

【原著】

Investigating Students' Perceptions of Languages Used for Grammar Instruction

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文法指導時の使用言語に対する学生の意識調査

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Abstract

Although researchers and practitioners have debated whether to use the first language (L1) or the second language (L2) as the medium of instruction in the English classroom over a few decades, few studies have dealt with students' perceptions about these language choices. At the Bunkyo English Communication Center in Hiroshima Bunkyo Women's University, the L2 is predominantly used in all English classes to maximize students' exposure to it. A semester-end survey in a grammar course, however, revealed that a third of the students taking the course felt the need for grammar explanations in the L1. Prompted by these results, the current study was conducted to investigate 1) the students' previous experiences in receiving L1 instruction, 2) the students' need for grammar explanations in L1, and if they have such needs, which grammar points, and 3) the students' beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction. The results suggested that majority of the students taking the grammar course were used to L1 instruction and that it might be beneficial to provide some L1 support for explaining particular grammar points conceptually difficult for Japanese learners of English. Also, some of the students' responses suggested that learners' beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction may change over the course of time. The limitations of the study and possible further studies are discussed at the end.

概 要

英語の授業における指示言語を、母語 (L1) にするか第二言語 (L2) にするかという議論は研究者及び教育従事者の間で数十年間に亘りなされているが、学習者の立場からこの問いに答えようとする研究はあまりなされていない。学生に可能な限り英語に触れてもらおうと、広島文教女子大学の文教イングリッシュコミュニケーションセンターでは、全ての授業において主に L2 が用いられている。しかしながら、学期末に行われた授業評価からは、文法の授業を受けている学生の 3 分の 1 が母語での文法説明を必要としていることが分かった。この結果を受けて、1) 学生が以前どのくらい L1 による指示を受けていたか、2) 学生は L1 による文法説明を必要としているかどうか、またそうであるならば、どの文法項目についての説明を必要としているか、3) 文法指導時の言語に対する学生の意見を調査することを目的に本研究を行っ

た。調査結果からは、当該文法授業を受けている大多数の学生がL1による指示に慣れていることに加え、日本人英語学習者にとって、概念を理解することが難しいと考えられる特定の文法項目には、日本語による補助をいくらか加えることが有益であろうということが示唆された。また、数名の学生の回答から、文法指示の言語に対する学習者の考えは、時間とともに変化することが示唆された。最後に本研究の限界と今後の課題について述べる。

1. Introduction

Despite six years of education in junior high school and senior high school, Japanese people are often said to have low English proficiency. According to Negishi, Takeda, and Tono (2012), about 80% of the Japanese people from their studies fall in the categories of A1 or A2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). To nurture youth equipped for today's rapid globalization, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) advocates improving English language teaching in institutions nationwide by introducing foreign language classes in primary schools and promoting classes with a greater focus on communication skills. English teachers in schools are encouraged to speak English (L2) in class to act as role models and to increase language input for their students. More and more teachers have started using English as the medium of instruction. In grammar classes, however, class content is often taught in Japanese, which is students' first language (henceforth L1).

At the Bunkyo English Communication Center (BECC) at Hiroshima Bunkyo Women's University, all English classes are taught in students' L2 in principle to maximize exposure to English, and the same is applied to grammar courses. Although implementing an English-only rule accords with the educational policy of the center, it is undeniable that this could be a big challenge for first-year students who are used to grammar being taught in their L1. As part of the course evaluations conducted at the end of each semester, first-year students taking a grammar course, Basic English Communication, were asked whether they felt the necessity for grammar explanations in L1. The results indicated that approximately 30% of the students taking this grammar course felt that they needed explanations in L1. As we believe students' perceptions are important for improving our practices, we decided to carry out further research on this matter. The purposes of this study are 1) to investigate students' English learning background, 2) to find out students' needs for L1 support, and 3) to find out students' beliefs about language choice for grammar explanations.

2. Literature Review

The debate regarding the use of one's L1 in learning an L2 within a classroom situation has received a significant amount of attention over the past few decades (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Cook, 2001; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Students' beliefs about the use of L1 and L2 in class, however, have been given considerably less attention.

