The use and perception of English as a lingua franca

by Japanese business people: exploring the gap between classroom

interaction in Japan and actual workplace communication

in Asian BELF contexts

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Abstract

Japanese policy makers, educators and business people are all aware of the crucial role of English in today's globalised world and emphasise the importance of English education. However, little discussion has focused on how English is actually used among people of different linguacultural backgrounds and what kind of skills are (un)necessary to communicate successfully. The present research explores how English is learned and used by Japanese business people who use English as a lingua franca (ELF) in their specific job contexts. The research participants work for a Japanese construction company, which provides English language training before dispatching its employees to overseas offices, where English is used as a business lingua franca (BELF). The data consists of recordings of talk-in-interaction both in the classroom and workplace as well as interviews with the participants, teachers, and program coordinators. Using a multi-source, multi-method research design, the present research analyses actual classroom and workplace interactions of the same participants, identifying gaps between what is taught/how it is taught in the classroom and what is valued in actual communication in the workplace. Furthermore, conducting focus-group/individual interviews multiple times, the research investigates the participants' perception of English communication and how it changes or does not change as they develop into more experienced

BELF users.

The current research intends to contribute to the field of BELF in a number of ways. There have been no research projects, so far, which follow the same BELF users both in the classroom and in the workplace. In addition, conducting a series of interviews with the same participants to observe changes in their attitudes can also be complementary to findings from previous BELF research on attitudes, which have been conducted mostly within a shorter time frame. Moreover, focusing on Japanese business people working in Asian BELF settings, this research is expected to counterbalance the unevenness of existing BELF research, which has been carried out mainly in Europe.

In analysing talk-in-interaction among speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds, the current research employs a pragmatic approach, stressing the importance of contextual information, based on Murata's (1994a) argument that 'pragmatics can be defined as the study of meaning in context' (p. 21). In particular, a conversation analytic (CA) approach is chosen to analyse the ongoing process in which BELF users negotiate meaning in a given situation from 'the user's standpoint' (Murata 1994a: 12). This CA approach is relevant to explore BELF users' *capability* (Widdowson 1983, 2003, 2016), which enables interactants to fine-tune their use of English to what is appropriate in a specific context. Furthermore, while traditional CA approaches deal with talk-in-interaction as the sole object of analysis and focuses on the contextual factors only when they are demonstrated in the talk, the present research also employs ethnographic approaches (e.g. interviews, observation), paying attention to contextual properties of interaction, and thus provides a holistic view of the participants' use and perception of English.

The present analysis of talk-in-interaction has revealed a significant discrepancy between classroom interaction and actual workplace communication. Classroom contexts are primarily language-focused (Section 6.4 in Chapter 6; see also Ehrenreich 2009): English is taught as a

foreign language (i.e. EFL) and the teacher forces the participants to adhere to native speakers'

norms, even during the free conversation time when the content of the message should be

prioritised over language forms. The natural flow of conversation is often disrupted by

interruptions and insertion sequences for the sake of teaching grammar. In addition, the

participants have little opportunity to select a topic to talk about or take turns spontaneously, since

the teacher almost always controls the interaction, deciding the topic and order of speakership.

Consequently, the participants remain passive learners, speaking up only when appointed by the

teacher, and being very careful not to make grammatical 'mistakes'.

By contrast, the present analysis of workplace communication in BELF contexts has

demonstrated that interlocutors concentrate more on the content and communication efficiency

(Chapter 7). The analysis of small talk data has confirmed the challenge in having small talk in

business (e.g. Ehrenreich 2016, Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005, Pullin 2010) and the ways in

which BELF users establish a good working relationship, skillfully utilising communication

strategies such as repetition, interruption, paraphrasing and syntactic simplification, without

necessarily conforming to native speakers' norms (see Section 7.2.3 in Chapter 7). To put it

another way, the analysis shows that BELF users possess capability to use a knowledge of

language as a resource for the creation of meaning (Widdowson1983, 2003, 2016). The analysis

of business meeting data has also demonstrated BELF users' capability to collaboratively

negotiate meaning effectively and efficiently with short and quick turns, accommodating to one

another (see Section 7.3.1 in Chapter 7). The goal-oriented nature of BELF communication is

evident in the meeting data, demonstrated in the use of *not to 'let pass'* (Firth 1996), direct

expressions of negation, and code-switching/multilingual practice.

Having clarified the discrepancy between the language-focused interactions in the

classroom and the content-focused interactions in the workplace, the present research then

discusses the perceptions of the participants towards English communication (Chapter 8). Analysing the interview data with a longitudinal perspective, it has elucidated the participants' ambivalent and complex attitudes towards ELF communication. On the one hand, those BELF users criticise the teacher's persistent focus on grammar, being aware of the gap between what is prioritised in the classroom and workplace (Section 8.3.1 in Chapter 8). They commented that they were actually annoyed with the teacher's strict grammar teaching, because they need to get their messages across on the spot without being afraid of making grammatical 'mistakes' in the workplace. On the other hand, however, the participants are from time to time more oriented to native speakers' English for a number of reasons (Section 8.3.2 in Chapter 8). For one, they are constrained by their past learning experience as EFL learners, including the intensive language training program provided by the company. For another, those BELF users adhere to 'standard' English because they believe it helps them to create good impressions of their company or themselves. In other words, they strategically choose to conform to native speakers' norms because they know, both consciously and unconsciously, the significant influence of 'standard' language ideology (Cogo 2016a, 2016b; Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011, 2018a). Again, this shows BELF users' capability to construct their own communication out of what they have learned, according to the context of use.

In order to help English learners—especially current/future BELF users—to develop such a capability, the present research also provides pedagogical implications on the basis of its findings. The main argument is that incorporating an ELF perspective into English education can contribute to filling in the gap between classroom interaction and actual BELF communication. More specifically, the research suggests ways to raise awareness among learners of the realities of English use, provide opportunities to communicate in ELF settings, and shift the focus from language to communication in class. It also questions the relevance of teacher-centred instruction

in class and assessment based on native speakers' norms, particularly the widespread adoption of the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) test by Japanese companies.

Finally, the thesis concludes with a discussion on limitations of the present research and suggestions for further research. First, I was able to obtain only a relatively small sample of the recordings of naturally-occurring talk-in-interaction in the workplace, although I was successful in obtaining ample data from class observation and interviews. Additional analysis of longer recording data or video recordings in similar contexts is expected to further support the findings of the present research. Second, this research has focused on one particular case of BELF users who participated in an intensive language program and the results should not be overgeneralised. Nonetheless, looking at the same participants from many angles as well as observing changes in their attitudes towards English over time, it is hoped that the current research has shed light on the realities of how Japanese BELF speakers learn, use and perceive English, providing detailed contextual information. The accumulation of context-sensitive research like the current one is expected to contribute to 'across-research-site triangulation' (Ehrenreith 2016: 136), in which findings from BELF research in different regions, disciplines and analytical frameworks are compared. Having identified the gap between the classroom and workplace settings, it is also hoped that the present research is able to give insights into making English education more practical for not only BELF users but also English learners/ users in general to develop their capability to exploit their linguistic resources in their own right.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1   Introduction

CHAPTER 2   Conceptualising and investigating English as a lingua franca

CHAPTER 3 Overview of BELF research and English education/use in Japanese professional contexts

CHAPTER 4   Research design

CHAPTER 6 Analysing talk-in-interaction in the classroom

CHAPTER 7   Analysing talk-in-interaction in BELF settings

CHAPTER 8   The participants' perception of English and English teaching/learning

CHAPTER 9   Conclusion

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List of Abbreviations

BELF   English as a business lingua franca

CA   Conversation analysis

EFL   English as a foreign language

ELF   English as a lingua franca

ELT   English language teaching

ENL   English as a native language

ESP   English for specific purposes

FIDIC   International Federation of Consulting Engineers

IBC   International Business Communication

L1   First language

MEXT   Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

NA   Needs analysis

NS   Native speakers

SLA   Second language acquisition

TOEIC   Test of English for International Communication

TOEFL   Test of English as a Foreign Language

VOICE   Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English

List of Tables, Figures, and Extracts

Tables

Table 2.1 Foreign language (EFL) and lingua franca (ELF)

Table 2.2 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Table 3.1 Comparison between EFL and BELF approaches.

Table 4.1 Weekly schedule for the intensive English program

Table 4.2 Profiles of the program participants (Itabashi engineers)

Table 4.3 Staff Members at Chiyoda Institute

Table 4.4 Staff Member at Itabashi Corporation

Figures

Figure 4.1 Interviews with the four participants during the program

Figure 4.2 The classroom layout

Figure 7.1 Web meeting and common languages in each office/between both parties

Extracts

Extract 5.1 (email communication with Koichi)

Extract 5.2 (email communication with Koichi)

Extract 5.3 (individual interview with Hajime)

Extract 5.4 (individual interview with Hajime)

Extract 5.5 (individual interview with Satoshi)

Extract 5.6 (individual interview with Tatsuro)

Extract 5.7 (individual interview with Greg)

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background to and aims of the present research

With the acceleration of globalisation, Japanese policy makers, educators and business people are all aware of the importance of English language for the country to be competitive in the globalised market. However, there has been little discussion on how English is actually used in global situations, and English education in Japan remains largely oriented to native speakers' English (D'Angelo 2018, Murata 2016b, Murata & Iino 2018). Exploring realities of English learned, used and perceived in Japanese business contexts, the present research discusses the role and function of English as a lingua franca (ELF) for communication with people of diverse linguacultural backgrounds. More specifically, this research focuses on four Japanese engineers, who are engaged in international construction projects in Asia, using English as a business lingua franca (BELF). The research participants were transferred to overseas offices after going through a 10-week intensive English course specifically designed for them by the company and its assigned language training provider. With a conversation analytic perspective and other ethnographic approaches including interviews and observations, the present research analyses the participants' use of English both in the classroom and workplace as well as their perception of English, which change/do not change as they develop into more experienced BELF users.

This research was originally motivated by my own experience as an instructor for in-house English training at Japanese companies. While mainly teaching at a university, I had opportunities to give lessons at a range of companies—from a car manufacturer, an airline company to a computer software company. In most cases, the curricula and teaching materials were already

fixed by language training providers assigned by those companies, and I was to teach according to the set guidelines. As I become acquainted not only with course participants but also with staff members from personnel departments of the companies, I started to question the relevance of existing in-house language training courses. First, I felt that many course participants had a sense of inferiority when it comes to communicating in English, although they were elite employees working for leading companies in each industry in Japan with excellent academic backgrounds. There seemed to be discrepancies between English taught in the classroom and English communication skills actually needed for work. Second, both the course participants and their companies (i.e. managers or employees at personnel departments) very often preferred native English instructors, regardless of those instructors' teaching experience or the participants' job settings, especially when the aim of the course was to develop oral communication skills. It seemed that they did not count on Japanese or non-native English teachers as role models. I began to wonder why Japanese learners of English downgrade non-native speakers' English including their own. I wanted to find a way to encourage or empower them to be confident users of English in their own right, acquiring communication skills necessary for their specific contexts of use. There was a clear need for another point of reference instead of solely relying on native speakers' norms.

Having acquainted with the concept and empirical findings of (B)ELF research, which have revealed how people of different linguacultural backgrounds use English as a lingua franca to pursue their communicative goals efficiently, effectively and creatively in their respective workplace settings, these vague impressions and questions about in-house English language training at Japanese corporations turned into motivation for the present research. Adopting a multi-source, multi-method, multi-administration research design, this research intends to contribute to the field of BELF in four ways. First, it focuses on Japanese business people, who entered the

company with little or no prospect of using English for work. Most BELF research, so far, has been conducted at multinational companies mainly in Europe (see Ehrenreich 2016 for a comprehensive overview). Although BELF research in Japan has been increasingly active (e.g. Konakahara, Murata & Iino 2017, Murata, Konakahara, Iino & Toyoshima 2018, Takino 2016, Thompson 2014), the number is still much smaller. Moreover, previous (B)ELF studies carried out in Europe have placed a disproportionate emphasis on 'participants with a high proficiency level' (Jenkins 2007: 85; see also Ehrenreich 2009 and Cogo 2009). Thus, this study is expected to counterbalance the unevenness of existing BELF research by exploring a case of less experienced/confident Japanese BELF users working in Asia, with careful contextualisation of the findings.

Second, analysing both classroom and workplace talk-in-interaction of the same participants makes the present research unique. It is a huge challenge for BELF researchers to collect naturally-occurring talk data in the workplace (see Chapter 3), and there are only a few studies which analyse talk-in-interaction involving Japanese business people (e.g. Handford & Matous 2011, 2015; Tsuchiya & Handford 2014). In addition, there has been no research projects, so far, which followed the same BELF users both in the classroom and in the workplace. The present research intends to identify the gap between what they study as English learners in the classroom and what they need to communicate as English users in workplace settings by analysing the same participants' talk-in-interaction recorded during and after the in-house English training program.

Third, while most (B)ELF studies have concentrated *either* on the use *or* the perception of ELF (but see Cogo 2012a for a pioneering study, combining the two), this present research aims to provide a holistic view of BELF communication in a single case study, analysing the participants' *both* attitudes *and* actual interactions.

Finally, conducting interviews multiple times at the beginning/during/after the intensive English course, the research investigates how the same participants change or do not change their perception of English as they develop into more experienced BELF users.[1] This longitudinal perspective can be complementary to findings from previous BELF research projects on attitudes, which are conducted mostly within a shorter time frame (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010).

Having clarified the aims of and rationale for the present research, the following section presents the outline of the thesis.

1.2 Organisation of the thesis

This thesis consists of nine chapters. After an introduction to the present research in the current chapter (Chapter 1), Chapter 2 clarifies the theoretical framework of this research and reviews findings from existing empirical research on ELF. This is followed by Chapter 3, which pays special attention to ELF in business contexts (i.e. BELF). The first part of the chapter discusses the development of BELF research, which has been most vigorously conducted in Europe. The second half focuses on Japanese business contexts and explicates how English is taught, learned and used in Japan. Chapter 4 provides the methodological background to the present research, introducing the details of methods and procedures of the data collection. Chapter 5 explores language needs and uses of the four participants, verifying the usefulness of the multi-method, multi-source research design. The contextual information obtained in this chapter facilitates the analysis of talk-in-interaction in the following two

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[1] The period for data collection for the present research was approximately for one year: the 10-week intensive English training program began in January 2012 and the last interview with one of the participants was conducted in January 2013.

chapters (Chapters 6 and 7). Chapter 6 analyses the talk-in-interaction in the classroom, paying attention to different foci of the teacher and participants and the teacher's control over the flow of interaction. Chapter 7, on the other hand, analyses talk-in-interaction in the workplace, small talk and business meeting situations in particular. It sheds light on how BELF users accommodate to one another, utilising their linguistic resources available. Chapter 8 analyses the interview data with the participants, focusing on communicative and identifying functions of the language. The final chapter (Chapter 9) provides a summary of the main findings of the present research, followed by discussion on limitations and pedagogical implications.

Having explained the outline of the thesis, I now turn to Chapter 2, which examines the theoretical background to the present research, providing an overview of findings from previous research on ELF.

Chapter 2

Conceptualising and investigating English as a lingua franca

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews and discusses the theoretical background of English as a lingua franca (ELF) research as well as findings from existing empirical studies. The first half of the chapter reviews the definitions of ELF users and explicates differences between ELF and English as a foreign language (EFL). The comparison between ELF and EFL is relevant to the present research because it compares the same participants' interactions in the classroom (an EFL situation) to those in the workplace (an ELF situation). This is followed by the discussion of the concepts and objectives of ELF research, referring to the active exchange of views between ELF researchers and non-ELF ones (Section 2.2.2).

The second half of this chapter focuses on approaches to ELF research (Section 2.3), empirical studies on ELF interactions (Section 2.4) and ELF users' perception (Section 2.5). Finally, I will point out that more empirical studies in a variety of contexts are necessary in order to further investigate the nature of ELF communication (Seidlhofer 2001), which has often been found to be cooperative and consensual (e.g. Cogo & Dewey 2012; House 2003; Jenkins 2007; Kaur 2009, 2010; Mauranen 2006, 2012; Seidlhofer 2004, 2011, but see Bjørge 2012, Ehrenreich 2009, Konakahara 2015; Pitzl 2005; Tsuchiya & Handford 2014,Wolfartsberger 2011). This issue will be further developed into my discussion on ELF communication in the workplace (i.e. English as a Business Lingua franca, BELF) in Chapter 3.

2.2 Conceptualising English as a lingua franca (ELF)

ELF is a relatively new paradigm, and there have been numerous discussions about the concept

of ELF within and outside the field of research. Researchers have been tackling challenges such as defining ELF speakers (e.g. Firth 1996, House 1999, Jenkins 2006a, Seidlhofer 2011), clarifying research objectives and methodology (e.g. Cogo & Dewey 2012; Firth 1996, Widdowson 1983, 2003), and offering counterarguments to misconceptions (e.g. Baker & Jenkins 2015, Baker, Jenkins & Baird 2005, Cogo 2008, Jenkins 2007, Seidlhofer 2006, Widdowson 2015). In this section I will discuss each issue, arguing that those discussions themselves have contributed to the development of ELF as a field of research.

2.2.1 Defining ELF

This section first introduces definitions of ELF and identifies a working definition that suits the purpose of the present research. For this purpose, it is essential to refer to more recent publications (Cogo 2012b: 104; Jenkins 2015b: 56), while it is useful to review discussions and debates on the concepts of ELF chronologically to understand how the field has developed. Accordingly, it reveals the evolving nature of ELF research as a relatively new field of enquiry (e.g. Baird, Baker & Kitazawa 2014).

2.2.1.1 Who are ELF users?

When studying ELF, one needs to consider who constitute ELF users. One of the most comprehensive definitions of ELF, which is 'recently most widely recognized and quoted' (Iino & Murata 2016: 113), is Seidlhofer's (2011), 'any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option' (p. 7). Unlike earlier definitions of ELF which exclude native speakers,[1]　Jenkins (2006a) explains

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[1] For example, Firth (1996) excludes native speakers, defining ELF speakers as 'persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication (p. 240). In the same vein, House (1999) argues that ELF is used 'between members of two

that the majority of ELF researchers now accept speakers of English from both the inner and outer circles (Kachru 1992) as ELF speakers, on condition that inner circle speakers should consist a small minority (Jenkins 2006a: 161). Likewise, Cogo and Dewey (2012) define ELF as 'any interaction where English is the preferred option for intercultural communication, where it is spoken predominantly (but by no means exclusively) among expanding circle speakers who usually do not share another language' (p. 12). They argue that the linguacultural makeup of participants and their orientation towards each other as well as the language are more important than the geographic location when defining ELF (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 12). My standpoint is in line with Seidlhofer's (2011) and Cogo and Dewey's (2012) above. That is, ELF is chosen and used in a variety of contexts, where speakers of different first languages communicate in English, pursuing their communicative goals without necessarily referring to native speakers' norms.

Having discussed what ELF is, the next subsection explicates the concept of ELF in comparison with EFL.

2.2.1.2 ELF and EFL

In order to clarify the concept of ELF, a number of ELF researchers compare the notions of ELF and EFL (e.g. Cogo 2008; Cogo & Dewey 2012; Iino & Murata 2016; Jenkins 2006b, 2007, 2014, 2015; Murata 2016; Seidlhofer 2009c, 2011, 2016; Widdowson 2012, 2013, 2016). This comparison is also relevant to the current research, which discusses the gap between EFL-based interaction in the classroom and ELF-based interaction in the workplace.

Seidlhofer (2011) illustrates conceptual differences between EFL and ELF with the following table (Table 2.1). According to her, ELF speakers focus on making ad hoc

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or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue' (p. 74). Jenkins (2006a) explains that these scholars present the narrow definitions in order to emphasise the legitimacy of non-native speakers' English in its own right (p. 161).

communication successful without conforming to the native speakers' norms and thus contribute to the development of English (Seidlhofer 2011: 18-19), while it is the predominant or even only option to adhere to pre-existing linguacultural norms in EFL:

Table 2.1 Foreign language (EFL) and lingua franca (ELF)

	Foreign language (EFL)	**Lingua franca (ELF)**
Linguacultural norms	pre-existing, re-affirmed	ad hoc, negotiated
Objectives	integration, membership in NS community	intelligibility, communication in a NNS or mixed NNS-NS interaction
Processes	imitation, adoption	accommodation, adoption

(extracted from Seidlhofer 2011: 18)

In other words, as summarised in the table above, Seidlhofer (2011) explains that while the objective of EFL is integration to the native speakers' community, that of ELF is to be mutually intelligible.

Jenkins (2014) also summarises the distinctions between ELF and EFL in terms of their conceptual approaches to English with a table (Table 2.2).[2] She clearly points out how the same linguistic outcome is viewed differently in EFL and ELF: while deviations from ENL are 'automatically regarded as errors' (i.e. 'deficit') in EFL settings, they 'may simply signal a preference to use English in ways that are different from those that NESs use' (i.e. 'difference') in ELF settings (Jenkins 2014: 26; see also Jenkins 2006b).

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[2] An earlier version of this table is presented in Jenkins (2006b: 140).

Table 2.2 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

ELF	EFL
1 Belongs with Global Englishes	1 Belongs with Foreign Languages
2 Difference perspective	2 Deficit perspective
3 Its metaphors: contact and change	3 Its metaphors: interference and fossilization
4 Code-switching seen as bilingual resource	4 Code-switching seen as error resulting from gap in knowledge
5 Goal: successful intercultural communication	5 Goal: successful communication with NESs

(extracted from Jenkins 2014: 26)

To sum up the difference between EFL and ELF, while in EFL non-native speakers are required to approximate native speakers in their performance, ELF speakers use English as their own, focusing on negotiating meaning in specific contexts.

Presenting the alternative view, ELF research can contribute to deconstructing established concepts about English and offer new insights for researchers as well as teachers to reflect the realities of the use of English on their research/teaching. For example, Jenkins (2014) questions existing notions such as 'interference', 'fossilization' or 'interlanguage' (Selinker 1972) in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and offers alternative views (see Table 2.2 above). Likewise, ELF researchers have been proposing reconceptualisation of established concepts in the mainstream SLA (e.g. Firth & Wagner 1997; Firth 2009a, 2009b; Jenkins 2006b, 2007). The next subsection discusses this critical perspective further.

2.2.1.3 Reconceputualising the mainstream SLA from an ELF perspective

In the field of SLA, English is studied in the guise of EFL, not ELF (Seidlhofer 2011: 11). Firth and Wagner (1997) argue for a reconceptualisation of SLA as more balanced between cognitive orientations, which view non-native speakers as defective communicators, and social and contextual orientations, which view them as users (see also Firth 2009a). Firth and Wagner thus question the concepts of 'interlanguage' (Selinker 1972), which regards learners' language as approximation of native speakers' model (Firth & Wagner 1997: 292). Jenkins (2007) also points out that most SLA researchers implicitly assume that if non-native speakers' use of language deviates from that of native speakers', it 'should be designated interlanguage (if learning continues) or fossilization (if it has ended)' (p. 239, see also Cogo & Dewey 2006: 65). Despite a serious criticism on its concept (e.g. Norton 2000), the interlanguage theory is firmly intact among both mainstream SLA researchers and English language teaching (ELT) professionals (Jenkins 2006a, 2006b, 2007).[3]

In the same vein, Widdowson (2012a) claims that ELF users' own English, which has been traditionally taken to be an 'interlanguage' (Selinker 1972), actually demonstrates that proficient ELF users have a 'capability' (Widdowson 2003, 2012a, 2016)[4] to exploit their linguistic resources for different communicative purposes in different contexts of use (Widdowson 2012a: 23-24). While most ELF speakers are former EFL learners (Widdowson 2012a: 22), and actually there is some overlap between ELF users and EFL learners (Jenkins 2006: 159; Cogo & Dewey

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[3] See also May (2014a) for more recent discussion of the 'monolingual bias' in SLA. According to May, although little progress has been made in developing an additive bilingual/multilingual approach to SLA, there are researchers who examine the problem critically within the linguistic-cognitive SLA communities (e.g. Ortega 2009, 2014).

[4] The term is formerly referred to as 'capacity' (Widdowson 1983). Widdowson (2013) defines 'capability' as 'the strategic ability to make communicative use of linguistic resources, including those of the learners' own language' (p. 192). Widdowson's capacity/capability will be discussed in a more detailed manner in Section 2.3.2.

2012: 38),[5] Widdowson (2012a) argues that learners construct their own version of English out of what they have learned in the classroom, and develop it further by focusing on what is functionally salient and giving intuitive priority to what is feasible and appropriate in the process of becoming ELF users in their own fields (pp. 22-23; see also Iino & Murata 2016 for specific examples). Thus, research on ELF questions and proposes reconsideration of the established concepts such as 'interlanguage' and 'fossilization'. Firth and Wagner (1997) is an example of such work, (re)analysing previously published data extracts from an ELF perspective.

On the other hand, mainstream theorists in SLA as well as other fields have been active to counterargue (May 2014b: 16). Indeed, ELF as a new research paradigm has attracted a great number of controversies. Responding to the critiques has been playing a significant role in clarifying the concept of ELF (Baker & Jenkins 2015: 191; Baker, Jenkins & Baird 2005: 121; Cogo 2008: 60; Seidlhofer 2006: 41; see also Widdowson 2015), as to be discussed in the next section.

2.2.2 Controversies on ELF

ELF researchers face the challenge from non-ELF scholars and exchange views with them actively (e.g. Jenkins 2006, Rubdy & Saraceni 2006 and Seidlhofer 2006; Cogo 2008 and Saraceni 2008). Nonetheless, misconceptions on ELF are still prevailing because some critics only refer to earlier publications on ELF (Cogo 2012b: 104) or repeat secondary sources without consulting the original work (Jenkins 2015b: 56).

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[5] Looking at this overlap superficially, Swan (2009) contends that ELF is in principle the same as EFL, and the concept of ELF is 'both redundant and confusing' (p. 4). The argument is repeated in Swan (2012), entitled 'ELF and EFL: are they really different?'. Swan's claim is based on the 'deficit perspective' (Jenkins 2014: 26), which embraces the authority of Standard English as a model (see Section 2.2.1.2). Widdowson (2013) points out that Swan confuses 'mistakes' in EFL settings with language use in ELF settings, which is non-conforming but 'functionally effective realization of linguistic resources' (p. 192).

In order to make the concept of ELF clearer, the next subsection reviews controversies, especially recent ones, regarding ELF (Baker & Jenkins 2015; Baker, Jenkins & Baird 2015; Cogo 2012b; O'Regan 2014; Seidlhofer 2011; Sewell 2013; Sowden 2012a, 2012b; Widdowson 2015; see also Section 2.2.1.3 for a debate between Swan 2012, 2013 and Widdowson 2013) and summarise two frequently heard misinterpretations of ELF: (i) ELF is a movement to codify a single variety, and (ii) ELF is another monolithic teaching norm. Sorting out the discussions, it will highlight the evolving nature of ELF research.

2.2.2.1 Misinterpretation One: ELF is a single variety

The first prevailing assumption on ELF is that ELF research is an attempt to establish a single variety of English as an international language, denying the diversity of Englishes (e.g. Matsuda & Friedrich 2012, O'Regan 2014, Rubdy & Saraceni 2006). The wrong interpretation has been repeated ever since the groundbreaking papers on ELF were published in the early 2000s, which include tentative lists of potential ELF features based on empirical data (e.g. Jenkins 2000, Seidlhofer 2004). The highlights of two seminal works, Jenkins (2000) and Seidlhofer (2004) are as follows.

First, Jenkins (2000) is a product of 'the first empirical research into ELF communication (Jenkins 2015b: 52) and analyses phonological features of international English speakers and presents Lingua Franca Core (LFC), a pronunciation guideline for English as an international language[6] to promote intelligibility. She identified features of pronunciation which are more likely to lead to intelligibility problems among non-native speakers (i.e. cores) and which are not essential (i.e. non-cores). At the same time, Jenkins (2000) emphasises that phonological intelligibility is not statically inherent but dynamically negotiable among ELF speakers (p. 79),

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[6] Jenkins (2000) uses the term 'English as an international language' before starting using explicitly ELF.

and both native and non-native speakers 'need practice in adjusting their pronunciation according to the demands of their addressee and the speech situation' (p. 228). Thus, Jenkins does not intend to present a monolithic model but emphasises the importance of accommodation skills.

Another important contribution to the earlier ELF research, Seidlhofer (2004), analyses the spoken ELF data collected through the VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) project and presents a list of lexicogrammatical characteristics found among ELF users: e.g. 'dropping' the third person present tense –s, 'confusing' the relative pronouns *who* and *which*, 'omitting' definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in ENL (English as a native language), and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL (Seidlhofer 2004: 220). [7] Seidlhofer argues, while these would be immediately corrected as 'errors' by most English teachers, they are generally unproblematic in actual communication (p. 220). Although these are 'hypotheses' (Seidlhofer 2004: 220) or possible examples of ELF features, ELF critics tend to misunderstand the list as identification of 'core features' (e.g. Sowden 2012a: 91) to be replaced with a Standard English, to which they are deeply attached.[8] What Seidlhofer (2004) actually claims, however, is to support the dynamic nature of ELF communication, describing how ELF users communicate in creative and systematic ways without conforming to native speakers' norms, which she calls 'destandardization' (p. 212).

In sum, even the earliest work in ELF research has emphasised the importance of accommodation and dynamic nature of ELF communication, while exploring characteristic forms (Cogo 2012b, 99). The incipient stage is called 'phase one' or 'ELF 1' in Jenkins's (2015b: 52)

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[7] In line with Jenkins (2009) and Jenkins et al. (2011), I reinstate Seidlhofer's (2004) original quotation markers, which were 'mistakenly omitted by the 2004 publisher' (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011: 290).

[8] Sowden (2012a) claims that 'native speaker model still has an important role to play' (p. 89) and that the existing power of Anglo-Saxon native-speaker norm will retain its leading role as long as the United States remains economically and culturally dominant in the world (pp. 94-95), without presenting empirical evidence (see also Section 2.2.2.2 for examples of strong belief in native speakers' norms).

terms. On the next level, 'phase two' or 'ELF 2', ELF researchers came to focus more explicitly

'on the *processes* underlying ELF speakers' variable use of forms' (Jenkins 2015b: 55, my

emphasis). In other words, as Jenkins et al. (2011) repeatedly argue, ELF scholars have 'moved

on' (p. 308),[9] shifting their focus from identification of linguistic features (i.e. *forms*) to focusing

on communicative *functions* of ELF (p. 289).

The question whether the study on ELF focuses on form or function has long been debated

by a number of ELF/non-ELF scholars. For example, Saraceni (2008) expresses his impression

that there has been too much emphasis on the form of ELF and not enough on its function (p. 24).

Cogo's (2008) response to this question is, in short, 'ELF is both form *and* function', while she

questions the validity of the form-function dichotomy in the first place and points out they are

more interrelated; functional motives can lead to changes in the form, while lexicogrammatical

innovations impact on pragmatic strategies (p. 60). In a similar vein, Seidlhofer (2009a) clearly

states that form and function are operating interdependently (p. 241) and claims ELF as a not

formally but functionally defined concept. In other words, ELF is 'English that functions *as* a

lingua franca' (Seidlhofer 2011: 25; original emphasis).

2.2.2.2 Misinterpretation Two: ELF is another monolithic teaching norm/a threat to multilingualism

The second prevailing assumption on ELF is deeply related to the first but can be discussed more

from a pedagogical point of view. ELF research tends to be confused with a suggestion of a

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[9] O'Regan (2014) asserts that 'they [ELF researchers] have not moved on at all' (p. 538), arguing that ELF researchers are still trying to hypostatise ELF as a variety. He is likely to be imposing pre-existed theory and framework to the evolving phenomenon, ELF. Moreover, O'Regan seems to be unfamiliar with ELF scholars' work which investigates issues of ideology, discourse, and power (e.g. Baird, Baker & Kitazawa 2014; Cogo 2010; Jenkins 2007, Jenkins 2014; Seidlhofer 2011 see also Baker & Jenkins 2015, Baker, Jenkins & Baird 2014 and Widdowson 2015 for ELF researchers' counterarguments to O'Regan 2014)

monolithic teaching standard. For example, Jenkins et al. (2011) point out that concerns are expressed among scholars of World Englishes that 'ELF is another attempt to impose a monolithic English on the world's NNSs' (p. 308). For example, the LFC (Jenkins 2000) is frequently criticised for suggesting a monolithic pronunciation model on ELF users (e.g. Matsuda & Friedrich 2012, Rubdy & Saraceni 2006, Saraceni 2008). However, what Jenkins (2000a) actually proposes is 'a pluricentric rather than monocentric approach to the teaching and use of English' (p. 173), which she believes would enable ELF speakers to reflect their sociolinguistic realities on their use of English, rather than those of native speakers. As Jenkins (2006c) also clearly asserts, the LFC 'respects both ELF learners' right to choose whether or not they adopt it and the diversity of their accents' (p. 36).

