Emily explained,

“I thought it was good that we could all work together, make a story and perform it. I also liked that I could see the personality of other groups’ performances.” (Emily, task survey)

In a different response, Daniel indicated the enjoyment of watching other performances and also made reference to his own group’s process as a result, writing,

“Watching everyone’s performances was fun and I could concentrate on listening and what these stories were about. We were called upon to create a story and we thought our hardest while using the grammar we had studied up to now.” (Daniel, task survey)

This relationship between the process of selecting material for the story and the observance of each group’s resultant product was also addressed by another student, Elijah, who reflected,

“When writing the story, there were times we didn’t know the right words, but we did things like look them up or ask the teacher and I think we made did well making it. We added movement to our story and made it easy to understand. It was great that the other groups made different stories and it was fun to see what interesting stories they made. (Elijah, task survey)

For Elijah, then, there was a conscious effort to consider the reception of their performance, which resulted in his group combining new vocabulary they found with stage action in order to make the story comprehensible to their classmates. For other students cited in this section, although they did not provide these exact sentiments, the

enjoyment of seeing other's performance likely connected with their ability to recognise the creativity that went into those performances. Elijah indicated that different groups had different stories to perform, and as Aiden discussed, doing this whole process within the medium of spoken language was particularly fun. He wrote,

"It was really fun, and doing it only with conversation was even more fun. The other groups had really interesting stories. Although English conversation is a weak point of mine, I think I am less conscious of this weak point than before. (Aiden, task survey)

These responses highlighted both the intrinsic motivation of a devised theatre task and the central role that the exhibition of performance played in students' positive perception of the task. From a pedagogical perspective, it might be understandable for a teacher to concentrate more on the creative demands of the task and the resultant procedural difficulties in completing the task. However, such a perspective would ignore the potential value of the each group's performance as a source of input for listening practice. In his response, Daniel mentioned not only this opportunity to listen to other stories but also the activation of his group's linguistic knowledge of English while they worked to complete the task. Another student, Madison, offered her own reflection along similar lines. She wrote,

"...Listening is a weak point for me, so when we go through a lesson, it was really good to come into contact with English from others besides the teacher. I did better than expected on the performance, and it was good to hear the other performances. It was good, not just as study, but enjoying theatre at the same time." (Madison, task survey)

If Daniel and Madison's reflections were taken together, than these two responses would suggest that enjoyment of the other performances had the potential added benefit of providing additional listening practice in class. As Madison indeed mentioned, the task was enjoyable for both its learning opportunities and the chance it offered her to enjoy the creativity of each group. This creative process is a nebulous entity in its own right. As the process data from chapter five indicated, both case studies, one from each task

condition, had particular struggles with progressing through the creative process, particularly from conceptualisation to formulation. The findings of that chapter thus suggested that for low-average to average ability groups, the creative demands of the task may not have been sufficiently scaffolded. The next section of this chapter turns attention, then, to another salient theme from the feedback data: the creative demands of the tasks and the effects they had on student perceptions of both process and product.

## **7.5 Creative demands of the tasks**

Students' lack of familiarity with the process of devising theatre likely had an influence on how they perceived the difficulty of both devised theatre tasks. Question 2 from the first survey asked students to rate the difficulty of the tasks they undertook. Table 7.9 shows the responses for this question.

For this question, the Adapted Play received slightly more responses of '5' than the Original Play, though overall the Original Play had slightly more responses of '4' and '5' collectively than the Adapted Play, at around eighty five percent against seventy seven percent respectively. In short, a strong majority of students perceived both treatments to be difficult, with the Original plays being perhaps slightly more difficult overall. A similar question from the repeated study, Question 2 of the second survey, recognised that the students had previously worked on the other task condition earlier in the school year. Consequently, the question was reformulated and asked the students to compare the difficulty of the second task to the previous task they had completed. The responses for this question are shown in Table 7.10 on the next page.

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Table 7.9 First Study - Question 2

How difficult was this project to complete?

	<i>easy</i>				<i>difficult</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=71)	0	1	9	34	27
Adapted Play (n=70)	0	4	12	20	34

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Table 7.10 Second study -Question 2

Compared to the first project, how difficult was this project to complete?

	<i>easier</i>				<i>more difficult</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=70)	3	10	20	25	12
Adapted Play (n=73)	2	20	29	20	2

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Given the amount of time that passed between the two studies, the results shown in Table 7.10 were harder to definitively interpret since they required students to recall elements of a previous task long since completed (three months previously). Nevertheless, it was possible to use this data as a rough gauge of difficulty if one considered a result of ‘3’ to indicate that the respondent found both tasks of approximately equal difficulty. Thus, a response of ‘5’ for this question would indicate that the task condition for the second study was considerably more difficult than the task condition from the previous study. Reflexively, a response of ‘1’ for the second study would denote that the respondent found the task condition significantly easier than the prior study.

Looking at the responses, then, it was clear to see that a majority of respondents for both task conditions found the difficulty to be either roughly equivalent or only slightly more or less difficult. The one difference was the greater number of ‘5’ responses for the Original Play. A comparison of these results with those from the first study show that the

Adapted Plays were rated slightly more difficult than the Original Play, with eighty percent of respondents rating it ‘4’ or ‘5’ compared to seventy six percent for the Original Play. For the second study, while fifty percent of Adapted Play participants found the Original Play more difficult, only thirty percent of Original Play participants found the Adapted Play more difficult. This difference, combined with the fact that the Original Play received only about half as many ‘1’ or ‘2’ responses, suggested that, overall, the Original Play was perceived as more difficult in the second study. The results of the second study are particularly informative because all respondents had a point of experience to reference when attributing difficulty to the tasks comparatively.

If one considers that the students did have that previous experience to draw from in attempting the second task, albeit with a different group, Question 3 from the second survey asked students to rate the extent to which that previous experience assisted their efforts on that latter task. Table 7.11 shows the responses the students provided.

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*Table 7.11 Second study - Question 3*

How helpful was the experience from the first project in completing the second project?

	<i>not helpful</i>				<i>helpful</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Original Play (n=70)	2	9	22	24	13
Adapted Play (n=72)	0	3	21	33	15

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As the table shows, a majority of the respondents rated the first experience as helpful when working on the second project. The Adapted Play rated somewhat higher than the Original Play, with ratings of ‘4’ or ‘5’ at sixty six percent compared to fifty three percent respectively. It was hard to draw a clear distinction between task conditions with these responses, but it would appear that students with experience in either treatment found this previous experience more or less equally useful for work on a subsequent, similar task.

Regardless of whether or not the students had prior experience on a similar task, findings from both surveys indicated difficulties with similar aspects of the tasks. To assess what aspects caused difficulty for the students when initially experiencing work on devising theatre, Question 3 in the first survey asked students to indicate with what areas they encountered difficulties. The responses for this question are shown in Table 7.12 below.

Table 7.12 First Study - Question 3

What part(s) were difficult to complete?

(note: multiple responses per individual permitted)

	<u>number of responses</u>		
	Original Play (n=71)	Adapted Play (n=70)	Total (n=141)
translation into English	17	31	48
writing and/or completing the story	27	12	39
“self” (Japanese: <i>serifu</i> ) “one’s lines”	9	17	26
the performance	14	3	17
actions; gestures; (stage) movement	9	6	15
getting started; choosing the story	9	5	15
content of the story	8		8
getting things in order (Japanese: <i>matomaru</i> )	5		5
how to complete the project	1	4	5
all parts		4	4
speaking in English	2	1	3
rehearsal	2		2
distribution of work responsibility	2		2
simplifying the story		2	2

This question helped to better understand the responses to the previous question on perceived difficulty. The most frequent response for the Original Play, that of ‘writing and/or completing the story’, received less than half as many responses as the Adapted Play. In contrast, the most frequent response for the Adapted Play, that of ‘translation into English’, received almost twice as many responses as it did for the Original Play. In actual fact, five of the top six responses for each play were the same five categories of responses but in different orders. The lone difference was that a far greater number of students in the Original Plays indicated that ‘the performance’ was one of the most



difficult parts of the task. At the very least, this provides a point of distinction between the two task conditions and provides a potential link to previous data in this chapter that also showed that the Original Play participants placed greater emphasis, be it positive or negative, on the performance. However, students from both tasks identified some aspect of script composition as the most difficult part to complete overall, with approximately 59% of responses for both treatments noting these aspects. So, while the number responses from the Original Plays for 'the performance' is worthy of mention, the two treatments did not differ so much beyond that in terms of what were identified as the most common sources of difficulty.

As for the categories with somewhat fewer responses than those mentioned above, another finding was the greater number of responses in the Original Plays for various aspects of the actual performance. As discussed above, almost a quarter of the responses for that treatment identified 'the performance' as the most difficult part of the task, compared with less than half as many responses for the Adapted Plays (around twelve percent). This finding suggested that with the Original Plays, completing the actual live performance of a wholly original work was more of a challenge than for an adaptation. One possible explanation for this was that adaptations involved existing stories and in many cases, there likely were exemplars of performance that students had the opportunity to observe previously in their lives. As a result, choices for the blocking, action, dialogue and portrayal of characters in an adaptation would be a comparatively simpler task as these exemplars provided a possible model to follow during work on the task. In contrast, the Original Plays would, in theory, not be based explicitly on any existing story. As a result, the presentation of such a story would require consideration of how the elements of a newly invented story could be expressed through live performance. In this sense, the Original Plays put a greater demand on students' conceptual creativity in order to solve this problem. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that the Original Plays featured a greater number of responses that identified this aspect of the process as the most difficult. On this point, the findings from the analysis of process data in chapter five supports this interpretation. The case study group working on the Original Play (case study two) not only showed considerable difficulty with the initial conceptualisation of

their story, but they also showed slow and laboured progress with formulating the target utterances appropriate for their story's content.

In regards to these difficulties, experienced often as a result of the creative demands of the tasks, some students reported on this aspect of the task in their open-ended reflections (Question 6 from both surveys). For this theme, the quality of responses showed some observable differences between the two task treatments. For this reason, the responses will be considered separately by task condition.

For previous questions on the feedback surveys, students provided results that frequently mentioned the collaboration necessary to complete a devised theatre task. About this topic, many students who worked on the Original Plays shared sentiments in their open reflections similar to Elizabeth, who wrote,

“Although we got quite noisy and weren't really coming up with sentences, it was good that we worked together and made the story. Though we weren't really able to rehearse, somehow we were able to perform. It was very fun.” (Elizabeth, task survey)

As this student implied with the mention of limited rehearsal time, finishing the story took more time than perhaps many of the groups anticipated. Charlotte offered a comparable report, reflecting,

“Although thinking up the story was difficult, as we were able to make the story it became enjoyable. As thinking up the story took too much time, we were not able to rehearse much. Next time, if there is the chance, I would like to have a presentation where we progress smoothly and steadily rehearse for it. This project was fun.” (Charlotte, task survey)

For Charlotte, it was not possible to tell from her response if thinking up the story and composing the story in English were considered the same thing. For Chloe, however, a distinction between these two steps was clearly made. She wrote in her reflection,

“Making up the story was good, but putting it into English was difficult. We were not able to make a very polished performance.” (Chloe, task survey)

If either creation of the story's basic plot structure or composing the story in English were difficult for a group to manage, then as a consequence, they would take longer to complete this phase of the task, leaving less time for rehearsal. On this point, a number of responses similarly addressed this lack of proper rehearsal time leading to a less polished performance. One student in particular, Ella, addressed this lack of rehearsal while providing a useful narrative summary of the whole process. She wrote,

"This project started with a discussion of how we would make groups. In our group, although we talked about the content, we didn't move forward easily. Step by step we came to decide the content, and gradually we expanded the story. It became really enjoyable. By the last lesson, we hadn't finished writing it so we weren't able to rehearse at all. So, the actual performance was not polished. Now, I think that it would've been good if we had thought more quickly during class and if the boys had helped out. However, I'm glad that we were able to make a story in a short time. When I watched other groups' performances, it became a fun project. It'd be good to do it again!" (Ella, task survey)

As with the other cited responses, this student indicated that creating the story took most of the entire allotted planning time, leaving her group with no in-class time to rehearse their performance. In spite of this, she expressed a sense of both enjoyment and accomplishment after finishing the devised theatre task and also expressed the desire to try the task again. Ultimately, Ella's sentiments were mirrored in the results of her group's performance. While her group was able to put together an original story in the end, one that was right around the average length for the treatment, a look at the rationale that the independent raters provided for their ratings of this particular performance indicated they both found the story hard to follow and felt that the performance lost its focus towards the end, making the resolution of the story unclear. With this group, it was clear that at least one of the members, the one who wrote the reflection, felt that only some of the group members were helping out and that perhaps the process of deciding on a story, and then writing it, both took a long time as a result. It seems reasonable enough to assume that this state of affairs could be expected of work

within larger groups. Still, in spite of those setbacks and the lack of polish to the final performance, this student had a desire to try the devised theatre task again, and found enjoyment in seeing the work of others.