L1/L2 in Class

Swain and Lapkin (2000) provide three guiding principles for language immersion programs concerning the use of L1 and L2: the first focusing on students (the permission of L1 for mediating cognition and affect), the second for teachers and students (the setting of clear expectations for L1/L2 use in the classroom), and the third for teachers alone (the purposeful use of L1). Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) suggest that the use of an L1 on paired tasks can result in learners working “at a higher cognitive level than might have been possible had they been working individually” (p. 768), which implies that teachers may need to reconsider strict English only policies. Nation (2010) also notes that some L1 discussion can help students gain better L2 performances especially when attempting tasks that may be beyond their capabilities. Two critical arguments against the use of L1 in class debated in Cook (2001) are the necessity of maximum exposure to the L2, and the separation and distinction of L1 and L2. Furthermore, Atkinson (1987) has outlined some issues with overuse of the L1 in class, notably laziness among students, oversimplification of differences, and a lack of L2 being used.

Regarding the amount of L1 being used in language classrooms, it would seem to be dependent on rules stipulated by a school's administration, and the enforcement of such policies by its individual teachers. Levine (2014) gives a figure of 80% of the time spent overall in class in the L2 with studies done by Nzwanga (2000), Macaro (2001), and his own 2003 and 2011 studies (p. 4). Levine (2014) also provides a summary of the amounts of L2 used in university settings which is predominantly teachers using L2 to instruct students, followed by students to teacher or whole class, and gradually less when students are talking with each other in scripted and then unscripted activities. Macaro adds that exclusive or near-exclusive use of the L2 “is rarely encountered in any learning context apart from [classrooms with mixed L1 learners]” (as cited in Littlewood & Yu, 2011, p. 67).

L1/L2 in Grammar Classes

When it comes to the question of in which situations should an L1 be used in a language class a number of researchers have found that explaining grammar is at the top of the list (Mitchell, 1988; Critchley, 1999; Tang, 2002). As Cianflone (2009) states, “at university level, where language specificity is higher it [the use of L1] can save time and increase students' motivation” (p. 3). Tang (2002) found that both teachers and students reacted positively towards the use of L1 in a university setting in China, and without guidance she noted that learners would often make incorrect translations. Burden (2001) found an interesting discrepancy in Japan between teachers' and students' opinions of when to use L1 in regards to explaining grammar. Although both teachers and students were found to be predominantly in favour of using L1 to explain the differences between L1 and L2 grammar, students were mostly against (63%) the use of L1 to explain grammar per se, whereas teacher responses (37%) indicated to the contrary (Burden, 2001, p. 2). This raises the question of which grammar points need to (or need not) be explained in L1. Furthermore, in Burden's 2000 study, he notes that students may not want L1 instruction to be reminded of unpleasant associations with learning English at high school, a point attributed to his findings that L1 grammar explanations were seen as undesirable with students below the

advanced level. As Burden (2000) states these students “do not want talk about language usage, but practice in its use.” (When should the teacher use learners MT in class?, para. 4).

Japanese Context

Japanese EFL university lessons are predominantly attended by monolingual speakers of Japanese. This environment no doubt has direct implications for the teaching and learning of an L2: namely whether to use the L1, and if so, how best to use it to facilitate language acquisition. Ford (2009) found teachers in various Japanese university settings mostly stuck to an English-only approach for themselves, and seemingly a non-systematic approach as to occasions when either teachers or students used Japanese in class, although flexibility and pragmatism were stated as key components in particular with allowing students to speak in their L1. In a study by Carson and Kashihara (2012), most first- and second-year students in a Japanese university thought that using the L1 helped their learning, but as their proficiency increased their dependency for L1 support decreased. Something teachers need to be mindful of in a Japanese university situation is the number of years already spent by students studying English at junior high school and senior high school. As Burden noted in his 2001 study, exchanges in the L1 can belittle students when meaning could have been negotiated with the teacher in the L2. That being said, a summary of the Japanese context given by Miles (2004), “the majority of Japanese students studying English are used to and desire a limited form of L1 use in the classroom, to help with learning and to relax them” (p. 16) would seem to resonate with a third of the students surveyed in our study.

3. Background and Study Methods

Grammar Course

This study was conducted in a grammar course in the BECC called Basic English Communication. It is a compulsory course for first-year students enrolled in the Global Communication Department (hereafter GCD) and students enrolled in the junior high school teaching license course in the Early Childhood Education Department. The aim of the course is to help students better understand and use grammar accurately in real life communication. Most of the grammar points are taught in junior and senior high school, but the course places importance on the students' actual performance as well as their knowledge about the meanings and forms of the grammar. This performance is demonstrated through role-plays, presentations and writing assignments.