In addition to the concern about ELF as a monolithic approach, House (2003) states that there is another widespread misunderstanding that the increased use of English is 'a threat to multilingualism' (e.g. Philipson 2003, 2008). However, multilingualism *is* an indispensable part of ELF communication (Cogo 2010, 2012a, 2016b, 2018; House 2003; Jenkins 2015b) as discussed below.

House (2003) argues against the misunderstanding by distinguishing between 'languages for communication' and 'languages for identification'. The former is 'a repertoire of different communicative instruments an individual has at his/her disposal, a useful and versatile tool' (p. 559) and ELF belongs to this category. On the other hand, the latter refers to local languages, 'particularly an individual's L1(s) [first language(s)], which are likely to be the main determinants of identity' (p. 560). House (2003) contends that the yardstick for measuring ELF speakers' performance should *not* be a monolingual English native speaker but 'an expert in ELF use, a stable multilingual speaker' who has comparable linguacultural backgrounds (p. 573). Cogo (2010, 2012a), also paying attention to the multilingual nature of ELF, illustrates that multilingual

backgrounds of ELF users are invaluable resources for them to facilitate their communication in a creative manner.

Moreover, Jenkins (2015b) moves another step further and asserts that multilingualism is not a mere aspect of ELF, but 'ELF *is* a multilingual practice' (p. 63; original emphasis). This is what she calls a 'more multilingual turn in ELF' (Jenkins 2015b: 61) or the third phase 'ELF 3' (Jenkins 2015b: 58), which proposes retheorisation of ELF within a framework of multilingualism (see also Cogo 2016b, 2018).

Multilingual learners are able to identify what is essential for communication themselves and construct their own version of English based on the experience with their own language(s) (Widdowson 2012a: 22). As explained in the previous section (Section 2.2.2.2), ELF researchers consider that form and function are interrelated. Widdowson (2013) argues that ELF users 'are likely to conform to prescribed forms only to the extent that these are taken to be functionally relevant' (p. 191). In other words, while English is generally taught monolingually, multilingual ELF users focus on 'what is functionally salient' (Widdowson 2012a: 22) based on the experience of their own language(s). Widdowson thus argues that teaching should be adjusted accordingly: 'not to identify what is to be corrected, but what is to be encouraged', which he calls 'genuine learner-centred approach' (2012a: 24).

The learner-centred approach argues against another misunderstanding about ELF pedagogy, which confuses ELF with simplified or 'reduced' (Sowden 2012a: 90) versions of English. Sowden's (2012a) comments expose his belief in Anglo-Saxon native-speaker norms without factual evidence.[10] Counterarguing this criticism, Cogo (2012b) claims that Sowden

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[10] Sewell (2013), referring to the debate between Sowden (2012a) and Cogo (2012b), calls ELF as '*[m]odels* that are perceived to be "reduced" in some way' (Sewell 2013: 8, my emphasis), which will be rejected by learners because learning 'reduced' models is unable to provide social and spatial mobility potential. This comment itself shows how deep-rooted the native speaker ideology is in societies.

(2012a) underestimates 'the force of empirical data' (p. 102) and demonstrates the 'richness' (p. 102) of ELF communication with a variety of accommodation strategies ELF speakers actually use to make meaning innovatively. Likewise, Jenkins et al. (2011: 284) and Cogo (2012b: 99) claim findings from ELF research based on empirical research should be distinguished from an arbitrary or intuitive decision about what to teach.[11] Based on a range of empirical data, ELF researchers believe that English teaching should be learner-centred (Widdowson 2012a), giving them choice of what they need to learn for their own practical purposes (e.g. Cogo 2012b, Jenkins 2006c, Widdowson 2012a).

Bearing the importance of empirical research in mind, the next section (Section 2.3) discusses approaches to ELF research, and then outlines empirical research on the use of ELF (Section 2.4) and on the perceptions of ELF (Section 2.5) respectively. In so doing, I will explain why the present research aims to investigate both use and perceptions of ELF.

2.3 Approaches to ELF: the force of empirical research

Since ELF communication involves speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds interacting in a specific context, it is inevitably hybrid, fluid and variable (Cogo 2012: 290; see also Dewey 2007; Jenkins et al. 2011). Section 2.3.1 argues this issue further and stresses that contextual information is vital in analysing ELF data. In order to take full account of ELF users' standpoint, a pragmatic, conversation analytic (CA) in particular, approach is often employed. Section 2.3.2 introduces Widdowson's notion of capacity/capability, which leads to the discussion of applicability of conversation analytic methodology to ELF talk (Section 2.3.3). In addition,

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[11] As an example of 'entirely intuitive' approach, Jenkins et al. (2011) name Globish (p. 284). On the other hand, Sowden (2012a), refers to Globish as 'a plausible future for English language development and teaching' (p. 94). Sowden seems to support Globish because it is 'heavily dependent on the Anglo-Saxon native-speaker model' (p. 94).

Section 2.3.4 explains how CA methods can be combined with ethnographic approaches (e.g. interviews, observation) for a holistic view of ELF communication.

2.3.1 The hybrid nature of ELF research and the importance of context

In response to Seidlhofer's (2001, 2004) call for more empirical research, ELF researchers have been investigating the use of English actively in different geographical locations, domains, modes at different linguistic levels. While geographical locations matter little in defining ELF communication (see discussion in Section 2.2.1.1), ELF research is most vigorously conducted in Europe (Murata 2016: 4), followed by East Asian/ASEAN countries (Jenkins et al. 2011: 285). As for domains, there are two major targets ELF researchers aim at: academic and business. Examples of the former are, to name a few, House (2016), Jenkins (2014), and Mauranen (2006, 2012). The latter, English as a business lingua franca (BELF), is the main domain of the present research and I will outline the development of and findings from BELF research in Chapter 3.

Since ELF communication is essentially hybrid, fluid and variable (Cogo 2012, Dewey 2007, Jenkind et al. 2011), ELF researchers focus on what is going on in a particular interaction in a given situation, paying much attention to the specific contexts. In other words, pragmatics, 'the study of meaning in context' (Murata 1994a: 21), is the area where many empirical studies on ELF are thriving now (Jenkins et al. 2011: 286). Kaur (2009) confirms this by arguing that 'most of the studies on ELF to date have focused on the pragmatic uses of ELF in various lingua franca contexts' (p. 12).[12]

In order to understand how ELF users exploit their linguistic resources pragmatically,

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[12] A similar argument can be found in Cogo (2012b: 99). This shows a great move forward since the time when Seidlhofer (2004) argues that research on ELF pragmatics is still in its initial stage. According to Seidlhofer (2004), pragmatics is, compared to phonology or lexicogrammar, less constrained due to the lack of a closed set of features, and thus less manageable in research (p. 217).

'qualitative, emically oriented studies' are frequently conducted (Seidlhofer 2009b: 50). More specifically, both a conversation analytic perspective and an ethnographic perspective are often useful to describe and analyse ELF interactions. Here, I turn to Widdowson's notion of capacity/capability, because it is essential to explain why a conversation analytic approach is frequently adopted for ELF research.

2.3.2 Widdowson's notion of capacity/capability

As briefly mentioned in Section 2.2.1.3, effective language use requires what Widdowson terms 'capability' (Widdowson 2003), formerly called 'capacity' (Widdowson 1983). Widdowson (1983) defines that capacity is 'the ability to use a knowledge of language as a resource for the creation of meaning' (p. 25). Moreover, he argues that *capacity/capability* is the driving force to extend existing *competence*, facilitating further learning (Widdowson 2003, 2013, 2016; my emphasis). According to Widdowson (1983), the concepts of *competence* are 'a set of formulae' and *capacity [capability]* is 'the mediating force which associates them (the concepts of competence) with actual instances' (p. 106). In other words, as Widdowson (2016) further argues, ELF users have *capability* to make creative use of the unused potential of English without referring to the native speakers' *competence*. Thus, capacity/capability in Widdowson's terms is the very ability that ELF users need to possess in order to deploy their linguistic resources at hand to create meaning for effective communication.

Moreover, Widdowson (2003) contends that only learners/users themselves can fine-tune their use of English to what is particularly appropriate and actually attested in a specific occasion (p. 115). In other words, Widdowson's concept of capacity/capability takes most account of 'the user's standpoint' (Murata 1994a: 12), paying attention to the contexts in which particular interactions take place. The argument leads to Widdowson's (1983) claim that 'capacity

(capability) is essentially ethnomethodological' (p. 25). Accordingly, the next subsection explores what ethnomethodology is and why ELF researchers often adopt a conversation analytic perspective, which is closely connected to ethnomethodology, in a context-sensitive way.

2.3.3 Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis as an approach to ELF interactions

Ethnomethodology was developed by Garfinkel (1967) as a form of sociology and defined as 'the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life' (p. 11). In other words, Garfinkel (1967) is interested in the ability of members of society to understand and account for their own actions (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008: 27).[13] Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) argue that CA, or what they refer to as 'the analysis of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction', is the most fruitful means of doing ethnomethodlogicial study (p. 27). CA is an analysis of 'recurrent patterns of talk studied with detailed attention to the specific sequential contexts in which these practices are found' (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby & Olsher 2002:18). To use Firth's (1990) terms, CA 'seeks to extend the perspectives of ethnomethodology to the empirical study of talk in naturalistic settings' (p. 273), which allows us 'to capture the way members make *situated assessments* as to the robustness of their activities, and the way resources are deployed' (Firth 1996: 248; my emphasis). Thus, as Murata (1994a) points out, CA is expected 'to cover the ongoing process of negotiation, that is, the domain of communicative capacity [capability]' (p. 69), which shows CA is suitable for investigating ELF talk.

Firth (1996) demonstrates the applicability of conversation analytic methodology to lingua franca[14] talk-data, analysing spoken interactions in lingua franca English, namely, telephone calls

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[13] See also Kaur (2009) for the significance of the participants' perspective, not the analyst's, to examine ELF talk-in-interaction and how CA provides the means.

[14] Firth (1990) adopts the term 'lingua franca', following Random House definition: 'any language widely used

between Danish export managers and their international clients. He claims that while CA provides a basic methodology to describe lingua franca interactions, the data based on these sequentially and socially constructed lingua franca interactions in turn can also shed new light on some of CA's perspectives and methods in that they focused on interactions between non-native speakers of English. That is, traditional CA has focused on the interactions of monolingual adults,[15] and there is a common working assumption within CA that analysts look at talk-in-interaction of members of the *same culture*, who share and use the *same native tongue* (Firth 1996: 238; original emphasis). CA studies on ELF can provide an alternative view: ELF researchers often look at talk-in-interaction among speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds, non-native speakers as well as native speakers of English, and analyse the data with careful examination of the contexts, not with their own knowledge of the community.

Subsequently, Firth and Wagner (1997), while arguing for a reconceptualisation of SLA (see Section 2.2.1.3), (re)analysed previously published data extracts of talk-in-interaction with alternative insights, viewing language not only as a cognitive phenomenon but also as 'fundamentally a social phenomenon, acquired and used interactively, in a variety of contexts for myriad practical purposes'(p. 296).

Meierkord (2000) also discusses the applicability of CA methodology to lingua franca talk-in-interaction. She contends that lingua franca speakers establish their own particular conversational style, and its characteristics are not simple 'interferences' from the individual speakers' L1s. Thus, she concludes that existing categories or rules proposed by CA, which were

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as a means of communication among speakers of other language'. According to Firth (2009a), it is after Firth (1990) that 'a burgeoning research field of "English as a lingua franca" has emerged' (p. 135).
[15] Schegloff et al. (2002) also admit that 'most CA research on institutional discourse is not explicitly concerned with NNSs (non-native speakers)' (p. 12). It should be noted, however, that Firth (1996) and Firth and Wagner (2007) mention Jordan and Fuller (1975), the earliest CA study of L2 spoken material, as an exception. Murata (1994a) is another example, analysing non-native (L1 Japanese) English interactions with a CA perspective.

developed for analysing interactions between native English speakers, cannot be applied to lingua franca data without modifications. For example, Meierkord (2000) points out the existence of unproblematic overlap (i.e. cooperative overlap),[16] although overlapping speech is often regarded as a violation of the rule 'one party at a time' (Schegloff 1968) by traditional CA analysists. Participants in Meierkord's (2000) study demonstrate the way in which they cooperatively complete their interlocutors' utterances to build up a collaborative turn (cf. Murata 1994b). Thus, Meierkord claims that a hearer plays more than a passive role and that the concept of turn needs to be re-defined as a jointly completed unit of conversation in anaylsing talk-in-interaction in lingua franca English, which are highly heterogeneous.

More recently, Santner-Wolfartsberger (2015) is another attempt to prove mutual benefits of applying CA methodology to ELF research. Although her argument is not limited to ELF interactions and relevant to all multi-participant interactions, Santner-Wolfartsberger refers to the heterogeneous nature of ELF interactions, which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by 'established categories and procedures of analysis'. More specifically, analysing audio-recorded data of workplace meetings among seven ELF speakers, she scrutinises the applicability of the turn-taking model of Sacks et al. (1974) for group interactions. The results demonstrate, in line with Meierkord (2000), the existence of unproblematic overlap. Santner-Wolfartsberger's (2015) point is interesting in that she discusses group interactions, arguing ELF interactions share many features in common with them: flexibility, fluidity and dynamics, which lead to opportunities to rethink taken-for-granted assumptions based on conventional uses of language (p. 279).

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[16] ELF speakers' use of overlap will be discussed further in Chapter 7, referring to Cogo and Dewey (2012), Kaur (2009) and Murata (1994b).

2.3.4 CA combined with a more ethnographic perspective

ELF researchers, on the other hand, do not rely solely on CA methods. To use Cogo and Dewey's

(2012) words, while the CA framework provides useful and effective methods to investigate '*how*

the interactants understand each other and *how* the interaction unfolds', it does 'not deal with the

why question' (p. 31, original emphasis). In other words, while the strict CA approach deals with

talk-in-interaction as the sole object and focuses on the contextual factors only when they are

demonstrated in the talk (Blommaert 2001: 19; Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008: 4; Kaur 2009: 33), ELF

researchers like Cogo and Dewey (2012) pay attention to other contextual properties of interaction

such as speakers' linguacultural backgrounds and the setting where communicative events take

place, by combining CA methods with a much more ethnographic perspective (p. 32).[17]

According to Cogo and Dewey, their research with an ethnographic perspective employs four

'ethnographic' features as follows: (1) exploration of the nature of the ELF phenomenon without

particular hypotheses, (2) work with very diverse data derived from a variety of sources (e.g.

recordings of conversations, field notes, participant interviews), (3) double role of the researcher

as observer and participant, (4) investigation of a small number of cases (Cogo & Dewey 2012:

35). Combining CA methodology with this ethnographic perspective, Cogo and Dewey (2012)

explore how ELF speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds communicate in a specific

context.

Apart from Cogo and Dewey (2012), a number of ELF researchers adopt a CA approach

in a context-sensitive manner for studies on the *use* of ELF, while ethnographic approaches,

interviewing in particular, are often adopted for studies on the *perception* of ELF. Although these

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[17] Dell Hymes proposed 'ethnography of speaking' (1962) and 'ethnography of communication (1964) to introduce a new approach to understanding language use. Hymes (1964) argues that any given linguistic code is only a part of resources that members of a community exploit for communication, and contexts must be taken into account when investigating 'communicative habits as a whole' (p. 3).

two approaches are expected to complement each other, most ELF studies have concentrated either on the use or the perception of ELF (Cogo 2012a: 294; see also Cogo 2016a). In this sense, Cogo (2012a) is a pioneering study to combine the two to 'provide a holistic view' of ELF communication in a single case study. The present research aims to follow Cogo (2012a) in this respect and provide a whole picture of the participants' use and perception of English, analysing their attitudes and actual interactions both in the classroom and workplace.

Having provided an outline of approaches to ELF research, I now go over what ELF researchers have found through empirical studies on the use of ELF (2.4) and studies on the perception of ELF (2.5) respectively.

2.4 Studies on the use of ELF

2.4.1 Cooperative and co-constructive nature of ELF communication

This subsection (Section 2.4.1) discusses 'overtly consensus-oriented, cooperative and mutually supportive' (Seidlhofer 2004:218) nature of ELF talk revealed by empirical research.[18] For this purpose, Firth (1996) should be mentioned first, since he presents key concepts to describe the nature of ELF communication, to which a large number of ELF researchers, including myself, refer in analysing their own data.

2.4.1.1 Firth's (1996) 'let-it-pass' and other strategies

Analysing business-related telephone conversations in ELF, Firth (1996) argues that lingua franca talk is not only meaningful, but also 'normal' and 'ordinary' despite grammatical, phraseological,

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[18] There are also studies which argue ELF communication is not always consensual but can be more competitive or direct (e.g. Bjørge, 2010, 2012; Ehrenreich 2009; House 1999, 2002; Konakahara 2015; Pitzl 2005; Tsuchiya & Handford 2014; Wolfartsberger 2011). See Chapter 3 (Sections 3.3.1.3 and 3.3.1.4) for discussions on these different views.

phonological, prosodic or pronunciation variants. He introduces four concepts observed in such interactive talk in lingua franca English, namely 'let it pass', 'make it normal', 'interactional robustness' and 'lingua franca status'.

The first communicative strategy, 'let it pass', is the one that the 'hearer lets the unknown or unclear action, word or utterance "pass" on the (common-sense) assumption that it will either become clear or redundant as talk progresses' (p. 243). Secondly, the notion of 'make it normal' means more active (but implicit) attempts 'to *make the other's "abnormal" talk appear "normal"*' (p.245, original emphasis), focusing on the message content, which often precludes 'other repair' and 'candidate completions'. Thirdly, the idea of 'interactional robustness' is the one that interlocutors collaborate to make their communication 'robust' by making situated assessments and deploying necessary resources suitable for a specific context. For example, participants do *not* 'let pass' potentially problematic features and try to make them 'normal' immediately when necessary.[19] Finally, 'lingua franca status' means that ELF speakers do not relate their non-native status to linguistic incompetence', but freely use it to make their communication successful (Firth 1996: 253). For instance, they make their non-nativeness explicit, or even laugh about it, to show it is 'non-fatal', or to invite the use of other linguistic resources available.[20]

Since Firth (1996) proposed the applicability of CA methodology to talk-data among non-native speakers, especially after Seidlhofer's (2001) call for more empirical research, the number of researchers who analyse ELF talk-data increased dramatically. Furthermore, on the basis of their findings, most researchers report that ELF communication is consensual, cooperative and successful[21] (e.g. Cogo & Dewey 2012; House 2003; Jenkins 2007; Kaur 2009, 2010; Mauranen

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[19] Cogo and Dewey (2006) present an example of avoiding 'let it pass' attitudes (p. 66 ff). The 'let-it-pass'/'not let-it-pass' strategy will be further deliberated in Chapter 3.

[20] These communicative features of ELF interactions are further discussed as a 'lingua franca factor' in Firth (2009b).

[21] I use the word 'successful' here, having the definition by Mauranen et al. (2010) in mind: 'the goals of the

2006, 2012; Seidlhofer 2004, 2011), which I introduce in the next subsection.

2.4.1.2 Co-constructing understanding through accommodation strategies

In investigating the way in which interlocutors innovatively use English to co-construct meaning, the importance of accommodation skills is emphasised frequently in ELF research (e.g. Cogo 2009, Cogo & Dewey 2006, Deterding 2013, Firth 1996, 2009a, 2009b, Hülmbauer 2009, Jenkins 2000, 2002; Kaur 2009, 2016, Mauranen 2012, Pitzl 2009, Seidlhofer 2009). According to Giles, Coupland and Coupland (1991), the founding scholars of communication accommodation theory,[22] accommodation is ubiquitous among communicators in face-to-face talk and functions 'to index and achieve solidarity with or dissociation from a conversational partner' (p. 2). Jenkins (2000) argues that accommodation in ELF communication is primarily motivated by a desire for interlocutor intelligibility (Jenkins 2000: 167, see also Jenkins 2002). Similarly, Cogo (2012b) defines accommodation as 'speakers' ability to change their speech patterns to make themselves more understandable to their interlocutors' (p. 99).

Accommodation strategies revealed by research on ELF pragmatics are, for example, repetition, paraphrase, repair, code-switching, clarification and confirmation requests as well as collaborative completion of utterances (Kaur 2009: 46; 2016: 241). In the following sections, I focus on repetition and code-switching respectively since they are frequently-used accommodation strategies in ELF communication (e.g. Cogo 2009; Cogo and Dewey 2006; Kaur 2009, 2016: Mauranen 2012; Seidlhofer 2009c). [23] Repetitions, including reusing the

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event are reached and communication does not break down' (p. 185). Cogo and Dewey (2012) also define 'successful communication' as 'any exchange that proves to be meaningful for the participants and that has reached the required purpose or purposes' (p. 36).

[22] Starting from Giles (1973), speech accommodation theory – later known as communication accommodation theory (CAT) – has been developed and elaborated in order to understand why and how people accommodate one another (Giles 2016).

[23] For example, Cogo (2009) analyses talk-in-interaction among language teachers of different linguacultural backgrounds in a higher education institution and discusses how those ELF users repeat the interlocutor's

interlocutor's word or phrase, are also often observed in my talk data, when analysing talk-in-interaction in the workplace (see Chapter 7). Code-switching should be shed light on because it illustrates a multilingual nature of ELF (see Section 2.2.2.2 as well as Chapter 7).[24]

2.4.1.2.1 Repetition as an accommodating strategy

Repetition is 'pervasive, functional, and often automatic in ordinary conversation' (Tannen 1987: 586), not limited to ELF interactions. Analysing interactions among native speakers of English, Tannen (2007) exemplifies functional divisions of repetition, namely, participatory listenership, ratifying listenership, humor, savoring, stalling, expanding, participating, evaluating through patterned rhythm, and bounding episodes (pp. 67-78). She also explains the effect of rhythmic patterns created by repetition, referring it as 'a poetics of talk' (Tannen 1987, 2007). Cook, G. (2000), who introduces the notion of 'language play', also focuses on the role of repetition in facilitating processing as well as creating rhythm and a 'more secure and relaxed' atmosphere (p. 30) among interlocutors.

On the other hand, Murata (1995) conducted a cross-cultural study on the use of repetition, examining three types of interactions: NSE-NSE (native speakers of British English), NSJ-NSJ (native speakers of Japanese), and NSE-JSE (Japanese speakers of English). She reports that repetition is frequently used with other communicative features such as interruption, overlapping, and pause/silence, and identifies five interactional functions of repetitions: interruption-oriented, solidarity, silence-avoidance, hesitation, and reformulation repetitions (p. 346). Murata (1995) is relevant to the present research because it provides cross-cultural perspectives in analysing

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utterance or code-switches in order to enhance understanding as well as show identity or solidarity among them.
[24] It should be noted, however, that ELF as a multilingual phenomenon is more than mere code-switching (Cogo 2012a, 2016b; Jenkins 2015b). I will discuss this point in Section 2.4.1.2.2.

interactional features of Japanese participants, applying also the notions of 'co-operative imperative' and 'territorial imperative' (Widdowson 1983; also see Chapter 7).

In the field of ELF research, Kaur (2009) explores how repetitions contribute to the co-construction of understanding among ELF speakers. Using the framework of CA, she classifies repetition according to the type (same-speaker or other-speaker), function (e.g. to secure recipient understanding, to request clarification), interactional site (e.g. after displayed misunderstanding, after prolonged silence), action (e.g. provides recipient with another opportunity to hear, elicits clarification of speaker's meaning), and (desired) outcome (shared understanding). The findings show that the participants employ repetition in order to both pre-empt and resolve problems of understanding, 'enhanc[ing] and secur[ing] understanding in ELF' (p. 73).

Repeating or reusing the interlocutor's utterance is another way of accommodation, which ELF researchers have frequently found. Cogo and Dewey (2006) give a qualitative description of the way in which a speaker uses repetition to have her speech style resemble that of her interlocutor. For instance, in the extract below, they observe how a Mandarin L1 speaker, Sila, repeats the zero article that her Japanese interlocutor, Chako, uses in the previous turn:

237　CHAKO:　my [specific interest in point

238　SILA:　　　 [yeah

239　CHAKO:　when did language I mean

240　SILA:　　 [mhm…mhm

241→CHAKO　because [of revolution

242　SILA　　　　 [mhm mhm

243　CHAKO　　did language change?

244　SILA:　　 [yeah it changed

245   CHAKO   [specifically intentionally

246→SILA: because of revolution but it also changed from

247   the beginning of the twentieth century

248   CHAKO   yeah

(extracted from Cogo & Dewey 2006: 72)

Cogo and Dewey (2006) confirm Sila's general tendency to use definite articles in other transcriptions and argue that her repeating Chako's words is for the sake of efficiency and alignment (p. 72). Likewise, Firth (2009b) provides examples of interpersonal accommodation regarding the use of a preposition; he analyses the way in which a Danish L1 speaker repeats her Dutch interlocutor's usage of a preposition, while she uses a different preposition that conforms to standard English usage on another occasion. Firth (2009a) also introduces the same extract of the Danish speaker as well as other examples of ELF interactants, who adopt and co-opt their interlocutors' non-standard English language use.

Similar examples are also drawn from the two prominent ELF corpora: VOICE and ELFA (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings). Seidlhofer (2009a) gives an example of accommodation from the VOICE corpus, in which ELF speakers intentionally use a non-standard expression, namely, 'endangered' in collocation with the 'field (of study)', collaboratively creating their own rule in the specific context. Mauranen (2012) shows another example from ELFA, in which one speaker introduces a non-standard verb, namely, 'registrate' and other speakers reproduce the form. These findings demonstrate how repeating the interlocutor's utterance is prevalent as an accommodating strategy among ELF speakers for co-constructing understanding as well as showing solidarity.

The next subsection discusses another accommodation strategy in ELF, i.e., code-switching,

which is used as part of 'languaging'/'translanguaging'.

2.4.1.2.2 Code-switching as an accommodating strategy/part of translanguaging

Code-switching is 'a common and effective feature of ELF conversations to *mix the two languages together*' (Klimpfinger 2009: 366; original emphasis; e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, 2014; House 2016, Iino & Murata 2016; Klimpfinger 2009). Klimpfinger (2009) analyses forms and functions of code-switching in her naturally-occurring spoken data recorded at an academic conference in Vienna.[25] She reports that the majority of the switches in her ELF data involves single words, while full sentences are the most frequently switched elements in a previous study on code-switching in a stable bilingual community (Poplack 1980 referred in Klimpfinger 2009: 359). Klimpfinger analyses that shorter switches are unique to ELF interactions, where English is often the only common code and code-switching possibly excludes other speakers (Klimpfinger 2009: 359).[26]

As to function, Klimpfinger (2009) lists four types of code-switching: *specifying an addressee, signalling culture, appealing for assistance*, and *introducing another idea*. The four functions are not defined exclusively; Klimpfinger (2009), while giving an example for each function, notes that actual cases of code-switching often serve more than one function simultaneously (p. 367). Iino and Murata (2016) also demonstrate the way students switch to Japanese to enhance understanding, indicate shared culture and knowledge, and show solidarity in the English-medium instruction classes at a Japanese university, where Japanese is the second lingua franca (pp. 115-119). House (2016) reports the way in which German academic advisors

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[25] The data were later incorporated into the VOICE corpus (Klimpfinger 2009: 355).

[26] On the other hand, Cogo and Jenkins (2010) argue that code-switching is 'often used in an *inclusive* way' (p. 280; my emphasis) in ELF communication to enrich interactions for all participants (see also Cogo 2016b, Cogo & Dewey 2006 and Pitzl 2016).

and their international students code-switch; for example, 'in the routinized, phatic opening and closing phases of the interactions' to effectively signal the start/end of the official interaction in English (p. 66).

In the professional domain, which is essentially goal-oriented in nature, code-switching is frequently used to achieve communicative goals efficiently (Klimpfinger 2009: 363). Similarly, Ehrenreich (2009, 2010) finds that quick exchanges of information between compatriots in international business meetings or phone conferences are often done in their own languages because it is more efficient (see also Cogo 2016b, Ehrenreich 2016 and Pitzl 2016 for situation-specific instances of code-switching in business meetings).

Cogo's (2012a) study on ELF speakers' use of multilingual repertoire discusses code-switching as a part of 'languaging', which is 'the use of various sociolinguistic resources for the purpose of making meaning, constructing deeper understanding' as well as 'for no purpose at all' (p. 290). Analysing her data collected at a small multinational Information Technology (IT) company, Cogo (2012a) first demonstrates the way the staff members use code-switching to exclude or include interlocutors, which parallels the first function introduced by Klimpfinger (2009): *specifying an addressee*. What is more, Cogo observes the way in which the business people cross, mix, and play freely with their multilingual resources in an ELF environment. For example, an L1 Spanish speaker code-switches to German when his clients, another L1 Spanish speaker and L1 German speaker speak in German, not for a practical purpose, but 'a bit like a joke' to show he can understand German, too (Cogo 2012a: 306). Cogo concludes that languaging is a common practice in this community of experts and part of their identity. She explains that 'super-diversity' is the umbrella term to indicate these new dimensions of sociocultural and linguistic diversity, including 'languaging' as well as 'translanguaging' and 'crossing' (p. 289).

While Cogo (2012a) uses the terms 'languaging' and 'translanguaging' interchangeably,

Cogo (2016a, 2016b), who analyses the case of the small IT company further, mainly uses the term 'translanguaging', because the prefix trans- draws 'more attention to the transformative perspective' (Cogo 2016b: 63), which transcends linguistic separations, merging multiple linguistic resources. Cogo (2016b) regards code-switching as part of translanguaging, while being critical about the fact that the notion of code-switching invokes 'traditional language alternation emphasizing separate languages' (p. 65).

Jenkins (2015b) also refers to 'translanguaging' (Garciá 2009, Garciá and Li Wei 2014) as an example of 'the newer critical work on multilingualism', and suggests that ELF researchers need to further investigate ELF as a multilingual phenomenon, which includes code-switching 'as well as other kinds of bilingual language use and bilingual contact'(Garciá 2009: 45 cited by Jenkins 2015b: 60).

To sum up, research on the use of ELF with a CA perspective has revealed the way in which ELF users communicate successfully in creative and collaborative manners, deploying a variety of strategies. It should be noted, however, that several researchers, especially who study ELF in business settings, point out that ELF users do not always communicate collaboratively (e.g. Bjørge, 2010, 2012; Ehrenreich 2009; House 1999, 2002; Konakahara 2015; Pitzl 2005; Tsuchiya & Handford 2014; Wolfartsberger 2011), but use more direct expressions to show disagreement. These different views on the nature of ELF communication will be discussed in a more detailed manner in Chapter 3 (Sections 3.3.1.3 and 3.3.1.4).

Having overviewed previous research on *how* ELF interactions unfold, the next section sheds light on previous studies on ELF users' perceptions and attitudes, which deal with 'the *why* question' (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 31), further illuminating contextual factors of ELF communication.

2.5 Studies on ELF users' perceptions

While conventional studies on language learners' attitudes tend to adopt experimental quantitative methods such as the matched guise technique with point-scaled questionnaires (e.g. Rubin & Smith 1990), ELF researchers are likely to opt for more qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussion as well as class observation in order to listen to participants' own voices (e.g. Iino & Murata 2016, Jenkins 2007, Murata 2011, Takino 2016).

Attitudes towards English are made up of and influenced by a variety of factors, including the use of native English as a yardstick (Jenkins 2007), experiences in EFL and ELF (Iino & Murata 2016), familiarity, motivation, future goals (Galloway 2013, Galloway & Rose 2013) , gender, self-perceived proficiency in the language (McKenzie 2008) and ethnicity (Rubin & Smith 1990). These previous studies have revealed that the same participant can frequently possess ambivalent or contradicting perceptions of English in a single instance as well as over a period of time. With this complex nature of attitudes in mind, this subsection examines two contradicting attitudes towards English, namely, conformity to 'standard' English (2.5.1) and the positive evaluation of ELF in its own right (2.5.2), paying careful attention to the contexts in which each participant develops his or her particular attitudes towards that language. First, the next subsection explains the standard language ideology and how it prevails among English speakers who adhere to the NS norm.