This lack of rehearsal mentioned by many students potentially resulted from the additional creative demands of the Original Plays, when little content was already available to aid the creation of a script. Several students reported initial uncertainty about how to proceed with the task. These related responses have been compiled together below. Relevant sections of their responses were italicised by the researcher:

*“At first, I didn’t really understand what we were to do, but our group worked together and did it well.”* (James, task survey)

*“At first, thinking of the story was difficult, but I think we thought up an enjoyable story together.”* (Benjamin, task survey)

*“It was tough for our group at first since we weren’t organised, but somehow our spirit of cooperation gained strength when we made our performance.”* (Matthew, task survey)

*“We had to make something from scratch so at first we didn’t know a good way to do it. However, after we picked our theme, although I’m not sure how, it took shape...”* (Amelia, task survey)

*“Though at first we started with not understanding anything, by the time we got going it gradually became fun. After that, I thought we did a great job on the final performance.”* (Jackson, task survey)

*“At first we hardly moved forward, but while discussing with my friends in the group we came up with a story....”* (Aubrey, task survey)

In each one of these responses, the start of the task was characterised by uncertainty. James was not sure what to do, Matthew felt his group was not organised, Amelia admitted that her group was uncertain how to proceed, Jackson expressed no

understanding of anything (presumably to do with the task) and Aubrey reported that initial progress was limited. As these select examples suggested, the Original Plays involved more of “blank slate” at the outset of the task. Other than the three themes that were available for selection in the design of the task (i.e., ‘shopping & leisure’, ‘travel’ or ‘school life’), the rest of the content was completely up to each group to create. In terms of problem solving, this manner of creativity was about as divergent as a theatre task could be. The only way to make it an even more divergent task would be to remove the three themes and allow any subject matter to be used, or remove the task demand that the performance be between three to five minutes in length. This extra freedom would significantly widen the scope of possible solutions even further. However, within the limits for the devised theatre task’s designed time schedule, even with the provision of three topics to select from, groups were still left with a large creative burden. Unlike the Adapted Plays, once the topic was selected, a substantial amount of creativity was still required to invent a story about that topic. As a consequence, it was not unreasonable to expect many students to express uncertainty or even apprehension about how to proceed with such an open task structure. Furthermore, as indicated by some of the findings previously discussed, some groups were clearly not equipped to handle such a procedurally open-ended task and likely needed additional support in establishing milestones to scaffold the process more adequately.

Shifting focus now to the Adapted Plays, While a few students did mention a lack of rehearsal, only one student made a direct mention of both insufficient rehearsal and a lack of polish in the performance. That student, Addison, wrote,

“It was interesting, but with no time for rehearsal it ended up being sloppy.” (Addison, task survey)

Another student, Matilda, similarly spoke of rehearsal specifically, but her response did not indicate a lack of rehearsal but rather the desire for more rehearsal time. She reflected,

“It would have been nice if we had rehearsed another hour or more. What we did was barely completed and it was really tough. We could have done better if we had gone for a more interesting story.” (Matilda, task survey)

Rather than mentioning a specific aspect of the project, several students indicated or implied that, in general, completing the task within the given time frame was difficult. The following responses exemplified this.

“I wanted a little more time. If so, maybe we could create a better play. However, this project was really fun. I’d like to try it again.” (Logan, task survey)

“Doing it in a timely fashion was really rough. I thought it was great that by the end, we could work together and perform a good play.” (David, task survey)

“We didn’t quite have enough time, but we came up with something. I think it would be fun if we did more complicated things with everyone in class.” (Anthony, task survey)

As all of the above responses suggested, some students felt there had been insufficient time to complete the project and Anthony even offered a suggestion that echoes Ellis’ (2003) suggestion of a teacher jointly undertaking the task with the students in order to ease the difficulty and better match the task with student ability. As with the responses from the Original Plays regarding similar sentiments, these students still enjoyed the task in spite of this time pressure and difficulty to complete it. In the responses from the Original Plays, one potential cause for this procedural difficulty was the initial uncertainty at how to go about doing the task. However, in the Adapted Plays, only two students specifically mentioned such initial uncertainty. One of these students, Joseph, wrote,

“At first I was embarrassed and didn’t understand how to do it, but since it was working with everyone, and we thought of interesting things, it was fun. When we performed, I was shy but when we finished I thought it was fun.” (Joseph, task survey)

For Joseph, the mention of embarrassment is inferred as a reference to initial knowledge that the task culminated in a public performance. This inference is supported by his admission in the next sentence that he had been shy during the performance. Coupled with this, he also reported that he had no idea how to proceed with the task but was able to make his way through by collaborating with the others in his group. Evelyn offered a more succinct version of this same progression when she reported,

“At first, it was tough because we didn’t know what to decide on and plan out, but once we decided and tried to do it, it was fun.” (Evelyn, task survey)

Outside of those two responses, other students who had worked on the Adapted Plays simply acknowledged that the creative demands of the task were difficult. Consider the responses, compiled below, with relevant sections italicised by the researcher.

*It was difficult to figure out how to put the story together and finish it.* (Joshua, task survey)

*Although thinking of a story in English and creating it was difficult,* we could work together and do it, and we ended up with a very good play. (Grace, task survey)

We should have thought more deeply about more of the story’s content. *Making the story fit the five minutes was difficult.* (Natalie, task survey)

*Although things like making a story in English and memorising it were difficult,* it was fun. (Zoey, task survey)

*Doing something like this in English was difficult* but it was good because at the end I could have fun. (Lucas, task survey)

*Working on everything for the performance ourselves was difficult,* but since it was really fun, I thought this was a good project. (Victoria, task survey)

*This was a really tough thing to do*, but when we tried it out we could have a really fun experience. (Samuel, task survey)

*Thinking up a story and putting the Japanese into English was tough* but we worked together and could do it. (Andrew, task survey)

It was so much fun. *Writing a story is difficult*, but I think we did it by working together. I thought we needed a little more rehearsal. (Hannah, task survey)

Besides the reported difficulty, one further relevant finding in the above responses concerned creativity. If one considered the divergent thinking required by creative tasks, none of the above responses specifically acknowledged the process of adaptation. Unlike the Original Plays, the Adapted Plays were conceptualised in the current study's methodology as making less creative demands on the students. This was based on the fact that the content for the stories in the Adapted Plays was available for use from the source material selected for adaptation. In spite of this fact, if the above responses were presented out of context, they could easily have been interchanged with responses from the Original Plays. For example, Joshua mentioned the difficulty of how to put the story together but did not mention the source material of the adaptation at all. Grace, Natalie, and Andrew all discussed creating a story and putting it into English but, similar to Joshua, none of them discussed the source material either. Moreover, Hannah simply described the process of adaptation in the Adapted Plays as 'writing a story'. For these particular students, their responses suggested that the adaptations were viewed more as original compositions than as translations, or indeed adaptations, of existing material. Given that the task design stipulated that student performances were required to take between three to five minutes to perform, it was not surprising that adaptations took on qualities of original compositions since it was very likely a challenge for a group to accurately recreate the original story in its entirety within such a short span of time. Thus the process of selecting which portions of the story to feature in the adaptation, and how to present those portions in a play, likely made the tasks more divergent than I had originally assumed.



In the end, while both tasks were perceived as roughly equivalent in difficulty, the second study suggested that prior student experience with the Adapted Play task made the Original Play seem much more difficult than when the order of task conditions was reversed. More importantly, students indicated in their reflections that the two task conditions were, broadly speaking, difficult for different reasons. For the Adapted Play tasks, the process of writing the story was the most challenging aspect, while for the Original Plays, conceiving of the story and crafting a good performance of that story were more challenging. This difficulty in performance for the Original Plays appeared to be the result of a knock-on effect of the heavier burden on creativity, as conceptualisation deprived many groups of the rehearsal time that had been built into the task's design.

In spite of the difficulties, as earlier sections in this chapter reported, most students found the tasks to be enjoyable. As section 7.3 also suggested, some students found benefits in watching the performances of others, including one student who specifically mentioned improvement of listening skills. This potential for language development will be discussed in the next section.

## **7.6 Opportunities for language learning**

The last salient theme to emerge from the data regarded the opportunities for language learning that students perceived in their reflections on the tasks. The open-ended reflection question from the second survey (Question 6) was modified slightly to include a prompt for students to comment on their language learning. However, despite being directed to do so, not every student in that study specifically addressed language learning in their reflections. For those who did address language learning, in either study, students reported, with equivalent frequency for both treatments, developments in some aspect of their language ability. Only one student, out of one hundred and forty-one responses, made a direct comparison between the two treatments. Her response is discussed at the end of this section. Prior to that, discussion will first turn to general increases in development indicated in the feedback from both treatments.

At the most basic level, some students reported positive development for certain aspects of their language ability. For example, Lillian wrote,

“It was fun. I have the feeling that my English pronunciation is better than before.” (Lillian, task survey).

Layla reported a similar positive development for her writing ability when she reflected,

“When making English sentences, because we were making the [story] using grammar we had learned up to now, I think I got a little better at writing English sentences.” (Layla, task survey).

Other students reported more general increases in knowledge and ability. John reported a increase in lexical knowledge, reflecting,

“By using English and talking, the words I hadn’t known before increased in the sentences. I felt enjoyment talking in English.” (John, task survey).

Dylan indicated a similar increase in lexical knowledge when he reported,

“I learned a lot from everyone teaching and discussing English together” (Dylan, task survey).

Leah made a similar reflection to Dylan regarding the opportunity for learning she got from group work on the task, writing,

“The goal was to make it ourselves and since there were words I didn’t now, I really learned a lot.” (Leah, task survey).

Isaac related the learning experience of the task to learning English conversation when he reported,

“Because we all had to make the story, it was really difficult, but as English study we learned every day conversation and so on so it was useful.” (Isaac, task survey).

Another student, Allison, similarly indicated lexical development from the task but foregrounded the performance aspect of the task as a part of this development. On this topic, she reported,

“Looking up words I didn’t know and so on, I was able to learn them and since I paid attention to things like pronunciation while I was doing [the play], I think it was it was good as English study.” (Allison, task survey)

Anna likewise indicated that she lacked knowledge but reflected,

“As an OC class, although most of the time I didn’t understand everything in English, the times I did understand gave me a real sense of accomplishment.” (Anna, task survey)

This recognition of a development in comprehension, shown by a sense of accomplishment, was also echoed by another student, Ryan, who discussed in his reflection the ways that work on the Adapted Play facilitated his learning. He reported,

“Because we knew the storyline already, it was fun even if I didn’t understand the [exact] words, and also the English was easy to understand. It was good to hear and learn new words. For words I’d never heard before, I could understand what was being said because I knew the story already.” (Ryan, task survey)

While Anna felt accomplishment when she could understand some of the language during the task, Ryan pointed out that being familiar with the story already allowed him to enjoy the experience of watching other group’s performances but at the same time, he had the chance to learn new vocabulary from watching those performances and, as he reported, his familiarity with the stories (in this case, the Adapted Plays) allowed him to infer from the context of the story the meaning of words he had not known in English

previously. Thus, while this student did not mention the difference in task treatments explicitly in his feedback, he acknowledged that the familiarity of content assisted his comprehension when viewing the Adapted Plays.

In a similar vein, two students discussed how their task, Original Plays in both cases here, provided opportunities for practice. Both Luke and Aria discussed how working on the devised theatre task provided new opportunities to use language. Luke reported that his existing knowledge of English gained functionality for him when he wrote,

“About English study: Information for this project- the words and grammar I’ve grown used to in class up to now became more practical (to use). Though, as usual, my pronunciation is bad.” (Luke, task survey)

Aria offered a variation of this idea when she reported,

“Even if I am learning/getting taught English, I don’t really think up and say much in English so this kind of project is good.” (Aria, task survey).

In respect to thinking up something in English, Kaylee specifically mentioned sentence composition in her reflection when she reported,

“Although, for me, making sentences in English is a weak point, I was able to think of some and I have a feeling that English is more enjoyable than before.” (Kaylee, task survey)

For all of these students, the opportunity to use the language was worthy of reflection, with both John and Kaylee also reporting enjoyment from this opportunity. Eli proposed that enjoying the task could contribute to his learning when he opined,

“English is difficult for me so when we have fun lessons I think I can learn [things] quicker.” (Eli, task survey).

On the general topic of language use, Scarlett offered a different perspective when she wrote,

“It is good to understand difficult words, but I think the most important thing is to use simple English and familiar phrases effectively.” (Scarlett, task survey).

For this student, it would seem that the task helped foreground for her the functional nature of the language she was using.

As alluded to earlier, virtually no one discussed differences between the two projects. Only one student explicitly compared the experience, in this case working first on an Adapted Play and then on an Original Play. This student, Claire, reflected,

“I was kind of surprised this time to find I could talk about something in such simple English, and this was less stressful and easier to practice than it was for the first time. I thought it might be possible to use simple English and talk in everyday conversation as well.” (Claire, task survey)

What could be inferred from this reflection was the association made between simple English and everyday conversation. For Claire, this simpler level of communication reduced her anxiety during work on the project and allowed her to realise the possibilities for communication that even simple English afforded. This was an interesting insight she reported given that the results from the task surveys indicated that, overall, the Original Play was perceived as slightly more difficult than the Adapted Play.