The textbook used for this course is Global Dimensions 1 (Badalamenti and Henner-Stanchina, 2007), which covers the following grammar points in Table 1. Units 1–12 are taught in Semester 1, and Units 13–25 are in Semester 2. The course runs for 15 weeks each semester with two 90-minute lessons held twice a week.

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Table 1: Course overview

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Week 1	Introduction Unit	Week 1	Welcome Back Unit Term 1 Review
Week 2	The Verb <i>Be</i>	Week 2	Direct and Indirect Objects, Direct and Indirect Pronouns
Week 3	The Verb <i>Be</i>	Week 3	<i>Can, Know How To, Be Able To,</i> Connectors
Week 4	The Verb <i>Be</i>	Week 4	Present Progressive Tense
Week 5	Count and Noncount Nouns	Week 5	Adjective Phrases, <i>Another, The Other,</i> <i>Other(s),</i> Intensifiers
Week 6	Review Unit	Week 6	Past Tense of <i>Be</i> Review Unit
Week 7	The Verb <i>Have</i>	Week 7	Past Tense
Week 8	<i>This / That / These / Those,</i> Possessives	Week 8	Reflective Pronouns, <i>Each Other</i>
Week 9	<i>There is / There are, A / An</i> Versus <i>The</i>	Week 9	Future Time
Week 10	Simple Present Tense	Week 10	Phrasal Verbs Review Unit
Week 11	Simple Present Tense	Week 11	Comparison Using Adjectives
Week 12	Review Unit	Week 12	Comparison Using Adverbs
Week 13	Imperatives and Prepositions of Direction	Week 13	Comparison Using Superlatives
Week 14	Quantifiers	Week 14	Factual Conditionals <i>If</i>
Week 15	Adverbs of Manner Review Unit	Week 15	Review Unit
Exam Week	Final Exam	Exam Week	Final Exam

Using this grammar book and some supplementary materials provided by the course teachers, students review the grammar points and practice using them through various language activities. As part of the assessment, students complete three assignments: two oral presentations and one writing task using certain grammar points in addition to three grammar tests each semester.

At the beginning of the academic year, the GCD students were streamed into two classes

according to the results of an in-house placement test. The high-streamed class is taught by a native speaker of English, and the low-streamed class is taught by a Japanese teacher. In both high and low classes, however, the teachers use English as the medium of instruction, and the students are encouraged to speak English all the time.

Participants

All the participants of this study are first-year students in the GCD. 32 students are officially enrolled in the course with 16 in the high-streamed class and 16 in the low. These students take six 90-minute English lessons a week at the BECC: two lessons focusing on English communication through listening and speaking, one writing, one reading, and two grammar lessons. As mentioned previously, all these lessons are taught in English in accordance with the BECC's English-only policy.

Individual students' English levels vary from beginner to pre-intermediate. According to the results of TOEIC conducted in April, 2017, the average and the median of the scores in the high-streamed class is 385 and 380 respectively, with the highest being 515 while the average and the median of the low-streamed class are 288 and 275 respectively, with the highest being 425 (Table 2).

Table 2: TOEIC scores

	Highest score	Average score	Median score
High-streamed class	515	385	380
Low-streamed class	425	288	275

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was conducted during a grammar class in the middle of Semester 2, 2017. Three students were absent on the day, so only 29 responses were collected: 15 from the high-streamed class and 14 from the low stream. The following seven questions were asked:

1. (In junior high school) In your grammar classes, what was the percentage of Japanese usage for instruction and explanation?
2. (In senior high school) In your grammar classes, what was the percentage of Japanese usage for instruction and explanation?
3. (At the BECC) Is there anything you would like teachers to explain in Japanese in classes? If so, what is it?
4. Are there any grammar points you wish were explained in Japanese? If so, what were they?
5. Some people believe that grammar should be taught in Japanese. What do you think?

6. Has your answer to Q5 changed since you started taking Basic English Communication at Bunkyo?
7. If your opinion has changed, how has it changed?