2.5.1 Adherence to 'standard' English

Atkinson and Coupland (1988) define ideologies in general as 'bodies of ideas systematically organized from particular viewpoints' and argue that situated talk symbolises and reproduces 'the institutional higher-order, structured value system' (p. 321). As for "standard language ideology", Seidlhofer (2011) explains that it is "[t]he belief that imposed language uniformity is good for

society and that the standard variety is the only legitimate one" (p. 42, see also Seidlhofer 2018).[27] Because of its global spread and role as a lingua franca, Seidlhofer continues, standard English ideology should be discussed as 'a special case of standard language ideology' (Seidlhofer 2011: 42). In reality, however, many people, both laypeople and language specialists, seem to have little doubt in the legitimacy of native-speaker English as a stable and established language (see also Widdowson 1994). Seidlhofer (2011) further points out that standard English 'does not refer to the language of all native speakers' (p. 46) but only to speakers of Inner Circle English (Kachru 1992).

Jenkins (2007), a pioneering study on attitudes and ideologies in ELF research, discusses the ways in which 'standard' English ideology permeates the attitudes towards ELF accents among those who teach and learn the language by analysing written and spoken resources as well as data gathered from questionnaires and interviews. The study found that the vast majority of participants prefer NS English accents; on the other hand, NNS accents are non-preferred 'in a hierarchical fashion, with those closest to NS accents being least non-preferred' and those furthest from them being most non-preferred (p. 186). Speakers of the most non-preferred accents, namely, East Asian English speakers, thus have been found to have a sense of inferiority. In fact, Japanese English was the worst rated of all in the questionnaire survey Jenkins (2007) conducted, and the Japanese respondents themselves were largely negative about the quality of their English accent (p. 174).

Likewise, Galloway (2013) conducted research on the attitudes of Japanese learners towards English. These participants tend to mention native English as 'correct' and 'standard' and non-native English as 'wrong' and 'imperfect' (p. 794) and perceive the English spoken in Japan

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[27] Cogo (2015a) also argues that language ideologies exert a significant impact on how language is used in institutional communication context (e.g. Cogo 2012a; see also Cogo 2016a).

negatively, over three-quarters of the participants wanting to sound like a native speaker (p. 800). Galloway (2013) also investigated the influence of global Englishes instructions on students' perceptions. The post-course questionnaire, although the figures were not statistically significant, indicated that the global Englishes course actually raised the students' awareness of the legitimacy of non-native English and confidence as speakers of a recognisable variety of English (p. 801). Yoshikawa's (2005) study on students' agreement on acceptability of Japanese English also found the effectiveness of world Englishes courses taught at the Department of World Englishes of Chukyo University: 'Introduction to Studies of World Englishes' and 'Singapore Seminar (visiting Singapore)', while there remains a stronger preference for traditional English varieties and lower tolerance of New Englishes' (p. 360).

Meanwhile, Galloway and Rose (2013) conducted a study on the attitudes towards ELF of students, student assistants and instructors at a bilingual business program in a Japanese university, adopting a mixed method approach. The results indicate that there is a distinct division in the attitudes between the students and the teachers. While the students are found to have developed a positive attitude towards ELF usage, the teachers seem reluctant to move away from their accepted traditional practices and ideologies (cf. Jenkins 2007). In other words, while the majority of the students are freeing themselves from the NS norms, their teachers continue to use native speakers' English as a yardstick at work.

Another example of research into the attitudes of students studying at a Japanese university that offers an English-medium degree program is introduced by Iino and Murata (2016). They focus on a group of students called *jun-Japa*, L1 Japanese speakers 'who were raised and educated solely in Japan, using Japanese as their daily means of communication' (p. 114). This qualitative study reveals the complex nature of *jun-Japa* students' ELF identity; while they are confident about being successful EFL learners who passed through the competitive educational system in

Japan (p. 121), they are not accustomed to ELF communication and thus 'suffer from an inferiority complex against NSs and other Japanese English speakers, whose proficiency is more like that of NSs' (p.123). On the other hand, Iino and Murata (2016) also analyse the way in which these *jun-Japa* students become legitimate and confident ELF students after being immersed in the ELF environment, casting off their former identity as EFL learners (p. 126). Thus, the authors explore the complex dynamics in which students constantly negotiate their identities

In sum, native speakers' English is still widely regarded as the language of prestige, especially in the expanding circle (Kachru 1992) such as Japan. On the other hand, as exemplified in the previous studies, taking a closer look at the contexts in which ELF speakers use English in detail provides a deeper understanding about the complex nature of people's attitudes and identities towards it, and also some indications of change can be observed especially among the younger generation. In a similar vein, more favourable and more receptive perceptions of ELF are foregrounded in Europe (Cogo 2010), to which I now turn.

2.5.2 Perception of ELF as legitimate English

Cogo (2010) investigates how students at secondary schools and universities in Europe evaluate their Englishes confidently. Comments from most of the young respondents on their experience in ELF communication abroad through school trips or family holidays are found to be positive. They describe English spoken by other ELF speakers as 'immaculate', 'good — practically fluent', 'incredible' or 'impressive' (p. 305). Hülmbauer (2009) also explains that Europeans have positive attitudes towards ELF. Introducing a survey by Mollin (2006), Hülmbauer explains that 60% of the respondents (European academics) agreed that they are not bothered about 'mistakes' that other users of English make as long as they can understand what they are saying, and further, only around a quarter of the respondents

has negative feelings about deviation from the ENL norm (p. 329). As for the number of English speakers, the European Commission (2012) reports that 51% (13% as a mother tongue and 38% as an additional language) of EU citizens are able to hold a conversation in English (pp. 10, 19).[28] The fact that the majority of Europeans are able to hold a conversation in English and that opportunities to use the language as a lingua franca are prevalent seems to account for the positive attitude towards ELF in Europe.

To sum up, research on the perception of ELF so far has revealed that ELF users have mixed feelings about their own use of English, depending on who they are and in what contexts they use English. Jenkins (2007) states that it is only recently (as of 2007) that attitudes towards ELF are focused in ELF research (p. 65). Since then, as Cogo (2016a) points out, while a good number of ELF studies have covered issues of attitudes and ideologies, the field of BELF in particular calls for more research on how local practices and situation-specific language use are affected by language ideologies (p. 42). Thus, the present research intends to contribute to BELF research by studying a relatively less-investigated object: professional ELF users' attitudes towards English in Asian contexts (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1.2).

2.6 Summary

The present chapter has clarified the theoretical background of ELF research. There have been controversies on what ELF is/isn't and clarifying the concept of ELF has been a significant part of the history of ELF research. ELF researchers call for reconceptualising what conventional SLA researchers and ELT practitioners regard as 'interlanguage' or 'fossilisation', considering that ELF users actually possess 'capability' to exploit their linguistic resources at hand in different contexts

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[28] European Commission (2012) does not elaborate on 'being able to hold a conversation' (e.g. what kind/level of conversation or with whom it is).

of use. In sum, ELF communication is, as Murata (2016) aptly defines, 'autonomous, legitimate, and competently and collaboratively conducted interaction, where interactants use ELF as their own' (p. 3). The cooperative and co-constructive nature of ELF communication is supported by a number of empirical ELF studies. Having clarified the theoretical background and overviewed findings from the previous research in ELF, the next chapter (Chapter 3) discusses ELF in business settings, namely English as a lingua franca in business contexts (BELF), with a special focus on how English is learned and used by Japanese business people.

Chapter 3

Overview of BELF research and English education/use in Japanese professional contexts

3.1 Introduction

Research into English as a business lingua franca (BELF) has been still relatively scarce, carried out by 'only a handful of people' (Ehrenreich 2016: 135). On the other hand, Seidlhofer (2004) claims that international business has faced up to the realities of ELF (p. 221) and Pitzl (2010) argues that global business is 'an area where ELF is of particular importance for people on an everyday basis' (p.60). Under these circumstances, BELF is gaining increasing attention and more empirical studies are expected to be carried out in a variety of regional/linguacultural contexts.

This chapter first reviews the development of BELF research, which has been most vigorously conducted in Europe, focusing on its multidisciplinary nature. Second, based on empirical data provided by previous studies, the transactional nature of BELF communication is discussed together with the importance of relational talk, small talk, in particular. Third, the chapter focuses on the Japanese professional contexts, in which the present research is situated. Examining English education at Japanese schools critically, it argues how Japanese business people who went through this type of education use English for work in the globalised world and what kind of challenges they face. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary and concluding remarks.

3.2 English as a business lingua franca (BELF)

This section first explores the definition of BELF (Section 3.2.1). Second, the multi-disciplinary nature of BELF is discussed with special attention to the field of International Business Communication (IBC) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Section 3.2.2). In order to understand the development of BELF research, the present research argues that it is useful to

review previous research on the use of English in the global workplace from analytical viewpoints of a variety of disciplines.

3.2.1 Defining BELF

As explained in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.1), business is one of the two major domains of ELF research, the other being academic. BELF is often defined by referring to ELF: 'ELF for business communication purposes' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2007: 56), 'English as a lingua franca in business contexts' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2010, Pitzl 2015), and 'English as a lingua franca in business settings' (Ehrenreich 2016: 135). It may seem easy then to understand what BELF is if one understands what ELF is. However, there has been some ambiguity or misunderstanding among researchers in defining BELF, especially when both ELF and BELF were 'only at the beginning' of their development (Charles 2007: 264). Thus, this section first clarifies the relationship between BELF and ELF (Section 3.2.1.1), and then the question of who BELF users are (Section 3.2.1.2).

3.2.1.1 The relationship between BELF and ELF

As business is one of the two major domains in which ELF is investigated, the 'E' of both ELF and BELF should mean the same phenomenon, i.e., English as a lingua franca. Nonetheless, when the concept of BELF was first developed, some scholars contrasted BELF to ELF, emphasising the striking differences between them. For example, Charles (2007) summarises the main differences in research approaches based on the ELF concept and those based on BELF (p. 266), maintaining wrongly that ELF researchers are more language-oriented and ELF speakers aim to emulate native speakers, while BELF researchers are more communication-oriented and BELF speakers prioritise situation-specific language use to get the job done.

More recently, however, BELF researchers agree that what makes BELF different from ELF is the domain (the 'B', i.e. business), and the 'E' should be the same (i.e. ELF). Thus, Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2013) modified the table in Charles (2007), contrasting EFL (not ELF) and BELF (p. 29). The table has turned to be similar to the ones in Seidlhofer (2011: 18) or Jenkins (2014: 26) (see Section 2.2.1.2), illustrating the way both ELF and BELF research focus on how (B)ELF speakers communicate in English 'in their own right'. In addition, the importance of 'B' (business) is emphasised in the BELF approach as shown in the table below:[1]

Table 3.1 Comparison between EFL and BELF approaches.

Criterion	EFL	BELF
Successful interactions require	NS-like language skills	business communication skills and strategic skills
The speaker/writer aims to	emulate NS discourse	get the job done & create rapport
NNSs are seen as	learners, "sources of trouble"	communicators in their own right
Main source of problems	inadequate language skills	inadequate business communication skills
"Culture"	national cultures of NSs	business community cultures and individual cultural backgrounds
English is "owned" by	its native speakers	nobody − and everybody

(extracted from Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013: 29)

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[1] See Section 3.3 for further discussion on the importance of the business domain.

In line with this argument, the current research regards that the 'E' means the same phenomenon in both ELF and BELF. Moreover, since this research stresses the importance of contexts in investigating ELF communication (see Section 2.3.1), it adopts the definition used by Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2010) and Pitzl (2015)—that is, BELF is 'English as a lingua franca in business contexts'.

3.2.1.2 Irrelevance of native vs. non-native dichotomy in BELF research

As is the case with the discussion of definitions of ELF users (Section 2.2.1.1), BELF users constitute both native and non-native speakers. Although earlier studies on BELF tended to exclude native speakers of English (e.g. Jensen 2009; Rogerson-Revell, 2007, 2008, 2010),[2] the majority of BELF researchers now agree that BELF speakers include both native and non-native ones (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013: 21). Moreover, several BELF researchers point out the irrelevance of native versus non-native dichotomy in BELF research (e.g. Charles 2007, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010, Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005). Instead, they claim that BELF is nobody's own but shared by everyone present in particular contexts. For example, when Louhiala-Salminen, Charles and Kankaanranta (2005) first introduced the term BELF,[3] they defined it as follows:

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[2] Rogerson-Revell (2007, 2008, 2010), who is often cited by BELF researchers (e.g. Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013, Kankaanranta, Louhiala-Salminen & Karhunen 2015), uses the term EIL (English as an international language) instead of ELF. She argues that ELF refers to 'contexts where no native speakers are present' (Rogerson-Revell 2010: 453), based on Firth (1996) and one of the earliest papers on ELF by Seidlohofer (2001). Jensen (2009) also excluded native speakers from his definition of ELF, referring to House (1999) (Jensen 2009: 5). See also the discussion of who constitute ELF speakers in Section 2.2.1.1.

[3] BELF researchers acknowledge Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005) as the origin of the concept BELF. Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that Louhiala-Salminen (1996) discusses the existence of English as 'the business lingua franca', namely, the mixture of Englishes used in European business by non-native speakers of English (p. 44). In addition, Louhiala-Salminen (2002) discusses 'English "as a business lingua franca"', referring to the role of English as the common code for non-native speakers' (pp. 212-213), in a case study on a Finnish business manager working in a multinational corporation.

English used as a 'neutral' and shared communication code. BELF is neutral in the sense that none

of the speakers can claim it as her/his mother tongue; it is shared in the sense that it is used for

conducting business within the global business discourse community, whose members are BELF

users and communicators in their own right — not 'non-native speakers' or 'learners'.

(extracted from Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005: 403-404)

What the authors mean by the adjective 'neutral'[4] is that, just like ELF, there are no native speakers in BELF communication. Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2012) paraphrase it as 'everybody is entitled to BELF' (p. 267). Indeed, a number of BELF researchers have found that native speakers of English can 'both have and cause communication problems' (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari 2002: 25; see also Kankaanranta & Planken 2010: 401 and Ehrenreich 2010) and they, as well as non-native speakers, should be included in training programs aimed at improving business communication (e.g. Rogerson-Revell 2008, 2010; see also Jenkins 2012:487). Ultimately, as Kankaanranta and Planken (2010) argue, the point of reference, or the role model in BELF interactions is 'not an NS or near-native, but a business professional whose (international) communication is clear' (p. 401).

In order to investigate how business professionals communicate in English in the globalised world, researchers in a variety of disciplines have conducted a number of studies with different approaches, well before the term BELF was introduced by Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005). The next section explores the multidisciplinary nature of such studies.

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[4] Here, Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005) do not mean BELF is culture-neutral but suggest that BELF speakers maintain their own culture-bound views and discourse practices. Charles (2007) also argues that BELF is not a 'cultureless' language, but rather creates new operational cultures (p. 260).

3.2.2 Multidisciplinary nature of BELF research

Just like ELF, BELF refers to hybrid and dynamic phenomena, and a large variety of disciplinary frameworks and research methods are applied in order to investigate BELF speakers' use and perception of English. In her comprehensive overview of BELF scholars and their disciplinary frameworks, Ehrenreich (2016) emphasises the interdisciplinary and multi-methodological nature of BELF research, which is still work in progress as a research 'field' (p. 140). Papers whose titles contain the term 'BELF' have been published in a variety of journals: *Business Communication Quarterly, English for Specific Purposes, Ibérica, IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, Journal of Business Communication, Journal of Business and Technical Communication, Journal of English as a Lingua Franca, Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of Pragmatics, Public Relations Review*, and *World Englishes*.[5] Other studies on the use of English for global business but without the term BELF in the title can be found in journals such as *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* and *Sociolinguistic Studies*.

Ehrenreich (2016) classifies different approaches to BELF into two perspectives, namely a communication-oriented approach and a language-oriented one (p. 142). Following this classification, this section particularly sheds light on two fields of research: International Business Communication (IBC) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Currently, BELF researchers are most active in the former (IBC), which is more communication-oriented, and seem to distance themselves from the linguistic focus of the latter (ESP). The next subsections explain this tendency referring to the inception of BELF research (Sections 3.2.2.1 and 3.2.2.2). These are followed by a critical review of ESP literature from an ELF perspective (Section 3.2.2.3), which can contribute

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[5] Disciplinary backgrounds of researchers, of course, cannot be detected only by the names of journals, while each author is expected to submit a paper to journals with whose editors and readers they identify. In this section, I explicitly list the researchers' disciplines only when they mention them in their papers themselves, or when Ehrenreich (2016) makes them clear.

to refining the idea of what BELF research is (Section 3.2.2.4).

3.2.2.1 Origin of BELF research and International Business Communication (IBC)

The notion of BELF was originated in and developed by two large research projects in the International Business Communication Unit at the Aalto University School of Business[6] from 2000 to 2009 (Charles 2007: 261; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013: 17). Researchers involved in the research projects placed their disciplinary framework in IBC, investigating global professional communication (Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2011: 245). According to Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011), the focus of IBC research was 'the communication activities of internationally operating (usually) profit-making enterprises' (p. 245), with a heavy emphasis on 'the significance of the context of communication in addition to language use' (p. 256). Thus, they emphasised 'the domain of use rather than the type of English' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013: 17; see Section 3.3. for specific findings on characteristics of BELF communication).

3.2.2.2 The focus in BELF research: from language-focused to communication-focused

BELF researchers' strong focus on communication is reflected on the fact that they changed how they write out the abbreviation BELF. Originally they used the abbreviation BELF to refer to 'Business English as Lingua Franca' (Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005), 'business English lingua franca' (Charles 2007), or 'Business English as a lingua franca' (Kankaanranta & Planken 2010), yet today most BELF researchers use 'English as a business lingua franca' (Ehrenreich 2010, 2016), 'English as Business Lingua Franca' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013), 'English

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[6] Until 2010, the school was called the Helsinki School of Economics (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013: 20).

as a lingua franca in business contexts' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2010, Pitzl 2015), or

'ELF for business communication purposes' (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2007) instead.

In short, as Kankaanranta, Louhiala-Salminen and Karhunen (2015) discuss, wheares the former

(i.e. Business English) focuses on linguistic aspects such as specific vocabulary and genres, the

latter (i.e. BELF) focuses on the *use* of English in *business communication* (p.136, original

emphasis). According to Kankaanranta et al. (2015), the shift in focus reflected the changes in the

global business environment, and their school (Aalto University School of Business) also changed

its curriculum accordingly: it now offers a subject called English Business Communication

instead of Business English or English for business purposes (p.136).

The focus on *communication* with special attention to specific contexts resonates with ELF

research. In other words, inspired by ELF research, these scholars with 'a linguistic background'

(Louhiala-Salminen & Rogerson-Revell 2010: 91) started to discuss what 'language' means in

communication, which used to be 'taken for granted—not questioned, examined, used as a

variable, or explained' (Louhiala-Salminen & Rogerson-Revell 2010: 91).[7] For example, *Journal*

of Business Communication produced two special issues entitled 'Language Matters Part1/ Part

2' in 2010, and *Journal of International Business Studies* produced a special issue entitled 'The

Multifaceted Role of Language in International Business' in 2014.

In light of this shift in focus (i.e. from language-focused to communication-focused in

BELF), the next subsections (Sections 3.2.2.3 and 3.2.2.4) review the literature in the field of ESP.

Although it can be criticised for its native-speaker orientation and narrow focus on language, the

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[7] Several BELF researchers point out that their focus needs to stay up-to-date with advancing globalisation of
the business world. For example, Charles (2009) recalls her questions to her PhD student, who works in a
MNC, regarding her colleagues' nationalities or mother tongues as 'outdated' (p. 18). Ehrenreich (2010) also
introduces an anecdote that her interviewees (business people) pointed out her questions concerning their use
and perceptions of English were 'too narrowly language-focused' (p. 419).

ESP research community has a relatively long history of investigating the use of English in global business contexts, and a substantial number of articles on BELF have been published in journals of the field such as *English for Specific Purposes*. Thus, the present research argues that reviewing these works critically as well as constructively is beneficial in understanding the concept of BELF research.

3.2.2.3 English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and its native-speaker orientation

ESP first came to prominence in the 1970s (Harding 2007: 3), and English for Business Purposes has been one of the areas 'of greatest activity and fastest growth in ESP' (Dudley-Evans & St John 1998: 53; see also St John & Johnson 1996: 1). Particularly, a large number of ESP researchers have been interested in the use of English in the global context. On the other hand, Gnutzman (2009) points out the native-speaker orientation of ESP, arguing that 'it has been common practice for native speaker norm of British and/or American English to serve as more or less undisputed reference models for the teaching of ESP' (p. 533). Seidlhofer (2012) also maintains that much of the work on ESP assumes that being competent in English necessarily requires conformity to the standard native speaker code (p. 400). In other words, there has been a discrepancy, or little 'interaction and cross-fertilization' (Seidlhofer 2004: 221) between what is investigated in the ESP field and the realities of the global business world, and ESP courses are often regarded as unpractical for business professionals working in ELF environments (Dudley-Evans & St John 1998, Ehrenreich 2010, Kwan & Dunworth 2016, Reeves & Wright 1996, Richards 2009).

Meanwhile, ESP scholars had not been unaware of the global spread of English and the power of non-native speakers for the development of English. To put it another way, researchers developed a new research paradigm (i.e. BELF) by critically looking at previous ESP studies. The next subsection explicates the fact that the term BELF was first introduced in the field of ESP.

3.2.2.4 ESP and (B)ELF: mutual benefit of cross-fertilisation

Some ESP scholars share a common perspective with ELF researchers regarding English used by business professionals working worldwide. To name a few, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) point out that little ESP research has investigated communication among non-native speakers, which predominates internationally (p. 65). They also claim that 'NNSs [non-native speakers] want to communicate effectively, but not necessarily like NSs [native-speakers]; and NSs of standard English also need to learn to use International English' (p. 72). Indeed, the early stage of development of BELF research can be observed in the field of ESP, since the term BELF is first introduced by Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005) in a special issue of *English for Specific Purposes*, entitled 'English as a *lingua franca* in international business contexts' (original emphasis). Nickerson (2005), the editor of this special issue, acknowledges the dominance of English as a lingua franca in international business contexts, referring to Seidlhofer (2004), and intends to explore the findings of empirical research on BELF communication, including the implications for the teaching of ESBP (English for Specific Business Purposes) (pp. 367-368).

ESP researchers based in Japan are also aware of the function of English as a business lingua franca. For example, Noguchi (2010) supports the idea of ELF in proposing the concept of 'ESP bilingualism', arguing that 'ESP bilinguals would not be trying to become "native English speakers" but would want to effectively use English for the specific purposes to get their work done' (p. 10). For another example, Terauchi and Araki (2016) re-examines results of a large-scale ESP survey involving 7354 global business people in Japan (Koike & Terauchi 2008, Koike et al. 2010) with an ELF perspective, realising English proficiency is only a part of business competence, others being professional skills and intercultural understanding. Based on the results from the same large-scale survey, Terauchi, Fujita and Naito (2015) also discuss essential English

skills for business meetings, incorporating an ELF perspective as an important topic for ESP researchers (see Section 3.5 for the details of each study). ESP researchers in other parts of the world also acknowledge the role and function of English as a global business lingua franca (e.g. Connor, Rogers & Wong 2005, Evans 2010, 2012, 2013). Thus, although the field of ESP research had largely been language-focused and native-speaker oriented, it has recently also been inspired and influenced by empirical BELF studies. In other words, the fields of ESP and BELF overlap and complement each other. ESP literature provides useful resources for BELF researchers to understand the use of English in global business contexts, especially in areas where only a small number of BELF studies have been conducted such as Japan (see Sections 3.4 and 3.5).

So far, the current section (Section 3.2.2) has reviewed the origin and multidisciplinary nature of BELF research, specifically referring to two fields: IBC and ESP. As Ehrenreich (2016) describes, research into BELF has evolved in 'a blind spot in a disciplinary field' (p. 135) and the number of BELF researchers is still relatively small. After taking a look at another reason why BELF research is scarce—namely, the challenge of accessing corporate information, the following section (Section 3.2.3) argues how 'across-research-site triangulation' (Ehrenreich 2016) is expected to make up the small number of BELF studies.

3.2.3 Challenge in gathering corporate data and across-research-site triangulation

Researchers in different fields have unanimously highlighted the difficulty of gathering data on corporate sites (e.g. Cogo 2016a, Edwards 2000, Ehrenreich 2009, Ehrenreich 2016, Holmes 2000, Kubota 2016, St John 1996; see also the challenge the current research faced in Chapter 4). Ehrenreich (2009) calls getting access to companies 'an enormous challenge' (p. 127), and more specifically, other researchers explain that it is most difficult to audio-/video- record

communication in the workplace (e.g. Holmes 2000: 161; Kubota 2016: 162; St John 1996: 4).

In order to make effective use of findings from the relatively small number of BELF studies, Ehrenreich (2016) underscores the high potential of 'across-research-site triangulation' (p. 135)—that is, although BELF studies vary in terms of disciplinary and analytical frameworks, they produce similar results, corroborating and validating one another to demonstrate common characteristics of BELF communication. In the same vein, Pullin (2010) argues that accumulation of small qualitative studies on different aspects of BELF can contribute to our knowledge of BELF (p. 461).

An example of common characteristics of BELF communication resulted from this type of 'across-research-site triangulation' presented by Ehrenreich (2016) is that BELF users in different workplaces in different regions unanimously regard English as '(only) a tool to get the job done' (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010; see also Kubota 2016), using a metaphor of mobile phones or computers (Ehrenreich 2011:21, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010: 399). Another example is that BELF users mention 'the length of relationship' as an important factor for successful communication (e.g. Ehrenreich 2009, 2011, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010).

The present research therefore adopts the across-research-site triangulation as an effective and practical way to analyse data gathered in respective workplaces. Referring to earlier studies in a variety of fields on the use of English in the globalised workplace, the next section (Section 3.3) discusses characteristics of BELF communication in a more detailed manner.

3.3 Findings from previous research on BELF

As discussed in Section 3.2.1.1, what distinguishes BELF from ELF is the 'B'—namely, the business domain. The importance of the domain is repeatedly emphasised by BELF researchers.

For example, Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2010) explain that the 'B' of BELF, the context of business, is 'of utmost importance' to get the job done (p. 205). Kankaanranta and Planken (2010: 381) argue that the business domain is characterised 'by its goal-oriented (inter)actions, drive for efficient[8] use of such resources as time and money, and an overall aspiration for win-win scenarios among business partners' (p. 381). Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2013) also maintain that the goal-oriented nature characterises BELF communication, through which interlocutors aim to get the job done and create rapport. Kankaanranta et al. (2015) further argue that getting the job done and maintaining rapport with their business partners are the two primary characteristics of successful BELF interactions (pp. 129-130). In line with this argument, the next two sections (Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2) discuss the two characteristics of BELF communication respectively in a more detailed manner.

3.3.1 Transactional nature of BELF communication

As briefly touched on in Section 3.2.3, English is only one of the tools business people use to get the job done. Section 3.3.1 explains the transactional nature of BELF communication, taking up four aspects: the tendency to prioritise the content of communication over grammatical correctness (Section 3.3.1.1), the strategic use of formal English and the power of ideology (Section 3.3.1.2), the use of direct expressions (3.3.1.3), and not to 'let pass' to avoid misunderstanding (Section 3.3.1.4).

3.3.1.1 Prioritising content over form

For successful business communication, BELF users generally prioritise accuracy and clarity of

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[8] Louhiala-Salminen (1996) discusses 'efficiency' is the key word among her research participants (p. 47). Ehrenreich (2009: 137, 142) presents a similar comment.

information over grammatical correctness, using English as a tool to get the work done. For example, Kankaanranta and Planken (2010) analyse their interview data and summarise that 'reaching for NS criteria is not a prerequisite for success in BELF. Rather, being able to use the language strategically is seen as vital' (p. 402). In a similar vein, Ehrenreich (2010) reports that conformity with 'standard' English is 'seen as a fairly irrelevant concept' (p. 418) at a German multinational supplier for transport systems, as long as people work there can exchange necessary information effectively and efficiently. Cogo (2012a) also indicates how the staff at a small multinational information technology (IT) company put greater importance on content than form of communication, not only in the spoken mode but also in the written mode. Prioritising work competence over language accuracy is not a practice limited to multinational companies in Europe; it is commonly observed among BELF users in other contexts (see Section 3.5 for Japanese examples).

It should be noted, however, that at times business people feel that they need to be more oriented to native-speaker correctness for job success. The following subsection discusses this issue in detail, paying attention to the role of NS-norm-based language ideologies.

3.3.1.2 The strategic use of formal English: the power of 'standard' language ideology

As discussed in the previous section (Section 3.3.1.1), Ehrenreich (2010) argues that in BELF situations, native speaker proficiency in English is neither expected nor necessarily beneficial. However, she simultaneously refers to 'important written texts' as exceptions, in which 'correctness' is required (p. 417). In other words, when certain written texts such as annual reports and corporate websites target a wider public (i.e. shareholders and clients) the company needs to demonstrate its professionalism and its global leadership by delivering texts that do conform to 'standard' English, as that standard is widely believed to be more accurate and more intelligible.

Cogo (2012a) also demonstrates that while participants in her study generally consider 'correctness' in terms of form as unimportant, there are occasions on which precise conformity to the NS norm is beneficial. That is, since the IT company is located in London and many of the firms they do business with are managed by English native speakers, the staff has to speak English 'well' when dealing with general sales activities or the marketing aspects of the business that requires an 'English external face' (p. 300).[9]

Not only external communication, but also internal communication, especially with superiors or management, is important because these stakeholders have the authority to make decisions about assigning positions and tasks to their subordinates. Gill (2009) presents an interesting study, examining the varying levels of competence of the sub-varieties of Malaysian English and whether they are viewed as acceptable and appropriate for different situations occurring in the workplace. In the study, managers and senior executives at a major bank listen to the audio recording of oral presentations given by six speakers and decide whether the speakers are suitable for delivering presentations on behalf of their organisation to internal colleagues/ superiors, or to external Malaysians/ foreigners (British, Australians, Canadians)/ foreigners (Japanese, Koreans). Gill finds that those in managerial positions consider presentations given by speakers with a markedly thick Malay accent and greater syntactical variation as only acceptable for internal presentations only at the colleague level (p. 147). The results demonstrate that the Malaysian employees are expected to achieve the level of 'standard' Malay English, which is acceptable for delivering business presentations to internal senior management and to those external to the organization.

In looking at when and how BELF users conform to 'standard' English, as Cogo (2016a)

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[9] Cogo (2016a) advances the argument further. Instead of the distinction between external and internal communication, she proposes applying the distinction between front-stage and back-stage (Goffman 1956) to business communication practices (Cogo 2016a: 42).

claims, it is important to pay more attention to the role of ideologies (p. 42; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1 for the strong influence of language ideologies). Cogo maintains that dominant ideologies—English native speakers' norms in many cases of the global workplace—do not allow flexible use of language (Cogo 2016a: 44; see also Seidlhofer 2011, 2018). Thus, competent BELF users who understand the power of language ideologies strategically choose to adhere to 'standard' English when it is advantageous to get the job done effectively and efficiently, even though they know 'correct' English can be unnecessary or redundant in order to get the message across.

The goal-oriented nature of BELF communication can also be observed in the strategic use of direct expressions, to which I now turn.

3.3.1.3 The use of direct expressions

Collaborative manners among interlocutors have been observed in both traditional CA studies[10] and empirical studies in ELF (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1). In the business field, however, negotiations and conflicts of interest among interlocutors are common practice and more attention should naturally be paid to competitive talk (Bjørge 2012, Ehrenreich 2009, Wolfartsberger 2011).[11] Indeed, some research on English communication in globalised companies demonstrate that business people tend to prefer direct expressions, which is one of the frequently observed features of competitive talk, to confirm the content of speech (e.g. Bjørge 2012, Forey 2004, Wolfartsberger 2011). Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2010) explain that directness in

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[10] Traditional conversation analysts have investigated how participants in naturally-occurring talk interact cooperatively with one another (Pomerantz 1984). For example, Sacks (1987 [1973]) explains the preference for agreement, which is elaborated by Drew (1994) as 'preferred actions such as acceptances are normally produced unhesitatingly without delay, are delivered right at the start of the response turn…Dispreferred actions are normally produced in variously mitigated or attenuated forms' (p. 752).