## **7.7 Discussion**

An enquiry into student perspectives on the doing the tasks indicated the following perspectives were shared by both task conditions:

- It was enjoyable to work on the task
- Working with a group was enjoyable and made the task itself enjoyable

- It was enjoyable to watch each other's performances , and for some, beneficial to their learning
- For some students, working on devised theatre provided opportunities for language development
- For some students, working on devised theatre offered new opportunities to use English (functionally)

These similarities suggested that despite the perceived difficulty of both tasks, a perception supported by data from the task surveys, there were many benefits that the students reported. These benefits were shared by both treatments.

The analysis of the open reflections found only one thematic area for which a difference in opinion occurred. This difference regarded the creative demands of the Original Play task and its effect on certain groups initial progress with this variation of the devised theatre task. While a couple of responses from the Adapted Plays were similar to those, a majority of students who discussed the difficulty of the Adapted Plays did not indicate that the initial part of the task was marked by uncertainty.

I wanted to investigate how students perceived the tasks and discern differences, if any, between the treatments in this respect. Considering the ranking, short response and open response task reflection questions together, several trends can be noted.

Firstly, students enjoyed both tasks in spite of finding them both difficult. The most frequent responses for the tasks' difficulties were related to devising the texts rather than either the performance or the rehearsal for that performance. While that indicated the possibility that the other phases of the project were not seen to be as difficult, analysis of the (group) strong and weak points reported by each student, coupled with an analysis of their reflections on the task, suggested that the composition phase of the tasks took considerable time to complete and resulted in less time being available for rehearsal. This could explain the dominant opinion of the writing phase being the most difficult part.

Secondly, the collaborative element of the the tasks featured prominently in many responses. The ability to work together as a group was a frequently cited strong point and most students responded positively when asked to assess how well their group worked

together. Additionally, student reflections illuminated this further by indicating that some students found the task enjoyable because they enjoyed working with their group.

Thirdly, there was a between-treatment difference in terms of student perspectives on the conceptual demands of the tasks. Reflections from the Original Plays indicated a greater sense of initial uncertainty in how to proceed with the task. Adapted Plays featured fewer responses regarding this. Instead, for that task, students frequently commented on the difficulty of the task but did not mention any initial uncertainty. This suggested that the extra creative demands of the Original Plays put a larger initial burden on students and this was reflected by the greater number of responses that indicated a lack of proper rehearsal as a result of the writing phase taking too long.

Lastly, both tasks featured responses that highlighted the opportunity for both learning, and enjoyment, that watching each group's plays offered. Several students indicated how the familiarity with the stories being performed also assisted with their comprehension. In addition, some students self-reported development in either writing, speaking, or vocabulary.

## **7.8 Chapter summary**

This chapter has shown that student perceptions of the tasks were generally positive and that, despite setbacks and difficulty with completing the project, most of them found the experience enjoyable, and in a number of cases, students perceived that their language ability was developing as a result. While most feedback was equivalent between task treatments, the Original Plays featured more responses that addressed problems with procedural orientation (i.e. completing the writing phase in time to progress to the rehearsal phase) and, relevant to this problem, more responses that indicated initial uncertainty with the correct procedure (i.e. how to go about the task).

With all three areas of analysis now completed (process, product and post-task), a synthesis of the various findings and results from these three chapters of analysis can be accomplished. This is the focus of the next, and final, chapter of this thesis.





## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

The current study investigated the implementation of tasks built around theatre practice as implemented in intact English oral communication classrooms at a high school in Japan. This thesis has described the theoretical rationale for this implementation of theatre using a task-based pedagogical framework. It has provided a comprehensive case study analysis for the process of two selected student groups collaboratively devising their plays in English, a systematic quantitative and qualitative analysis of the resultant language production in the students' final performances, and a qualitative analysis of the salient themes that emerged from the reflections that the students provided in their post-task surveys about their work on the devised theatre tasks. This final chapter concludes the current study by offering, in order, an overview of the research undertaken, a summary of the findings from that research, an acknowledgement of the current study's limitations, and a discussion of first the theoretical and then the pedagogical implications of this thesis. The chapter concludes with a final personal statement from the researcher.

### 8.1 Overview of the study

This study investigated the implementation of devised theatre tasks in Japanese high school EFL classrooms. The main purpose of this implementation was to address the lack of systematic L2 studies involving theatre and fill this gap. In addition to this, the study was intended to investigate existing models of language production by using theatre tasks to introduce a strong creative component as a task design feature that has been underrepresented in relevant studies on task design features and their effects on task performance (e.g. Skehan, 2009, 2003, 1998; Skehan et al 2012; Robinson, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2011b). Task process data and student feedback were also used in this study to offer triangulation of the task performance analysis, to provide a thick description of the process of devising theatre and how students orient to the tasks, and to investigate student perceptions about a TBLT implementation involving theatre.

The design of this study was as follows. It was a two-phase, mixed methods quasi-experimental study that implemented devised theatre tasks into a first year high school

Oral Communication (OC) course in Japan. The participants were students enrolled in the high school and attending the OC course as a compulsory subject of their English studies. I was the principal teacher for all of the first year classes in this course and was assisted by two faculty members who split duties between these classes. I designed the tasks to follow, as much as a fit could be made, Willis' (1996) pedagogical framework for tasks. The OC course followed the established national curriculum guidelines and featured a government approved course book from which one element of task design was extracted (the three themes for the Original Plays). My role, by contract, was to manage and implement lesson plans and materials for the OC course to keep within objectives established by the structure and content of the texts. In addition, as the host institution lists consolidation of junior high school English study as an objective of the OC classes, the devised theatre tasks were designed to partially fulfil this objective. Given this consolidation and the overall design of the course, the devised theatre tasks effectively followed a task-supported approach that combined regular instruction of English conversation and particular lexical and grammatical features with open tasks to consolidate that knowledge (Ellis, 2003; Samuda, 2001; Samuda & Bygate, 2008).

After a short series of trial tasks, the main study involved an initial study of the two theatre tasks and then, after a ten week interval, a repeated study with the same participants assigned to new groups per an institutional request. Treatments were counterbalanced and this produced two studies that were then collapsed into one data set for analysis. Task process was analysed via two case studies, one from each task type, whose collaborative work was analysed for the nature of their on-task talk as well as the frequency and quality of their co-construction of linguistic knowledge. Task performance results were analysed for significant differences in selected general measures, and in addition, independent raters rated an audio recording of each performance for overall quality of theatrical performance. Further qualitative analyses were conducted on both the narrative strategies employed in the devised play texts and the post-task student feedback collected by means of task surveys administered at the conclusion of both studies.

## 8.2 Summary of results

To investigate the effects of the task design feature of *available content*, an operationalisation for the lessening of task demands on conceptual creativity, two devised theatre tasks were used in this study. One task was the Adapted Play, which had the task feature of available content. This content was ‘available for use’ from the source material student groups selected for adaptation in order to complete this version of the task. The other task was the Original Play, which lacked similar available content. Instead of adaptation, students in this task selected one of three broad themes (shopping & leisure, travel, or school life) and devised an original play based on that theme. A counterbalance of tasks afforded students the chance to attempt both tasks, with group membership changed in the second study as the result of an institutional constraint.

Findings from the analysis of two case studies, one an Adapted Play group and the other an Original Play group, showed that the creative demands of both tasks had adverse effects on how students oriented to the tasks and managed their work. Moreover, the students in the Original Play case study in particular struggled with the conceptual creativity of devising an original story line for their play and their process demonstrated that similar groups, representing a lower average of task performance, likely needed additional scaffolding of this creative process in order for the tasks to be optimised for language development. Nevertheless, students in both case studies remained engaged with the task and managed to overcome their struggles and perform their plays from memory with an adequate amount of appropriate physical actions and stage blocking. While both groups actively co-constructed their linguistic knowledge as they devised their dialogue for these performances, they mediated the rest of the process exclusively in their shared L1. The collaborative writing observed in these case studies indicated that the group members who were most actively involved in meta-talk about language, also known as *language related episodes* (LREs) (Swain, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 2002), were the students who took on transcribing duties for each group and their fellow students situated closest to the actual text. Additionally, this co-construction of knowledge primarily concerned lexis, although the Original Play case study did feature a few short grammar-based LREs.

Results from the language production observed in the final performances of these tasks showed that there was a significant treatment effect with the Adapted Plays for increased fluency (number of words) and syntactic complexity (clauses per AS-unit, ratio of sub-clausal AS-units). These results confirmed my prediction that making content available for use, by virtue of the source material providing this content to the students, lessened the demands on conceptual creativity for each group and pushed both fluency and complexity. Conversely, a lack of available content, which increased the conceptual creativity required for the task and made the Original Plays more difficult, also had the predicted increase in accuracy coupled with lower complexity and fluency. This result also confirmed my prediction of a trade-off between complexity and accuracy and a further post-hoc correlation test found a significant inverse correlation between syntactic complexity and accuracy across both treatments.

The current study found no significant differences between treatments for the other measures analysed. Thus, there were no treatment effects for lexical diversity (in terms of a lexical profile based on word frequency in two established English language corpora), rates of lexical and grammatical errors per AS-unit (as opposed to the general accuracy shown by the ratio of error-free AS-units), or the average level of syntactic complexity reached before errors typically occurred (mean length of error-free AS-units).

Language production was also qualitatively analysed for narrative strategies employed. This measure was essentially the relative amount of overt narration present in a play. Overt narration referred to the aspect of narrative composition that aligns the narrative with the mode of engagement utilised by theatre: live action in a performance space. Thus the temporally sequenced series of events in the narrative and the plot details contained within that narrative must both be conveyed with action and spoken dialogue. The use of overt narration would be, prototypically, the presence of an out-of-scene narrator during performance. Alternatives to this form of overt narration were defined in this study as either a character as narrator or narrative details that were “embedded” within the dialogue of the story (embedded narrator).

The post-hoc analysis for this aspect of task outcomes identified a greater employment of overt narration strategies in the Adapted Plays, with around twenty percent more plays

(n=4) featuring overt narration. The Original Plays actually had the same number of stories that featured a narrator (n=5) as the Adapted Plays, but in the latter treatment, analysis found the narrators to generally take on a more substantial role in these stories beyond simply setting up the initial scene that starts the play. Moreover, only two Original Plays used an overt narrative strategy other than a narrator, compared with six for the Adapted Plays. As for a treatment effect, without exception, dialogue from an overt narrative source was comprised of full clauses at the minimum, with some turns featuring more elaborate AS-units featuring subordination or two independent clauses joined by a conjunction. Therefore, as the Adapted plays made for frequent use of overt narration, those stories in turn featured more syntactically complex language as a consequence of this strategy. Synthesising this result with the general measures results, the results for the current study suggest that overt narration was partially responsible for more complex output, both in terms of clauses per AS-unit and tokens per AS-unit. This would provide a possible explanation for the significantly greater complexity and fluency observed in the Adapted Plays.

Results from independent ratings did not show a significant difference between treatments for a holistic rating that regarded the theatrical quality of audio recordings of the student performances. While the results approached significance, such findings must be balanced by noting that the inter-rater agreement for this subjective measure was found to be only 'fair'. Overall, the Adapted Plays pushed student language production more, in part through the employment of overt narration strategies, and indicated a non-significant towards producing an improved theatrical quality of performance over the Original Plays as well.

Finally, results from student feedback data found that collaborative work was a positive and frequently mentioned aspect of these tasks and, for some, contributed to their enjoyment of the tasks. Some students also pointed to the viewing of group performances as good listening practice while others indicated that work on the stories within groups expanded their knowledge of the language, particularly lexical knowledge. Relating these student reflections with the observed differences in task performance, a portion of students also noted the difficulty of both task types. Data from the students who

undertook the Original Play, coupled with process data from the Original Play case study, showed that some students took too long to write their plays and left little time for rehearsal. Along similar lines, other responses from the Original Plays showed that there was initial uncertainty about how to orientate to the task and how to proceed. This was mirrored in the performance of the Original Play case study, as that group of students took considerable time (more than half of the allotted 100 minutes) to conceive a usable story line for their play.

When asked what part of the task was most difficult to complete, a majority of responses in both treatments identified this to be the writing phase. While performance related matters were reported much less frequently, the Original Plays featured students who identified these matters as weak points. Taken collectively, these responses suggest that students perceived the Original Plays as being more difficult to complete. This interpretation of the results is informed by the greater number of responses from Original Play participants related to: a) initial uncertainty; b) lack of rehearsal; and c) performance matters as a weak point. All of these imply a different temporal orientation to the task than for the Adapted Plays.

A triangulation of data sources can now be achieved by using the two case studies from Chapter Five. Recall that both the Adapted Play group and the Original Play group experienced a degree of difficulty during the initial stages of their tasks. The latter group in particular needed a little more than half of the allotted time to conceive of their story line prior to devising their dialogue. Both of these groups mediated this more demanding aspect in their shared L1, and analysis did show that they engaged in meta-talk about language, primarily with a lexical focus, while they collaboratively wrote the dialogue. This talk was also handled primarily in their L1, though both groups adapted strategies of using the target L2 as a means of prompting the input of others when co-constructing dialogue. As for their resultant final performances, the differences in process observed between the two case studies were emphasised even more by their language production. Table 8.1 shows a comparison of that language production using the measures that were found to be statistically significant between-treatments for the entire data set (see Chapter 6, section 2) as well as the overall score for each play.