Of these, Questions 1 and 2 were designed to find out students' English learning background. Questions 3 and 4 were hoped to find students' needs in regards to grammar explanations in L1, and Questions 5–7 were designed to elicit students' perceptions and beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction. All the responses were collected electronically through an online survey website and analyzed. Where relevant, the responses from the high-streamed class and the ones from the low were compared to see if there was any difference between the students' perceptions in the two classes.

4. Results

Students' English Learning Background

As can be seen in Table 3, the responses to Question 1 revealed that most of the students (n=23, 79%) experienced their teachers using Japanese more than 75% of the time. One student in the high-streamed class said her teachers used Japanese 25–50% of the time, and four said their teachers used Japanese 50–75% of the time while only one student in the low-streamed class said her teachers used Japanese 50–75% of the time.

Question 1: (In junior high school) In your grammar classes, what was the percentage of Japanese usage for instruction and explanation?

Table 3: Percentage of Japanese instruction in junior high school

	<10%	10–25%	25–50%	50–75%	75%<	can't recall	Total
High	0	0	1	4	10	0	15
Low	0	0	0	1	13	0	14
Total	0	0	1	5	23	0	29

The responses to Question 2, as shown in Table 4, provide information about the students' English learning experiences in senior high school. While only one student reported that her junior high school teachers used Japanese less than 50% of the time, five students reported that their senior high school English teachers used Japanese less than 50% of the time. Although more students seem to have experienced more instruction in English in senior high school, about a third of students reported that their teachers used Japanese more than 75% of the time. From these responses, it can be argued that the majority of our students are used to receiving English lessons predominantly in Japanese, and our strict English-only language policy was new to many of them.

Question 2: (In senior high school) In your grammar classes, what was the percentage of Japanese usage for instruction and explanation?

Table 4: Percentage of Japanese instruction in senior high school

	<10%	10–25%	25–50%	50–75%	75%<	can't recall	Total
High	2	0	1	1	11	0	15
Low	0	0	2	3	8	1	14
Total	2	0	3	4	19	1	29

Students' Needs in Japanese Support

Question 3 asked students' preference for Japanese support in four different areas: explaining how to do tasks and activities, grammar, vocabulary and class rules. Among these four items, grammar was the most popular answer for L1 support; five students in the high-streamed class and six students in the low said they would like their teachers to use Japanese for grammar explanations. One student in the high-streamed class didn't choose the grammar option but commented "I'm fine without Japanese explanations, but these days I can't understand grammar." One student in the low-streamed class said she would appreciate Japanese support if students don't understand in English, and another student said important matters or points can be explained in Japanese.

Question 3: (At the BECC) Is there anything you would like teachers to explain in Japanese in classes? If so, what is it?

Table 5: Students' preference for Japanese support

	No support	Tasks	Grammar	Vocabulary	Class rules
High	5	2	5	0	4
Low	3	5	6	2	5
Total	8	7	11	2	9

Examining the responses to Question 3 overall, we can argue that, although the difference is still very small due to the small sample size, the low-streamed class showed slightly more preference for L1 instruction. Five students in the high-streamed class said there is no need for L1 usage in class while three in the low said the same. The students in the low-streamed class who favor L1 support in some ways listed seven more items in total.

Question 4 was designed to elicit students' needs in L1 support for particular grammar points covered in this course. The question was given with a list of grammar points that students had studied in class so far. Table 6 provides all the points and how many students felt the need for Japanese support.

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Question 4: Are there any grammar points you wish were explained in Japanese? If so, what were they?

Table 6: Students' needs in Japanese support for particular grammar points

Grammar points	High	Low	Total	%
There aren't any grammar points I wish were explained in Japanese.	6	5	11	37.93%
The verb be	0	0	0	0.00%
Count and noncount nouns	0	2	2	6.90%
Some and any	1	3	4	13.79%
Demonstrative pronouns (this, that, these, those)	0	0	0	0.00%
Possessives (differences between "the boy's" and "the boys'")	1	1	2	6.90%
Possessive pronouns (e.g. I, my, me, mine)	0	0	0	0.00%
There is / there are	0	0	0	0.00%
Articles (a, an, the)	3	2	5	17.24%
Simple present tense	0	2	2	6.90%
Imperatives (e.g. "Open the door!")	0	1	1	3.45%
Prepositions (e.g. at, in, of, on)	2	2	4	13.79%
Quantifiers (e.g. many, much, little, few)	4	2	6	20.69%
Adverbs (e.g. carefully, quickly, hard)	0	2	2	6.90%
Direct and indirect objects (e.g. give... to... , buy... for..., send... to...)	0	2	2	6.90%
Can, know how to, be able to	0	0	0	0.00%
And, but, so, or	0	0	0	0.00%
Another, the other, other(s)	6	4	10	34.48%
Intensifiers (e.g. very, really, quite)	2	2	4	13.79%
Past tense of be	0	0	0	0.00%
Past tense	0	0	0	0.00%