[11] One problem aptly pointed out by Pullin Stark (2009) in collecting data of competitive talk is that researchers are unlikely to gain access to settings where there is overt conflict. (p. 163).

BELF communication means that the main point comes early since 'there is no time to look for the main point' (p. 207). For example, Bjørge (2012) analyses that while ELF users in her corpus prefer using some kind of mitigating strategy to express disagreement, they also use a number of expressions to express direct or unmitigated disagreement. Wolfartsberger (2011) further argues that ELF speakers in business, while employing a variety of collaborative devices, are 'prepared to engage in hard negotiations and do not avoid conflicts' (p. 173), introducing an example of the use of explicit negation with 'no'. Referring to Grässel (1991), Wolfartsberger (2011) explains that disagreements in business interactions 'have to be articulated immediately by the listener, not at some point later' (p. 173). Another example of unhedged 'no' can be found in Pullin (2013), who asserts that the directness in her data, which can be face-threatening in other contexts, is not problematised in the particular meeting context.

Another strategy for getting the job done as quickly as possible is to prevent misunderstanding by 'checking and double checking understanding' (Kankaanranta & Planken 2010: 396). For that purpose, (B)ELF users choose *not* to 'let pass' (Firth 1996) and point out unclear matters on the spot. In the next section, I turn to the earlier research on such a strategy.

3.3.1.4 Not to 'let pass' to avoid misunderstanding

As discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.1.1), Firth (1996) argues that ELF users do not 'let pass' potentially problematic features. Referring to Firth (1996), House (1999) discusses 'the myth of mutual intelligibility' in ELF interactions, which may mask deeper sources of trouble (p. 75). Mauranen (2006) also maintains that ELF speakers let pass only minor imperfections, when they do not hamper intelligibility, in order to maintain sufficient level of intelligibility (p. 148).

Discussing 'not letting it pass', Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) introduce intriguing results from their corpus-assisted discourse analysis of a professional ELF meeting. More specifically,

the authors analyse an international multiparty bridge design meeting in a Southeast Asian country, paying attention to the use of other-repair. Although repairing others' talk is potentially face-threatening,[12] Tsuchiya and Handford report that there are numerous uses of other-repair, especially by the Chair, who intends to facilitate the comprehension of the audience, who have different knowledge and practices. Thus, the authors argue that the Chair's use of other-repair ('not let it pass') shows more emphasis on strong transactional goals to clarify what the speaker means for the sake of the other participants than on interactional goals (p. 124).

At the same time, Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) argue that BELF users' discursive practices can be affected by specific contextual factors in the workplace. In other words, direct expressions are preferred in some contexts because getting the job done as quickly as possible has the utmost importance, whereas, in other contexts, it is necessary to communicate more politely to establish a workable relationship to enhance job efficiency. Focusing on the latter case, the next subsection sheds light on relational-oriented BELF communication.

3.3.2 The importance of small talk

Relational talk is an essential part of BELF competence (Ehrenreich 2016; Planken 2005; Pullin 2010, 2013, 2015), because it facilitates the effectiveness of transactional communication by building a rapport among colleagues and business partners. Out of all forms of interpersonal communication, the importance of small talk, which is 'a prime means of nurturing relations between workers' (Pullin 2010: 456) in business settings has been repeatedly emphasised in previous studies. For instance, Holmes (2005) explains that 'small talk warms people up socially, oils the interpersonal wheels, and gets work started on a positive note' (p. 358). However, 'small

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[12] For this reason, Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) explain that 'self-repair predominates over other-repair' (p. 361).

talk' is more than mere 'social talk' or 'socialising'. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) point out that 'socialising' appears to be a misleading term because 'the "social" aspect of interactions is primarily aimed at establishing a good relationship in order to enhance the conduct of business' (p. 64). In other words, as St John (1996) defines, the purpose of small talk in business contexts is 'to establish a good working relationship through less formal channels and hospitality rather than merely socialize' (p. 10), and the focus of the interaction always remains on business.

The significance of small talk in business and its goal-orientation have been confirmed by a number of BELF studies empirically. For example, Planken (2005), who compares negotiation discourses by professional negotiators and aspiring (i.e. inexperienced) negotiators, finds that the professional negotiators engage in small talk more frequently than the aspiring negotiators and that their talk almost always remains relevant to the main transactional goal of the interaction. Pullin (2010) also argues the essential functions of small talk in the workplace. She analyses talk-in-interaction among employees working for an international company based in Switzerland and finds that small talk functions in building, maintaining, repairing, and reinforcing rapport and solidarity.

While BELF users recognise the importance of small talk, it is often difficult for them to engage in small talk to break the ice, off their usual business topics (e.g. Ehrenreich 2016, Pullin 2010). This issue will be further argued with empirical data from the present research in Chapters 5 and 7.

Thus far, the current chapter has reviewed the definitions and findings from previous research on BELF communication, most of which took place in European contexts. The next section (Section 3.4) discusses the need to explore BELF communication in other regional or linguacultural settings.

3.4 Regional imbalance of BELF research

As stated above, the majority of BELF studies have been conducted in European contexts (Ehrenreich 2016). Moreover, participants of those studies are also mostly Europeans (e.g. Cogo 2016b: 74; Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2011: 252; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010: 404). On the other hand, the number of BELF studies in Asian contexts is very small, let alone in Japanese contexts, despite remarkable exceptions (e.g. Konakahara, Murata & Iino 2017, Murata, Konakahara, Iino & Toyoshima 2018, Takino 2016, see also Handford & Matous 2011, 2015; Kubota 2016; Terauchi & Araki 2016, Terauchi & Maswana 2015; Tsuchiya & Handford 2014). Ehrenreich (2016) points out that this 'European, or more specifically, Finnish and German bias' (p. 152) may be emerging in BELF research and calls for more empirical studies with Asian perspectives.

The present research is intended to counterbalance the unevenness of existing BELF research by exploring a case in Japan, with careful contextualisation of the findings. In analysing the Japanese participants' use of English in the classroom/workplace as well as perception towards their communication in English, it is important not to solely depend on the framework of BELF research, most of which is developed in Europe, but also to understand how English is learned and used in Japan, since, as Ehrenreich (2016) argues, BELF communication is different from place to place, shaped dynamically by its particular context (p. 151). Thus, the rest of this chapter (Section 3.5) explicates English educational policy/practice and actual use of English in Japan, after highlighting the differences between the Japanese contexts and European ones (Section 3.5.1).

3.5 English education and use in Japanese professional contexts

3.5.1 Contextual differences between Japanese speakers of English and European counterparts

Before applying BELF research framework, which had been developed mainly in Europe, to Japanese cases, two differences need to be highlighted between the two contexts: relatively low frequency of English use in Japan and low English performance of Japanese speakers of English. First, Japanese people generally have fewer opportunities to use English than European counterparts.[13] While the momentum to use English is getting stronger among Japanese people (see Section 3.5.2), the majority of people still rarely have the opportunity to use English in their daily lives (D'Angelo 2018, Morrow 2004, Seargenant 2009, Takino 2016).[14] It contrasts with the case of people in Europe, where multilingualism is a matter of fact and English is frequently used as a lingua franca (Cogo & Jenkins 2010). Even at companies with global operations in Japan, as Terauchi and Maswana's (2015) survey reveals, English is used still much less frequently than the Japanese language (p. 92, see also Kubota (2011) for the low frequency of English use at work in Japan).

Second, Japanese people in general have lower proficiency and less confidence in English, while European counterparts are reported to be more confident in communicating in English (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2). Indeed, a number of studies have pointed out the low performance of Japanese learners of English in general (e.g. Butler & Iino 2005, Koike 2008, Negishi & Tono

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[13] While linguistic situations of each country in Europe differ considerably (see Ehrenreich 2016: 146 for a German example), this section discusses the general tendency of prevalent use of English as a lingua franca in Europe.

[14] It should be noted, however, that Japan is by no means ethnically or linguistically homogeneous country (Kubota 2002, Yamada 2015) and the number of non-Japanese residents in Japan is ever-increasing (Ministry of Justice, 2017). For example, there are native-born Chinese- or Korean- speaking residents (oldcomers) and newcomers who speak Portuguese or Spanish in Japan (Castro-Vázquez 2013).

2014, Seargeant 2009, Stanlaw 1992, Takino 2016). For example, Negishi and Tono (2014) state that 80% of Japanese learners of English fall within CEFR A1/A2 (basic user) level, and less than 20% within B1/B2 (independent) level. ETS (2015) reports that the mean score of Japanese-born test takers on TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) is 513, which falls within TOEIC level C (independent user – threshold level).[15]

Focusing on business people specifically, the shortage of Japanese personnel who can communicate well enough for global work has been also pointed out by researchers (e.g. Iwasaki 2015). A large-scale questionnaire survey conducted by Ikuo Koike and Hajime Terauchi (Koike & Terauchi 2008; Koike, Terauchi, Takada & Matsui 2010; Terauchi & Araki 2016) report that the research participants—7354 Japan-based business people who have higher TOEIC score (within the band of 687-737) than average Japanese test-takers[16]—feel that their English proficiency is insufficient for efficient global business communication.

As for the participants of the current research, while being elite professionals who graduated from a competitive university/graduate school and work for one of the leading construction companies in Japan, they evaluate their English proficiency is very low. Indeed, scores of the TOEIC test they took at the beginning of the intensive English course (within the band of 325-545) were lower than those of average Japanese test-takers (for the detailed profiles of the participants, see Chapter 5).

In sum, these findings from previous studies on English proficiency of Japanese business people contrasts with the fact that many (B)ELF researchers in Europe conduct their research based on the assumption that (B)ELF users are 'minimally bilingual and often multilingual'

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[15] English proficiency of each individual is of course different depending his/her educational backgrounds, profession, position, company, or industry. For examples of studies on more proficient and experienced Japanese (B)ELF users, see Murata and Iino (2016) (academic contexts), Konakahara et al. (2017) and Takino (2016) (business contexts).

[16] The average score of test-takers who took TOEIC test in Japan in December 2017 is 587.2.

(Pullin 2015: 33; e.g. Cogo 2012a, Pullin Stark 2009, Rogerson-Revell 2007) and 'fluent or expert users' (Cogo 2009: 259; e.g. Cogo 2010; Mauranen 2006). It should be noted, therefore, that previous (B)ELF studies conducted in Europe seem to have placed a disproportionate emphasis on 'participants with a high proficiency level' (Jenkins 2007: 85). Ehrenreich (2009) is cautious about the 'optimistic conceptualization of ELF speakers as "highly proficient"' and claims that ELF speakers can be 'highly non-proficient' and insecure communicators (p. 145). Cogo (2009) also argues that non-expert speakers may behave differently from her participants, who are language teachers in a higher education institution (p. 270). Thus, one has to be careful when comparing results from previous BELF studies mainly on European MNC employees, who need to have English communication skills to get hired (Ehrenreich 2010: 417), with those from studies on Japanese employees, who do not necessarily need to possess high skills in English to get hired and promoted (Kubota 2016: 167), at least before the acceleration of the globlalisation.

Keeping these critical perspectives in mind, the next section (Section 3.5.2) discusses how the use of English is increasing among Japanese business people due to globalisation.

3.5.2 Globalisation of Japanese businesses and changes in company policies

In response to globalisation, many Japanese companies are taking various measures to cultivate human resources who can operate globally: hiring employees and executives with various linguacultural backgrounds, making English the official company language, or simply encouraging existing Japanese employees to learn/use English. These company policies can change the language situation of Japanese employees—even those who used to need only Japanese for work communication—virtually overnight.

A major momentum to promote English for business communication in Japan occurred in 2010, when Fast Retailing Co., the operator of the Uniqlo casual clothing chain, and Rakuten

Inc., the Internet service company, announced their plans to make English the official company language by 2012 (*Mainichi Japan*, June 24, 2010, *The Japan Times*, May 18, 2010). The news was taken up by the media repeatedly and stirred a heated debate among Japanese people.[17] More recently, Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Ltd., the leading pharmaceutical in Japan, which has an L1 French speaker as its president since 2014, is currently in the process of making English the official company language. The company announced that it requires that new recruits possess the score of 730 or more on TOEIC (*The Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, January 23, 2011).[18] For another example, Shiseido Company, Ltd., the leading cosmetic company in Japan, announced that it would make English the official company language for written documents at the headquarters by 2018 (*The Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, February 20, 2017).

As a result of these changes in company policies, existing Japanese employees, who used to need only Japanese language for work, are put under pressure to acquire necessary English skills while working.[19] The participants of the present research also fit in this category, entering the company with no or little prospect of using English for work. Having overviewed the increasing need for English communication in the workplace where Japanese business people work, the next section moves on to the discussion of what kind of 'English' they use.

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[17] Furthermore, in the same year (i.e., 2010), Panasonic Corporation, an electronic product manufacturer, announced plans to recruit approximately 80% of new graduates from abroad (*The Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 18, 2010), and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. released the news that it will recruit approximately 4,000 employees from overseas in the next five years (*The Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, August 30, 2010).

[18] TOEIC tests are extremely popular in Japan and extensively used by Japanese companies to measure their employees' English proficiency (Saito & Shibata 2011, Kubota 2011). Yet, the adoption of TOEIC as the screening test for business communication competence is controversial, which will be discussed in Chapter 9.

[19] Those who do not possess enough English proficiency are struggling to acquire necessary skills. Some attend in-house language training offered by the company, and others go to outside language training providers. Berlitz Japan Inc., a language instruction and cross cultural training provider, showed a 50 % increase of new students belonging to corporations in the first-quarter of 2010 compared with the same quarter of the previous fiscal year. Another English school, Gaba, reported a 12% increase in the number of new contracts in the first half of 2010 (*The Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 18, 2010). According to Yano Research Institute, the language business market in Japan, of which English language classes for adults account for the largest share, is steadily growing and projected to achieve 868.2 billion yen for FY2017 (Yano Research Institute 2017).

3.5.3 Prevalent use of ELF by Japanese business people

Findings from previous research on the use of English by Japanese business professionals have revealed that business communication is increasingly conducted in ELF contexts (D'Angelo 2018, Konakahara et al. 2017, Murata 2016a, Terauchi, Fujita & Naito 2015). For example, Terauchi, Fujita and Naito (2015) present results from an online questionnaire survey with 909 Japanese businesspersons at the senior manager level or above at companies with global operations, focusing on the English meetings they attend. The study reports that more than 70% of meeting attendees are non-native speakers of English (including Japanese) (Terauchi et al.2015: 66). The authors also introduce findings from the interviews with 12 research participants, who comment on the increasing percentage of non-native meeting attendees, especially from India, China, Hong Kong, and Singapore. For another example, D'Angelo (2016) provides findings from a long open-ended questionnaire survey to graduates from the Department of World Englishes, Chukyo University, Japan. It reveals that many graduates work with people from Asian countries including China, India, Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore (p. 156). The result parallels with Konakahara, Murata and Iino (2017), who analyse questionnaire responses of graduates from a Japanese university and find that the majority of the informants use English with non-native speakers—most frequently with their Asian counterparts, Chinese in particular (p. 133). While these studies confirm the extensive use of English as a lingua franca in Asia (Kirkpatrick 2010, Morrow 1995, Murata & Jenkins 2009),[20] English educational policy and practice in Japan does not properly reflect the reality of English used in the globalised world, to which I now turn.

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[20] At the same time, however, it should be kept in mind that English is not the only lingua franca Japanese business people need or actually use for work communication. The importance of other languages, the Chinese language in particular, is pointed out by Konakahara et al. (2017) and Kubota (2016). Moreover, language skills are a mere part of professional competence. As discussed in Section 3.3.1, English is only a tool for Japanese business people and, just like BELF users in other contexts, professional competence to get the work done is considered more important (Handford & Matous 2015, Kubota 2016, Terauchi et al. 2015).

3.5.4 Critical review of Japanese language policy and practice regarding English education

This section examines English educational policy and practice in Japan, provided and supervised by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), which exerts a great influence at all levels and in all aspects of education in Japan (Butler & Iino 2005, Carpenter 2012).[21] Since all the participants of the present research received education in Japan from kindergarten to university/graduate school and studied English for at least eight years (from junior-high school to the first two years at university), reviewing MEXT policies and actual English teaching practice in Japan is relevant as a way to gain an understanding of their English language study experience at school. For this purpose, the following sections examine MEXT policies regarding English education (Section 3.5.4.1) and actual English teaching practice in the classroom (Section 3.5.4.2) respectively.

3.5.4.1 MEXT's policy regarding English education and its NS orientation

MEXT policies regarding English education have supported the idea of English as a global lingua franca (e.g. MEXT 2003, 2011, 2014), at least on the surface level, and have been making efforts to improve national English curricula.[22] As early as in 2003, a well-known action plan clearly stated that English is 'the common international language[23] in linking people who have different mother tongues' and 'cultivating "Japanese with English Abilities" is an extremely important issue

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[21] The Ministry presents *the Course of Study* that serves as the fundamental standards for curricula 'to ensure that children are able to receive a certain level of education wherever they are in Japan' (MEXT homepage). Textbooks used at elementary, junior high, and high schools also need to be authorised by the Minister to ensure compliance with *the Course of Study*.

[22] The strong emphasis on improving English education is demonstrated, for example, in recent changes in English classes at every level. At the secondary level, for example, the Ministry increased English class hours offered at junior high schools by approximately 30% and regulated that English classes in high schools were to be basically conducted in English (MEXT 2011). At the tertiary level, MEXT launched the Top Global University Project in 2014, which promotes English as a medium of instruction at university 'to enhance the international compatibility and competitiveness of higher education in Japan' (MEXT 2014b).

[23] `English as a common international language' is the English translation by MEXT of the original term in Japanese (国際共通語). 'English as a lingua franca' can also be translated as 国際共通語 in Japanese.

for the future of our children and for the further development of our country' (MEXT 2003: opening remarks by the MEXT minister).[24] MEXT (2016) also acknowledges English is important 'for communication with various people, which is required in any profession Japanese children will engage in in the future' (p. 8). Thus, MEXT apparently understands the role of English as a lingua franca for business communication, a tool to communicate with people of various linguacultural backgrounds and survive in the globlised market.

On the other hand, however, actual guidelines provided by MEXT have regarded English as a foreign language based on NS norms, although there are some signs of change in the descriptions.[25] As Murata (2016b) points out, Japanese policy makers are not aware of how English is actually used in global situations and operate under the NS yardstick (p. 80). Muarata and Iino (2018) also argue that MEXT policy documents never explicitly discuss the nature of 'E' (English), assuming there is just one 'English', i.e. NS English (p. 402, see also Seidlhofer 2011, 2018a). To put it another way, MEXT continues to be 'norm-dependent' (Kachru 1985) and relies on inner-circle countries (Kachru 1985) for standards to reinforce its own English education, instead of presenting indigenous models of English (Hino 2012). As a result, actual English language teaching practice in the classroom is largely oriented to NS English, to which now I turn.

3.5.4.2 Problems of English language teaching practice in Japan

Being oriented to NS English, English language teaching (ELT) practice in Japan does not reflect the realities of ELF. Problems regarding ELT practice at Japanese schools have been pointed out in several aspects, including 'correctness' orientation (Butler & Iino 2005, D'Angelo 2018, Honna

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[24] See Butler and Iino (2005) for a constructive criticism on the 2003 action plan.
[25] As an example of a positive change, while MEXT (2003) obviously considers 'a native speaker of English' as the reference point, MEXT (2011) does not refer to 'native' teachers and instead claims taking advantage of 'foreign' teachers as well as Japanese people who have experience in working/studying abroad.

& Takeshita 2003, Mimatsu 2011, Murata 2016b), and in relation to this, specific recruitment of NS teachers at the secondary schools (D'Angelo 2018, Mimatsu 2011, Suzuki, Liu & Yu 2018) as well as at universities (Murata 2016b), while some positive yet slow changes are reported to be observed in the area of material development, introducing more characters with non-native backgrounds (Kawashima 2018, Takahashi 2014).

Above all, 'correctness' orientation based on NS norms is a prominent feature of Japanese ELT (Butler & Iino 2005, Silver & Skuja-Steele 2005). A number of researchers have argued that this tendency is due to competitive university entrance examinations, which 'usually predominantly assess their test-takers on the basis of correctness according to the inner-circle native speaker norms' (Murata & Iino 2018: 405; see also Butler & Iino2005, D'Angelo 2018, Mimatsu 2011, Murata 2016b, Silver & Skuja-Steele 2005, Suzuki et al. 2018). In order to prepare for such examinations, Japanese teachers of English tend to 'focus on transmitting knowledge about native English rather than on how to use English for communication (Mimatsu 2011: 259). Butler and Iino (2005) also discuss that the focus of Japanese ELT is 'on memorization of grammar and vocabulary for translating English into Japanese, with little emphasis on its use for communication' (p. 28, see also Suzuki et al. 2018: 496). Students spend a large portion of class hours to engage in fill-in-the blank exercises with only one correct answer. Consequently, Japanese students are frequently found to be reticent to speak out in class (D'Angelo 2018, Iino & Murata 2016, Murata 2011).

Among inner-circle countries (Kachru 1985), the most influential one for Japanese English education since the Second World War has been the United States followed by the United Kingdom (D'Angelo 2018, Fennelly 2016, Mimatsu 2011). Mimatsu (2011) reports the result from a questionnaire that 92.5 % of Japanese teachers of English and 80.0 % of native assistant language teachers equate 'contemporary Standard English' with the English of the United States

(p.256). Her interview data also show examples of Japanese teachers' 'unquestioning acceptance of American English as the norm' (p. 257) and reluctance to teach different varieties of English (p. 258). Thus, Japanese learners of English tend to have a fixed view of English: it is a language spoken by native speakers (especially Americans), and they need to study it with a strict focus on grammatical accuracy for university entrance examinations.

The participants of the present research graduated from competitive universities, which suggests that they studied English mainly to get good scores to pass entrance examinations rather than to gain communicative skills required for their future career.[26] Their attitudes as passive learners of NS English can last after they started working in the business world, even during the intensive English training provided by their company, which should be free from the influence of MEXT guidelines and supervision, as will be discussed in later chapters (Chapters 6-8).

Having overviewed the policy and practice regarding English education in Japan, the next section sheds light on how English is used in Japan, especially by Japanese business professionals. As discussed in Section 3.4, most BELF studies have been carried out in Europe with European participants (Ehrenreich 2016; e.g. Cogo 2016b, Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2011, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010). In adapting the European-born framework of BELF research to a Japanese case, it is useful to review previous studies on Japanese professionals' own use of English and challenges they face, referring to a variety of business-related fields (BELF, ESP, IBC, etc.).

3.5.5 Challenges in oral communication for Japanese BELF users

This section focuses on challenges in BELF communication for Japanese business people,

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[26] This is also confirmed when I conducted individual interviews with them. All the participants admitted that the time when they had studied English most seriously was before university entrance examinations.

resulting from 'correctness'-oriented learning experience (Section 3.5.5.1) and unfamiliarity with other varieties of English (Section 3.5.5.2) respectively. As discussed in Section 3.5.4.2, Japanese ELT is largely 'correctness'-oriented based on NS norms with less emphasis on actual communication, which is likely to make Japanese learners of English hesitant to use English as their own tool for communication. This tendency lasts after they start working and Japanese business people are more likely to feel difficulties in oral communication, especially speaking (e.g. Cowling 2007, Takino 2016, Terauchi et al. 2015), although challenge in speaking compared to other skills (i.e. listening, writing, reading) can also be observed among BELF users in other regions (e.g. Khoo 1994, Rogerson-Revell 2007). Araki et al. (2014) argue that oral skills in business encounters are one of the key aspects in much need of support for Japanese business people (p. 57). Koike et al. (2008) also indicate that even relatively highly proficient business people in Japan have difficulty in speaking and presenting their opinions/views in English.

In order to understand why and how Japanese business people face the challenge of oral communication, the following subsections divide the problem into two categories— namely, challenge in speaking due to 'correctness'-oriented learning experience (Section 3.5.5.1) and challenge in listening to other varieties of English (Section 3.5.5.2).

3.5.5.1 Challenge in speaking due to 'correctness'-oriented learning experience

A number of studies point out that Japanese business people suffer from confidence problems, especially in speaking' due to their English learning experience at school (e.g. Cowling 2007, Takino 2016, Terauchi et al. 2015). For example, Cowling (2007), who carried out a needs analysis in order to create a syllabus for first to third year employees at a leading Japanese manufacturing company, reports how his research participants feel uncomfortable or embarrassed when speaking in English, because of 'their lack of English skill and confidence' (p. 432). He analyses that these

participants often suffer from confidence problems because they care too much about accuracy, as a result of school and university English courses concentrated on reading and grammar with little practice of speaking (p. 431). Similarly, Terauchi et al. (2015) point out Japanese business people's inferior complex about their own English proficiency as a problem with Japanese education. The authors find that more than 60% of their questionnaire respondents are not confident in their English proficiency and feel intimidated to speak out in meetings (p. 84). It is noteworthy that quite a few respondents indicate that they hesitate to speak in English when there are Japanese speakers of English who can speak better (Terauchi et al. 2015: 85, 108). While Terauchi et al. (2015) do not elaborate what they think is the problem about Japanese ELT, fear of speaking in front of other fluent Japanese speakers of English is also reported by Iino and Murata's (2016), who elucidate Japanese university students' inferiority complex against NSs or near-native speakers of English in an academic setting. Being constrained by NS norms, Iino and Murata analyse, L1 Japanese students are afraid of making 'mistakes' and cannot speak up confidently in class. In other words, Japanese business people, who received this type of education, face difficulties in oral communication because they keep the attitude of EFL learners, who are taught to pursue grammatical 'correctness' based on NS norms, even after they start using English for business communication.

In addition to stating their opinions, it is of course necessary for Japanese business people to understand what interlocutors are talking about for smooth and effective oral communication. The next subsection focuses on the challenge Japanese BELF users face caused by their unfamiliarity with varieties of English other than American or British English.

3.5.5.1.2 Challenge in listening to other varieties of English

Previous studies point out another reason why Japanese business people find it difficult to

communicate orally in English is because they are not familiar with varieties of English other than American or British one (see also Section 3.5.4.2). According to Terauchi and Maswana (2015), their questionnaire respondents indicate that one of the problems in attending meetings in English is listening to a variety of English pronunciations (p. 98). Unlike previous findings that English spoken by non-native speakers is often easier to understand than native-speakers' (e.g. Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2012: 266), respondents in Terauchi et al. (2015) comment that Englishes spoken by other non-native speakers are more difficult to listen to. Terauchi and Maswana (2015)[27] suggest that the unfamiliarity with varieties other than American or British English is one of the causes for the difficulty, another being the relatively 'low' English proficiency of Japanese people. In other words, Japanese business people do not have sufficient skills to communicate with other non-native speakers in English because Japanese ELT fails to introduce varieties of English, reflecting the reality of ELF in the globalised world. As Konakahara et al. (2017) point out, Japanese business people often realise this gap between NS-oriented ELT and ELF-oriented actual business situations and feel 'the need for ability to cope with diverse English' (p. 140), after they start using English as a business lingua franca.[28]

　　As the later chapters reveal, the participants of the current research also report their difficulties in oral communication. Based on the findings from previous studies introduced above, this study intends to analyse the participants' use and perception of English, paying attention to their past learning experience behind it.

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[27] Terauchi et al. (2015) and Terauchi and Maswana (2015) analyse the same data: the former uses an ESP approach, while the latter takes an ELF one.

[28] On the other hand, however, Konakahara et al. (2017) analyse that these Japanese business people continue to adhere to NS English to some extent, based on their educational experience at school as well as stay-abroad experience in inner-circle countries (p. 136).

3.6 Summary

The present chapter has discussed English as a business lingua franca, reviewing previous studies in two foci: (i) the development of research on BELF, which was originated and developed mainly in Europe and (ii) English education/use in Japanese professional contexts.

First, reviewing BELF research, the present chapter has defined that BELF is communication in ELF in business contexts, where interactants of different linguacultural backgrounds efficiently as well as collaboratively negotiate meaning to get a particular job done. Focusing on the transactional nature of BELF communication, this chapter has explicated how business professionals use English as a tool in specific job contexts. While BELF users generally consider native-speaker 'correctness' unnecessary as long as they can exchange necessary information for the job accurately and clearly, there are times when they strategically choose to conform to 'standard' English if it is beneficial for job success. Moreover, while they recognise the importance of relational talk, they also use unmitigated expressions in competitive or time-constrained situations. In other words, BELF users are able to fine-tune their communication with their interlocutors flexibly and strategically according to a specific job context.

The second part of this chapter has moved its focus onto Japanese business contexts, in which the present research is carried out. Clarifying contextual differences between Japanese speakers of English and European counterparts, it has critically argued that English educational policy and practice in Japan are often NS-oriented. Although the momentum to study and use English is getting stronger, Japanese business people are reported to be not confident in their English proficiency, especially oral communication skills. This chapter has pointed out two reasons for the inferior complex they have. For one, Japanese ELT is so 'correctness'-oriented based on NS norms, focusing on grammar and vocabulary, that students have few opportunities to use English for actual communication. For another, only inner-circle Englishes, American

English in particular, are introduced as the norm at Japanese schools and Japanese students have few opportunities to use English as a lingua franca with other non-native speakers until they start working in the globalised world.

Keeping in mind that BELF communication is shaped dynamically by its particular context (Ehrenreich 2016: 151), the present research aims to analyse the participants' use of and perception towards English both in a learning situation and in job settings with careful contextualisation of the findings. For that purpose, this study adopts multiple-source, multiple-method and multiple-administration research design, which the next chapter (Chapter 4) explicates.

Chapter 4

Research design

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the design of the research methodology of the present research and its implementation. As I have explained in Chapter 2, the present research is an attempt to capture a holistic view of BELF communication in a particular case of Japanese construction engineers in a context-sensitive manner. More specifically, it investigates the participants' use of and perception towards English both in the classroom and workplace, combining CA (Conversation Analysis) methods with an ethnographic perspective, including interviews, observations (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4). While placing the main focus on the four engineers and their emic point of view, this research also explores perceptions of other stakeholders such as a human personnel person and language training providers in order to make the research context more 'transparent' (Ehrenreich 2016). For this purpose, the present research adopts a multi-method, multi-source research design (Jasso-Aguilar 2005, Long 2005), drawing on the concepts and methodology of needs analysis (NA) (Dudely-Evans & St John 1998) as well as BELF research with an ethnographic perspective (e.g. Cogo & Dewey 2012, Ehrenreich 2009).

In addition, the current research has a longitudinal aspect in that it follows the participants during and after the language training program, administering interviews multiple times (multiple-administration). Closely collaborating with the participants for a certain period of time,[1] I claim that the present research is a co-constructed event accomplished jointly and locally by all of us. As a researcher/advisor/participant-observer, I consider myself not as a mere recipient of the

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[1] The 10-week intensive English training program began in January 2012 and the last interview with one of the participants was conducted in January 2013.

information from the participants but as an active player who also has some influence on the participants through interaction (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008, Mann 2011).

The next section (Section 4.2) introduces the concept and methodology of needs analysis (NA) and discusses why they are relevant to the present research. Section 4.3 argues the significance of combining multiple methods/sources, which is adopted by a number of NA as well as BELF researchers (e.g. Cogo 2012a, Cowling 2007, Ehrenreich 2010, Jasso-Aguilar 2005, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010, Long 2005, Pullin 2010, Terauchi et al. 2015, Wozniak 2010) in identifying and understanding the context of the participants' use of English. Section 4.4 provides an overview of the organisations and participants on which the present research focuses. The contextual information is followed in Section 4.5, in which I explain how I conducted the pilot study. Section 4.6 moves on to the discussion of each method I utilise: a questionnaire, interviews, classroom observation, analysis of talk-in-interaction, and email communication. Furthermore, Section 4.7 describes how I followed the program participants after the language training program.

Finally, the chapter discusses potential problems and limitations of the methodology (Section 4.8). The paucity of talk-in-interaction data in the workplace and the influence of my role as a learning advisor on the data collection process will be pointed out and discussed. Focusing on only four participants, this research does not intend to provide representative findings regarding BELF communication in general. Instead, it aims to provide in-depth description of a particular case in a relatively unexplored area (i.e. Japanese professional contexts) and hopes to contribute to 'across-research-site triangulation' in the field of BELF (Ehrenreich 2016; see also Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3).