Table 8.1 Comparison of case study language production

<i>measure</i>	<i>case study one (Adapted Play 10)</i>	<i>treatment average</i>	<i>case study two (Original Play 11)</i>	<i>treatment average</i>
<b>tokens</b>	183	136.1	112	98.1
<b>clauses / AS-unit</b>	0.83	0.807	0.67	0.669
<b>subclausal AS-unit%</b>	0.17	0.26	0.37	0.35
<b>error-free AS-unit %</b>	0.76	0.707	0.80	0.783
<b>overall score</b>	4	2.4	1	1.76

From the results shown above, two primary observations can be discussed. First of all, the two case studies replicated the results of the total data set: higher complexity and fluency for the Adapted Plays and higher accuracy for the Original Plays. Additionally, the differences in overall scores, which approached significance in the current study, clearly favoured case study one. Second of all, in examining the process of devising theatre, it can be hard to predict the language outcomes that will result. Given the difficulties that they had during their task process, the Original Play case study expectantly under-performed within its treatment for fluency, but it was close to the average for both syntactic complexity and general accuracy. This would suggest that groups that experienced similar problems as this case study did, in fact, represent an average for both process and product. The Adapted Play case study, however, excelled in the language production aspect of their tasks, despite their initial setbacks and seemingly lower proficiency of English (evidenced from their LREs). In fact, as Tables 6.12 and 6.13 in Chapter Six show, case study one was actually *both* the second most fluent and second most syntactically complex play across both treatments. This result is surprising given the details of their devising process discussed in Chapter Five. Consequently, the observance of initial setbacks and erratic progression for this case study would not help one fully predict how they would manage such a final performance, given that the process data from some of

the other groups suggested better management of time, and more productive devising periods, yet resulted in plays that, with one exception each for fluency and complexity, consistently under-performed in comparison. Therefore, an important finding to draw from this comparison is that, while the Original Plays might more easily facilitate correlations between process and product, and thus inform a teacher's decisions about the need for additional scaffolding of the task, the Adapted Plays might not as readily afford such a means of predicting task performance.

Both the task processes and language production of the two case studies can also be further evaluated in terms of students' perspectives on the tasks, as was the focus of the previous chapter. For the Adapted Play, the consensus from their feedback was a positive appraisal of the task and consistent reports of the group working well together. For example, Bernie noted the initial hesitation of his group but felt that once everyone took responsibility for the story, they were able to progress together. Ray had the feeling that some of their time might have been wasted, but he was happy with the final performance. Gus similarly acknowledged their initial difficulties and occasional lapses in progress, but, as with the others, he was very pleased that they could work together and make a story. As for the Original Play case study, opinions were also generally favourable of the experience. As examples, Amy and Trish similarly commented on the task's difficulty, but both identified the collaboration with their peers to be a positive aspect. For her part, Helen expressed gratitude that the group had been able to come together and perform their play while Sara, who shared with Helen the larger burden of devising the English dialogue for her group, actually felt her group made a very good performance, in spite of the low marks that it later received from the independent raters.

What the experiences of these students in both case studies illustrate is that devising theatre is ultimately about that the final product. Regardless of the struggles and the circumspect means by which they went about completing their plays, the students felt glad for the collaboration they had with their peers and some amount of satisfaction with the performance. This also points to the fact that devising theatre, even in an implementation into L2 classrooms, is not just about 'doing something' with language. It is equally about the endeavour to make a performance that is enjoyable for both the



audience and the performers. Consequently, within the process of devising theatre, a group will always devote some amount of effort to making their plays align with the perceived expectations of the audience.

Theatre was chosen for implementation in a task-based pedagogical framework since it ostensibly satisfied the requirements of both Willis' (1996) conceptualisation of *creative task* and Samuda's distinction for tasks that activate existing knowledge and promote greater control of the existing interlanguage (Samuda, 2001). That being recognised, Willis's own framework for tasks made for a difficult fit with an actual creative task of a prepared public presentation, even if the task itself was the realisation of one of Willis' own suggestions for a creative task outcome (a public performance). As discussed in the literature review, since devised theatre tasks mirror the process of writing in the initial part of the task, the cycle of the task (task—> planning —> report) posed a problem for implementation since it would necessitate delineating the boundary of the 'task' portion of the cycle as either the end of composition or the end of the public performance. In the former case, the public performance would then be the 'report' on the writing phase of the task, which does not completely match with Willis' suggestion that students select some part of their task performance to share with others in their class. In the latter case, as I have argued, the performance is the culmination of the task, and so any subsequent planning and reporting would have to recapitulate part of that initial public performance in order for it to be reported. Ultimately, my task design was based off my experience and familiarity with theatre. I viewed the performance as the task itself and thus the subsequent planning and report phases that Willis outlines were made impractical. This leaves me to conclude that theatre is better described as a project since it does not match well *procedurally* with the concept of a task in such a framework, despite the fact that Willis (1996) and Willis and Willis (2007) both indicate public performance of a play as a possibility for a *creative* (or project) task. This is not simply a matter of semantics, since the procedures of devised theatre tasks remove some of the necessity for the planning and report phases, both due to the presence of a public performance as a task outcome, and the impracticality of including planning and report phases for individual tasks within the larger sequence of devising. That being stated, it must be acknowledged that these are not

critical features of a task as discussed by Ellis (2003). Regarding the mismatch with Willis' framework, a possible remedy could be to reconceptualise the devised theatre task as a sequence of distinct smaller tasks (i.e. brainstorming a concept, storyboarding the plot, writing character profiles, and so forth) for which public reports are not integral. In this way, a series of related tasks could promote first development of fluency, and then of accuracy, in line with Willis' framework prior to an actual performance itself. This performance itself could be performed with a smaller portion of the class as an audience (perhaps even just one other group) which would allow, in turn, a final report on the performance to be included in the task cycle.

Regarding task performance effects, the results offered confirmation of Skehan's LAC model (Skehan, 1998, 2003) since a push in complexity in one treatment was off set by a trade-off with accuracy in the other treatment. However, in regards to task influences, an alternative classification of the tasks used in this study could be suggested by Skehan's newer framework (Skehan, 2009; Skehan et al, 2012). In the current study, I considered the demands on conceptual creativity to be related to task difficulty, as a lack of a story line would necessitate its creation either prior to or during composition. If the provision of this available content were considered as an issue of task 'easing' rather than task 'complexifying' influences, then available content would ease the difficulty of the task because students would be familiar with the story lines already. In contrast, Original Plays would remove this easing influence since a selectable story line for this task would not exist at the start of the task. If I were to realign the distinction between treatments in this way, in essence, by reformulating it as a matter of task conditions rather than task difficulty (as per Skehan's older taxonomy), this would still offer confirmation for Skehan's updated model. To wit, easing the task conditions during the conceptualiser stage would result in an increase in complexity, while complexifying the task conditions would result in an increase in accuracy. Both of these results were observed in the current study.

### 8.3 Limitations of the study

Any research study inherently has limitations and there were several limitations to the design of this study that may have influenced observed outcomes.

#### 8.3.1 Group membership

Group membership was decided by the students themselves, rather than random selection. On this matter, I maintained the procedure put in place for all classwork undertaken during the year for this OC course and let students select their own partners for group work. I acknowledge that this might have lead to noticeable outliers in task performance, particularly if less proficient students or unruly students constituted strong majorities in certain groups. Still, I maintain that this was a ‘true’ reflection of classroom conditions and practices.

A second limitation related to this was the change in group membership between the two studies. In its initial design, the current study was a counter-balanced two-treatment intervention with between- and within-group comparisons. However, due to circumstances that prompted the host institution to request a change in group membership prior to the second study, the within-group comparison was lost and the study was reimagined as an initial and repeated study that were collapsed into a single data set for analysis. Order effect was not detected, as the Adapted Play performed better in both studies, but it is impossible to predict if retaining the same group membership would have similarly ruled out any order effect.

A third limitation related to group membership also related to other studies of task performance and task design features. Most studies using general measures to analyse language production regard performance at the individual level. This study regarded group performance as a collective singularity. In doing so, individual differences between students in each group were disregarded. An analysis at the individual level would be feasible but not logical for devised theatre as the product is the result of collaboration and, consequently, individual language production in performance is not necessarily mapped out strictly 1:1 with individual contributions during the devising of the script for

that performance. The level of analysis required to establish links between individual contributions during devising to the language features of individual performances was beyond the scope of this study.

### 8.3.2 Research methods and location

The current study was designed to use the participants and settings of intact classrooms at the host institution, leading to a quasi-experimental design. Conducting research in such a context involved audio and video data collection methods that had to accommodate to actual classroom conditions. As a result, there were instances during data collection of classroom work in which ambient classroom noise made portions of audio unintelligible. Additionally, these same conditions prevented the collection of higher quality recordings for both the classroom work and the final performances, which in turn made objective measurements of this audio data via mechanical means impossible. I acknowledge that this additional analysis could have benefitted the current study, especially in regards to a further operationalisation of fluency, but I maintain that the adoption of more extensive means of voice recording would have interfered with classroom procedures and insinuated too much of an experimental research atmosphere into the classrooms.

Additionally, the demographics of the host institution itself, as mentioned in chapter four, provided a ratio of roughly 60:40 male to female students. English was also a compulsory subject for all students and these students were grouped into English classrooms by homeroom membership and thus they were not streamed by ability. Both of these factors could have contributed to higher variability in the data as either one could have adversely affected language production and task performance. I acknowledge that the number of all-male and mixed gender groups was likely higher than for a normal Japanese high school, and I also recognise the possibility that the interaction between students in participating groups likely involved a wider variability in language ability. However, while I acknowledge these limitations, I contend that intact classrooms

were central to the design of the current study and provided valuable data that an experimental design would not have yielded.

### 8.3.3 Measures of performance

The current study investigated task performance in light of competing theoretical models of language production (e.g., Robinson, 2001, 2009; Skehan, 2003, 2009). Both of these models are principally based on speech production, and as a result, many of the studies informed by these models analyse language production with measures that align more easily with aspects of extemporaneous speech, particularly for fluency, although as Ong (2014) notes, these models are being used with more frequency to investigate other task types. While the current study involved both a strong writing component and a strong performance component, the final performances were not judged for temporal measures of fluency for two reasons: 1) the content of that speech was planned out and rehearsed in advance; and 2) theatrical performance could feature articulation choices (hesitations, slow rates of speech) that are a consequence of deliberate choices made by the performers to convey aspects of their characters. This being stated, there were no established measures of fluency that could accommodate this emotive performance and so a measure of fluency from writing studies (number of tokens) was selected instead. Accuracy and complexity were drawn from general measures used for primarily speech production, although in regards to this practice, there has been an emergent trend (e.g. Kormos, 2011; Ong 2014) to appropriate these measures for writing as well. Further research needs to be done to establish validity for this.

### 8.3.4 Response bias

In the student feedback I collected, a response bias was possible. This is due to the fact that I was the principal teacher and held a position of power over them as an assessor of their achievement throughout the course. I tried to mitigate response bias for the study by introducing elements of the research design, namely post-task feedback surveys, as

more standard classroom procedures from the start of the course. Video and audio equipment were also introduced into the classroom prior to the piloting of data collection methods and were occasionally implemented into lessons outside of the study at random to lessen their association specifically with the devised theatre tasks. That being stated, it is possible that the presence of the video cameras and digital audio recorders pushed students towards aberrant language production that would not have arisen under normal conditions. In regards to the task surveys, I acknowledge that students might have been influenced by the student-teacher power relationship inherent in the classroom. As result, student responses might have been pushed towards more favourable reflections of the task in the belief, perhaps, that positive assessment of the tasks correlated with better marks for either the tasks themselves or the course overall.

#### **8.4 Theoretical implications**

The current study aimed to fill gaps in the literature regarding both the process and product of theatre as it is implemented within a task-based framework in intact L2 classrooms. To these ends, the results and findings from the current study contributed the following: 1) it provided an extensive description of student interaction during the process of devising theatre; 2) it systematically analysed the language production outcomes of devised theatre tasks; 3) it introduced a new means of analysing student devising of plays for theatrical performance through the use of four distinct narrative strategies; and 4) it provided a detailed analysis of student feedback regarding the experience of devising original plays.

In terms of the first contribution, studies involving theatre in second language classrooms heretofore have largely avoided or ignored what students actually do when they work on a theatre task. As a result, many of the reported results lack any true context to assist in one's evaluation of their generalisability. By providing a detailed account of two case studies, I have highlighted the divergent ways in which similar tasks can be undertaken and discussed the ways in which these observed differences in task process may have profound effects on the product they generate. By selecting case studies representative of a lower average on task performance, I have also provided evidence that

these and similar theatre tasks likely require more extensive scaffolding and teacher guidance for students of lower proficiency levels in order to better ensure optimal conditions for language learning.