While six students in the high-streamed class and five students in the low-streamed class said they did not need any grammar explanations in Japanese, the other 18 students said they wish some of the grammar points were explained in Japanese. The popular items chosen by these students are *another/ other/the other(s)* (six students in the high stream and four students in the low chose this), quantifiers (four students in the high and two in the low chose this), and articles (three students in the high and two students in the low chose this). The results were not surprising because these items are conceptually difficult for Japanese learners of English with there being

no equivalent grammar or direct translation in Japanese. No students reported that they needed L1 support for understanding *be* verbs, demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns, *there is/are*, *can/know how to/be able to*, connectors (*and/so/but/or*), or past tense, as these grammar points are conceptually easier to understand, and/or there are direct Japanese translations available.

Students' Beliefs about the Medium of Grammar Instruction

Question 5 asked whether grammar should be taught in Japanese. The responses to this question can also be interpreted as students' beliefs about their own learning. While most of the students indicated in Questions 1 and 2 that they had previously experienced abundant L1 support in school and more than a third of the students indicated preference for grammar explanations in Question 3, no students reported that they strongly believe that Japanese should be the medium of grammar instruction (Table 7). While seven students agreed that Japanese should be used for grammar explanations, 12 students disagreed with the idea.

Question 5: Some people believe that grammar should be taught in Japanese. What do you think?

Table 7: Students' beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction

	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	No opinion (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Total	Weighted Average
High	0	3	5	6	1	15	2.67
Low	0	4	5	2	3	14	2.71
Total	0	7	10	8	4	29	2.69

Comparing the two classes, high and low, although one more student in the low-streamed class agreed with idea that grammar should be taught in L1, the average of their responses were very similar with the high-streamed class average being 2.67 and the low being 2.71. The same number of students said they don't have an opinion, and seven in the high stream and five in the low stream said they disagree with the idea. Notably, three students in the low-streamed class said they strongly disagree that L1 should be used for grammar explanations.

Questions 6 and 7 were asked to find out if students' beliefs about medium of grammar instruction have changed since they started taking this grammar course. Since many of the students had been used to grammar classes being taught in Japanese, it was deemed interesting to see if the new experience of grammar instruction in English in this course has made any impact on the students' beliefs. The responses to Question 6 showed that about a third of the students had never thought about the best medium of grammar instruction, and about 40% of the students said their beliefs haven't changed. On the other hand, about a quarter of the students reported that their beliefs

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have changed since they started taking this course. This is notable since the course had only been taught for 22 weeks before this survey was carried out.

Question 6: Has your answer to Q5 changed since you started taking Basic English Communication at Bunkyo?

Table 8: Change in students' beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction

	High	Low	Total	%
My opinion has changed	4	3	7	24.14%
My opinion hasn't changed	5	7	12	41.38%
I had never thought about it before	6	4	10	34.48%

The responses to Question 7 allow us to closely examine how these students' beliefs have changed. Among the seven students who reported that their beliefs have changed, three students showed more preference towards L2 grammar instruction while two indicated that they appreciate L1 support from time to time. The translated responses and our interpretations of the responses can be found in Table 9.

Question 7: If your opinion has changed, how has it changed?