4.2 The concept and methodology of needs analysis (NA) and its relevance

According to R. West (1994), NA covers what learners as well as users are/will be required to do

with English for a specific job, and how they might best master it during the period of training (p. 1). Dudely-Evans and St John (1998) explain that the concept of NA includes various aspects of learners as follows:

A. professional information: the tasks and activities learners are/will be using English for

B. personal information: previous learning experiences, cultural information, reasons for attending the course

C. English language information: what their current skills and language use are

D. the learners' lacks: the gap between (C) and (A)

E. language learning information: effective ways of learning the skills and language in (D)

F. professional communication information: knowledge of how language and skills are used in the target situation

G. what is wanted from the course

H. information about the environment in which the course will be run

<p align="right">(extracted from Dudely-Evans & St John 1998: 125)</p>

Thus, the concept of NA encompasses different aspects of English learners/users' use and perception both in the classroom and workplace. Taking advantage of this feature, the present research intends to explore what research participants actually learn and need to learn in an English training program, and how they use it in the actual workplace.

In BELF research, several NA studies have been conducted in order to discuss the concept of BELF competence and develop curricula suitable for (future) BELF users. For example, Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011) report findings from an online survey designed to find about BELF usage among internationally operating business professionals working in five

Finland-based companies. Pullin (2015), who introduces the case of the School of Management Vaud in Switzerland, claims 'the importance of context and needs analysis in designing courses that are relevant for target students and identifying appropriate learning aims and outcomes' (p. 38). The current research, while being in line with this argument, is unique in that it conducts NA not only at the beginning of the training program, but also discuss its results during and after the program, comparing the original results from NA to the participants' actual use of English in an BELF environment.

In collecting data on the language needs and use in a particular context, the significance of utilising multiple sources and methods has been argued repeatedly (e.g. Jasso-Aguilar 2005, Long 2005, L. West 1984, Wozniak 2010), to which now I turn.

4.3 The merits of utilising multiple sources and methods

In order to understand the language needs and use of the participants, the present research uses various methods (questionnaire, interview, observation, email communication) and sources (the main participants, teachers, staff members at the language training provider, human resources personnel, textbooks, documents). The NA methodology using multiple sources and methods is most discussed and sophisticated in the field of ESP, because, according to Dudely-Evans and St John (1998), NA is 'the corner stone of ESP' (p. 122; see also Cowling 2007, Jasso-Aguilar 2005, R. West 1994). For example, L. West (1984) provides a detailed account of the methodology, describing how to utilise various sources of information, including reference books on job descriptions, vocational education materials, jobsite observations, and vocational instructors. L. West claims that target situation analysis should not be conducted relying on one source, e.g. either learners, domain experts or applied linguists, but instead on the information from multiple sources. Referring to L. West (1984), Long (2005) also claims that utilising multiple sources and methods

77

is vital for NA. As for sources, for example, Long argues that while 'in-service' learners could make adequate sources that provide valid insights about present or future needs in the workplace, they may know little about the language involved in functioning successfully in their target discourse domains. By contrast, while teachers and linguists can analyse what learners need linguistically, they are outsiders who do not possess firsthand knowledge or experience of learners' tasks.

Based on Long's (2005) argument above, Jasso-Aguilar (2005) conducted NA for hotel maids, employing three methods (participant observation with tape-recording/note-taking, unstructured interviews and written questionnaires) with various sources (housekeepers, an executive housekeeper, a human resource person, supervisors, meetings, and documents). Jasso-Aguilar triangulated the findings by comparing how different informants looked at the same situation or issue. She concludes that voices from insiders (i.e. housekeepers) regarding language needs clearly disagree with institutional needs and interpretations from outsiders (i.e. a human resource person, supervisors), and thus claims for inclusion of the insiders' perception in curriculum development. In a similar vein, Cowling (2007) and Wozniak (2010), who carried out NA in Japanese and French contexts respectively, maintain the advantage of covering multiple sources and methods as well as triangulating the results.

The effective use of multiple methods and sources to comprehend the language needs and actual use in the workplace has also been argued by BELF researchers. In particular, multi-method approach is frequently adopted to conduct holistic accounts of BELF (e.g. Cogo 2012a, Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010, Pullin 2010, Terauchi et al. 2015; see also Ehrenreich 2016 for the overview of BELF studies based on multi-method data). Kankaanranta and Planken (2010) emphasise the strength of multi-method approach, arguing how semi-structured interviews enabled them to dig deeper into the participants' opinions expressed in the

online survey. Similarly, Pullin (2010) claims that her multimethod approach, combining audio recordings, questionnaires, interviews, and field notes, provides a credible and trustworthy analysis of the data drawn from three meetings in an international company based in Switzerland.

The significance of investigating multiple sources has also been argued by researchers in the field of Language Auditing. Reeves and Wright (1996) provide practical and specific guidelines for analysing employees' language use and needs as well as their language skills with minute chart explanation. They encourage language auditors to have interviews not only with postholders who actually participate in the language training and people at personnel departments in charge of the language training but also with people at the senior management level to gain an insight into their company's longer-term language needs.

In line with these arguments above, the present research adopts a multi-method, multi-source approach. Prior to elaborating each method and source, the following section provides an overview of the targets of this research: the company, the intensive English language training program and the research participants, which is essential to contextualise the methodology for this particular case.

4.4 Profiles of the organisations and participants

This section first provides an overview of the Japanese construction company and explains why the company is struggling to have more employees with higher English proficiency, with the aid of a language training provider (Section 4.4.1). Secondly, the content of the customised English language training program will be described in detail (Section 4.4.2). This is followed by the profiles of the participants (Section 4.4.3) and other stakeholders (Section .4.4.)

4.4.1 The Japanese construction company and the language training provider

The main informants of the present research are the four participants of an English training program provided for employees who work for a construction company in Japan. The company, which will be referred to as 'Itabashi Corporation',[2] is one of the leading general contractors in Japan. The company used to engage in building construction, civil engineering and real estate development activities primarily in Japan. However, since the domestic market is mature, the company is struggling to advance into overseas markets, especially those of other Asian countries (Itabashi Corporation's company website and brochure). Placing regional headquarters and offices in North America, Asia, Middle East, Europe, and Oceania, the company can be categorised as multinational company, but the dominant language at its Tokyo headquarters, especially for oral communication, remains solely Japanese.[3] Thus, Itabashi Corporation provides its employees with English language training in order to have more Japanese personnel who can function in English. Especially engineers, who majored in engineering or other science and technology fields at university or graduate school in Japan, tend to have low English proficiency (elementary to low-intermediate, with most participants scoring below 400 on the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) test).[4] In order to improve their communication skills in English, each division of the company, such as architecture, civil engineering, or on-site management, decides which employees participate in language training programs; the decisions are authorised by the personnel department. Once those participants complete the language training, they are likely to be assigned overseas projects in the near future.

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[2] All names of organisations and participants in this research are pseudonymised for the protection of organisational and personal information provided for the research.

[3] Brannen, Piekkari and Tietze (2014) argue that MNCs cross and manage diversity of language frontiers on a daily basis (p. 502). In this sense, Itabashi Corporation is different from typical MNCs studied by European BELF researchers.

[4] Not all the Itabashi engineers take part in the intensive course. If employees possess enough English proficiency already, or do not have time to participate in the intensive course before urgent assignments, they go overseas without receiving any language training.

Itabashi Corporation outsources language training courses through its personnel department to an outside language training provider: the corporate service division of Chiyoda Institute. Chiyoda Institute has been in charge of carrying out a 10-week intensive course for Itabashi Corporation since 1999, twice a year, in summer and in winter. Each course includes between two and six participants. The program is held not on the company premise but in a Chiyoda Institute classroom, which allows program participants to be exempted from work and thus concentrate on their study. Both the headquarters of Itabashi Corporation and Chiyoda Institute are located in metropolitan Tokyo.

The present researh focuses on four participants who took part in the intensive course in winter 2012. The next section describes the detail of the program.

4.4.2 Customised English language training program

The English training program for Itabashi Corporation is completely customised by Chiyoda Institute, with original curriculum and textbooks. Section 5.4.2.1 provides an overview of the 10-week intensive program, which consists of six modules. The following section (Section 5.4.2.2) explains each module.

4.4.2.1 Program overview

The program for Itabashi Corporation offered by Chiyoda Institute is remarkably intensive: the course runs for 10 weeks, from 9:30 am to 5 pm (with a lunch break from 1 to 2 pm), Monday through Friday, which makes a total of 288 hours of study (excluding the time for learning advising provided by the present researcher). According to the program coordinator/sales manager of Chiyoda Institute, who is in charge of the program for Itabashi Corporation, courses provided by the Institute for other companies run typically only once a week, two hours per lesson, for three

months, which makes a total of 24 hours.[5] The intensive program also differs considerably from the typical picture presented by L. West (1984) of VESL (vocational English as a second language) students in training programs or work situations where the learner has only a few hours a week to study (p. 144). The remarkable intensiveness of the program shows Itabashi Corporation's extraordinary emphasis on English language training for its employees as part of its globalisation strategy.

4.4.2.2 Course modules

The program is divided into six modules: core business skills, presentation skills, email & report writing skills, meeting skills, current affairs & discussion, and TOEIC skills. Six different teachers—two Japanese teachers and four native English teachers from Inner-Circle countries (two from the United Kingdom, one from Australia, and the other from the United States)—teach the six modules. In addition, I was in charge of the learning advising session once a week. The weekly schedule of the program is shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 Weekly schedule for the intensive English program

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up
	Self-study	Self-study	Self-study	Self-study	Self-study
10:00	**Core Business Skills**	**Core Business Skills**	**Core Business Skills**	**Core Business Skills**	**Presentation Skills**
	·language focus (L/R/W/S)	·language focus (L/R/W/S)	·language focus (L/R/W/S)	·language focus (L/R/W/S)	·planning, theme
	·vocabulary	·vocabulary	·vocabulary	·vocabulary	·structure
	·business skills (telephone, etc.)	·business skills (telephone, etc.)	·business skills (telephone, etc.)	·business skills (telephone, etc.)	·body language
13:00	·focus on functions	·focus on functions	·focus on functions	·focus on functions	·use of visual aids
	Lunch break				
14:00	**Current affairs & Discussion**	**Email & Report Writing Skills**	**TOEIC Preparation**	**Meeting Skills**	**Presentation Skills**
	·gist reading	·salutations	·Listening section	·agreeing, disagreeing	·signposting, delivery
	·skimming/scanning	·request emails	·listening for ideas	·expressing opinions	·mini/full-length presentation
	·discussions	·reply positive/negative	·listening for details	·summarizing	·FIDIC terms
17:00				·chair a meeting	
			Learning Advising		
18:00					

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[5] Also typically, if the company is satisfied with the course, they renew the contract and continue offering the same course for another three months. This is so that the company can provide language training as their budget permits and change or add new participants.

The present research focuses on three modules: core business skills, presentation skills, and email & report writing skills, with special attention paid to the first. The core business skills module is taught by the 'anchor' teacher, a British male, who spends more time with the participants than other teachers, meeting in the morning from Monday through Thursday for a total of 12 hours every week. The second module, presentation skills, is taught by another British male, who meets the participants once a week for six hours to prepare them to give a 15-minute presentation on their own jobs at the end of the program. The third module, email & reports writing skills, is taught by an American male once a week for three hours.

4.4.3 The four participants of the intensive English training program

The four participants are engineers from different divisions of Itabashi Corporation. Their pseudonyms, age, length of time working for the company, and affiliation are listed in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2 Profiles of the program participants (Itabashi engineers)

Name	Age	Length of time working for the company[6]	Affiliation
Koichi	26	2 years	Project management department
Tatsuro	32	8 years	Architecture department
Hajime	37	13 years	Machinery department
Satoshi	44	20 years	Nuclear facility department

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[6] This information is accurate as of winter 2012, when the four participants participated in the intensive program.

All of them fit into the profile of typical Itabashi program participants: male engineers in their twenties to forties who majored in electric engineering, civil engineering, architecture or other science and technology fields at one of prestigious universities/graduate schools in Japan.

As for language learning experience, they had each studied English for six years in junior high and senior high schools and for one or two years at university. The average score of the TOEIC test they took on the first day of the course was 402.2, the lowest score being 325 (Hajime) and the highest being 545 (Tatsuro).[7] More detailed information on the participants will be provided later in Chapter 6, as it is revealed by the present researh.

While these four engineers are the main focus of the research, I decided to include other stakeholders in the research: staff members at Chiyoda Institute and Itabashi Corporation. As discussed in Section 5.2, while in-service learners (i.e. program participants) can talk about their own language needs and use for their current work situations, language experts (i.e. program coordinators or teachers) are expected to provide metalinguistic information or appropriate decisions on language training. Moreover, although working in the same company, program participants/engineers and human resource personnel who is in charge of the program may have different ideas about employees' communication skills necessary for the job. Thus, cross-referring the data gathered from various stakeholders is vital. The next subsection shows the list of such stakeholders other than the four engineers.

4.4.4 Other stakeholders of the intensive English training program

Two staff members at Chiyoda Institute, who have been working with the Itabashi Corporation's intensive program for a long time, are deeply familiar with the common features of the course

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[7] The participants were required to take TOEIC tests before and after the intensive English language program to measure the effect of the language training. The relevance of the adoption of the TOEIC tests for this purpose will be discussed in Chapter 9.

participants' backgrounds and future work situations. Thus, even though such individuals are outsiders to the company, they can nonetheless provide relevant information on participants' language needs and professional backgrounds. The profiles of these informants are shown in Table 4.3 below. Tsukasa is a Japanese and Greg is a New Zealander.

Table 4.3 Staff Members at Chiyoda Institute

Name	Length of time in charge of the program[8]	Title
Tsukasa	13 years	Program coordinator/ sales manager
Greg	13 years	Chief instructor

Tsukasa was a key contact person for me to get in touch with all the research participants. Prior to the main research project, I conducted unstructured interviews with Tsukasa in July 2010 and August 2011. Tsukasa told me that he, as a sales representative, approached Itabashi Corporation and made the first proposal for the language training program in 1999. Once his proposal was accepted, he and Greg designed the curriculum for Itabashi's intensive course. Greg used to teach the course himself for more than 10 years, and now works on its administration, including developing tailor-made teaching materials for Itabashi Corporation engineers.

During the intensive course, Tsukasa and Greg supervise the entire program as program coordinators. Their job includes hiring and assigning teachers to each module of the course, deciding on and ordering teaching materials, and making sure the course is run smoothly by

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[8] The information is accurate as of winter 2012, when I interviewed them.

talking to course participants and teachers. Thus, even though Tsukasa and Greg are outsiders to Itabashi Corporation, they have been engaging in the intensive language program since its inception of the program and are very familiar with the general pictures of insiders: engineers working for the company.

In order to gain access to Itabashi Corporation, I asked Tsukasa to introduce me to Yoko, a staff member in the personnel department of the company. We visited her at the Tokyo headquarters of Itabashi Corporation, which gave me the first chance to go inside the company.

Tsukasa told me in advance that the person in charge of the intensive course on Itabashi's side changes frequently (six or seven people had held the position within the previous 13 years), and Yoko had been in the position for only several months at the time of the interview.

Table 4.4 Staff Member at Itabashi Corporation

Name	Length of time in charge of the program	Title
Yoko	Several months	Personnel department employee

Because of the gap in knowledge and experience, Tsukasa and Greg are in a position to tell Yoko, who actually works inside the company, about the history and implementation procedures of the language program. Thus, the simplistic dichotomy of insiders and outsiders is found irrelevant to this context, which makes the multi-source analysis desirable.

Through the interviews with Yoko, I obtained not only an overall picture of the intensive course but also opportunities to meet two participants who took part in the intensive course, which led to a pilot study, in the summer of 2011, prior to the main research project. The next section describes how I carried it out.

4.5 The implementation of the pilot study

Both two participants of the pilot study were in their twenties but had different job backgrounds; one was an engineer working at the Tokyo head office, and the other was an on-site manager who had been transferred to nine different cities mostly in the Kansai and Kyushu regions of Japan since he started working for the company.

First, I observed one of their classes, email & report writing skills, for one hour. Then I conducted individual interviews with the two participants for approximately 30 and 40 minutes respectively. Through these interviews as well as listening to their conversations with the instructor in class, or with each other during the break, I collected information regarding the types of jobs performed at Itabashi Corporation and the types of situations in which the participants were likely to use English. I utilised this information to design the questionnaire for the major research.

At the time of this pilot study, the challenge of gaining access to the participants was highlighted. Simply introduced as a researcher who is interested in the corporate use of English, I was given little time to explain the research purpose to the two participants and get to know them, because they were extremely busy studying and preparing for their new job assignment, presumably abroad. In planning the main research project, I felt the need for finding a way to spend more time and build rapport with the participants.

Eventually, I decided to volunteer to serve as a learning advisor for 10 weeks when the next intensive program was carried out. With the consent of Yoko and Tsukasa, the learning advising session was officially incorporated into the curriculum (see Table 4.1 in Section 4.3.2.2), and I was able to gain access to the participants, other teachers, staff members, course textbooks, and relevant materials.

So far, I have provided an overview of the program, the research participants, and the pilot study. With this contextual information, I now move on to the explanation of each method I used for the present research.

4.6 Research methods and procedures

For the present research, a variety of methods (questionnaires, interviews, class observation, recording of talk-in-interaction) were utilised at various stages of the 10-week intensive English language program (at the beginning, during, and at the end of the program) as well as after the program was over. In the following subsections, I explain each method and how I carried it out.

4.6.1 Questionnaire

This section starts with the purpose and design of the questionnaire (Section 4.6.1.1), and then discusses how I administered it (Section 4.6.2.2).

4.6.1.1 The purpose and design of the questionnaire

Administration of a questionnaire is among the most widely used procedures in NA (Long 2005). On the other hand, most of the advantages of questionnaire surveys, such as obtaining sizable amounts of focused, standardised, and organised data from a large sample of respondents, or anonymity (Long 2005), do not apply to the present research because the number of participants is very small. Instead, the purpose of the questionnaire in this research is two-fold. The first is to collect background information on each participant; the second is to use it as an 'interview schedule/guide': a list of questions to be covered closely with every interviewee (Dörnyei 2007: 135; Long 2005: 37).

Based on the results of the pilot study, a written questionnaire was designed with reference

to two previous studies. For one, the pre-course information questionnaire conducted by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) shows examples of question on participants' current use of English as well as future use of English, which are relevant to the present research because the participants' job situations are likely to change dramatically before and after the language training program. For another, the Rotterdam foreign language needs questionnaire presented by Reeves and Wright (1996) was useful to design the questionnaire to identify specific situations in which participants use English (e.g. telephoning, email, hosting, and meetings).

The questionnaire was written and completed in Japanese, the native language of both the participants and the researcher (see Appendix 4.1 for the original, and Appendix 4.2 for English translation). The following is the list of the questions written in the questionnaire:

- name of the participant

- language proficiency score (TOEIC and others)

- English learning experience

- Experience in studying/working/traveling abroad

- current job situations (affiliation, roles and responsibilities)

- future career plans (possible overseas projects in which the participant may be involved)

- opportunities to use languages other than English and Japanese.

- current use of English (telephoning, email, reading technical/business documents, hosting clients, giving a speech/presentation, negotiating, attending meetings)

- self-evaluation of current English proficiency

- open questions (How would you like to improve your English proficiency, and what kind of skills would you like to acquire through the course?)

All the questions except the first one are directly connected to the purpose of the present research, and the findings will be cross-referred with those from other methods. In the next section, I briefly report how I implemented the questionnaire.

4.6.1.2 The implementation of the questionnaire

On the second day of the program (Week 1), the four students filled in the questionnaire during the first learning advising session with me while we were each introducing ourselves. As expected, the students did not give more than simple answers on the questionnaire, although they were given plenty of time to fill in the form. Nonetheless, the questionnaire was, also as expected, useful as the basis for an interview, i.e. interview schedule/guide (Dörnyei 2007).

In the next section, I move on to the implementation of the interview, which is an essential part of the present researh as a way to listening to the participants' own voice.

4.6.2 Interview

Kvale (2007) defines that a qualitative interview is an attempt 'to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world' (p. xvi). Dörnyei (2007) argues that interviewing is a frequent part of the social life surrounding us and works so well as a versatile research instrument: it is most often used method in qualitative inquiries (p. 134). On the other hand, Mann (2011) points out that the ubiquity can desensitise the researcher to forms, roles and expectations (p. 8). In what follows, I first describe the types and procedures of the interviews.

4.6.2.1 Types and number of interviews

Interviews I conducted for the present research can be divided into different types according to the

degree of structure and whether there are single or multiple interviewee(s)/session(s).

While unstructured interviews allow researchers to build rapport with informants and to roughly identify the tasks and sub-tasks carried out by domain experts (Gilabert 2005: 196), in-depth, semi-structured interviews with interview schedules are useful to ensure that all relevant questions have been answered. As explained above, I utilised the questionnaire filled out in advance as the interview guide for the first individual interviews, which made them more structured. The succeeding interviews took less structured approach with more open questions.

In addition to individual interviews, my learning advising sessions served as focus group interviews with the participants. During each session, I spent a certain amount of time with the participants to review what they had learned and whether there were any problems or difficulties in understanding the program content. I played the role of 'moderator' (Dörnyei 2007: 145; Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 150) to create a synergistic environment that resulted in a deep and insightful discussion on how they could learn English efficiently and how effective the learning experience would be for their future work. While individual interviews were chances to listen closely to each participant's voice, the four participants seemed more relaxed in the focus group interviews and stated their opinions more spontaneously and openly. Thus, by conducting interviews on both one-to-one and group basis, I was able to understand their emic view about the learning and use of English more deeply.

With regard to the number of interview sessions, I conducted multiple sessions with the same interviewee, while the typical qualitative interview is a one-off event (Dörnyei 2007: 134). As will be explained in the following sections, I conducted at least three individual interviews and eight focus group interviews with all the four program participants. The purpose of the multiple sessions was two-fold: it enabled (i) fuller and richer descriptions as well as (ii) the documentation of changes in their responses. In other words, conducting interviews multiple times enabled

tracking their trajectories of learning and using English over time. The next section discusses how I implemented these series of interviews.

4.6.2.2 The implementation of the interviews

The interviews with the participants and staff members were conducted in their first language (either English or Japanese), referring to six criteria for an interview proposed as guidelines by Kvale (1996) as follows:

- The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.

- The shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the subjects' answers, the better.

- The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.

- The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.

- The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subject's answers in the course of the interview.

- The interview is "self-communicating" — it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations.

(extracted from Kvale 1996: 145)

Kvale (1996) argues that the last three are particularly important, which means the interviewer should interpret and verify what the interviewee says by the time the interview is over (p. 144). In practice, however, the analysis of the content was possible only after the interview through the process of listening to the recordings many times carefully and transcribing them. Follow-up questions were then carried over to the second/third interviews.

Each interview lasted between 40 and 120 minutes and was recorded on a digital video camera/voice recorder with the permission of the interviewees.

4.6.2.2.1 Individual interviews with the participants during the program

As explained in Section 4.5.2.1, interviews with the program participants (i.e. the four engineers) during the language training program were conducted multiple times, and can be illustrated in Figure 4.1 below:
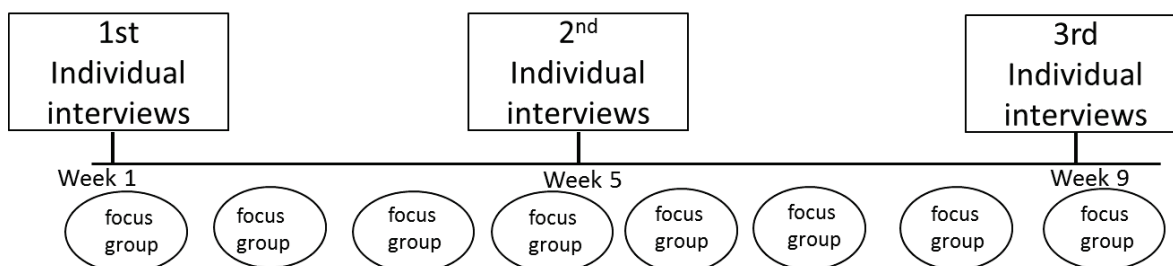
Figure 4.1 Interviews with the four participants during the program

I conducted the first semi-structured interviews with each participant based on their answers to the questionnaire on the third and fourth day of Week 1. The interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes each. I read aloud what they had written on the questionnaire, checked unanswered questions, and explained ambiguous items orally to each participant and asked for clarification of what I did not understand. Furthermore, I was able to think of and ask questions as the interviews revealed questions unforeseen when the questionnaire was designed. I asked a series of questions on their use of English at work. Answers from the four participants revealed wide-ranging tasks

at different sections in Itabashi Corporation, which will be described in Chapter 5.

The second individual interviews with the four program participants were conducted in Week 5. The interval between the first and the second interviews allowed me to become familiar with each participant and go over the transcripts of the first interviews and prepare more focused questions. The interval also gave the participants time to reflect on the linguistic environment in which they work, which provides additional details of the situations in which they use/have used English to get the job done. Furthermore, since the participants had spent four-and-a-half weeks learning English intensively by the time of the second interview, there expected to be changes in their evaluation of their own English skills and in their recognition of the language skills necessary for communication at work.

Finally, the third interviews were conducted in Week 9. It was an opportunity for each interviewee to confirm what they had learned from the program and how they had progressed. I also helped them prepare and practice their final presentations, which they were to give in Week 10. At the end of the interviews, I asked each participant for further cooperation for my follow-up research.

4.6.2.2.2 Focus group interviews with the participants during the program

I had a total of eight learning advising sessions, which also functioned as focus group interviews. Each session was divided into roughly two parts. For one, I gave a lecture based on what I observed in classes taught by other teachers (e.g. grammar points they were not familiar with). For the other, I let them review and speak freely on what they were learning and how they were feeling about the study experience, the teachers, or course materials. The former part was necessary for authorising myself as a learning advisor, who could observe classes freely, while the latter is directly connected to the present research.

4.6.3 Classroom observation

Observation provides direct information rather than self-report accounts collected by questionnaires or interviews (Dörnyei 2007: 178). Murata (1994a) shows an example of cross-reference of the findings from the questionnaire to those from the observation of conversational interactions, which enables comparison between participants' awareness of their conversational management and their actual behaviours. Following the argument, the present research cross-refers the findings from the questionnaires and interviews to the findings of the class observation, including analysis of the recording of the talk-in-interaction.

4.6.3.1 The purpose of classroom observation

My intention regarding class observation was to see how the participants actually communicate using English and what and how the teachers teach, so that I can confirm the results of the questionnaire/interviews as well as the relevance of the curriculum content and instructions to the participants' job situations where they use English as a lingua franca. It actually turned out to be an excellent way to obtain information on their current or future job situations because the teachers often asked the participants to describe their job responsibilities and experiences. In what follows, I describe how I conducted classroom observation.

4.6.3.2 The implementation of classroom observation

I asked the four teachers who teach core business skills, presentation skills, email & report writing skills, and meeting skills, for permission to observe their classes, and all of them granted this request. I observed the modules for six days, approximately 20 hours in total.

The four participants always sat in the same seat, and I sat at the back corner of the classroom, taking fieldnotes. The layout of the classroom is illustrated in Figure 4.2 below:
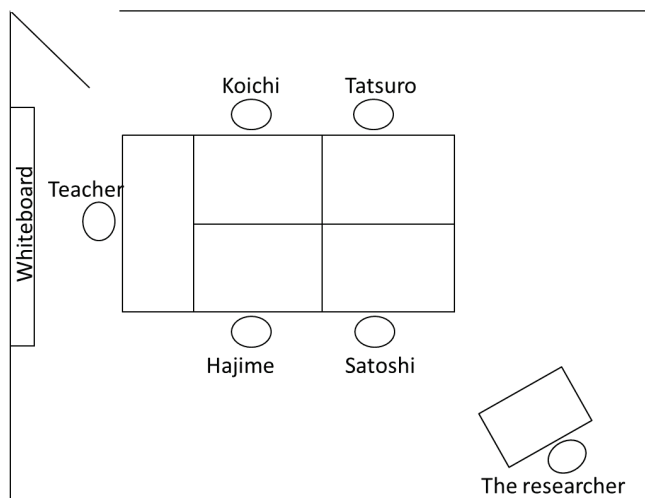
Figure 4.2 The classroom layout

By taking field notes, I basically concentrated on silently observing the classroom interactions as potential subjects for analyses (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 2011). Nonetheless, I was rather a 'participant-observer' (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 35) in the classroom in two ways. First, both the participants and the teachers were aware that I was checking their interactions and giving the participants learning advice later. Some teachers even oriented to me explicitly, asking, for example, 'what do you think, Akiko?'. Second, as a researcher with an ethnographic perspective, I was there not only to audio-/video- record the interaction but also to gain emic viewpoints by observing and understanding the surrounding contexts (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 35; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4).

    The recording of the interactions between the participants and the teachers will be used to analyse the relevance of the classroom instructions compared to what kind of skills the participants need in actual BELF communication, which will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. In the next section, the purpose and procedures of the recording of talk-in-interaction will be explained.

4.6.4 Recording of talk-in-interaction in the classroom

At the time of classroom observation, I obtained permission to audio-record the classroom interactions, to which everyone agreed without a problem. I also video-recorded presentation skills classes because in that module the participants utilised visual effects such as PowerPoint slides to give a presentation on the projects they had been involved in at Itabashi Corporation.

Additionally, I found that one of the participants, Satoshi, was also audio-recording every class for the purpose of reviewing. Upon my request, he kindly copied all the data for me at the end of the program. In total, recording hours added up to more than 200 hours. Although I intended to use only the data I recorded myself for the analysis of classroom interactions, the data recorded by Satoshi proved most useful when I found that the participants told me they were feeling frustrated with the way one of the teachers was being too form-focused (see Chapters 6 and 8). I listened to the audio-recording of the morning lessons from the same day I heard them complaining during my learning advising session in the evening and was able to identify examples of the teacher's strict focus on grammar.

I selected the other interactions of particular interest by referring to my fieldnotes and transcribed the data using a slightly adapted version of the transcription conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (Appendix 4.3, see also Atkinson & Heritage 1984: ix-xvi). In line with Hutchby and Wooffitt's (2008) argument, the data were not necessarily approached with a particular question in mind, because conversation analysts avoid having preconceptions about what may be found in some set of transcribed recordings ('unmotivated' looking in Sacks (1984: 27)'s term).

Thus far, this section (Section 4.6) has elucidated how I collected and analysed the data during the intensive learning program. In the next section, I describe how I followed the participants after they completed the program.

4.7 Follow-up research after the program's completion

Since analysing how the participants use BELF in the actual workplace after completing the language training was a significant part of the present research, I needed to follow the participants after the intensive program was over and they were assigned projects abroad, where they use English as a lingua franca. This was an extremely challenging task for a number of reasons. Firstly, since they are busy working in a totally different work environment where languages are used merely as a tool, they are likely to be unwilling or unable to take the time to reminisce on what they learned, or what kind of language skills they need to improve.[9] Secondly, when the participants no longer have the status of 'students', they are not obligated to answer inquiries from a learning advisor (i.e. the present researcher). Finally, the participants are under the condition of confidentiality, which is strictly regulated by the company. The employees need to be very careful and selective about the data they can provide for outside researchers.

Being well aware of this difficulty in advance, I made every effort to establish a cooperative relationship with the participants throughout the intensive English program. Both as a researcher and a learning advisor I visited Chiyoda Institute frequently, 22 times out of 49 days during the 10 weeks; I had chances to meet the participants directly in class as a learning advisor and to interview and observe them as a researcher. Besides, whenever the participants needed assistance, I was willing to help them self-study, review study methods, clarify their questions about classes, and practice presentations. The close collaboration with the participants also helped me to gain 'a truly emic perspective' (Ehrenreich 2009: 126).

As a result, I was able to keep in touch with the participants after the program through email

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[9] For further detail of hard working conditions in the construction industry, including unpredictableness and the time pressure, see Handford (2017) and Handford and Matous (2015).

communication. One agreed to be interviewed in person, while another accepted interviews via Skype (an online video calling system). Furthermore, one of them agreed to record his talk-in-interaction in the workplace. The next subsections explicate the measures I took to keep in touch with the participants after the program.