In terms of the second contribution, language production in L2 theatrical performance itself has rarely been analysed in detail. Many studies of theatre rely solely on teacher observations, student interviews, or pre-tests and post-tests to motivate a discussion of theatre's benefits and effects on language learning. While these veins of research are all equally valid, the current study reported results of a between-treatment comparison of the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of each group's language production. In doing so, it aligned itself with a more established methodology in SLA research and contributed to the ongoing discussion of task design features and their effects on task performance. Moreover, in the same way as Kormos (2011), the current study offered evidence to support the claim that measures of task performance meant primarily for spontaneous speaking tasks can also be used for tasks that involve writing, or in this case, a combination of writing and speaking. Furthermore, in showing this compatibility with research into oral language production, the current study also provided support for Skehan's Limited Attentional Capacity model by confirming that a trade-off between complexity and accuracy also seemed to occur when devised theatre tasks increase in difficulty due to greater demands on conceptual creativity.

In terms of the third contribution, the feedback that students offer about experiences with tasks is a valuable way of triangulating results for task performance and findings for task process. Without this data, it would be impossible to determine if the variances in both process and product were indicative of general trends with the tasks. As the responses to the surveys were strongly positive, it could be confirmed that the enjoyability of the tasks, and the sustained engagement they were able to foster despite their difficulty, is one of theatre's strongest selling points.

In terms of the fourth contribution, formulating a story into a play requires a writer to align the details of a given story with the mode of theatre. This mode of theatre, one of live performance, is a departure from standard written narratives as the communication between author and audience is indirect. In theatre, an author must convey their story,

and the information necessary to comprehend that story, indirectly through the performance of the actors on-stage. As a result, an author does not have the ability to simply provide his or her audience with exposition or narration as needed. Instead, this information must be conveyed by considering the narrative strategies most suitable to the author. This will involve, in order of decreasing levels of overtness, an off-stage narrator, a character within a scene acting as a narrator, or an embedding of information within a dialogue between characters done for the audience's sake and not for those characters. If such overt narration is not desired, an author can simply adopt a dialogue emergent strategy and let the details arise naturally from the conversation between characters. Within the process of composing or devising a play, authors can select any combination of these strategies that they deem appropriate. Regarding these strategies, while the process of writing for theatre (and by extension radio, television and motion pictures) is discussed in numerous publications, this classification of four narrative strategies is not discussed, so this represents a further contribution that the current study makes.

Furthermore, several other implications can be drawn from the current study. To start, analysis of task process data demonstrated the difficulty in applying the construct of task planning time to devised theatre tasks. Devised theatre shares a close similarity with collaborative writing tasks: the pressure to plan and execute language production is not undertaken simultaneously as it is with spontaneous speaking tasks. Finally, planned speech itself presents a challenge to planning time as one is forced to more or less arbitrarily decide where the task actually begins. Therefore, planning time as a task condition that can be manipulated with an experimental or quasi-experimental design seems more appropriate for spontaneous oral language tasks. In order for writing studies, and in particular studies involving the collaborative devising of a text for public performance, to be better aligned with speaking studies, alternative ways of viewing planning time need to be considered that accommodate both modes of communication collectively.



## 8.5 Pedagogical implications

The comprehensive investigation of process, product and post-task feedback in the current study provides teachers with a much fuller picture of theatre tasks than most other studies investigating theatre. Rather than report on the procedures of a theatre task from a teacher's point of view, I observed two case study groups over a period of four days of class work to provide a full narrative account of how the students managed their orientation to the tasks. Additionally, I analysed student outcomes for a range of language production measures. The results and findings from these analyses informed the following three observations regarding implementation of theatre within a task-based framework.

Firstly, the Original Plays can put considerably greater demands on students' conceptual creativity in comparison to the Adapted Plays. This has a consequence of content generation dominating the devising process and leaving much less time available for language production. More importantly, as the case studies indicated, the Original Plays will likely require much more carefully structured scaffolding in order to ensure that students progress through the stages of the task. Considering these points together, if the case studies in the current study are any indication, additional demands on creativity and insufficient support through that creative process could have a further consequence of limiting the extent to which students can engage in beneficial talk about language and also limit ability of the group to support each other's learning. Carson's (2012) study shares a similar distinction of task type and she offered the two groups in her study the choice between adapting a story into a play or devising an original play. This appears to be a good recommendation to make, although the lack of information about how the processes and products differed between those two task types limits its relatedness to the current study. Given that the Original Play group displayed noticeable difficulty in devising their script, it might be helpful to do as Carson did and offer students the option of doing either version. In this way, students that need or desire the extra scaffolding that adaptation provides can have access to this assistance. Furthermore, by providing two ways to complete the task, this scaffolding can be embedded into the design of the task

itself, which in turn can free the teacher from some of the need to scaffold the learning for the entire class if such support is not necessary for every group.

Secondly, the language production for both task types indicated that the Adapted Plays promoted more fluent and complex language output while the Original Plays pushed more accurate output. This was partly due to greater presence of overt narration in the Adapted Plays and partly due to the fact that the increased demands on conceptual creativity left less time for students to focus on their language production. As a result, students in the Original Plays likely struggled to construct language and thus settled for more rudimentary language production with a narrower scope for error. Additionally, as discussed before, if groups have similar ability and task orientation issues as the case studies in the current study did, a lack of structured scaffolding may prohibit learners from being able to transfer focus between complexity and accuracy. As a result, they may show an inclination to make do with the grammar with which they are already familiar, or even rely more on sub-clausal utterances. Therefore, as a means of expanding the complexity of student language production and encouraging more fluency, the Adapted Plays, with their available content lessening the demands on conceptual creativity, seem a more appropriate choice to fulfil such objectives.

Lastly, student engagement with the theatre tasks can not be understated. A majority of the participants expressed enjoyment in doing the tasks and also frequently indicated that the ability to collaborate with their classmates was a major factor in finding an intrinsic motivation for completing the task. The process and product analyses reported a wide range of possibilities, so teachers should temper their approach to implementing similar tasks, particularly in regards to classroom management, with the understanding that devised theatre can be accomplished in many ways. Thus an evaluation of achievement that focuses on comparing either quality of product or the perceived diligence and productivity of group work would ignore the simple fact that such an extended creative process is susceptible to a wide range of contributing factors. Moreover, these variances in process and product do not necessarily, in some cases, preclude learning. The ability to be creative itself might foster language production that, relative to those students, could be considered innovation in their linguistic knowledge.

In addition to the observations discussed above, there are two other relevant areas of interest to discuss in this section related to the implementation of the theatre tasks. The first is how the tasks facilitate oral language development and the second is how teachers can better promote L2 use during work on the tasks. In regards to oral language gains, both advantages and disadvantages of using devised theatre projects in L2 classrooms could be identified. To start with, one distinct advantage of devised theatre, and likely theatre and role-play in general, is the opportunity for students to trial different ‘voices’ and manners of speaking as they develop and rehearse their characters. In essence, the devised theatre tasks allow a recursive interface with the target language. Moreover, it provides students with an occasion to practice L2 conversation as they conceive it to be. Both of these points suggest how theatre prompts students to consider the meaning of the language they use, how form relates to the conveyance of that meaning, and articulate that meaning appropriately with prosodic features. Related to this, both the Adapted and Original plays, in different ways, could encourage students to develop their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge in order to effectively convey the details of their story as they intend it. Working collaboratively with a group also provides students with the opportunity to fill certain gaps in their speaking skills, such as pronunciation, by co-constructing that knowledge with their peers.

Several disadvantages were identified as well. Firstly, given the greater demands placed on students’ conceptual creativity, which in turn precipitated the predominant use of the shared L1 to mediate these cognitive demands as well as manage each group’s procedural orientation to the task, speaking practice was restricted to rehearsal and performance of the devised scripts. Secondly, as students were involved in the collaborative writing of dialogue, but not necessarily in the devising of their own character’s dialogue, it is possible that certain students will do little more than memorise and ‘parrot’ the language prepared for them with minimal focus on the both the form and meaning of what they utter. Both these disadvantages could limit some students’ opportunities for uptake.

To address the second area of interest, there are several strategies teachers can consider in order to encourage greater use of the L2 during task process. One suggestion would be to follow the advice of Nation (2003), discussed in chapter 3, and appoint a member of

each group to act as a 'language monitor'. This monitor would have the responsibility to ensure that L1 use does not become excessive and, if possible, scaffold relevant portions of the interaction to enable greater participation in L2 task mediation. This appointment of language monitors would also better serve the students' needs if it were implemented as a course-wide procedure rather than a procedure specifically for the theatre tasks alone. A second suggestion to increase L2 use during the task would be to have the teacher engage in a trial task, or a portion of the content creation and dialogue composition of the main tasks, with the whole class. This practice would better ensure that students' progress is sufficiently scaffolded to the extent that students are provided with exposure to and practice with exemplars of L2 task mediation for all of the various task procedures and not just L2 dialogue composition. Furthermore, this initial phase of more teacher-centred classroom activity also affords students experience working with the theatre tasks under direct teacher supervision. This initial experience could ease some the procedural difficulties observed in the two case studies, particularly if the teacher were to operate on the assumption that prior student experience with theatre of any kind is likely minimal.

## **8.6 Final personal statement**

I investigated the implementation of theatre within a TBLT framework in order to finally combine two passions of mine which had existed as separate parts of my life for long enough. I was encouraged by the overwhelmingly positive reception of theatre tasks by my students in previous language learning classrooms. So, I wanted the chance to study theatre more systematically and ascertain if the opportunities for L2 learning that I observed informally during my teaching were actually there or simply a result of hindsight bias removing less constructive aspects of the tasks from my recollection of them.

The final design of the main study was a compromise between my vision and the realities of working at an educational institution in Japan. While my colleagues and participants were supportive of my research interests, they could not always accommodate every facet of research design that I intended for my study. My original intention was to investigate the different opportunities for collaborative dialogue that

arose between devising original scripts and working with existing scripts. Additionally, I had wanted to maintain the same groups for both iterations of the tasks. On both of these points, the final design of the main study was not able to accommodate these research design features.

In regards to group composition, I acknowledge that my decision to base group size on theatre practices familiar to me likely confounded some of the difficulties in task orientation that I observed, particularly for the Original Play case study. The trial tasks conducted before the main study gave me little indication that student groups would struggle with the more minimalist structure of the devised theatre tasks in the main study. The groups involved in those trial tasks, for the most part, managed their work on the tasks well and were able to produce final scripts comparable to the main study in less than half of the time. However, as I mentioned, the main study involved larger groups of five to six members, while the trial tasks involved only pairs and groups of three. This being said, the results of my study do not lead me to preclude the possibility of collaborative work in larger groups, for I still see the value in bringing a diverse collection of people together to work on a common goal and share their personalities, experiences and ideas. What my study does tell me is that, for an average group of this size, especially for lower proficiency students, more deliberate scaffolding of the stages of the task is necessary to ensure that students can progress through the creative process in an efficient manner and get the full benefit of working with a cross-section of peers.

Finally, I chose the two case studies for chapter five because they represented what I felt to be an average undertaking of the task from a process standpoint. From the main study, I could have picked the most productive group in each task condition as exemplars. In doing so, I might well have shown how much students could achieve under their own management of the tasks. However, such an approach would have obfuscated the fact that, while some groups in both task conditions did indeed have very productive processes in devising their plays, the less capable groups struggled with the demands of the tasks. By highlighting the need for more scaffolding of the task for these students, I feel I have presented a much more accurate portrayal of how the typical group performs on these tasks. Given the number of position papers and teacher reports that highlight

the benefits of theatre and drama also under-represent limitations of their studies' various task designs and methodological approaches built around drama, I feel I am providing teachers with useful information regarding potential obstacles that devising theatre creates rather than simply trying to sell them on the idea by using the best case scenarios exclusively. I made this decision for my study despite the fact that it undermines, to some extent, my ability to use the results from the current study to further support the various theoretical claims other authors make about theatre's potential in L2 learning. I still feel theatre has an enormous amount of potential for language learning, but the current study helped me to better understand some of the limitations that it has for lower proficiency learners.

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## APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM



### Information sheet: Theatre tasks in a foreign language

I am doing research for a PhD on the use of theatre techniques in English language learning. I want to investigate how theatre techniques assist learners with language acquisition, particularly pronunciation and prosody, and to what extent it promotes greater fluency.

I am conducting this investigation by asking you to take part in various theatre tasks during our oral communication classes. This school, as well as the teachers in charge of first year oral communication (OC) classes have approved this study. I would like to collect data from approximately 100-250 students.

Video and audio recordings will be made of classroom activity that occurs during theatre tasks. In addition, Individuals who take part will also be asked to provide feedback in the form of written comments on activity handouts. Feedback will be done during class. On rare occasions, certain students may be asked to participate in a short, private interview. Private interviews will occur after school in a designated classroom and last for no more than 20 minutes.

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will not have any effect on your grades. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you will still take part in the activities during class, but your data will not be recorded. Any data that I collect will only be viewed by myself and my doctoral supervisors.

Although I will keep records of our classroom activity, your confidentiality is assured as all recorded and collected materials will be kept in a locked cabinet and destroyed after two years. In addition, I will not divulge the names of the individuals participating in this study to anyone else in the school. Your real name will never be used in any publications based on this research.