Table 9: How students' beliefs have changed

Class	Response to Q5	Open-Ended Response to Q7	Interpretation
High	Disagree	In high school, I wouldn't have understood if grammar had been explained in English due to the lack of my listening skills, but I have got used to hearing English in class at the university a little, so I started understanding explanations by the context.	Preference for L2
High	Disagree	I had been taught grammar in Japanese up to high school, but I understand it when explained in English more, so I like it better.	Preference for L2
High	No opinion	I used to prefer grammar being taught in English, but I would appreciate explanations in Japanese for the parts I don't understand. However, it doesn't mean that I want everything explained in Japanese.	Appreciate L1
High	Strongly disagree	I had never thought about this because I had been taught by Japanese teachers before, and I took it for granted that it was always the case. However, I now prefer being taught in English because my teacher explains the nuance along with the grammar points.	Preference for L2

Low	No opinion	The more examples are provided, the easier it gets to understand explanations in English.	Appreciate L2 with examples to support understanding
Low	Agree	I listen more carefully and learn vocabulary more to understand the grammar explanations.	Difficult to interpret because her explanation contradicts her opinion.
Low	Agree	I used to prefer explanations in English in Semester 2, but I don't feel quite the same now. I sometimes prefer Japanese explanations.	Appreciate L1 support

While it is impossible to make any generalization from these responses due to the small data size, it can be argued that students' beliefs may change over the course of time. Longitudinal studies on students' learning experiences and beliefs could be conducted in the future to examine this issue further.

5. Discussion

As stated above, the results of the course evaluations in the first semester had suggested that about a third of the students taking this course expressed the need for some L1 support, and the main purposes of this study was to find out 1) the learners' experiences in having L1 support in their English classes, 2) the students' need for grammar explanations in L1, and 3) the learners' perceptions about the medium of instruction in grammar class.

The results of the questionnaire indicated that majority of the students are used to receiving instruction in their L1 from their education at junior and senior high schools and that our language policy in the classroom might have caused a mismatch between their expectations and how English is taught in the class. When the students were asked whether they would like L1 support, 28% of the students (n=8) said they don't need it. The other 72%, however, said L1 support is appreciated for some situations, and among four given situations, grammar instruction was the most popular answer. Unsurprisingly, the grammar points that these students said they would appreciate being explained in L1 were the ones that are conceptually difficult to grasp due to the lack of equivalent grammar or direct translation in the Japanese language.

Comparing the responses between the high- and low-streamed classes, although the low-streamed class seemed to prefer L1 support slightly more, their preferences for the medium of grammar instruction were very similar. This could be because the students' language levels are not significantly different, resulting in similar responses in the two classes. TOEIC was taken after the streaming with an in-house placement had been done, and the results from TOEIC seemed to disagree with the placement of a few students. It had also been more than seven months since they were streamed into these two classes, and a number of factors, such as hours of self-study and motivation, might have generated gaps between individual students' language levels within the classes, possibly leading to some students in the low-streamed class achieving better language ability than some students in the high-streamed class.

6. Conclusion

We are aware that our research has limitations. First, the study was conducted among only 29 students, which makes it difficult to make any generalization or application for other learners in different settings. Also, due to the small sample size with only 14 and 15 students examined in each class, the reliability of the analysis is questionable. That is, it is conceivable that the results could have been different if only one or two students responded differently. Second, when high- and low-streamed classes were compared, no notable difference in their perceptions about the medium of grammar instruction was found. Simply comparing the two streamed classes by weighted average scores (Table 7) may not have been a precise enough measurement to allow us to see such differences. Comparing the individual participants' language abilities and perceptions in a larger sample size may strengthen this kind of study in the future. Third, the fact that the high-streamed class was taught by a native speaker of English and the low class by a Japanese teacher may have influenced the ways the students answered the survey questions. Although this was not a controllable factor, it is undeniable the students' responses could have been different.

Nonetheless, the results of the survey have provided the authors with informative data when thinking of improving this grammar course. Having observed that many of the students were used to abundant L1 support in their previous English education and that more than a third of the students indicated the necessity for grammar explanations in Japanese, some of the conclusions that can be drawn here are as follows. First, the teachers should keep in mind that students may find it difficult to follow the class due to the English-only instruction, especially at the beginning of the course. Second, the future students taking this course may benefit from some L1 support for some grammar points that are particularly difficult for Japanese learners of English. These two conclusions drawn here would seem to follow principles outlined in Swain and Lapkin's (2000) study mentioned previously: the permission for L1 to mediate cognition and the purposeful use of L1 by the teacher. Finally, the last two questions of the survey suggest that learners' beliefs may change. In our study, about a quarter of the students reported that their beliefs about the medium of grammar instruction have changed since they started taking the grammar course. Conducting longitudinal studies on the same students and running the same survey on senior students may allow us to examine how learners' perceptions change over the course of four years.

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