4.7.1 Email communication with the participants

After the course was finished, I kept in touch with the four participants who went back to their respective workplaces mainly through exchanging email messages. Email communication is very convenient in that it solves the issues of time differences and busy schedules when contacting people working abroad. Simultaneously, however, this convenience leads to a problem: email messages can be easily disregarded. For example, I received reply from neither participants of the pilot study when I sent email messages expressing appreciation for their help and request for further cooperation. For the main research project, after my efforts to establish a collaborative relationship, three of the four participants, Koichi, Tatsuro, and Hajime, responded to my request by email and agreed to report on their job situations and English use after the program. Satoshi sent me CDs of the recording of classroom interactions with a thank-you note by mail.

4.7.2 Interviews with the participants after the program

When one of the participants (Hajime) came back from an overseas assignment (three months in Hong Kong), I interviewed him for 61 minutes at the Tokyo headquarters of Itabashi Corporation. I interviewed another participant (Tatsuro) twice when he was working in Singapore via Skype, an online video calling system for the total of 109 minutes. The results of these follow-up interviews will be introduced in Chapters 5 and 8.

4.7.3 Recording of talk-in-interaction in the workplace

Even after I succeeded in keeping touch with the participants, asking them to provide the data of actual talk-in-interaction in the workplace was extremely challenging. Although I emphasised the merit on the participants' side—I would listen to the recording and give advice on which skills they should work on to improve their communication and enhance job efficiency—it was not enough of an incentive for them when language was no longer their focus of attention. In the end, however, one of the participants, Tatsuro, understood my enthusiasm and commitment to the research and consented to record his conversations at work. He recorded his conversations with his interlocutors at work on his cell phone and sent them to me. The recording was carried out in a variety of situations: in-person discussion in the office, group meetings via a web-meeting software, small talk in the car. The data are divided into six segments and the total length of the recording is approximately 30 minutes.

In the next section, I will explain how I deal with the relative paucity of the data of talk-in-interaction in the workplace as well as the influence that my role as the learning advisor exerted on the whole process of the data collection.

4.8 Limitations of the methodology

Two types of problem were perceived in conducting the present research. The first thing to point out as a potential problem or limitation is that I was able to obtain only a small portion of the recordings of authentic talk-in-interaction in the workplace. To put it another way, it does reflect the challenge and reality of BELF research (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3). To my knowledge, there are few published analyses of talk data collected from Japanese major company employees like Itabashi Corporation (the only expectations are Handford & Matous 2011, 2015 and Tsuchiya & Handford 2014 all of which are based on the same data source). On the other hand, I was able to

obtain ample data from class observation and interviews, not only with the main participants but also with other stakeholders. The contrast between classroom interactions and workplace interactions of the same participant is expected to make this research unique. In addition, the interview data after the program (i.e. when the participants were interviewed as BELF users) will be used to complement the paucity of the talk data in the workplace, in discussing the actual use of BELF.

A second possible limitation is the influence of my role as a learning adviser on the process of data collection. Because of my earnest attempt to be connected to the participants, there is the 'insider/outsider dilemma' (Hornberger 1994), or the difficulty of striking a balance between being close to the research target and being an objective researcher. In this regard, those who see 'the interview as a search-and-discovery mission' (Holstein & Gubrium 1995: 2), with the researcher bent on finding what is already there inside participants, may criticise the methodology as less standardised and sanitised. Nonetheless, I would argue that the present research itself is rather a co-constructed event between all the participants and myself, meeting multiple times before/ during/after the intensive program. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) argue, the participants were not simply imparting information to me, but we were 'engaged in social action' (p. 181). Through the interviews and frequent interaction with the researcher/learning advisor, the participants were motivated to reflect on and make sense of their experience in learning and using English. Thus, in Talmy's (2010) terms, I took a 'research interview as social practice' perspective [10] which contrasts with an 'interview as research instrument' orientation. In order to make the context in which the present research is co-constructed clear, this chapter has described the research process and the role I played in detail.

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[10] See also Kvale (2007), Mann (2011), and Silverman (2013) for similar arguments.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the design of the empirical research and how I carried it out as a researcher, who was at the same time a learning advisor to the four participants. Different types of methods and sources were selected depending on the phase and situation. Adopting the multi-source, multi-method, multi-administration design, I was able to look at the same participants from many angles as well as to observe changes in their use of and perception towards English over time.

BELF research in Asian contexts is only at its inception stage and more empirical studies are called for (Ehrenreich 2016, Handoford & Matous 2015, Kubota 2016). Exploring this relatively uncharted territory, the present research, although small in scale and not for generalisation, is expected to contribute to the accumulation of case studies for more encompassing BELF research, which also combines learning/teaching phases. For the 'across-research-triangulation' (Ehrenreich 2016), it is essential to describe the context of research as transparent as possible, and for this reason, this chapter has described the methodology and research procedures in a detailed manner.

Having clarified the methodological background to the present research, the following four chapters (Chapters 5-8) present and discuss the findings of the present research: language needs and uses of the four Japanese engineers (Chapter 5), analyses of talk-in-interaction in the classroom (Chapter 6) and in the workplace (Chapter 7), and the perception of the participants towards English (Chapter 8). I now turn to Chapter 5, which discusses the contexts of the participants' learning and using English in a detailed manner.

Chapter 5

Language needs and uses of the four Japanese engineers

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter focuses on identifying and understanding the language needs and uses of the

four Japanese construction engineers: what the participants expect from the intensive English

program and why these skills are necessary for their communication at work. By making these

contexts of learning and using English clear, I intend to facilitate deeper analyses in later chapters

(Chapters 6-8). As Ehrenreich (2016) points out, BELF communication 'is not the same

everywhere, it is always shaped by its particular context, a fact that is sometimes overlooked' (p.

151), and thus BELF researchers need to put more effort into contextualising their findings.

Collecting data through multiple sources and methods (see Chapter 4), this chapter attempts to

make the current research contexts as 'transparent' as possible (Ehrenreich 2016).

In addition, conducting interviews multiple times, this chapter investigates not only the

current language needs and uses of the participants, but also how they change (or do not change)

before, during and after participating in the intensive course (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2.1 for the

merit of conducting multiple interview sessions). Thus, it makes possible to elucidate the dynamic

and variable nature of the jobs that the Japanese construction engineers carry out, which

exemplifies the fluid and multilingual nature of BELF communication found in previous studies

(e.g. Cogo 2012a, 2016a; see also Kubota 2011, 2016).

The organisation of the present chapter is as follows: first, it discusses the changeability and

unpredictability of job situations and language needs, especially in the global construction industry,

followed by the participants' profiles and job contexts in which they use English (Section 5.2).

Next, the chapter examines the increasing needs and uses of English as a lingua franca and other

languages in the participants' workplaces (Section 5.3). The discussion then focuses on the more

specific English skills these engineers require for their work, namely oral communication skills

(Section 5.4.1). Particularly, the importance of making small talk (Section 5.4.2) and mastering

technical vocabulary and expressions (Section 5.4.3), which will be topics discussed also in later

chapters, is highlighted.

Although small in scale, the analysis in this chapter intends to shed light on a reality of

Japanese BELF users, who are struggling to acquire necessary communication skills to get the job

done in their specialised job fields.

5.2 Changeability and unpredictability of job situations and language needs

The changeability of professional communities and cultures as well as unique language needs in

respective communities have been pointed out by a number of ESP scholars since the 1980s (e.g.

Brown 1995, Chambers 1980, Crossling & Ward 2002, Hutchinson & Waters 1987, Widdowson

1998). Widdowson (1998), in reflecting on the generic view of ESP, discusses that 'the language

is regulated by the requirements of the profession, and as the requirements change, the language

will change accordingly' (p. 9), while Chamber (1980) explains that language needs change even

during an ESP course (p. 27). More recently, Crossling and Ward (2002) point out the changing

nature of business with the increasing use of technology, issues of quality, innovation and

competitiveness (p. 42). In the field of BELF, Pullin (2015) also refers to the issue of changing

workplace needs in discussing varied approaches to needs analysis (p. 41), while most cases of

needs analysis so far carry out an interview or questionnaire survey with the same participants as

a one-off event (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2.1).

The changeability of language needs and uses is particularly relevant to people who work

in the global construction industry, including the four engineers in the present research. The

Itabashi engineers who participate in the intensive English language training are usually selected by supervisors who intend to send them abroad for mid-term or long-term projects where they will need to use English for business communication. Consequently, after the employees complete the course offered by the company, they will most likely to be working in a different linguistic environment where their exposure to English and other languages will increase dramatically. In addition, since most construction projects are won by tendering, there are so many possible countries or areas where they may work in the future. The Itabashi employees cannot plan their job schedules beforehand and so have little time for preparation before they are dispatched to overseas destinations.

Another feature of the construction industry is that those companies are often involved in joint ventures (JV). A joint venture is a combination of two or more companies to carry out a single project, during which the parties 'combine the distinctive competencies and the complementary skills' (Kale, Patil, Hiravennavar & Kamane 2009: 60). Each participating company makes contributions in the form of capital, technology, knowledge, experience, and personnel in an agreed-upon manner, thus establishing a new set of working relationships (Kale et al. 2009). JV partners and subcontractors in each project are different. Thus, as Handford and Matous (2011) explain, developing good relationships with new partners is crucial for the success of the project (p. 88).

In the following sections (Sections 5.2.1–5.2.4) I present each participant's profile, focusing on the changeability and unpredictability of their job responsibilities and locations before and after the intensive English program.

5.2.1 Koichi

When Koichi, the youngest participant of the four, participated in the intensive English program

in winter 2012, he was working in the Department of Construction Project Management. He got an MSc degree and began working for Itabashi Corporation two years before and was working at the corporate headquarters in Tokyo, managing sales and contract information from overseas branches. At the first individual interview, he told me he had few chances to use English for work so far, but when he completed the intensive English training program, he would be dispatched to an Asian country immediately, most likely to Taiwan, where he would work as a construction project manager on site.

After the intensive program, however, he was actually made to stay in Japan for a year, continuing his previous duties and studying for the national examination for the first-class architect (*Ikkyu Kenchikushi*) to be qualified to play the dual roles of architect and building engineer. In February 2013, the company decided to dispatch him to Jakarta, Indonesia, where Itabashi Corporation engages in a number of construction projects.

5.2.2 Tatsuro

Tatsuro was a chief architect in the Architecture Department at the Tokyo headquarters of Itabashi Corporation. His job there was to design office buildings, both interiors and exteriors as well as to create design concepts. At the third individual interview conducted at the end of the intensive program, Tatsuro told me that he was likely to be sent to the Singapore office after the English training program was finished in March 2012. He started working in Singapore ten days after the intensive program ended, being told that it would be a two-year assignment. However, less than six months after he started working in Singapore, he was told that he might be sent to Thailand for another construction project. His circumstances changed again at the end of 2012, and he ended up working in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, from January 2013.

Another motivation for Tatsuro to learn English was to be chosen to study at a graduate

school abroad, most likely in the United States, with a company scholarship. Thus, he was the most diligent learner of English of the four participants, taking TOEFL exams to be qualified for the scholarship other than TOEIC exams required during the intensive English program (see Chapter 6).[1]

5.2.3 Hajime

Hajime was a deputy section manager who works at a machine production facility in Itabashi Corporation. He had been involved in the construction of six tunnels in Japan for discharge pipelines, subways, and highway express, before he participated in the intensive English language training. Hajime had little chance to use English at work for 12 years out of his 13-year career with the company. However, because his supervisor wanted to develop personnel who can function in overseas projects, Hajime was sent to New Zealand in February of 2011, and then to Singapore in October of the same year. He stayed approximately for two months in each country and took part in construction plans for a tender process, taking quotations and planning the construction work.

At the third individual interview, Hajime told me that he might be sent to Hong Kong to work on another project after the intensive English program. Hajime was sent to Hong Kong 17 days after the intensive program finished to take part in a joint venture for a new extension project for the Metro Transit Railway. After the three-month mission, he came back to Japan and worked at the Tokyo headquarters for four months. In November of 2012, he was sent to Jakarta, Indonesia, for two months. In May of 2013, Hajime was dispatched to Jakarta again to work there for four years, engaging in the Jakarta MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) Project.

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[1] However, his wish was not granted because he was sent to Singapore and Vietnam and passed the eligible age for the scholarship (around 30 or younger).

5.2.4 Satoshi

Satoshi is a section manager who engages in nuclear power station design. During the first individual interview, he told me that he worked at the Tokyo headquarters and seldom had a chance to use English other than receiving email messages in English, which he just read and rarely needed to respond in English. Satoshi said he was 'old' (44 years old as of winter 2012) unlike the other three participants and not likely to be dispatched to work overseas for a long period. He needed English mainly for short visits to the U.S. to offer technical suggestions and advice to his client and also attend conferences held by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission with them and joint researchers. He visited the U.S. twice in 2011, the year before he participated in the language training, for approximately five days each time. Most of the clients or colleagues he met in the U.S. were either Americans or Japanese, while some joint researchers were from other countries such as India.

After the intensive program finished, Satoshi went back to his office at the Tokyo headquarters. Upon my request, he sent me two CDs, which contained the data of the audio recordings of the classes, and a thank-you note. After that, I lost contact with him. Tatsuro, Hajime and Koichi told me they do not know how Satoshi is doing after the program, while these three are still in touch with one another. It is assumed that Satoshi, as a section manager, became very busy working after being excused from work for as long as 10 weeks to participate in the intensive language program, while his language needs and use for work changed little, as he predicted in the interviews.

In sum, the work environment surrounding the participants, especially when they are working abroad, is significantly dynamic and diverse. Since operating joint ventures is a common type of

business for Itabashi Corporation, the engineers work abroad with a variety of people in terms of both professional status and linguacultural background. From the moment they enter a new work environment, they need to establish new relationship with colleagues, clients, and subcontractors from different backgrounds and do so immediately, so that the project can proceed successfully. In other words, the Itabashi engineers always need to be well prepared for the changeability and unpredictability of their type of work.[2]

Having overviewed the backgrounds of each participant, the next section (Section 5.3) discusses the participants' language needs for work.

5.3 Increasing needs and uses of English as a lingua franca and other languages

At the time of the outset of the English training program, three out of the four participants, Tatsuro, Hajime and Satoshi already had some work experience using English, or English as a lingua franca in many cases. After they were dispatched to Asian countries, the need for BELF increased. The fourth participant, Koichi, was dispatched abroad after the program and faced the needs to use English as a lingua franca as well as other languages. The advantage of knowing other languages than English is also found in Tatsuro and Hajime's cases (see also Konakahara, Murata & Iino 2017, Kubota 2016), which demonstrates that ELF is located in the multilingual context (Cogo 2012a, 2016b, 2018; Jenkins 2015b).

This section therefore discusses how English is used prevalently as a lingua franca in the participants' workplaces (Section 5.3.1), while the importance of other languages is also highlighted (Section 5.3.2).

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[2] A presenter at the Tokyo Workshop on Intercultural Communication for Engineers (held at the University of Tokyo, on the 16th of May, 2014), an employee working for another major general contractor in Japan, spoke on this matter and called it a challenge for Japanese construction engineers (see also Handford & Matous 2015).

5.3.1 Prevalent use of English as a business lingua franca

The prevalent use of English as a lingua franca was proved to be evident in the participants'
workplace both in Japan and abroad. In Tatsuro's case, the architect joined in several international
projects at the Tokyo headquarters for clients from overseas who wanted to construct buildings in
Japan before he participated in the intensive English program. For example, he once worked on a
project to build a retail building in Tokyo for an Italian fashion brand. In these occasions, he
prepared proposal documents of tenders or designs and drew actual plans in English. When the
projects were put into practice, he attended meetings in which English was used as a lingua franca.

After he completed the program and got transferred to the Singapore office, he was in
charge of a factory construction project in Malaysia. He basically stayed in Singapore designing
the factory building and giving instructions to local engineers in Malaysia, using an online meeting
system as well as email communication. He chaired weekly online meetings and checked on the
progress of the factory construction in English as a lingua franca.

Hajime was transferred from the Machinery Department in Japan to a shared office for a
JV in Hong Kong. In the office, there were twelve local employees, six Japanese, and a British
person, who was the project manager. While Hajime spoke Japanese when communicating with
the Japanese staff, and the Hong Kong staff spoke in Cantonese among themselves, the common
language in the office was English. During the three-month mission, Hajime's main task in Hong
Kong was to plan the construction and obtain quotations for tendering the procedures. For the job,
he needed to communicate with a number of local subcontractors, whose L1 is mostly Cantonese,
in English as a lingua franca, explaining what Itabashi Corporation needed for the project and
asking them to provide estimates.

To summarise, the participants' stories support that English is widely used as a lingua franca
in Asian countries (e.g. Kirkpatrick 2010, Murata & Jenkins 2009). On the other hand, Koichi,

who works in Construction Project Management Department, found that he needed another language for his new assignment after the English language training. The next section discusses the role of other languages in Asian professional contexts.

5.3.2 Needs for other languages—multilingual practices in the workplace

Kubota (2016) argues that in a non-English dominant country, expatriates' use of the local language and their own native language, rather than English, is not unusual in the transcultural workplace (p. 171, see also Kubota 2011). More specifically, she found that Japanese expatriates in China use mainly Japanese and Mandarin, instead of English. Ehrenreich (2010) also discusses that being able to communicate with a business partner in his/her language is considered an advantage (p. 423, see also Konakahara, Murata & Iino 2017).

One of the four participants, Koichi, was transferred to Jakarta, Indonesia as an on-site manager and faced the need to learn and use the Indonesian national language, Bahasa Indonesia[3] other than English as English is not very much used in the local workplace context. In the email message he sent me to inform me of the transfer, he said:

Extract 5.1 (email communication with Koichi)

Unfortunately, it seems that I don't have many opportunities to use English. I'm going to study the Indonesian language from now on.

残念ながら英語はあまり使わないようです。インドネシア語をこれから勉強していきます。

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[3] According to Kirkpatrick (2010), the Indonesian population is comprised of some two hundred ethnic groups that speak some four hundred languages. Bahasa Indonesia, a 'democratic' language which was not spoken by any powerful group in the country, was enshrined as the national language by The Constitution of 1945 (see Kirkpatrick 2010: 43-44).

He uses the word 'unfortunately (残念ながら)' because he studied English so hard during the 10-week intensive program and wanted to test his ability working in English. Judging from the information he gathered from his colleagues, he found he needs to study Bahasa Indonesia, to be able to communicate with the local people. However, since Koichi left for Jakarta only one week after he sent me the email message to inform me of the transfer, it is assumed that he had to start his career in Indonesia with virtually no knowledge of the language.

The next email message he sent me after spending one year and three months in Jakarta showed how he was accommodating himself to the new linguistic environment. The message began with an Indonesian greeting, 'Selamat Siang!', showing he routinely uses the greeting. In this message he wrote:

Extract 5.2 (email communication with Koichi)

I manage to communicate in mixing Indonesian and English. I manage to be able to communicate because Indonesian and English are similar, to a certain extent. For example, 'confirm' in English is 'confirmasih' in Indonesian. They look alike. When I give a few instructions in writing, I use English.

インドネシア語と英語まぜこぜで何とかコミュニケーションしています。インドネシア語は英語と似ているところもあり、なんとかやっています。たとえば、英語の Confirm（確認する）は、Confirmasih で似てるんです。書面でのちょっとした指示等は英語を使います。

Koichi uses the expression 'manage to (なんとか)' twice in this extract, indicating his struggle to communicate with the local people in both Bahasa Indonesia and English. While Bahasa Indonesia is necessary for daily communication, he uses English when issuing instructions in writing. Similar to Kubota's (2016) case, it seems that Koichi chooses a language depending on the nature of the work or the linguistic repertoire of the interlocutors. Thus, Koichi is struggling to

communicate at work as a novice multilingual speaker.

Similarly, when Tatsuro, the architect dispatched in Singapore, communicates with Malaysian engineers, multilingual repertoire seems to be an asset. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, when Tatsuro holds web meetings with these engineers, he often speaks Japanese with his Japanese supervisor, while the Malaysian engineers speak their local language among themselves. If they could understand one another in respective languages, they would be able to get the job done more speedily. The same applies to Hajime's case, who had many opportunities to communicate with L1 Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong. Thus, although the current research mainly focuses on the participants' use of and perception towards English, it agrees with Kubota's (2016) argument that research on BELF needs to be situated within a broader framework involving other languages. To put it another way, using not only English but also multiple languages is normal practice in these BELF settings, which corroborates the claim that ELF is a multilingual phenomenon (Cogo 2012a, 2016b, 2018, Jenkins 2015b; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1.2.2).

Keeping the contextual information of each participant in mind, the next section moves on to analyses of the data from the questionnaire, interviews, and email communication, paying special attention to English skills that the individuals believe will be vital for their jobs.

5.4 Participants' perceived language needs

This section discusses the participants' perceived language needs and actual needs they found in workplace settings. Throughout the intensive course and after the participants were dispatched abroad, a desire to improve oral communication skills was the need that was identified most strikingly not only by the participants but also by other stakeholders (Section 5.4.1). More

specifically, the importance and challenge of having small talk was highlighted (Section 5.4.2).

On the other hand, the participants did not prioritise learning technical vocabulary in their own professional fields during the English program (Section 5.4.3.1), while other stakeholders emphasised its significance (Section 5.4.3.2). After the participants started working in BELF environments, however, they seem to have realised the importance of acquiring technical terms beforehand in order to get the job done more speedily and efficiently (Section 5.4.3.3).

5.4.1 The importance of oral communication

The participants of the present research, both the program participants and other stakeholders such as teachers and staff members in the language training provider/personnel department, unanimously emphasised the importance of oral communication skills for the engineers' jobs, paralleling the results from previous studies in the field of ESP as well as BELF (e.g. Crossling & Ward 2002, Handford & Matous 2015, Pullin 2015; see also Chapter 3, Section 3.5.5). These opinions were heard at the beginning/in the middle of the intensive program as well as after the participants were dispatched to their own workplaces. In the responses to the questionnaire conducted at the beginning of the intensive English training, Satoshi, Hajime and Tatsuro said that they wanted to improve their speaking ability, while Koichi said that he wanted to become able to listen to and understand long spoken statements. Tsukasa, the sales director/program coordinator at Chiyoda Institute, and Greg, the chief instructor at Chiyoda Institute, told me in the interviews that they were trying to design the intensive program in a way that program participants can strengthen their oral communication skills, judging from their experience in administering the program for 13 years. Tsukasa also told me that the staff in Itabashi Corporation's personnel department also asked for improvement in the participants' oral communication skills when designing the course.

The follow-up interviews and email communication also confirmed that skills in oral communication are vital for the participants to carry out their work. For example, Tatsuro has to chair online meetings with Malaysian engineers. As Pullin (2013) explains, being a chair gives the person particular rights and obligations, and he or she is ultimately responsible for achieving the goals of the meeting during the limited time allotted for the meeting (Pullin 2013: 16, 17). To fulfill this responsibility, it is crucial for Tatsuro to have oral communication skills to be explicit and functional at the meetings. Koichi, who works as an on-site construction manager in Jakarta, also stated that he needs oral communication skills 'to be competent on-site problem solver', to use Handford and Matous' (2015) term (p. 86).

Of all forms of oral communication in the workplace,[4] the participants in this research emphasised the importance and challenge of small talk most notably. The next section discusses this issue in detail.

5.4.2 The challenge of small talk

As discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.2), small talk is a primary means to establish rapport and maintain solidarity among people in the workplace. On the other hand, Ehrenreich (2016) points out that relational talk and rapport-building are often felt to be more challenging than business-related or specialised talk (p.138, see also Ehrenreich 2010 and Kankaanranta & Planken 2010, Pullin 2010). More specifically, Pullin (2010) presents an example of an employee who lacks the vocabulary in English when she talks about a toy for her dog with her colleague.[5]

It is even more difficult to deal with small talk when BELF users meet someone at work for

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[4] Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) introduce five events requiring primarily oral language at work: telephoning, socialising, making presentations, taking part in meetings and negotiating.
[5] The difficulty regarding small talk is not limited to the use of ELF. For example, Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, and Kankaanranta (2005) explain that ordinary small talk is problematic for Finnish employees who need to speak Swedish for work.

the first time since there is no 'length of relationship' to familiarise themselves with the interlocutors' communication styles (Ehrenreich 2011, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010). In the Japanese business context, Cowling (2007) explains that many respondents, employees at a large Japanese manufacturer, find it difficult and embarrassing to handle first time associations with guests from overseas, and they want a grounding in initial contacts that would give them more confidence in a culturally demanding situation (p. 433).

The present research found equivalent results. The participants stated that they hoped to acquire social English skills through the English training program more than learning technical terms and expressions used in their specific fields. Explaining what he wanted from the course, Hajime said in the first individual interview:

Extract 5.3 (individual interview with Hajime)

First of all, I would like to acquire the communication skills necessary for initial contacts. For example, when I talked with people from foreign, English-speaking countries, I did not know what to say other than "Nice to meet you." After the greeting, I wanted to do something like, talking about general things and then getting into a specific business discussion, but I couldn't do it at all. If it's my special field, I can somehow talk...even if it's not proper 'talk', I can get the message across.

まずファーストセッション、そのコンタクトでのコミュニケーション。例えば、外人の人と、英語圏の人と話をする、ま、会話。最初の、やっぱり Nice to meet you から先がなかなか出なかったんですよね。一般的なことをしゃべりつつ具体的な中身に入っていくみたいな、まったくできなかった。専門的なものだったらなんとなく、話は、話っていうか、ごり押しで、これはこうだろう、みたいな感じでいけるんですけど。

117

According to Hajime, when he does business in his field, for example, ordering parts for a tunnel boring machine, he has specific tasks to accomplish with set specifications for the component, budget, and deadline for the quotation. Even if he has troubles expressing himself in English, he can use gestures, drawings and numbers to communicate with his colleagues, subcontractors or clients without having to use many words. Thus, Hajime explained that he always carries a pen and paper with him to draw designs and numbers whenever he has meetings.[6] On the other hand, having a small talk at the first encounter is difficult for him because there is no specific topic he can talk about, while he feels the need to establish a good working relationship immediately.

When Hajime came back from Hong Kong, I conducted a follow-up interview with him at Itabashi Corporation's Tokyo headquarters. During the interview, he emphasised the importance of small talk again as follows:

Extract 5.4 (individual interview with Hajime)

I think it is always a key to success to have small talk before getting into the main business. That's where…the point is…we need to break the ice, don't we? And that's…if we say 'Please give us quotations for this' hastily with no preamble, they would feel intimidated and become defensive. But in fact, I just go like 'Nice to meet you. Um…by the way, request for quotation.' [Laughs.]

いつも仕事する時ってある程度世間話しながら入るのがたぶんうまくいく秘訣なんでしょうけどね、

そこら辺が、要は緊張、初対面なんで緊張取らないといけないじゃないですか。それって、いきなり、

じゃこれ見積もりお願いしますって言っても、彼らも、相手も引くし、防御線張っちゃうんですよね。

でも実際は、'Nice to meet you. Um…by the way, request for quotation.' みたいな感じで（笑）

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[6] Similarly, Hanford and Matous (2011) claim that the use of gestures, drawings, diagrams, photos as well as deixis (e.g. here, there) enables successful construction communication without a higher English level (pp. 96, 97). Ehrenreich (2010) also mentions the help of additional communicative aids such as documents, drawings (p. 421).

Hajime repeated the phrase 'nice to meet you', which was mentioned in the initial interview (Extract 5.3) as the first thing that comes to his mind when he meets someone for the first time. He still finds it difficult to have small talk and does not know what to say after saying the set phrase 'nice to meet you'. In other words, he realised the difficulty of having small talk once again during his three-month experience using BELF in Hong Kong.[7] The difficulty in having small talk will be further discussed in Chapter 7, using the data from talk-in-interaction recorded in the actual workplace of one of the participants, Tatsuro, when he met someone at work for the first time.

Meanwhile, several BELF studies also argue that communicating about technical matters is less challenging compared with having relational talk (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010). The question, then, is how much time and effort should be allotted to acquiring technical vocabulary and expressions in English training curricula for BELF users. The next section analyses comments on this matter from the four participants as well as other stakeholders, and how they changed before and after the training.

5.4.3 The significance of acquiring technical terms and expressions

As discussed in Chapter 3, in the business domain, getting the job done is of the utmost importance and English is only one of the tools for that purpose. Thus, as Kankaanranta and Planken (2010) maintain, mastering business-specific vocabulary and genre conventions should be more important than learning only 'general' English (p. 380). On the other hand, Handford and Matous (2015) discuss that what some Japanese construction engineers are lacking is not knowledge of

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[7] I asked Hajime how he manages first-time encounters at work when speaking in Japanese. He said that he usually begins his conversation with a short small talk, talking about the weather or using a set phrase such as "*Saikin dou desuka?* (how is it [your business] going?)" According to Hajime, while he is not very good at having small talk in Japanese either, it is more difficult in English because he does not know proper expressions.

technical issues or terminology, but minimum general language skills which can be learned

through generally available language courses (p. 96). Analysing comments from Japanese BELF

users, Terauchi et al. (2015) introduce contradicting opinions from different respondents: some

say that it is no problem to understand even fast-paced English if you know technical terms, while

others say that they need to acquire more general English vocabulary to overcome difficulties in

attending meetings (pp. 85, 86). There seem to be a variety of views on the significance of

acquiring technical terms and expressions depending on the individual's specialised fields, current

language skills, or previous experiences.

The following sections discuss the importance of acquiring technical terms and expressions

perceived by the participants of the present research. The four participants did not show much

concern for learning English vocabulary and expressions in their own specialised fields at the

outset of the intensive program (Section 5.4.3.1), while other stakeholders such as teachers and

coordinators believe they should be an important part of the curriculum (Section 5.4.3.2). After

the intensive program is over, however, the engineers realised that it was vital to have acquired

sufficient technical terms and expressions *before* they started working in BELF environments in

order to pursue their professional goals speedily as well as successfully (Section 5.4.3.3).

5.4.3.1 Needs for technical terms perceived at the beginning of the program

At the beginning of the intensive program, the first individual interviews with the participants

revealed that they are fairly confident in their potential to acquire specialised vocabulary necessary

for working in their own professional fields. Satoshi, the designer of nuclear facilities, and Tatsuro,

the architect, stated that it was less of a problem to translate technical terms related to their own

fields from English to Japanese or Japanese to English. Satoshi, who noted that he primarily

wanted to improve his oral communication, especially listening skills (Seciton 5.4.1), commented on technical terms and phrases in his own field as follows:

Extract 5.5 (individual interview with Satoshi)

They're something I think I need to study besides taking this course, but it's not a big deal…if I replace the terms (from Japanese to English or English to Japanese). As for (vocabulary in) the area of my specialty, I can study that by myself.

それは、また別に勉強しなければいけないと思ってはいるんですけど。そんなに問題ではない、（日本語を英語に、英語を日本語に）置き換えれば。専門については自分で勉強できますので。

Satoshi says that besides the electronic dictionary he always carries at work, an online dictionary is quite useful to look up technical terms in his field.

Tatsuro, the architect, made similar comments. While working at the Tokyo headquarters, he sometimes had a chance to use English at work for requests from overseas branch offices, especially when non-Japanese clients wanted to build offices or retail buildings in Japan. For example, when an international brand wanted to erect a retail building, the brand already had their design drawings and instructions written in English. Tatsuro was assigned to check whether these conformed to the Japanese law, estimate the cost and period for construction, and make design suggestions to lower the cost. Tatsuro commented in the initial interview as follows:

Extract 5.6 (individual interview with Tatsuro)

Numbers and designs are the same (even when languages change), right? For example, simply changing (Japanese) words into appropriate translations: 'ceiling' for *tenjo*, 'floor' for *yuka*. If you

want to say 'this (wall) is finished by a wallpaper.', 'cloth'[sic] for *kabegami,* 'finish' for *shiage.* I

did it quite a long time ago, with a dictionary of architecture terms in my hand, and my boss

checked the final product. It is something you can do without a problem only if you have enough

time.

数字とかデザインは（言語が変わっても）同じですよね。そうですね、単純に言葉を適し

た語彙に直すとか、天井だったら ceiling とか、床だったら floor とか。この仕上げは壁紙で

すとかいったら cloth、仕上げ、finish とか。わりとそれは、もうやったの結構昔なんですけ

ど、建築用語辞典みたいなのを片手に、翻訳して、上司が最後チェックみたいな。それは

時間かければできるような話。

Pointing at the ceiling, floor and walls of the classroom in which we had the interview, he

explained that word-by-word translation was not a problem for him.