I do this research as a student enrolled at the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. The Human Ethics Committee of Victoria University has approved this research. If you agree to participate in this research, please sign the consent form. After signing, you still have the option to withdraw from the research project at any time before July 1, 2012. To withdraw, either inform me in person or email me at [robin.reid@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:robin.reid@vuw.ac.nz).

**Thank you for reading this information sheet.**

**Robin Reid**

**School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies  
Victoria University of Wellington**

*Supervisors:*

Dr. Jonathan Newton      School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria  
University of Wellington, 418 Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade,  
Wellington, NZ (TEL) 64-4-463-5622

Dr. Frank Boers      School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria  
University of Wellington, 409 Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade,  
Wellington, NZ (TEL) 64-4-463-6014



**Agreement to participate in  
'Theatre tasks in a foreign language'**

**PLEASE READ THE INFORMATION SHEET CAREFULLY and SIGN THIS FORM IF YOU  
AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.**

I agree to participate in the study 'Theatre tasks in a foreign language'

I have been provided with adequate information regarding the nature and objectives of this research project and I have understood this information. I have been given the opportunity to seek further clarification.

I understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time prior to the date of July 1, 2012. If I withdraw from the study, my data will be destroyed immediately. To withdraw, simply notify the researcher (Robin Reid) in person at his desk in the teacher's office or by emailing him at : [robin.reid@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:robin.reid@vuw.ac.nz)

I understand that the information I have provided will be used only for this research project and that any further use will require my written consent. I also understand that only the researcher (Robin Reid) and his PhD supervisors (Jonathan Newton & Frank Boers) will view the data.

I understand that when this research is completed the information obtained will be destroyed after two years.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ #: \_\_\_\_\_

# Original Story

## About the project

**Project Goal:** Work together and make a presentation of an original story in English (minimum 5 minutes)

**Theme:** Your group must choose one (or two) theme for your story:

**student life**                      **travel (in Japan or international)**                      **shopping / leisure (free time)**

**Needs:** Each member needs to speak.  
The story should have an interesting event or problem (trouble)

**Options:** One person can be multiple characters (but each member needs a part!)  
You can make props or pictures for your presentation.



## Notes

This project is about group work, BUT, there is a lot of individual work, too.

You are responsible for **memorizing** your words.

You are responsible for your own “Get It Together” work. Our classes are only 50 minutes long. In order to have good lessons together, you need to be prepared. If you are prepared, everyone will benefit.

✕ ㊦

## Schedule

We will work on our projects once a week.

So, you will have time to finish homework before the next lesson.

There are 4 project days, and one performance day.

After performances, you will be asked to take a short survey.

✕ ㊦

## Stage Adaptation

### About the project

**Project Goal:** Work together and make a presentation of an adapted story in English (minimum 5 minutes).

**Theme:** Your group must choose one manga, book, anime or movie. You will adapt this story for your performance.

\*If you cannot decide, "Winnie the Pooh" will be your story.

**Needs:** Each member needs to speak.

If the story is long, you will need to write a **simple** version in English.

**Options:** One person can be multiple characters (but each member needs a part!)  
You can make props or pictures for your presentation.



### Notes

This project is about group work, BUT, there is a lot of individual work, too.

You are responsible for **memorizing** your words.

You are responsible for your own "Get It Together" work. Our classes are only 50 minutes long. In order to have good lessons together, you need to be prepared. If you are prepared, everyone will benefit.

✕ ㊦

### Schedule

We will work on our projects once a week.

So, you will have time to finish homework before the next lesson.

There are 4 project days, and one performance day.

After performances, you will be asked to take a short survey.

✕ ㊦

## APPENDIX THREE: SUPPLEMENTAL TASK WORKSHEETS

### Original Play



### Group Information Sheet

#### Members:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Key Words & Main Story



## Task 1 → Brainstorm Your Ideas

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Soon, you and your group must decide on an original story.

So, let's prepare some ideas. **Brainstorm** means *to think of as many things as you can* about a topic.

There are 3 topics: **student life** **travel** **shopping / leisure**

Please **pick two** topics. Write as many words about each topic as you can.

*For example: The TOPIC is "pets". Some words could be- 'cat', 'dog', 'hamster' [types], 'pet food', 'milk', 'bone' [foods for pets]; 'take care of', 'wash', 'go for a walk' [activities with pets]; 'cute', 'funny', 'happy' [feelings and moods]; etc...*

Topic #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic #2: \_\_\_\_\_



## Task 2 → Study of Self

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student No.: \_\_\_\_\_

You and your group chose one **topic** for your "original story".

What is your topic? \_\_\_\_\_

useful Japanese guide

**NEXT STEP:** 答えるときには、なるべく、簡単な英文を書いてみてください。

Think about your topic and yourself. Answer the questions below:

このトピックについて、どんな経験がありますか？

What is your experience with this topic?

このトピックについて、どんなような問題がありましたか？（問題が無い場合は、友人のを説明してもいいです。）

For this topic, what are some problems you have had? (If you don't have problems, you can write about a friend)

この話題の場面を作るために、どのような話が面白そうだと思いますか？

For this topic, what do you think would be an interesting or funny story?

## Adapted Play

Get It  
Together

### Group Information Sheet

Story Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Roles \_\_\_\_\_

Please write the names of your group members.

Then, please write down the character(s)/(parts) they will perform:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Get It  
Together

Pick a story, either a book or a comic (manga).

Please write some basic information about the story:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Published: \_\_\_\_\_

### Story Selection

Task  
1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Now, please talk about the story. Who are the characters? Where is the story?  
What happens? What kind of story is it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you like this story?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What character is similar to you? How?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Handy Japanese Guide

選んだ話について説明して下さい。(もちろん簡単な英文で)  
どんなキャラクタ、どんな場面、  
どんなイベント、どんな話ですか？

なぜこの話が好きですか？

キャラクタの中から、自分の個性や態度や姿と一番似ているキャラクタはどれですか？どこが似ていますか？

## APPENDIX FOUR - LANGUAGE PRODUCTION DATA

Original Plays: fluency, complexity, and overall theatrical quality of oral performance

<i>group</i>	tokens	clauses / AS-unit	sub-clausal AS-unit %	<2K BNC / COCA	overall score
1 Love and Shopping	127	0.53	0.53	0.976	0
2 Birthday Present	162	0.48	0.52	1	4
3 Pet Elephant	94	0.82	0.18	0.881	2
4 Holiday Planning	106	0.68	0.32	0.991	1
5 In Kyoto	47	0.47	0.53	0.978	0
6 Trouble in Class	43	0.91	0.09	0.905	0.5
7 Lost Child	84	0.71	0.33	1	2
8 Disney Sea Date	70	0.71	0.33	0.985	2
9 Hawaii Rescue	47	0.75	0.25	0.955	1.5
10 Pet Shop	166	0.64	0.38	0.938	3.5
11 After Club Practice	112	0.67	0.37	0.982	1
12 Sale	90	0.47	0.49	0.977	4
13 Festival Preparation	85	0.74	0.26	0.867	0
14 Love and Soccer	74	0.9	0.1	0.946	1.5
15 In Las Vegas	171	0.65	0.37	0.922	2.5
16 Space Travel	114	0.8	0.27	0.932	2
17 Pineapple	88	0.53	0.47	0.945	0.5
18 Meeting Mickey	59	0.53	0.47	0.999	1.5
19 Date Trouble	115	0.78	0.24	1	2
20 Mix-up at School	103	0.58	0.42	1	2.5
21 New Students	104	0.7	0.33	0.991	3



Original Plays: accuracy

<i>group</i>	error-free AS-unit %	avg. length of error-free AS- unit	grammatical errors / AS- unit	lexical errors / AS- unit
1 Love and Shopping	0.87	3.03	0.2	0.1
2 Birthday Present	0.92	3.26	0.13	0.08
3 Pet Elephant	0.91	4.88	0.17	0
4 Holiday Planning	0.56	4.2	0.76	0.12
5 In Kyoto	0.66	2.4	0.43	0.29
6 Trouble in Class	0.73	3.36	0.2	0.1
7 Lost Child	0.71	3.25	0.47	0.18
8 Disney Sea Date	0.75	2.56	0.41	0.18
9 Hawaii Rescue	0.82	2.39	0.42	0.08
10 Pet Shop	0.74	3.03	0.25	0.16
11 After Club Practice	0.8	3.54	0.2	0.15
12 Sale	0.89	2.31	0.24	0
13 Festival Preparation	0.84	4.18	0.14	0.21
14 Love and Soccer	0.57	3.42	0.42	0.11
15 In Las Vegas	0.96	3.71	0	0.07
16 Space Travel	0.57	2.82	0.58	0.13
17 Pineapple	0.83	2.72	0.31	0.06
18 Meeting Mickey	0.84	2.75	0.1	0.2
19 Date Trouble	0.86	2.84	0.17	0.03
20 Mix-up at School	0.83	2.5	0.1	0.19
21 New Students	0.79	2.69	0.3	0.09

Adapted Plays: fluency, complexity, and overall theatrical quality of oral performance

<i>group</i>	tokens	clauses / AS-unit	sub-clausal AS-unit %	<2K BNC / COCA	overall score
1 3 Little Pigs	127	1	0	0.984	4
2 Urashimatarou	97	0.62	0.39	0.969	4.5
3 Kaguyahime	146	0.8	0.29	0.926	1.5
4 Seven Children	133	0.96	0.14	0.969	3.5
5 Tottoro	139	0.67	0.33	0.977	1
6 Momotarou	106	0.69	0.31	0.97	0.5
7 Little Mermaid	134	0.84	0.36	0.96	2
8 Alice in Wonderland	167	0.97	0.23	0.951	2
9 Snow White	77	0.65	0.35	0.987	1.5
10 3 Little Pigs	183	0.83	0.17	0.945	4
11 Doraemon	120	0.93	0.11	0.991	2.5
12 Urashimatarou	138	0.76	0.35	0.964	3
13 Cinderella	155	0.89	0.24	0.968	4
14 Anpanman	113	0.78	0.25	0.982	0.5
15 Snow White	126	0.79	0.24	0.992	2.5
16 Straw Millionaire	114	0.71	0.34	0.965	2
17 One Piece	138	0.91	0.1	0.957	2.5
18 Urashimatarou	141	0.69	0.36	0.919	1
19 Momotarou	197	1.03	0.14	0.933	3
20 Snow White	161	0.92	0.24	0.968	3
21 3 Little Pigs (4 Pigs version)	145	0.5	0.52	0.957	3

## Adapted Plays: accuracy

<i>group</i>	error-free AS-unit %	avg. length of error-free AS- unit	grammatical errors / AS- unit	lexical errors / AS- unit
1 3 Little Pigs	0.46	3.06	0.34	0.2
2 Urashimatarou	0.62	4	0.63	0.06
3 Kaguyahime	0.69	3.16	0.29	0.25
4 Seven Children	0.54	4	0.48	0.19
5 Totoro	0.74	3.17	0.35	0.15
6 Momotarou	0.91	3.24	0.09	0.05
7 Little Mermaid	0.52	2.06	0.81	0.38
8 Alice in Wonderland	0.64	3.73	0.4	0.09
9 Snow White	0.65	3.67	0.31	0.38
10 3 Little Pigs	0.76	3.09	0.24	0.07
11 Doraemon	0.77	3.48	0.16	0.2
12 Urashimatarou	0.88	3.47	0.12	0.08
13 Cinderella	0.7	3.58	0.42	0.06
14 Anpanman	0.84	3.07	0.16	0.12
15 Snow White	0.79	4.08	0.17	0.17
16 Straw Millionaire	0.77	2.3	0.32	0.16
17 One Piece	0.76	4.28	0.17	0.17
18 Urashimatarou	0.82	3.25	0.19	0.15
19 Momotarou	0.5	3.27	0.59	0.3
20 Snow White	0.62	3.3	0.44	0.09
21 3 Little Pigs (4 Pigs version)	0.85	2.6	0.21	0.08

## APPENDIX FIVE: TRANSCRIPTS OF FINAL PERFORMANCES

### **Original 1: Love and Shopping**

Good morning. Good morning. It's a fine day so I want to go shopping with my family. Nice idea. Let's go shopping. What shall I buy? I bought new clothes because I am having a date with boyfriend. Really? I'm sad. Okay. I will give you new clothes. May I help you? This clothes is cute. I'll take it. Thank you. Wow. What? He is my boyfriend. Nice to meet you. Oh, nice to meet you, too. What are you doing? I'll bought new clothes. Me too. How about going together? It is good. Wow, SXXX. Wow, YXXX. Are you couples? That's right. Really? Enjoy a date. Thank you, Yuko. Bye. I return soon. Okay. I must return. Sorry. See you.

### **Original 2: Birthday Present**

We want to go shopping. Okay. But you have to go with YXXX. No no no. We want only us. Why? We want to buy a birthday present for YXXX. That's a good idea. But watch out for cars when you cross the street. Okay, mom. See you! I want to buy clothes. Yeah. Me too. May I help you? Yes. We want to buy pretty clothes for my sister's birthday. Okay. How old is your sister? And what color does she like? She is sixteen. She likes red. Okay. This way please. Okay. I'll take it. Thank you for coming. Have a nice day. See you. Bye bye. Hi. Hi. Did you go shopping? Yes. Only you? Oh, what did you buy? It's secret. Okay. Be careful. Bye I'm home mom. Welcome back. Did you buy anything? Yeah. We bought something nice clothes. Yui. Come on. Present for you. Oh,

Thank you. I'm very happy. Happy birthday.