Similarly, neither Koichi nor Hajime in the questionnaire or interviews commented on the

need to acquire technical vocabulary and expressions during the intensive English training

program. It seemed that participants did not perceive the need to learn English technical terms and

phrases in each participant's field in the classroom.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that when the questionnaire and initial interviews were

conducted at the beginning of the English training course, the participants were in Japan, where

they were working primarily in Japanese and only occasionally assigned projects requiring them

to use English mostly in written forms. When these employees are dispatched to foreign countries

or areas, they may have a different need for technical terms and expressions. In order to find out

about such possible changes, other stakeholders can provide valuable information. To this end,

the present research carried out interviews with course coordinators, instructors at Chiyoda

Institute and a staff member in Itabashi Corporation's personnel office.

5.4.3.2 Needs for technical terms perceived by other stakeholders

In terms of the need to acquire technical vocabulary and expressions, there was a remarkable

discrepancy between the participants' perceived needs and other stakeholders' views at the outset

of the intensive program. Contrary to the participants' request to learn more general skills for

better communication in English, the personnel department of Itabashi Corporation asked

Chiyoda Institute to teach technical vocabulary and expressions in the presentation skills module.

Greg, the chief instructor, explained the module in the individual interview:

Extract 5.7 (individual interview with Greg)

Even though this is a presentation course, it covers a large student-oriented vocabulary block,

because they'll have to present using the words that they have in English to describe their work.

And then Itabashi Corporation requested to cover FIDIC terms. FIDIC terms are the contract

specific vocabulary as well as contract specific concepts for international construction projects.

FIDIC is the French acronym for the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, whose

objectives are to promote the professional interests of its member associations and to disseminate

information to the members of its component national associations (International Federation of

Consulting Engineers 1999). Using *Conditions of Contract for Construction,* a guidebook

published by FIDIC, Greg and other instructors at Chiyoda Institute created an original textbook

for Itabashi Corporation's intensive course to enable their students to learn the terms in both

English and Japanese. Tsukasa explained that the request to include technical terms and lexical

phrases in the course materials was made by one of the former personnel department staff

members who had already worked overseas. Based on his own experience, the personnel

department staff member believed it is helpful for Itabashi engineers to become familiarised with

these terms both in Japanese and English.

Meanwhile, Yoko, the current personnel department employee at Itabashi Corporation said that previous participants who participated in the intensive English program in the summer of 2011[8] complained that the FIDIC materials were too difficult for them. Accordingly, Tsukasa, the coordinator at Chiyoda Institute, asked the instructor who taught the presentation skill module to reduce the amount of time spent on FIDIC materials and increase the presentation portion of the class. With this knowledge in mind, I observed the presentation skills module for a day and found that the instructor used the FIDIC material for only 50 minutes out of a total of six hours of instruction. The four participants in the current research also said that they had not had much of a chance to use these FIDIC terms in their daily jobs.

In order to determine whether the original request from the personnel department to include construction contract-specific terms in the program curriculum was an adequate fit for the work situations the Itabashi Corporation's engineers actually face, I followed the participants after the intensive program. The results are shown in the next section.

5.4.3.3 Needs for technical terms perceived after the program and further job experiences

Follow-up interviews and email correspondence after the intensive program revealed that the participants realised the importance of acquiring necessary vocabulary and expressions for their own fields *before* they entered BELF environments, where the need to communicate in English increased dramatically. In other words, staff both in the personal department and at Chiyoda Institute was right about the decision to include FIDIC materials in the curriculum.

Tatsuro, who said in the initial interview that drawing a plan in English is *just* translating words and it can be done *without a problem* if he has *enough time*, is nonetheless struggling to

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[8] These are the two participants with whom I conducted the pilot study, as explained in Chapter 4.

acquire more architectural vocabulary in Singapore. In the first interview via Skype after he started

working in Singapore, I asked him about the occasions when he felt in trouble at work. He replied

as follows:

Extract 5.8 (Skype interview with Tatsuro)

I'd say that's when I can't get across what I want to tell them and become lost for words. When I

can't think of specific terms or expressions. I always carry an electronic dictionary. I cannot

survive without it. I always have it at hand. When I'm really in trouble with words, I say 'wait a

second' and look them up in the dictionary.

語彙が分からなかったり、言い回しが追い付かなかったりする時ですかね。常に電子手帳
は持ち歩いてるんで、電子手帳はなかったら生きていけない感じなんで、常に手元に置い
てますね。本当に分かんない時は、ちょっと待ってっつって、で、あ、これだみたいな、
それはやってますね。

Tatsuro says that no one he works with—neither the local engineers nor his Japanese supervisor—

uses dictionaries or has trouble remembering technical terms and expressions at all. Being in the

position of chairing meetings and giving instructions to local engineers on the spot, he is required

to respond in English more quickly than was necessary when he was in Japan (see Chapter 7). In

order to deal with the suddenly increased need for technical terms, he said he was creating and

renewing his own list of architectural terms.

I also asked Hajime and Tatsuro via email whether it was useful to have learned the FIDIC

terms (i.e. construction contract-specific vocabulary) in the presentation skills module. Hajime

answered that he often recognises what he learned in class appears in his actual work, as he

currently engages in international tendering processes, which makes him realise the lessons were

useful. Tatsuro, who did not even know the existence of FIDIC before the intensive program, commented via email on the same course module as follows:

Extract 5.9 (email communication with Tatsuro)

While we were studying English five days a week, the FIDIC lesson was the only time when I dealt with architecture. It was very practical because I could think in the way I actually think during the actual work…Now that I'm dispatched to an overseas branch, I think it's desirable to have more lessons like FIDIC that are directly related to our work.

週 5 日英語漬けとなる中で、FIDIC の授業が唯一建築を扱っていて、実際の業務で使う思考を英語の授業で発揮していたのでとても実践的だったと思います。赴任後に思うことは、もう少し FIDIC のような業務に直結する授業があってもよいかなと思います。

Hajime and Tatsuro, who did not initially consider it important to learn FIDIC terms, came to understand the usefulness of such vocabulary and expressions after they were assigned projects abroad. Since continuing to study English while acclimating to a new work environment in a foreign country is no doubt exhausting, it should be beneficial for participants to acquire a sufficient amount of special terms related to their work during the intensive English course.

5.5 Summary

The present chapter has identified and analysed the language needs and uses by engineers working for a Japanese general contractor, which will contextualise findings from analyses of talk-in-interaction and interview data in later chapters. The results have shown that the participants need to prepare themselves for the unpredictable and fluid nature of their jobs, including the necessity to learn local languages other than English, which parallels with the variable, fluid and

multilingual nature of many BELF communities (e.g. Cogo 2012a, 2016a, 2016b; see also Kubota 2016). Among the specific language needs they have, oral communication skills are felt to be most necessary, with a special emphasis on small talk so as to establish good working relationships and enhance job performance. These results were endorsed by other stakeholders in the study as well.

On the other hand, the participants and other staff members disagreed on the importance of learning technical terms and expressions during the intensive English program. While the participants thought that they could acquire terms and expressions unique to their specialised fields on their own, the experienced coordinators and instructors regarded acquiring these terms as an essential part of the curriculum, following the advice of a former personnel staff member at Itabashi Corporation who had been assigned overseas projects. Only after the engineers were dispatched to their respective workplaces abroad did they recognise the necessity of learning sufficient technical vocabulary before starting their jobs in an English-speaking environment. Thus, the present chapter has confirmed the usefulness of a multiple-source, multiple-method, and multiple-administration, multiple-administration research design explained in Chapter 4 in documenting changes in BELF users' language needs and uses. While dynamic and fluid nature of BELF communication is frequently highlighted, there have been, as far as I know, few BELF studies that pay close attention to the changeability or unpredictability of job situations of BELF users (but see Pullin 2015), let alone with a longitudinal perspective. While this is a very small-scale study that does not claim any generalisability, the present research aims at listening to particular participants' voices, distinctive histories and unique desires for the future both in the classroom and in the workplace.

With the precise job situation contexts of each participant in mind, this research now moves on to analyses of the participants' talk-in-interaction occurring both in the classroom (Chapter 6) and in the workplace (Chapter 7) as well as their perceptions towards English (Chapter 8).

Chapter 6

Analysing talk-in-interaction in the classroom for BELF users

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 has identified what kind of communication skills the four participants expect to acquire during the intensive English program before engaging in overseas construction projects using English as a lingua franca. The present chapter explores what is actually happening in the classroom by analysing talk-in-interaction between a native English teacher and the participants, who are language learners in this specific context but also professionals in their own fields. First, this chapter takes a close look at the teacher-centred interaction in the classroom and questions its relevance for BELF users. Second, it analyses how the teacher places great emphasis on grammatical 'correctness', imposing mastery of 'perfect' grammar based on NS norms, which seems to be 'communicatively redundant or even counter-productive' (Seidlhofer 2005: 340; see also Seidlhofer 2011 and Widdowson 2016) for professionals who use English as a lingua franca. Realising this specific teacher can be an extreme example, the present research does not intend to generalise the result beyond this particular context, while it hopes to point out that classroom instructions for BELF users can be unpractical if teachers i) always control the content and flow of conversations in class and ii) pay too much attention to students' grammatical 'correctness' based on NS norms.

In order to explain the different vantage points of business professionals and language teachers toward using English, the next section (Section 6.2) discusses Ehrenreich's (2009) two speaker conceptualisations, namely, content-focused speakers and language-focused speakers.

6.2 Content-focused speakers vs. language-focused speakers

Ehrenreich (2009) argues that there is a remarkable discrepancy in attitudes towards English between students/teachers of English and people working globally, conceptulaising the former as 'language-focussed speakers' and the latter as 'content-focussed speakers' (pp. 128-129). As discussed in Chapter 3, business professionals generally focus more on the content than form in communication because for them 'business matters most, with language skills only being assigned a subordinate function' (Ehrenreich 2009: 129). In other words, they regard English as only a tool to get the job done (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, Galloway 2014, Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010, Kubota 2016) and are more concerned with communicative effectiveness than formal correctness. Thus, BELF users in many cases are more content-focused than language-focused when pursuing their professional success.[1]

By contrast, English teachers tend to be overtly sensitive to the language itself. As Ehrenreich (2009) states, even if teachers of English have first-hand experience in ELF interactions, they tend to see ELF communication as something that is flawed and remain ardent supporters of English as a native language (p. 128). Ehrenreich explains that this characteristic applies to the majority of non-native speaker teachers and linguists (Ehrenreich 2009: 129). Similarly, Jenkins (2007) takes up the issue of teacher attitudes towards ELF and observes 'how closely and instinctively they [teachers] identify with an NS norm' (p. 141), which often prevents the development of effective materials and precise methods that fit the actual needs of BELF users.

The contrast between language-focused speakers and content-focused speakers can be explained applying Widdowson's notion of capability (Widdowson 2003, 2016; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2). While language-focused speakers prioritise NS *competence* (i.e. how the native

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[1] As discussed in Chapter 3 (Section3.3.1.2), there are situations in which BELF users strategically choose to be more language-focused (i.e. when formal English correctness is beneficial for business).

speakers use a language as appropriate to their social contexts), content-focused speakers prioritise *capability*, pursuing communicative effectiveness by making strategic use of their own linguistic resources not necessarily conforming to the NS norms (see Widdowson (1983) for discussion on competence and capacity [capability]).

As the following sections show, the native English teacher discussed in this chapter can be labelled as a language-focused speaker while the four participants are more likely to be content-focused speakers. Although there is such a gap between what the teacher intends to teach and what the participants want to learn, the teacher has the power to decide what to teach as well as how to teach and manage the class.

The next section (Section 6.3) discusses the reason and relevance of the teacher-centred flow of the classroom interaction.

6.3 The irrelevance of EFL-based language training for BELF users

Language training provided by the company for its employees has often been criticised as irrelevant by a number of researchers (e.g. Cowling 2007; Ehrenreich 2009, 2010; Reeves & Wright 1996, Terauchi et al. 2015). One of the major reasons for the criticism is because classes in in-house language training programs show little difference from EFL lessons provided at school. In other words, English is taught as a subject unilaterally by teachers to learners, when professionals need to acquire communication skills necessary for their specific jobs.

In a typical EFL classroom setting, teachers decide what and how to teach with clear objectives for the class, which often presume NS competence. Cogo and Dewey (2012) point out the significant influence of the teacher and describe the pressure students feel in a typical language classroom setting as follows:

students are normally given activities and tasks to focus on, and they may have little or no agency

regarding the subject matter of their talk, or how, when and under what circumstances they may

engage in communication. Moreover, students may feel the pressure of performing to a certain

standard, they may over-concentrate on form rather than content, they may self-correct more often

and their performance may be 'staged' for the teacher rather than spontaneous.

(Cogo & Dewey 2012: 28)

As described above, talk in an EFL classroom is often controlled by the teacher and the students

have few chances to choose topics of the conversation and learn natural turn-taking. In addition,

teachers tend to be language-focused, and thus learners feel that they need to be careful not to

make 'mistakes' in their speech or writing.[2]

On the other hand, English training programs for professionals should be designed so that

the participants can learn how to communicate effectively to get their job done in a specific field

of work. Thus, these programs should be different from general EFL programs in at least two

points. First, teachers should realise the fact that they are not always the 'primary knower'

(Dudely-Evans and St John 1998:13) of what is necessary for participants' job communication.

As Kubota (2016) states, '(t)he linguistic competence necessary for specific workplace

communication might be quite different from what is typically taught in language classrooms' (p.

158). Accordingly, teachers need to be willing to adapt their teaching according to communication

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[2] In the Japanese context, researchers find that both Japanese EFL teachers and learners tend to prefer, at least
in practice, teacher-centred approaches with a focus on grammatical 'correctness', mainly for the sake of
preparation for grammar-oriented university entrance examinations (e.g. Gorsuch 2000, Lochland 2013, Sakui
2004, Samimy & Kobayashi 2004; see also Section 3.5.4 in Chapter 3 of the present research). On the other
hand, several studies report that Japanese teachers understand the potential effectiveness of more learner-centred
approaches with a focus on communication (e.g. Matsuura, Chiba & Hilderbrandt 2001, Nishino 2008, Sakui
2004, Taguchi 2005) and students enjoy more communication-oriented lessons (e.g. Abe 2013, Hyland 1994),
if there are no constraining factors such as entrance examinations and rigid curriculum schedules presented by
MEXT.

practices in respective job fields. Second, teachers should keep in mind that program participants are not only language 'learners' but also professionals who play various roles (e.g. supervisor/subordinate/colleague, client/service provider) when back in the workplace. Thus, these professionals need to learn how to adapt communication practices according to the relationship with his/her interlocutors in particular contexts.

In reality, however, corporate language training practitioners often keep an attitude of typical EFL teachers. Ehrenreich (2009) points out that business English trainers in general are not familiar with socialisation practices in business communities, which accounts for a 'mismatch between supply and demand with respect to language training' (p. 147). She also reports her interviewees' dissatisfaction with conventional English training offered through the company; they rather feel that 'learn[ing] by doing' is a much more efficient way of acquiring communication skills necessary for their jobs (Ehrenreich 2009: 419).

In the Japanese business context, Cowling (2007) introduces his research on business people working at a large Japanese company, which reveals participants' critical comment about business English courses they had attended: 'unhelpful in preparing them for certain business situations as the language they studied was unrepresentative of what actually took place' (p. 433). Cowling also points out that many company employees are suffering from confidence problem when speaking English because they went through English school education which focused too heavily on accuracy (p. 431). As discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.5.4.1), the strong influence of MEXT, which retains deep-rooted NS-based perspectives in English language teaching (Murata 2016b, Murata & Iino 2018) seems to permeate in not only school education but also corporate language training. Under these circumstances, more research is expected to be carried out to investigate the realities of in-house language training at Japanese companies. With this rationale in mind, the next section examines the teacher-centred and language-focused tendency by

analysing actual talk-in-interaction in the classroom for BELF users.

6.4 The analysis of talk-in-interaction in the classroom

The main data for this chapter consist of three different classroom exchanges between the teacher and the students recorded on different days during the intensive English program for the four Itabashi Corporation engineers. The first classroom talk (Case 1) was chosen because it was recorded on the same day when one of the participants, Tatsuro, told me how he felt frustrated by his 'mistakes' being corrected incessantly by the language-focused teacher, when he wanted to get the content of the message across (see also Section 5.6.4 in Chapter 5 for the background of the recording and Section 8.3.1 in Chapter 8 for his comments on the classroom interactions). The second classroom talk (Case 2) was chosen because it explicitly demonstrates the teacher's belief that there is only one 'good' English, which equals native speakers' English. In addition, both conversations show the way in which only the teacher has the authority to select a topic to talk about and decide the order of the speakership. The third classroom talk (Case 3) was chosen to further illustrate the teacher-centred flow of the classroom exchanges and the participants' passive attitudes towards giving opinions in class.

It should also be noted that these interactions were observed not during the time allotted for grammar lessons, but during the time scheduled for a warm-up or wrap-up of the day, when the content of the talk should be given priority over formal correctness.

Section 6.4.1 analyses the teacher-centred flow of classroom interactions, in which the program participants do not have much opportunity to take turns spontaneously, because the teacher has the power to select topics to talk about as well as nominate which participant to speak. Next, Section 6.4.2 moves on to illustrate the gap between language-focused speakers and content-focused speakers. The extracts exemplify how the native English teacher of the program

is intently language-focused, forcing the program participants to 'defer to native speakers' model'
(Jenkins 2012: 487), while the participants try hard to communicate the content of their messages
with their linguistic resources at hand.

6.4.1 The teacher-centred flow of interaction

The extracts in this section demonstrate the ways in which only the teacher has the control over
the topics of the classroom conversations and the orders of speakership. Extract 6.1 is taken from
a warm-up exercise at the beginning of a class, in which the teacher, Chris, is taking time to talk
with each of the four students, Koichi, Tatsuro, Satoshi, and Hajime one by one, on what they are
planning to do during the coming weekend. After talking with Koichi, the teacher now turns to
Tatsuro:

Extract 6.1 (Case 1: Topic control by the teacher)

C: Chris (a British teacher of the English training program)

T: Tatsuro (an architect, Chief of Design Department, but a learner in this specific context)

H: Hajime (a mechanical engineer, Deputy Section Manager of Machinery Department, but a learner in this
   specific context)

S: Satoshi (a nuclear power station designer, Section Manager of Technical Department, but a learner in this
   specific context)

K: Koichi (a construction project manager, but a learner in this specific context)

1   C: Tatsuro, tell me a[bout] the weekend

2   T: [yes]

3   C: what're you going to do this weekend

This extract typically shows the teacher-centredness of Chris's lessons –the teacher has control over the order of speakership, selecting a topic to talk about and nominating a participant to speak in turn. Meanwhile, the other three participants usually remain (almost) silent until their turn came. When they do show listenership, they make it so unobtrusive that only the teacher and the selected speaker can continue to be the main interlocutors, as Hajime and Satoshi do in the extract below (Extract 6.2), which is the continuation of Extract 6.1:

Extract 6.2 (Case 1: Topic control by the teacher)

4 T: on this weekend er: (0.7) I'm going to (0.5) take (0.8) an exam (0.3) of

5 (0.6)

6 T [TOEFL]

7 C [really]

8 (0.6)

9 → H: [° oh°]

10 C: [TOE]FL=

11 T: =TOEF[L]

12→ S: [° TO] hahahaha°

13 C: REAlly=

14 T: =yeah

Tatsuro's utterance surprises not only Chris but also other participants, Hajime and Satoshi, because Tatsuro is taking an extra exam at the same time as participating in this intensive English program Monday through Friday, in which a considerable amount of homework is assigned to be

done on both weekdays and weekends. Moreover, they must have been surprised because it is not

TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) but TOEFL (Test of English as a

Foreign Language) that Tatsuro is going to take on the weekend: the exam that Itabashi

Corporation requires its employees to take at the end of the intensive course is TOEIC, and

TOEFL is a more challenging test in terms of both level and number of questions.[3]

Nonetheless, it is only Chris who shows the feeling of surprise loud enough to lead the

conversation. After Chris says 'really' in line 7, Hajime murmurs 'oh' (line 9) quietly, but it does

not hinder Chris's simultaneous utterance 'TOEFL' (line 10). In fact, Tatsuro appears to disregard

Hajime's reactions and only turns to Chris, assuring that it is indeed 'TOEFL' he is going to take

(line 11). Likewise, before Tatsuro finishes saying 'TOEFL', Satoshi, another participant,

responds to the name of the exam, repeating it halfway, and laughs in a very quiet and unobtrusive

way (line 12). In other words, both Hajime and Satoshi refrain from meddling in the interaction

between the teacher and a fellow participant. Furthermore, neither Chris nor Tatsruo responds to

Hajime's and Satoshi's reactions and continues to be the main interlocutors in this sequence.

The next example (Case 2) shows another sequence in which the participants are being

passive speakers. It is at the very end of a class, after Chris and the four students discussed the

assignment for the coming weekend:

Extract 6.3 (Case 2: Teacher-centredness)

1   C   ok guys (0.4) have a very nice (0.1) oh we've got a couple more minutes (0.4) so

2   (3.0)

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[3] As explained in Chapter 5 (Section 5.2.2), Tatsuro at the beginning of the intensive language training had a wish to study architecture at a graduate school in the U.S. with the company scholarship. He told me in the first individual interview that a certain TOEFL score is required by the company to apply for the scholarship program.

3 → H   °ahem° (clearing his throat)

4   (1.5)

5   C   Hajime, do you have any questio[ns↑]

6   H   [um::] (0.4) ah:: (0.5)

In line 1, Chris tries to close the lesson for the day by saying 'have a very nice [day]', but notices that there are a few minutes left before the class period ends, and says 'so', wondering what he or his students can do during the time left. A three-second pause follows, and the program participants remain silent (line 2). Having made sure that the teacher or other participants will not speak up, Hajime clears his throat discreetly to indicate that he would like to say something and waits for Chris to call on him (line 3). When Chris notices this sign and asks if Hajime has a question (line 5), Hajime does not answer directly, that is, saying 'yes' to Chris's question, but instead responds haltingly, saying 'um' and 'ah'. This type of passive attitudes of the participants is very often observed throughout the 10-week intensive program, as also illustrated in Extract 6.4 below:

Extract 6.4 (Case 3: Program participants as passive speakers)

1   C   ((looking at Koichi)) so WHY why did you choose that

2   K   (1.8) umm::: (2.0) umm[:::

3   T   [°hhh°

4 → S   °hhh *muzukashi* ° (difficult)

5   K   ah::: (1.8) umm::: (1.2) um ↑ (0.5) ah:: (.) structure (.) designer

6   structural architecture

7   C   um hum=

8   K   =is (0.6) ahh:::: (0.4) very difficult

9   C   Ah[h

10 → S   [hhhh

11   C   so you >chose it because it was difficult<

12   K   yeah very difficult

Before the above exchange, Chris asks each participant's major at university/graduate school in the order of Koichi, Tatsuro, Satoshi and Hajime[4]–Koichi and Satoshi majored in structural architecture, Tatsuro, architecture, Hajime, mechanical engineering. Chris then looks at Koichi to ask him why he chose structural architecture (line 1). Koichi takes time to answer the question, repeating 'umm' twice to show he is trying to find words to explain the reason in English (line 2). Listening to this, Tatsuro laughs softly, showing his sympathy with Koichi's struggle (line 3). Satoshi also laughs quietly and murmurs '*muzukashii*' ('difficult' in Japanese), meaning 'it's a difficult question to answer' (line 4). Considering that Satoshi also majored in structural architecture, he could join the discussion with Koichi and Chris here, contributing his own reason why he chose the particular field of study. Instead, however, he talks to himself in his native language, putting himself in a position of a bystander, because he knows he will not be nominated by the teacher until his turn comes. Furthermore, when Koichi finally states his reason why he chose to major in structural architecture because it 'is very difficult' (line 8),[5] Satoshi only laughs at the comment, withholding giving his own opinion about it. Meanwhile, even though Chris knows Satoshi's major was the same as Koichi's and must have heard Satoshi laughing, he does

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[4] Chris often nominates the four participants in this order, clockwise from his seat in the classroom (see Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4).

[5] The later exchange reveals what Koichi means by 'difficult' is that majoring in structural architecture is very hard, which makes him competitive in the job market.

not ask for Satoshi's opinion and continues the conversation only with Koichi (line 11). Indeed,

Chris maintains the usual order of nomination and turns to Satoshi after talking with Koichi and

Tatsuro:

Extract 6.5 (Case 3: Program participants as passive speakers)

42   C   Ah great ↓ (0.8) okay and Satoshi ↑ what about you=

43   S   =oh ah (0.5) umm (.) when I was um (.) elementary school ↑

44   C   yeah

In line 42, Chris ends a conversation with Tatsuro, saying 'Ah great' and then calls on Satoshi

('okay and Satoshi what about you'). Satoshi's response latches Chris's call, which means he

knows Chris would speak to him at this timing. Although he says 'oh ah' and 'umm', Satoshi

answers the question quite smoothly, referring to his memory when he was an elementary school

student (line 43). To put it another way, Satoshi gives up an opportunity for an active and

spontaneous discussion with another participant (i.e. Koichi), using the time to prepare for his one-

to-one conversation with the teacher. Thus, Chis's ways to control the class seem to rather

reinforce the participants' reserved attitudes as passive learners than encourage more spontaneous

and active turn-taking, which is necessary for business people to get the job done effectively as

well as efficiently.[6]

So far, this chapter has analysed how the class is managed, controlled, and proceeded by

the teacher. The next section shows how the teacher is being extremely language-focused and

participants are not able to get to the content of the conversation until they produce a

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[6] Chapter 8 of the present research discusses how the participants themselves point out in the interviews that they must not hesitate to speak up and state loudly what they have in mind on the spot for the success of their business.

grammatically correct sentence.

6.4.2 NS-norm based interactions in the classroom

This section exemplifies two different foci observed between the teacher and the participants: while participants try to communicate specific contents with their linguistic resources at hand during the free classroom conversation time for a warm-up/wrap-up, the language-focused teacher does not allow any deviation from NS norms in their interactino. Section 6.4.2.1 analyses the way in which Chris corrects a participant's use of a preposition/verb which collocates with a certain word (Case 1). Section 6.4.2.2 analyses how the teacher tries hard to make another participant, Tatsuro, produce a grammatical sentence and repeat it again and again (Case 2).

6.4.2.1 The teacher's persistent focus on grammar: Case 1

This section analyses extracts from Case 1, in which Chris interrupts Tatsuro's information-giving by insertion sequences (Schegloff 1972) for the purpose of teaching grammar. In Extract 6.6 below, Tatsuro starts to explain his previous experience on TOEFL:

Extract 6.6 (Case 1: 'Correcting' the use of a preposition)

20   C: <u>ha</u>ve you taken (0.5) e:::r a TOEFL exam before?

21   T: yes I have

22   C: oh=

23   T: = o:::[:::::n]

24   C: [what was your s]core,

25   T: (0.2) o::::n (0.7) on December on [last December?]

26 → C: [in in in] December

27	T:	i:::n last December?=
28 →	C:	=no we don't say we say In December OR LAst December but not in last December
29	T:	okay
30	C:	so=
31	T:	=last December

In line 20, Chris asks Tatsuro if he has taken a TOEFL exam before. Tatsuro's answer 'Yes, I have.' is a textbook answer (line 21).[7] In line 23, Tatsuro says 'on', elongating the vowel, which shows he is trying to remember when he took the TOEFL exam the last time. Interrupting Tatsuro's utterance, Chris asks Tatsuro what his score was (line 24). Tatsuro hears this question, but continues his effort to remember when he took the exam, elongating the vowel of 'on' again in line 25, to complete his information-giving first in response to Chris's previous question in line 20. After the first 'on' in line 25, there is a 0.7 second pause, but Chris just waits because he does not know exactly what Tatsuro is trying to say at this stage. However, as soon as Chris hears Tatsuro's 'incorrect' use of a preposition ('on December' in line 25), the teacher corrects it to 'in' both instantly and intently, repeating the preposition three times (line 26), overlapping Tatsuro's utterance 'last December'. Although Tatsuro's 'last December' and Chris's three 'ins' overlapped, Tatsuro hears what Chris has said and understands his use of the preposition 'on' should be corrected to 'in'. Responding to this other-initiated other-repair (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks1972),[8] Tatsuro attempts to produce a grammatical expression by replacing 'on' with 'in' ('in

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[7] Of the four course participants, Tatsuro had the highest English proficiency and motivation, always played the role of a model student all the way through the intensive English training program.

[8] According to Schegloff (2000) repair refers to 'practices for dealing with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, and understanding the talk in conversation' (p. 207). Schegloff et al. (1977) introduce four types of repair sequences (self-iniated self-repair, self-iniated other-repair, other-initiated self-repair, other-initiated other-repair) and argue when 'errors' of grammar are made and repaired, the repair is usually initiated by speaker of the trouble source, and rarely by others'(p. 370), while Chris in this research initiates repairs very frequently to 'correct' the participants' grammar.

last December' in line 27), but Chris rejects it immediately by saying 'no' and imposes the 'correct'

usage in terms of native speakers' norms, stressing the first syllables of each word ('In', 'OR', and

'LAst' in line 28). In line 29, Tatsuro answers 'okay', accepting Chris's correction and withholds

what he is going to say (i.e., the content of the message, that is, when he took the exam) for the

moment. Thus, natural and meaningful turn-taking for information giving is interrupted by an

insertion sequence (Schegloff 1972) for the purpose of teaching grammar, which started in line 26

and lasted up to line 31, when Tatsuro selects one of the 'right' versions. The way in which Tatsuro

says only 'okay' briefly and discontinues the talk for the moment seems to show that he is

demotivated and confused by the interruption. By contrast, Chris does not hesitate to correct

Tatsuro's grammatical 'mistakes'. His attitude seems to show he has little doubt that 'there is such

a thing as *the* English language, a stable entity' (Seidlhofer 2011: 33; original emphasis), and he

has the sole authority in the classroom to impart the knowledge. His use of the pronoun 'we' (line

28) symbolically implies that English is the language of its native speakers[9] (see Widdowson

(1994) on the ownership of English).

The teacher's extreme emphasis on the form does not stop here. Right after Tatsuro resumes

his information giving, it is interrupted again by another insertion sequence as soon as he makes

a 'wrong' choice of a verb:

Extract 6.7 (Case 1: 'Correcting' the collocation of a verb)

40   T: ahem (0.2) but I (0.7) couldn't (0.4) make good i good score

41   (1.2)

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[9] The pronoun 'we' can be used both exclusively and inclusively, the former not including the immediate interactant (Scheibman 2004). Throughout the classes observed in the present investigation, Chris always uses 'we' exclusively when correcting his students' utterances and presenting 'our', that is, (British) native speaker norms.

42	C:	ah I couldn't (0.8) NOW [wha]
43	T:	>[I] couldn't make it<

42　C:　ah I couldn't (0.8) NOW [wha]

43　T:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　>[I] couldn't make it<

44　C:　(0.3) yeah wha what's the verb with score

45　　　(6.4)

46　C:　the verb is to <u>mmm</u> a good sco[re]

47　T:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[to ge]t?=

48　C:　=GEt well d[one]

49　C:　(0.6) so you couldn't get a good score

50　T:　yeah=

In this extract, Tatsuro explains that his TOEFL score was not satisfying for him, while being unsure about the 'correct' collocation of the words thus leaving a 0.4 pause before producing 'make'. In line 40, after 'I couldn't make good', Tatsuro says 'i[t]' halfway and decides on going with 'good score'. Here, Chris must have understood that Tatsuro means that he was not able to get a good score on TOEFL and that is why he started correcting the grammar. First, Chris repeats part of what Tatsuro says (i.e. 'I couldn't' in line 40), starting with 'ah', which shows he has found Tatsuro's 'wrong' use of a word (line 42). After that, leaving a 0.8 second pause to see if Tatsuro self-corrects the 'mistake', Chris tries to elicit a 'correct' verb from Tatsuro, saying 'NOW' in a loud voice to get Tatsuro's attention (line 42). Responding to the teacher's prompt, Tatsuro hastily makes self-correction ('I couldn't make it' in line 43), which is inserted, overlapping with Chris's last utterance 'what[t]'. This is a complete sentence itself and while Chris accepts it with 'yeah', he does not overlook the vagueness of Tatsuro's knowledge of collocation in his earlier utterance in line 40 and asks for a suitable verb for the noun 'score' (line 44). The long pause in line 45 indicates Chris starts writing down the 'correct' expression on the white board, namely, 'to (blank)

a good score' (line 46). When Tatsuro reacts quickly to this, overlapping with Chris's word 'score' and answers 'to get', Chris immediately repeats 'GET' loudly and praises Tatsuro's answer with 'well done' (line 48). This seems to close the extended repair insertion sequence (Schegloff et al. 1972) in lines 42 to 48. In line 49, Chris gets back to the content of the conversation, showing his understanding of what Tatsuro has said in line 40 ('so you couldn't get a good score' in line 49).[10] Tatsuro also gets back to the content of the conversation again, answering 'yeah' (line 50). [11]

However, Chris's grammar lesson in the middle of the free conversation time as a warm-up exercise further extends. He goes over what he believes is important—the 'proper' use of prepositions, resuming the discussion about the grammatical feature dealt with earlier in the exchange:

Extract 6.8 (Case 1: 'Correcting' the use of a preposition)

51   C: =ah (1.0) now this word (0.7) just to to practice (0.3)

52   C: um it's not <u>in</u> last December it's just last December (.) OR (0.2) in December (.) [but]

53   T: [okay]

54   C: ° yeah° so you couldn't (.) what was your score

Showing what he has written on the white board (during and after a 6.4 second pause in line 45 in Extract 6.7), Chris brings Tatsuro's attention to his earlier 'mistake' ('it's not in last December' in line 52) once again. Tatsuro interrupts Chris's utterance ('but') and says okay (line 53), showing

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[10] It should be noted, however, that Chris is still language-focused in line 49 in that he may be presenting the full sentence with a 'correct' collocation of words (i.e. 'get a good score') intentionally.