### **Original 3: Pet Elephant**

Look. My pet. It's very cute. I have a pet, too. What pet do you have? I have an elephant. Really? Say it again. I said, I have an elephant. I don't believe it. Then let's go to Thailand to see my elephant.

This is Captain KXXX speaking. Today's weather is good. We can fly safely. So, please enjoy the flight. Thank you. It's the first time for me. Well, don't worry. Just enjoy your flight. Shall we go? Let's go to his house. This is my elephant.

### **Original 4: Holiday Planning**

Today, Kanda got a lot of money. Her family give her a lot of money. Where do you go? I want to the sea. Go to the hot spring. Oh, how about Hawaii? I wish. Good morning. How are you? Yea. On plane. I'm hungry. We don't have food. Please feed me. Here food. Oh, It's beautiful sea. Bondage to the sea. Let's go. Good morning. How are you? I'm fine thank you, and you? Where do you want to go today? I want to go to a hot spring. Let's go hot spring. I can go to hot spring.

### **Original 5: In Kyoto**

Two persons. An American in Kyoto. Attention please. I arrive in Japan. At once right away in Japan. Sure. I suprised Kinkakuji temple of Kyoto. Very beautiful. Sure. But what that this. That what a building. That is Kinkakuji. Thank you. Such ... come. One day passed.

### **Original 6: Trouble in Class**

Let's begin English class. Yes, teacher. Well who are you? I'm a suspicious people. Shut up. Please not kill student. You are noisy. You must die. You must be quiet. I avenge my teacher. I'll arrest on suspicion of murder.

### **Original 7: Lost Child**

Let's go to USA. Okay. Good idea. The family going to the USA. They look at the view. Oh, beautiful. They arrived in USA Child disappeared Oh no. Where is my grandchild? I'm worried. We are in trouble. Child was found. Where is this? The child in Mexico. In Mexico? We will fly to Mexico by [X]. Wow. It can't be. Good for you. I'm relief. Family found the child. But leave to USA but enjoyed in Mexico. End.

### **Original 8: Disney Sea Date**

One day we go to Disney Sea. Oh, arrived. Something take. Let's ride Indiejones. Yea. Oh, interesting photo. Oh, where is KXXX? I don't know. Look for after. Okay. Look for after we go another attraction. Stop, stop. Yes you are look. My name is HXXX. Oh, shall we go around Disney Sea? Okay. Wait Who is he? My boyfriend. What? Wait, wait. No no. Please wait. This is DXXX.

### **Original 9: Hawaii Rescue**

JXXX and AXXX went to school trip to Hawaii. Try to swim but drown. Help me. Excuse me. Help you. The two students [X]. Hey girl. What's up? Help me. Help. The girl was rescued. Is it alright? Okay. Yes. The people fell in love. Yes.

### **Original 10: Pet Shop**

My birthday is coming soon. Me too. Because we're twins. What do you want? I want to have a new family. I want a dog. No. I want a cat. I want a dog. No. I want a cat. Okay. Okay. Let's go to the pet shop. Let's go. Look. Many cute dogs are over there. Look. Many cute cats are over there. No. My first. No. My first. Stop. Stop. May I help you. Yes we want buy pet. What type of do you like. I like dog. No. I like cat. Okay. I'll show you a dog and a cat. Okay. First, how about this dog? Love you. I'm very cute dog. So you are like me. Cute. Okay. How about this pet. Please buy me. I'm most popular cat in this shop. It's very cute cat. I want a dog. No. I want a cat. Sorry. I have an allergy of animals. Oh my God.

### **Original 11: After Club Practice**

Come here. Let's finish our practice. Thank you very much. Good job. Be careful crazy man. Thank you. See you. Let's go home with me. Sure. What is today's homework. It's English and Japanese. Oh no. A lot of homework. I know you can do it. You are cute. Let's go forest together. Oh, sorry I have to go home early. Don't touch me. Please help me. Today I learned the art of self defence. I will call policeman. Hurry up police man. Place is near park. Let's go. You students are very wonderful. Thank you. Well, I must be going to home. Good bye. Bye bye.

### **Original 12: Sale**

Will you go shopping with me tomorrow? Yes. Can I invite

MXXX? That's good idea. Okay. Hi. This is KXXX speaking. Will you go shopping with NXXX and me tomorrow? Sure. Sounds fun. Okay. See you. See you. Hi. Hi. Hi. Hi. Look that. That's sale. Okay Let's go. Do you want to go to sale? Yes. This is cute. It's mine. It's mine. It's mine. Don't touch me. Shut up. Hey. This is cute. Wow. Oh my God. Sorry. Sorry. The end.

### **Original 13: Festival Preparation**

We have to sing chorus in school festival. Today let's select our conductor. Who is the best? I want to conductor. So I will ask SXXX. Please tell me about our conductor. I want to sing. So I will ask FXXX. Won't you be our conductor? No. I am good at playing the piano. I nobody everywhere on the piano. Bingo. Will you be our conductor? No no no. Oh, I see. I will be the conductor. Sorry. It's important to be positive.

### **Original 14: Love and Soccer**

They are very love love. Mary, I love you. I love you too Peter. But this place is soccer ground. He is soccer player. She is manager. He is a younger student. Please practice. Who is he? I'm Mary's brother. What happened? I ... your ...

Let's decide it with PK kick. Oh no. Oh, supervisor. What is it say? I love. I love, too. Prohibited from love. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

### **Original 15: In Las Vegas**

Enjoy the flight. Can I have wine? What kind do you want? I'll have white. Can I have lunch? Coffee or tea? Tea, please. Here. Thank you. Okay guys, we'll be landing shortly. Okay, we have landed. Thank

you Have a nice day. Thank you. Have a nice day. Shall I carry your bag? Yes. Excuse me. I have made a reservation. I'm under YXXX. Okay. Your room is 503. Here you are. Thank you. Enjoy your stay. Oh my God. I'm so sorry. Were you my pilot? I think I was. I mean, there were only two people on the flight. So nice to meet you. I'm NXXX. Nice to meet you. I'm DXXX. Why are you in Las Vegas? Playing the casino. You're a gambler? Yes. Would you like to go to the elevator? Wait wait wait. Who are you? I'm RXXX. Okay. Why are you in Las Vegas? I'm going to gamble. Nice to meet you. Nice to meet you. The end.

### **Original 16: Space Travel**

One day the girl went to the space travel. At first she arrived at big planet. Oh, excuse me. I want happiness. Okay. The stone I give you. It's happiness stone. Thank you. Next she arrived water planet. Oh, I'm thirsty. I have delicious water. Oh, please me. Of course. Thank you. Next she arrived good fragrance planet. I'm hungry. I have delicious food. Oh, please me. Of course. Thank you. Last she arrived at heart planet. Oh, I want love. Really? I will give you love. Please me. You have to go home. There are your family. Oh, you remind me of family is important. I will never forget. Bye.

### **Original 17: Pineapple**

Good morning. Hi. What's this? This is a pineapple. A pineapple? Yes. Let's harvest. Okay. We can't pull it out. Let's call my friends. Help me. Good morning. What's the matter? We only want to pull out this pineapple. A pineapple? Okay.

This is not coming out. All right. Let's call her. Her? Yes, come on EXXX. I am strong girl. Oh, let's come out. Hi. Why? This is my uncle. Uncle? Hello. I am uncle. Oh, it was only uncle.

### **Original 18: Meeting Mickey Mouse**

Do you going to Disneyland? Yes. Let's go to Disneyland. Oh. It's very beautiful. What attraction should we ride? I want to meet Mickey and Donald. I love Mickey and Donald. Me too. That is Mickey and Donald. Hello. What? Oh hello. What on earth happened? Please take picture with me. Okay. Bye. Bye. Let's go home.

### **Original 19: Date Trouble**

Today I travel with you. We will have a good trip. Hi. Who are you? Who are you? Are you friends? No. I'm his lover. No. I'm his lover. No. Please tell me, who are you? I'm sorry. I do not respect. Mama mia. What happened? Stop. Oh, what's up? Oh, who are you? I'm her lover. Oh, I'm your lover. No. Mine. Shut up. Stop. It's time you stop. Enough is enough. I'm tired. Me too. Okay. You and you go out. And you and you go out. Let's go out. I wish you happiness. I wish you, too. Who are you? Who are you?

### **Original 20: Mix-up at School**

Oh no. I'll be late. Where is here? Where is here? I'll be late. I'll be late. Where is here? Oh, good morning. Good morning. Hey. Do you hear? Today, a transfer student came this class. Really? Must be a girl. Ah, I hear he is boy. So? I don't like boy. Good morning. Morning. Morning. Morning. Okay, today

this class has a transfer student. Okay. Come here. Okay. Tell me about you. My name is KXXX. Me, you. Me, you. Return my body. Stop. Where is here? Where is here? Ok. Let's start class. Who are you?

### **Original 21: New Students**

What's this? I'm new English teacher. And new student come to school. Wow. Wow. Come in. Who are you? [X] student, please introduce yourself. Okay. My name is... No. Just look. I'm from Bhutan. I know first Japanese word is [X]. Alright. Next student please. My name is CXXX. I am from Bulgaria. Oh, it's present. It's creamy. It's creamy. Thank you. Body yogurt. My name is HXXX. I'm from Brazil. I am first Japanese word is [X]. Thank you. Thank you very much. This school is finish. Thank you. Very cool. I love you. I love you. No.

### **Adapted 1: 3 Little Pigs**

We are pig brothers. Today we are building my house. Let's start. My name is Ichiro. I build my house with straw. My name is Jiro. I built my house with wood. My name is Takuro. I built my house with brick. I'm very hungry. I want eat you. Three little pigs near my house. So, go eating. I'm straw house. This is a pig. I want eat you. Ah, blow. Oh my God. Stop it. I'm wood house. This is a pig. I want eat you. Blow. Oh my God. Oh, run away. I'm brick house. This is a pig. I want eat you. Blow. What? I want eat you. Go. Look. Flew in to the pot. We are win.

### **Adapted 2: Urashimatarou**

What's this? Oh, maybe this is person. Help, help me! Stop.

You must stop this violence. Thank you so much, mister Urashimataro. I want you to do something. Oh, I have a nice idea. What about, please ride on my back? Welcome to my Ryugu castle. I'm princess. This my castle. Mister Urashimataro. [X]. Okay. Here you are. This box. Don't open the box. Musn't open. Bye bye. Don't open this box. Don't open this box. Don't open this box. What's this? Oh, maybe this is person. You are die?

### **Adapted 3: Kaguyahime**

We will go to bamboo grove and take some bamboo to make dish.

Okay. Goodbye. Oh, what is that shining bamboo? I'm trying to cut it. Wow. There is a little cute girl in bamboo. I take her to my house. Who is the cute girl? There was her in bamboo. We haven't child. So let's take care of her. Good idea. She was from bamboo, so we call her Kaguya. Oh, she is sleeping. Good night. Good morning. Good morning. Wow. You grow very quickly. You grow as beautiful. I am warn, Kaguya is beautiful in town. You are very very beautiful. Will you marry me? Stop it. Give up. Today the room is very clean. That's right. Who is coming from? I'm messenger. You must come back. I'm sorry. She must return to the moon. Thank you. Goodbye.

### **Adapted 4: Seven Children**

I'm hungry. In winter, I can't get some food. I know sheep family live near here. I'm going. I go shopping so please wait for me at home. I see. Don't open the door. Okay? Okay. Bye. While mother is out, it's good chance to eat kids. I'm mother. Open the door. This voice is

different. So you are not my mother. I'm mother, open the door. Mother is back at home. Eat kids. I'm full and sleepy. I'm back at home. Oh, where is my kids? They are eaten by the wolf. Who is sleeping now. Oh, let's cut the stomach open. Thank you for mother. Please kids, bring mother four stone. I'm thirsty. Let's go the river. Wolf die.

#### **Adapted 5: Totoro**

We just arrived new house. Yea. Excuse me. Do you have a [X] at the entrance? Of course. Yes, I do. I give you ohagi. Oh, thank you. Tonight, you have to ghost house. I have a lot of works. Please play outside. Alright. Are you Totoro? Yes. I sleep. It's raining harder. But my father forget to bring umbrella. Let's go to the bus stop. Okay. I want to sleep. Take on back. Do you need umbrella. Oh, thank you. Oh, thank you. My name is Yuji. I will go to home. I give you two donburri. Oh, thank you. We will grow our food. Night. Good night. Hey wake up. Totoro is coming here. I want to sleep. Be quiet. Wake up. Totoro is coming here. Let's go see Totoro. Let's more like Totoro.

#### **Adapted 6: Momotarou**

Let's go to the river. Yes, let's. What's that? It is a peach. Let's take it back home. Okay. I will cut it. The name is Momotaro. Hi grandmother. I will go to Onigashima to knock out the ogre. I made kibidango. Take it. Okay. Thank you. Bye. Who are you? My name is monkey. Give me kibidango. Yes, here you are. Thank you. Let's go. Go. We arrived at Onigashima. Welcome to Onigashima. I will knock down you. Don't touch me. I won. Let's go home. Hi grandmother. I'm back.

Welcome home. I saved the world.

#### **Adapted 7: Little Mermaid**

In the morning. Put away futon. A wave come all the members. But everyone survive by magic. Okay. This was their first days. Don't stop. Don't stop. Yes. Wow. We was crush rock. Do you feel ok? Yes. Besides chi is rock part everything all right. With friendship. Thank you. The second daughter then with towel around tie and became mermaid. That girl stays with golden fish and the wave were damaged. Called is golden fish really. You're mermaid. Yes. Name is [X] but oldest daughter is called oldest. Yes. Baby sister don't speak. Yes. Part is than many. So feeling. Don't speak little sister is [X]. Don't call sister. Pick it up together. I using the flow... and go.

#### **Adapted 8: Alice in Wonderland**

One day, Alice was playing field wonder rabbit was rushed. Oh, stop the rabbit. Alice jump into the hole. Where I will go? She made it to wonder forest. Hey girl. Where do you go so busy? Are you surprised? We are Dee and Dum. Nice to meet you. Did you saw a white rabbit? He went there. Thank you. Dee and Dum was keep speaking. Alice is ignore. Alice was walking then she saw smoke. What's that? I'm Alice. Please help me. Oh, why? I'm looking for a white rabbit. He went there. Thank you. She became lost. Alice find out a cat on the tree. Oh, cat, did you see a white rabbit? I don't know. Let's go Mad Hatter. Thank you. Alice met Mad Hatter. Mouse and white rabbit were holding a party. Today is festival when we

observe the day to do nothing. The day do no nothing is [X]. Oh, strange people. They have a good time.

#### **Adapted 9: Snow White**

Mirror mirror on the wall., Who is fairest of us all? Queen thou art fairest there. I hold but Snowdrop is fairer. Mirror? Snowdrop shall die. Even if it cost me myself. Oh, rabbit. Why are you here? I find not Snowdrop. Yes I guide there. Wow. Who is she? Can I stay on here? Sure. I don't have anybody place This apple is very good. Would you eat? Yes please. Oh, what a beautiful woman.

#### **Adapted 10: 3 Little Pigs**

I'm a pig. You're a pig. I'm also pig. We are brothers. I'm planning to build my own house. Me too. Okay. Let's go. Let's go. I'm a wolf. I'll eat pig. I build straw house. I'm straw house. I build a wood house. I'm wood house. I build a brick house. I'm brick house. May I come in? Who are you? I'm wolf. I'll have it. No. Oh my god. I have run away. Help me. What's happened? I the wolf wanted to eat. Okay. Come on. Thank you. May I come in? Who are you? I'm wolf. I'll eat you. No, oh no. I cook dinner. I am pot. Help me. What happened? The wolf want to eat me. Okay. Please come in my house. Thank you. May I come in? Who are you? I'm wolf. I'll eat you. No no. I'm very very strong. I'm very very strong house. Where is wolf? There. That is chimney. It's very hot.

#### **Adapted 11: Doraemon**

One day, one animal throat cats came to Nobita's house. The name is Doraemon. Many secret tools are contained in the

pocket. One day, Nobita borrowed to dokodemo door and took to play with it. Let's go to the park. Hey you. Did you come for battle with me? Jaian can knock down easily. Jaian and Suneo beat up Nobita. Don't beat up Nobita. You are not safe here. Go somewhere. I'll call Doraemon. Doraemon! Did you call me? Help Nobita. Okay. I will go to the park. I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Don't beat me up anymore. Run. Help me. Are you okay, Nobita? I'm fine. Get up and go home. Thank you.

### **Adapted 12: Urashimatarou**

Why is there a turtle here? I'm going to beat you up. You're perfect for dinner. Don't eat me. Help me. Stop. Don't beat up the turtle. Thank you. Who are you? I'm Urashimataro. In return, I will take you to Ryugyujo. Thank you. Welcome to Ryugyujo. Thank you for helping the turtle. Here is a gift for saving the turtle. Please have fun. Dance. Look at my perfect dance. Nice dancing. Thank you. Thank you. Here is a tamatebako. Thank you. Don't open it. Okay, sure. See you. Okay. Thank you. She told me not to open it, but I really want to open it. What's this? I'm old. My face is yobo yobo. I didn't want this kind of present. I'm shouldn't have save the turtle.

### **Adapted 13: Cinderella**

You must clean my room. Clean my dress. We going to a castle to dance with a nice prince. I want to wear this dress, so hurry up. I have a lot of work to do so I can't. Why? You must do. Okay. Hurry up. We have to leave soon. What the matter? I want to go to castle but I don't have dress for dance. Oh, I'll make a dress for you. Wow.

Thank you. Enjoy. See you. Wow. You're the most beautiful in the world. No no no. I want to dance with you. Shall we dance? Oh, yes. It is twelve o'clock. I must go home. Sorry. Wait. What's your name? Sorry. Next day. Yesterday was good time. Excuse me. I look for just fit girl this slipper. Oh, it's mine. Oh just fits. Prince is look for you. I want to marry you.

### **Adapted 14: Anpanman**

I am Anpanman. I protect my town. I have to patrol. Look. There are many beautiful flowers. How beautiful. I want to give to my mother. I'm [X]. I don't like beautiful flowers. Oh my God. Please stop. Help me. Hey. What on earth are you doing now? I am playing with her. Nonsense. This is water. I lost power. I have to tell mother. Please make an Anpanman's new face. Oh no. I must make an Anpanman new face. Finish. I'm winning. I'm winning. This is Anpanman new face. I'm very fine Anpanman. Thank you, Anpanman. You're welcome. Here you are. I am happy. Happy end.

### **Adapted 15: Snow White**

Mirror mirror. Who is the most beautiful person in the world? It is the Snow White. She is the most beautiful in the world. Oh my. I hate Snow White. If she dies, I will be the most beautiful person in the world. Okay. I'll make poison apple. Where is this? I got lost. Are you okay? Where are you from? I'm okay but not fine. Because I'm funny day. I don't find my way home. You can come to our home. Yes. You are kind. I was made it. We're going to job. Yes. Have a nice day. Hey girl. This is a present. Would you like to try

this? Yes please. Oh my God. She's dying. I win.

### **Adapted 16: Straw Millionaire**

I want to become rich. Okay. You touch first thing is very important. So, go trip with it. I see. Ouch! What's this? Straw. I want it. Mommy. What's wrong? I want it. Okay. Excuse me? Would you exchange an orange with it? Okay, here you are. Thank you. Help me. What's the matter? I'm thirsty. Would you exchange cloth with it? Okay. Thank you. Excuse me. I want it. I want it. Would you exchange a horse with it? Okay. Thank you. Hey you! I want it! Because I must go journey. If you give it to me, I will give much money. Of course! I become rich man.

### **Adapted 17: One Piece**

You are not a familiar face. Who are you? I'm a resident of here. You look tired. Would you like to eat candy? Thank you. What's your name? I'm Sanzi. I'm Robin. Ok, Sanzi, Robin, you must defeat Ruffy's companion. Yes. You are always walking around. Sorry, you waited here. Oh, what are they? They haven't been theirself. You're being taken in. Isn't it about time you woke up? It's no saying. They can't listen. That's right. Keep it up! They were puppet. What did you do to my friends? I'm not the only one at fault. Don't be a fool. I can't beat you. Oh, what happen? That's all. Are you okay? Don't mind. Why? He is fine. Let's the sequel to adventure.

### **Adapted 18: Urashimatarou**

Help me. Let's throw lock. Okay. Let's throw. Stop it. What? Surprise. Help that turtle. Shut up. I'll give you grilled fish. I'm not hungry.



Well then, I will give you a living fossil, coelacanth. Yay! Ammonite for you. Yay. Octopus for you. Yay? We'll retreat for now. Thank you for the fish. Let's go. Thank you for helping me. No problem. I will take you to Ryugushiro as in etiquette. Thanks. This is Ryugu castle. This is it. Welcome to Ryugu castle. I am god of ocean, Poseidon. Hello. Let's celebrate a party for you. Thank you. Let's go. Where am I? You gave me an old fish. How long has it been since we met? One hundred years. I don't care now. Let's open now. Became an old person.

#### **Adapted 19: Momotarou**

1 Once upon a time in Japan. There were grandfather and grandmother in there. Grandfather went to cleaning mountain. And grandmother went to river to wash their clothes every day. One day grandmother wash their clothes big peach flow from the upper reaches of that river. Grandmother was very surprised. After that grandmother took the peach. At that time fall the peach from grandmother's hand. Peach was broken and Peachtaro was born from peach. Peachtaro look at the grandparents were surprised. Peachtaro said "wow. What's happened?

Grandparents very injured. Grandfather said, "We fought with Ohga. And we lost. So we were very injured." So Peachtaro decide. Okay. I decide to beat Ohga. Grandmother said, "All right. Take this kibidango." Good luck. Peachtaro go to the Onigashima. Between the way, he met dog, bird and monkey. They said, "Hey. What you have in your hands?" I have kibidango. Give me kibidango. Okay. But you must go to Onigashima with me. No. Yes. So they arrive to Onigashima. I'll beat you. Can you beat me? The won the Ohga. After that, Peachtaro and animals make a village in Onigashima. And Peachtaro will king of Onigashima.

#### **Adapted 20: Snow White**

One day there is snow white. Her mother dead when she was child. The new mother is not well for her. Mother has special hair. And nurse [X]. Mirror, mirror. Who is the most beautiful woman? Of course you are. But one day the mirror answered. Not you are, the most beautiful girl is Snow White. Her mother made angry snow white ran away and her mother became monster. Do you become a friend? Of course. Let's eat together. Let's go picnic. Let's sing a song. Snow

White had a good time. But one day the [X] went over for her. Hi. Pretty girl. Would you like to get an apple? Thank you. I'll take it. What's wrong? Why you die? Witch killed her. What's wrong? Who are you? I'm prince. What's wrong? Killed her. Just a minute. She's alive. Thank you. I'm glad to meet you. Please marry me. Yes.

#### **Adapted 21: 3 Little Pigs (4 Pigs version)**

Oh. I went to Tsutaya to borrow DVD. Do you know, three of pigs? Yes. But this movie, four pigs. Whoa. I don't know. I don't know. Do you want to see? Yes. Yes. You must independent. Independent... jiritsu... I give you, first pig, sausage. Thank you. Second pig. Third pig. Thank you. Fourth pig. Pumpkin. Thank you. Let's go out. Let's go. Meeting. I want to eat you. You must build house. First pig, first pig, first pig. Oh. You must use wood. Second pig, second pig. Use wood. Third pig, third pig. Yes? Third pig use brick. Fourth pig. I don't know. Let's go. Ah. It's gasoline. Thank you. Lighter. Lighter. Complete. It's [X]. What, what? Complete. Oi, come on. Let's play Jenga. Oh, it's shellfish. Let's make this shellfish a house.

## APPENDIX SIX: POST-TASK SURVEYS

— FEEDBACK SHEET —

Did you find this project enjoyable?  
このプロジェクトは楽しかったですか。

not enjoyable

enjoyable

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

### How difficult was this project to complete?

このプロジェクトを完成させるのはどのくらい難しかったですか。

easy

difficult

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**What part(s) were difficult to complete?**  
どの部分を完成させるのがむずかしかったですか。

--

How well did your group work together?  
グループの協力はどうか。

not well

well

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

What were strong points for your group?  
What were weak points for your group?  
グループのよかった点はなんでしたか。  
グループの悪かった点はなんでしたか。

--

You worked with your group for four class periods to create and rehearse your story. In the box below, please write your reflection about the project.

あなたはグループと一緒に四時間で話を作ったり、練習をしました。

下に、プロジェクトについて感想を書いてください。

[illegible]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student # \_\_\_\_\_

## — FEEDBACK SHEET 2 —

**Did you find this project enjoyable?**

このプロジェクトは楽しかったですか。

not enjoyable

enjoyable

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Compared to the first project, how difficult was this project to complete?**

前回のプロジェクトに比べて、このプロジェクトを完成させるのはどのくらい難しかったですか。

easy

difficult

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**How helpful was the experience from the first project in completing this second project?**

この二回目のプロジェクトにおいて、一回目の経験はどのくらい役立ちましたか。

not helpful

helpful

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**How well did your group work together?**

グループの協力はどうでしたか。

not well

well

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**What were strong points for your group?**

**What were weak points for your group?**

グループのよかった点はなんでしたか。

グループの悪かった点はなんでしたか。

**You worked with your group for four class periods to create and rehearse your story.**

**In the box below, please write your reflection about the project. Be sure to discuss English learning in your reflection.**

あなたはグループと一緒に四時間で話を作ったり、練習をしました。下に、プロジェクトについて感想を書いてください。感想の中に英語の学習についての自分の考えも書いてください。

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student # \_\_\_\_\_