[11] Tatsuro's 'yeah' (line 50) means that he was *not* able to get a good score at that time. In Japanese, *hai* (yes in English) means 'that is correct' or 'I agree with what has been just said', which leads to the reverse of 'yes' and 'no' in English (Yamada-Yamamoto & Richards 1999: 110).

he has understood the grammar point well enough.[12] Hearing this, Chris finally turns back to his original question ('what was your score' in line 24 in Extract 6.6), which had been discussed before the insertion sequences. Thus, the teacher's passion to teach 'correct' grammar strictly based on NS norms can sacrifice not only the natural flow of conversation but also the interlocutor's motivation to speak, which is unthinkable in daily conversation, let alone in time-constraint business situations.

The native English teacher's attitude makes a sharp contrast with that of ELF speakers' reported in previous studies (e.g. Cogo 2010, Firth 2009a, 2009b). For example, Cogo (2010) introduces a case in which a speaker is unsure about the preposition that collocates with an idiomatic expression and asks for help with it:

1	ISABEL	I mean we don't have problems…we all get
2		on yeah
3	NANA	yeah I think we are all on the same…on in …ah: what is it
4		…on the same boat
5	ISABEL	yeah?
6	NANA	yeah?.. how do you say? on the same boat?
7	ISABEL	I don't know yeah…on the same boat I think…on the bus
8		on the train
9	ANNA	anyway we understand you
10	ISABEL	yeah…we are all foreigners
11	NANA	all foreigners (laughing)

(quoted from Cogo 2010: 303)

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[12] As is confirmed in the focus-group interview later of the day, he is annoyed with Chris's frequent grammar corrections (see Section 8.3.1 in Chapter 8).

In the above extract, Nana (L1 Japanese) is not sure which preposition to use ('on' or 'in' in line 3) and makes a request for help ('what is it' in line 3 and 'how do you say?' in line 6). In response, her interlocutors, Isabel (L1 Portuguese) and Anna (L1 Italian), do not take authority on the idiomatic phrasing ('e.g. I don't know' in line 7) but assure her that they understand what she means (e.g. 'yeah...on the same boat I think'in line 7 and 'anyway we understand you' in line 9). They even downplay the need for the 'correct' preposition, playing creatively with the idiom ('on the bus' 'on the train' in lines 7 and 8, 'all foreigners' in lines 10 and 11). For another example, Firth (2009a) reports a case in which an ELF speaker needs to repair her interlocutor's utterance for the sake of disambiguation of business interactions:

1   Natalie: an' then is er this night uh?

2   (0.3)

3   Mette: yes it's tonight

4   (0.4)

5   Natalie: it's tonight

<div align="center">(quoted from Firth 2009a: 159)</div>

When Mette (an L1 Danish wholesaler) hears Natalie's (an L1 French customer) expression 'this night' in line 1, she makes it unmarked and responds first Natlie's question by confirming the data saying 'yes' and then makes it sure by stating 'tonight' instead of 'this night' in her own turn in line 3, without stressing the first syllable in the word, as a language teacher might feasibly do, when 'correcting' an L2 learner's usage (Firth 2009a: 159; see also Firth 2009b: 146-147 for further analysis of the same extract). Natalie, in response, incorporates the form provided by Mette (i.e. 'tonight') without displaying 'noticing' (e.g. 'ah yes!', 'oh' or "right!') in line 5.

As I have repeatedly pointed out from the outset, Case 1 was recorded during a warm-up exercise in which the content of the conversation should be prioritised. However, the conversation is interrupted so often by the teacher's language-focused insertion sequences and grammar practice, which is both unnatural and unnecessary for these BELF speakers, at least in this context. In other words, in this teacher-centred interaction, the participants are treated more like EFL learners, whose objective is to approximate native speakers (Hülmbauer 2009: 328; see also Section 2.2.1.2 in Chapter 2), and deprived of chances both to communicate naturally in the target language and to learn natural turn-taking mechanism. It is questionable whether Chris's over-emphasis on accuracy, when the participants are supposed to be in a situation where they can talk freely in class, is relevant for professionals like Tatsuro, a successful architect working for a leading general contractor who can think and express thoughts logically and strategically at least in his L1.[13] Although he may have a limited range of skills in English, he knows what he needs to acquire in order to improve his communication in his own field.

The next section analyses another example of teacher-centred interaction, in which Chris makes a participant produce a grammatical sentence, treating him also more as EFL learners at school than as a professional ELF speaker.

6.4.2.2 The teacher's persistent focus on grammar: Case 2

Case 2, which was recorded during a wrap-up of the day (see Section 6.4.1), is another example to illustrate how the teacher believes that English is the language of native speakers' and no deviation is acceptable in whatever situation. Extract 6.9 is a continuation from Extracts 6.3 above. At the end of the class, Hajime tries to ask the teacher what a certain word means:

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[13] Similarly, Tarone (2016) introduces a case of two English learners, who are lawyers in their home country. Despite their limited range of vocabulary and simple syntax in English, a closer analysis proves their remarkable strategic competence to organise and structure information well.

Extract 6.9 (Case 2: The teacher's strict grammar 'correction')

7　H　　what (0.1) what (0.1) um:::: what means

8→C　　WHAT↑=

9　H　　= what means

10→C　　that's not En<u>lish</u> Hajime=

11　H　　=[um?]

12　C　　[what] <u>mea</u>ns,

Chris must have understood that Hajime wanted definitions of some words as early as in line 7, but he does not accept Hajime's 'wrong' word order of the question (i.e. 'what means). He does not wait for Hajime to complete his question and starts a long insertion for sentence-level correctness, which extends to Extract 6.10 below, saying 'WHAT' loudly with a rising intonation (line 8). Using this 'intrusive interruption' (Murata 1994b), Chris intends to shift Hajime's focus from the content to the form of the question, prompting Hajime's self-correction, as here Hajime is answering Chris's original invitation to ask questions. However, Hajime does not take this hint and says 'what means' again (line 9). Then Chris tries to correct Hajime's sentence more overtly, saying 'that's not En<u>lish</u>', emphasising the latter syllable of English ('lish') (line 10). This utterance evidently shows Chris's idea about English—if the form does not defer to NS norms exactly, it is *not* English. In line 12, Chris repeats Hajime's utterance in lines 7 and 9 (i.e. 'what means'), stressing the word 'mean', trying to make Hajime notice the 'trouble' source. Moreover, in the following extract (Extract 6.10), Chris starts correcting Hajime's sentence word by word, while Hajime tries to get to the content of his question:

Extract 6.10 (Case 2: The teacher's strict grammar 'correction')

13   H   what=

14 → C   =WHAT [DOES]

15   H   [what]

16   H   what does?

17   C   mmm

18   H   um: [what da] (0.2) what does you say mean?

19   C   [mean]

20   (0.7)

21 →H   um, what does you say (0.5) enormous?

In line 14, Chris says 'what DOES' loudly as a clue to the correct form of the question[14] and

eventually moves on to saying 'mmm' (line 17), suggesting that Hajime should put the subject

(the word in question) there, and complete the question form with 'mean' (line 19). Put together,

lines 14, 17 and 19 constitute the model form of the question presented by Chris, that is, 'what

does mmm mean'.

On the other hand, Hajime tries to communicate the content of his question by incorporating

the words Chris has suggested. First, he repeats what Chris has said ('what' in line 15 and 'what

does' in line 16) in an automatic manner. Next, he seems to take Chris's 'mmm' (line 17) as a

back-channel and goes ahead to construct a question himself, again incorporating the word Chris

has suggested ('mean') in line 19, but as a consequence, producing even more deviant utterance

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[14] The hint Chris gives here ('what does') is in line with Koshik's (2002) observation that teachers use designedly incomplete utterances, repair initiation as a pedagogical prompt to get students to self-correct their own language errors, even when the teachers have experienced no problem in hearing or understanding their student's sentence.

('what does you say mean' in line 18) from Chris's standard. Eventually, he presents the word in question: 'enormous' in line 21. However, his final product 'what does you say enormous?' is still ungrammatical. Although Chris now realises the exact content that Hajime wants to know about, his first response is still to continue correcting Hajime's 'mistake':

Extract 6.11 (Case 2: The teacher's strict grammar 'correction')

23→C   now say that again in GOOD English (0.2) Hajime=

24 H   =um?

25   (0.2)

26 C   WHAT [DOES]

27 H   [what] does you (1.0) say,

28 C   enor (0.2) <u>no</u> (0.1) <u>wha</u>t WHAT DOES=

29 H   =does

30 C   [enormous]

31 H   [enormous]

32 C   <u>mean</u>↓

33   (0.2)

34 H   mean

35 C   what doe[s enormous mean   ]

36 H   [da enormous mean]=

37 C   =say it again

38 H   what does enormous mean=

39 C   =AGAIN

40 H   >what does enormous mean<

41→C   good (0.1) good question and an the answer…

In line 23, Chris tells Hajime to ask his question 'in GOOD English' with an emphasis on the word 'good'. Again, the teacher believes that there is only one English, which belongs to native speakers, judging that Hajime's English is 'not good'.

Chris tries to present the model structure again, but when he found that Hajime is still unsure about how to fix the form ('um?' in line 24 and 'what does you say' in line 27), being confused by Chris's instruction, the teacher starts to have the participant repeat the sentence word by word, 'what does enormous mean' (lines 28, 30 and 32). Finally in line 35, Chris offers the 'correct' sentence at a breath, that is, 'what does enormous mean'. When Hajime is not able to repeat it completely in 36, overlapping with Chris in line 35, the teacher makes him ask the question in the right word order again and again (lines 38 and 40). Indeed, it is not until line 41 ('good question and the answer is…') that Chris begins to answer Hajime's original question, which started in line 7 in Extract 6.9 ('what means') and asked more specifically as early as in line 21 in Extract 6.10 ('what does you say enormous?'). In other words, there was such a long insertion sequence to correct the form before Hajime's simple question was answered during the wrap-up period, when the content of the message should be prioritised. The way in which Chris 'corrects' Hajime's word order must be out of his passion to teach grammar. However, not responding to Hajime's original question immediately and naturally, but having the participant repeat grammatical sentence like school children, the teacher may be demotivating Hajime to speak up and ask questions in class.

Thus far, this section (Section 6.4.2) has analysed the classroom interaction in which the language-focused teacher ardently corrects the participants' grammatical 'mistakes' while the participants try to focus on the content of the conversation. Koshik (2002) argues that it is a challenge for teachers (of English writing, in Koshik's own research) to deal with both language and content problems at the same time. In the case of Chris, however, he seems to give priority to

language without hesitation, interrupts the ongoing sequence and derails it in order to correct language 'errors' in an abrupt manner before responding to the participants' information-giving/question.

There are at least three problems about providing this type of NS-norm-based interaction for BELF users. First of all, it can reinforce the participants' inferior complex that non-native speakers' English is something flawed. As discussed in Chapter 3, feelings of inferiority about their own English is often generated among Japanese learners through their EFL-based experience at school (e.g. D'Angelo 2018, Iino & Murata 2016). Corporate language training should be free from such EFL-based educational policies and practices, but the present chapter reveals that NS-norm-based interactions continues to be observed at least in this classroom for the Itabashi Corporation English engineers.

Second, it is unpractical to over-emphasise the form and stop the flow of conversations in favour of correcting participants' 'mistakes' in a worm-up/wrap-up session, which could be only a few chances in class for the participants to freely communicate in English and engage in natural flow of conversation. When the aim of exercise is to improve participants' oral communication, teachers should allow participants to let out all they want to say first, and interact with them naturally, even if teachers believe that grammatical correctness is important for their participants, or if participants themselves ask teachers to correct their grammar. More formal ways of saying the same content can be presented afterwards.

Finally, aiming at NS competence consuming too much time of language training for busy professionals can be counter-productive. As discussed in Chapter 3, BELF users regard English as only a tool to get the job done. They do not necessarily need grammatical 'correctness' based on NS norms in order to communicate effectively with their interlocutors in the workplace. As Widdowson repeatedly discusses, many features of correctness taught in the classroom are

communicatively redundant, and learners construct their own version of English to be communicatively fluent in their own community (Widdowson 2003, 2012a 2013, 2016. see also Section 2.3.2 in Chapter 2). To cite Hajime's case, even though Chris makes him repeat the 'correct' form again and again, unless he realises himself that the lesson is important for him, he can continue to develop his own construct, which may not be 'correct' but communicatively functional. After all, professionals judge what is 'good' for themselves, and as Widdowson (2016) argues, teachers may need to 'abandon the objective of NS competence in favour of encouraging and supporting the natural development in learners of communicative capability' (p. 222).

6. 5 Summary

This chapter has explored what is taught and how it is taught in the classroom of the company English training program for professionals who are going to work in BELF environments, applying Ehrenreich's (2009) conseptualisation of content-focused speakers and language-focused speakers. First, I have taken a look at the way the native English teacher gives one-sided instructions, deciding the topic to talk about and allocating speaking turns. The participants have neither much opportunity for taking turns spontaneously nor authority to choose topics they would like to talk about. Second, the teacher is persistently language-focused, paying intense attention to the 'accuracy' of the students' utterances, forcing the program participants to 'defer to native speakers' model' (Jenkins 2012: 487). He does not go into the content of the interaction unless the participants construct perfectly grammatical sentences. Interruptions and insertion sequences are used to correct the participants' grammar, stopping the natural flow of communication.

Chris may be an intense example of language-focused teacher (and an ardent one) and I do not argue that all the teachers for English courses provided by Japanese companies are like him. However, the fact that Chiyoda Institute has chosen Chris as the anchor teacher for Itabashi

Corporation—one of its most important clients—shows that it is not unusual to design a corporate language training so language-focused.

The present research argues that this type of NS-norm based interactions can widen the gap between classroom and workplace experiences of BELF users, reinforcing their inferior complex that their English is not good compared to native speakers' English. It also contends that strictly aiming at NS competence is counter-productive because participants actually acquire only what they feel is necessary for effective communication in their respective job fields (Widdowson 2016). Thus, teachers of English language training for BELF users should rethink what should be taught and how it should be taught 'in the name of subject "English"' (Seidlhofer 2016: 27).

In order to support the arguments empirically, the next chapter (Chapter 7) will analyse the talk-in-interaction in the workplace, where one of the four program participants actually works using English as a lingua franca, and compare the results with the findings in this chapter to see what kind of differences/similarities can be observed between the two settings. Chapter 8 will shed light on the participants' perceptions towards NS-norm based instruction as well as their own English.

Chapter 7

Analysing talk-in-interaction in BELF settings

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 has highlighted the reality of form-focused English language training for BELF users, largely controlled by the teacher. The present chapter analyses talk-in-interaction recorded in the workplace, where one of the program participants works using English as a business lingua franca. The chapter consists of two parts, each of which deals with an important aspect of business communication in ELF identified in the previous chapters, namely, small talk and business meetings. The first half of the chapter (Section 7.2) analyses the small talk data, focusing on the careful choice of topics, the use of repetition and syntactic simplification in order to facilitate their BELF communication. The second half of the chapter (Section 7.3) analyses the talk-in-interaction in business meetings, paying attention to the use of *not to 'let it pass'* (Firth 1996) (Section 7.3.2.1.1), direct expressions of negation (Section 7.3.2.1.2), code-switching/multilingual practice (Section 7.3.2.2), and speedy and quick turn-taking without necessarily conforming to NS norms (Section 7.3.2.3). As a whole, the present chapter attempts to exemplify the goal-oriented nature of these specific BELF settings and the ways in which interactants use English as their own tool to get the job done as efficiently as possible, without necessarily conforming to NS norms.

7.2 Small talk in business

This section analyses actual small talk between two BELF speakers who meet for the first time, exemplifying the nature of initial business small talk and its difficulties pointed out by previous

research as well as the participants of the present research (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.2). The analysis reveals two features of the interactions: (i) the way in which the interlocutors pay careful attention to the selection of topics and the flow of workplace talk in order to save each other's face (Goffman 1967), and (ii) the ways in which the interlocutors work collaboratively to make their BELF communication efficient and effective by using a variety of strategies: overlaps, repetitions, and syntactic simplification. In so doing, the present research argues, in line with findings from previous studies, that small talk in the workplace functions more than as a means of mere socialising (St. John 1996, see also Section 3.3.2) but as a means of establishing footholds to facilitate their upcoming jobs. Moreover, it reveals how the interlocutors start collecting information necessary for their job even at the first-time encounter, before they actually start working.

In the following, Section 7.2.1 argues the challenge in handling small talk for the first-time encounter in business settings. Section 7.2.2 explains the small talk data for the current research, followed by findings and discussion in Section 7.2.3.

7.2.1 Challenge in handling first-time business contacts

As discussed in Chapter 3, small talk functions in order to establish a good working relationship for a certain business purpose rather than to merely socialise (St. John 1996). The chapter also has pointed out that while business people understand the importance of small talk, they frequently find it difficult to talk informally, off their usual business topics (e.g. Ehrenreich 2016, Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005, Pullin 2010). In the context of Japanese business people, there is a pressing need for them to acquire skills in handling first-time business contacts (e.g. Cowling 2007). The sense of awkwardness in handling small talk for the initial meeting is discussed in Chapter 5 of the present research, which has illustrated how one of the participants, Hajime, often finds it

difficult to continue casual conversation after saying 'nice to meet you' (see Section 5.4.2).

Previous studies on BELF have found that one reason why corporate people find it hard to deal with small talk when they meet someone at work for the first time is that there is no 'length of relationship' to familiarise themselves with the interlocutors' communication styles in ELF (Ehrenreich 2011, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010). Moreover, business people have to be sensitive to 'roles and hierarchical differences' (Pullin Stark 2009: 165) for their success in a job and avoid 'face-threatening acts' (Brown & Levinson 1987) so as not to offend their supervisors, colleagues or business partners. As an example of strategy not to offend their interlocutors, Pullin (2010) also claims that choosing topics carefully is important to allow non-face threatening discussions (p.469).

In line with these arguments, this section attempts to explicate what actually happens in interactions in an initial job contact situation, paying careful attention to the selection of topics and the use of communication strategies, especially repetition. In ELF research, repetition is reported to be a common accommodation strategy to achieve efficiency as well as to show cooperation among speakers to co-construct interactional understanding (e.g. Cogo 2009; Cogo & Dewey 2006; Mauranen 2006, 2012; Kaur 2009, 2016; see also Section 2.4.1.2.1, Chapter 2). For example, Cogo (2009) explains that 'repetitions are a powerful and versatile tool that can provide a linguistic resource for facilitating rhythm and group synchrony', while it can maintain rhythmic delivery of the speech and show alignment and solidarity (pp. 260-261). In demonstrating how BELF speakers use repetition to establish common ground as well as to gather information necessary for their jobs, this section makes special reference to wider interactional sociolinguistic studies, namely Tannen (2007) as well as Murata (1995) (see Section 2.4.1.2.1, Chapter 2). In addition, Cook, G.'s (2000) notion of 'language play'[1] will also be referred in order to examine

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[1] According to Cook, G. (2000), language play is not only for fun or mere socialisation, but also for increasing

the role of repetition as a lubricant when two people meet for the first time in a job situation.

Having clarified the challenge in having small talk in business and the importance of topic choice as well as accommodation strategies—especially the use of repetition—in dealing with the challenge, the next section introduces the small talk data for the current research.

7.2.2 The small talk data and single case analysis

The data analysed in this section are extracted from a small talk between two professionals at a first-time encounter: Tatsuro, the Japanese architect, and a Malaysian hotel employee, Ahmad. As explained in Chapter 5 (Section 5.2.2), Tatsuro was transferred to the Singapore branch of Itabashi Corporation, immediately after the intensive English program was over. His first assignment in Singapore is to design a factory building in Malaysia for a Japanese manufacturer. Based in Singapore, he visits Malaysia once in a while to supervise the construction of the factory building. During his stay in Malaysia, Tatsuro stays at a hotel at which Ahmad works, located close to the construction site. The data were recorded by Tatsuro on the day of his arrival in Malaysia, while Ahmad is giving Tatsuro a ride from the airport to the construction site.

A technique applied to the analysis is 'single case analysis', which 'involves looking at a single conversation, or section of one, in order to track various conversational strategies and devices which inform and drive its production (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008: 114) in a detailed manner. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) argue, analysing a single case in detail is useful for researchers to discover how the order and organisation of conversation operates in particular instances.[2] The data are valuable since, to my knowledge, there has been little BELF research

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co-operative efficiency, because '(i)ndividuals who are used to co-operating in play, judging each other's capacities, reaction times, and attitudes, are better able to collaborate in more urgent situations' (p. 103).

[2] For example, Tannen (2007) analyses a range of types of repetition in a single segment of her Thanksgiving conversation, although she does not follow the conversation analytic approach in a strict manner.

analysing naturally-occurring talk-in-interaction at first-time business encounters (but see Pitzl 2016).

7.2.3 Findings and discussion

The analyses of the small talk data reveal the ways in which the interactants start eliciting information necessary for upcoming jobs while establishing a good working relationship. This section discusses some of the strategies employed by the BELF interactants. Section 7.2.3.1 explores the way in which Tatsuro and Ahmad carefully choose a 'safe' topic, appropriate and uncontroversial for the first-time encounter. Section 7.2.3.2 focuses on the way in which they negotiate meaning successfully, using overlaps, repetition and syntactic simplification.

7.2.3.1 Selecting a 'safe' topic

In line with findings from previous research (e.g. Holmes 2005, Meirekord 2000, Murata 1994a, Pullin 2010), the interlocutors in the data for the present research are found to carefully choose a topic to talk about in beginning a new business relationship. At the outset of the recording, the two interactants talk about a mutual acquaintance of theirs, pseudonymised here as 'Mr. Sato'. Sato is working for a subcontracting company under the orders of Tatsuro's company, Itabashi Corporation, and staying at the hotel for which Ahmad works. In other words, Sato is a subcontractor for Tatsuro and a hotel guest for Ahmad. In Extract 7.1, Ahmad asks Tatsuro a question about Sato:

Extract 7.1 (Selecting a 'safe' topic)

T: Tatsuro (a Japanese architect from Itabashi Corporation)

A: Ahmad (a Malaysian hotel employee who is giving Tatsuro a ride to the construction site)

159

1	T:	uh Mr. Sato is uh::[::::::::::::::::::]
2	A:	[supervisor?] ma[nager?]
3	T:	[yeah] supervisor
4	A:	ah
5	T:	he supervisor for construction
6	A:	oh

In this extract, Ahmad chooses to ask Tatsuro about Sato, not about Tatsuro himself. He presumably decides to talk about the mutual acquaintance first because it is a 'safer' way to begin a business relationship with Tatsuro. Holmes (2005) argues that, in her New Zealand workplace data, 'when people are of different status, small talk tends to be restricted to bland, impersonal, uncontroversial topics' (p. 355, see also Pullin 2010: 469 for the selection of non-face threatening topics). What is considered a 'safe' topic, however, is culturally variable (Holmes 2005: 356, see also Murata 1994a: 98), and since trying to reduce distance with someone too hastily may 'trespass on and threaten the security of the personal domain' (Widdowson 1983: 50), Ahmad seems to have preferred to talk about Sato, their mutual acquaintance, and establish common ground with Tatsuro first. This concern is relevant especially on Ahmad's side, considering the relationship between Ahamd and Tatsuro: a hotel employee and a guest at the hotel. Ahmad's attitude contrasts with that of Chris, the English teacher appeared in Chapter 6, who nominates Tatsuro and asks a direct question about how he is going to spend a weekend, and insistently calls for a report on his TOEFL score in the other participants' presence.

Another way in which this topic is 'safe' is that talking about the mutual acquaintance at work requires less effort to find necessary vocabulary items. This is in line with Meierkord's

(2000) argument that participants in lingua franca communication choose topics that are relatively easy to deal with and avoid putting their partners in an embarrassing situation by using words or expressions their interlocutors may not understand. As Firth (2009b) explains, 'L2 proficiency is in essence a *private* matter in that it is not alluded to or topicalised' in the workplace, in sharp contrast to classroom interactions, where Tatsuro and others were placed in (p. 136, original emphasis).

Meanwhile, when Ahmad asks a question about Tatsuro, he becomes careful not to intrude the hotel guest's 'territoriality' (Widdowson 1983), as shown in Extract 7.2:

Extract 7.2 (Not to intrude the interlocutor's 'territoriality')

62　A:　　ah he's very (.) very hard work lah?

63　T:　　yeah

64　　　　(1.3)

65 →A:　　on big holiday also you working

66　　　　(1.1)

67　A:　　yes[terday Christmas did you,]

68　T:　　　[　on　holiday　ah:::::::]　the::[::::::::::::::::::::::::::]

69　A:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Christmas holiday]

70　T:　　yeah two days ago?

71　A:　ah=

72　T:　=Christmas

73　　　　(0.9)

74 →A:　　every day working he go morning,

75　T:　　umh

Here, in line 62, after commenting on Sato as 'he's very very hard work lah',[3] there is a 1. 3 second pause (line 64) before Ahmad eventually asks a question about Tatsuro in line 65, which implies his hesitation to bring up Tatsuro himself as a topic. Murata (1995) explains that when Japanese interactants talk for the first time, they 'appear to leave plenty of time for each other to initiate a new topic, showing respect for the territory of others' (p. 349), and that seems to apply to Ahmad here. Murata (1994b) also explains that the decision as to who opens a conversation (or moves to another topic, in this case) may depend on the status and roles of the participants in a particular culture (p. 90), and Ahmad seems to be showing a little awkwardness to initiate a talk directly about his guest, Tatsuro.

In line 65, Ahmad manages to say, 'on big holiday also you working', meaning 'Do you also work on big holidays?'. The question—whether Tatsuro is going to work as hard as Sato does— is relevant to Ahmad's job because he is going to give Tatsuro rides between his hotel and the construction site, as he has been doing for Sato. However, the following 1.1 pause in line 66 shows that Tatsuro does not understand Ahmad's question.[4] Thus, Ahmad elaborates on what he means by 'big holiday' in line 67 ('yesterday Christmas did you'). Nonetheless, since the Christmas holiday was actually not 'yesterday' but 'two days before', the following lines 68-72 end up confirming when the Christmas holiday was as Tatsuro does not understand what Ahmad intends to ask. After a 0.9 pause (line 73), Ahmad discards his unanswered question and goes back to talk about Sato again in line 74.

Talking about Sato again, Ahmad 'lets pass' (Firth 1996) the unsolved matter and 'recycles'

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[3] The discourse particle 'lah', which is frequently used in Malaysian English, is employed as a 'softener' that conveys emotive or affective attitudes of the speaker, which can increase informality, familiarity, solidarity and rapport (Azirah 2007: 37-38).

[4] Kaur (2014) explains that such prolonged silence is a way to suggest the recipient's non-understanding, to which the speaker needs to be sensitive (p. 162).

the previous topic (House 2003: 567; Tannen 2007: 23). Topic change is reported to be a frequently used strategy in ELF interactions to pre-empt misunderstandings (Seidlhofer, 2004: 218), and there are two possible reasons in this specific context. Firstly, Ahmad might have decided to quit asking directly about Tatsuro in order to reduce the likelihood of offence (Pullin Stark 2009: 153), or to avoid infringing Tatsuro's 'territoriality' (Widdowson 1983) as mentioned earlier. Secondly, Ahmad is perhaps being careful not to risk both Tatsuro's and his face by negotiating meaning further on this matter, which may draw attention to a 'lack' of English proficiency on the part of Ahmad and/or Tatsuro.

Accordingly, choosing a 'safe' topic in having a small talk in business is a challenge. In Murata's (1994a) terms, interactants 'need to be able to judge what is "tellable" from what is not before they present their own topics' (p. 98) and the topic choice is influenced by their power and role relationship. As the section has revealed, in the case of Tatsuro and Ahmad, Ahmad, who is in a position to attend a guest, seems to be more careful about the choice of topic.

Apart from attention required in choosing topics, the two interlocutors also need to negotiate meaning to achieve successful communication. The next section analyses how the two interlocutors negotiate meaning, using English as their own, with the use of communication strategies such as overlaps, repetition, and syntactic simplification.

7.2.3.2 Effective use of overlaps, repetition and syntactic simplification

In addition to the careful choice of topics, it is also remarkable in the small talk data that Tatsuro and Ahmad are able to communicate successfully despite the presence of 'non-standard' and 'dysfluent' (Firth 2009b) expressions, utilising interactional strategies such as overlaps, repetitions and syntactic simplification. From this perspective, Extract 7.1 can be re-analysed as follows:

163

Extract 7.1 (requoted) ('Co-operative interruption' and 'expansion' repetition)

1   T: uh Mr. Sato is uh::[:::::::::::::::::]

2 →A: [supervisor?] ma[nager?]

3   T: [yeah   ] supervisor

4   A: ah

5 →T: he supervisor for construction

6   A: oh

In line 1, Tatsuro is trying to explain what Sato does and searching for the right expression, saying 'uh'. Ahmad overlaps Tatsuro in line 2, suggesting words for which Tatsuro should be searching, namely 'supervisor' and 'manager'. According to Murata's (1994b) classification, this is 'co-operative interruption', which shows 'interest and active participation in the conversation' (p. 388). Or if we use Cogo and Dewey's (2012) terminology, these are 'completion overlaps', which occur when another speaker tries to complete the sentence of the current speaker to show the listener's involvement and support (p. 147). The way interlocutors collaborate using overlaps is also found in other ELF studies such as Kaur (2009).

Tatsuro responds to the overlapping utterance 'supervisor' immediately, using repetition effectively to confirm the information Ahmad has asked for. First, he says 'yeah', overlapping Ahmad's another supposition ('manager') in line 2, and then repeats the word 'supervisor' himself (line 3). After Ahmad responds to this, saying 'ah' (line 4), Tatsuro reconfirms that Sato is a supervisor and expands on this by adding the information that Sato is a supervisor 'for construction' (line 5). In Tannen's (2007) terminology, this type of repetition, namely repeating the initial utterance with elaboration, is classified as 'expansion' repetition, which scaffolds construction of on-going talk (p. 73).

Another noticeable point found in this extract is that Tatsuro successfully communicates with Ahmad by prioritising the content of his message over 'correct' forms of sentences. In order to immediately respond to Ahmad's utterance in line 2, Tatsuro simply repeats the word Ahmad has offered ('supervisor') without composing a full sentence. After Ahmad's short backchannel 'ah' in line 4, Tatsuro self-repeats 'he supervisor for construction' (line 5) by adding the subject 'he' and the subject complement 'for construction' to the word 'supervisor'. Although the construction of this utterance is irregular from native speakers' norms, Tatsuro's simple reuse of the content word 'supervisor' without the copular verb 'be' is rather effective, particularly when the interlocutors, who have just met and are unfamiliar with each other's communication styles, have difficulties in listening to each other due to considerable background noise from the car's passage over a rough road.[5] This can be explained in line with Meierkord's (2004) observation of syntax simplification in ELF interactions, namely 'an avoidance of long utterances by segmenting these into smaller units' (p. 125). By picking up only content words, Tatsuro's utterance in line 5 is cognitively easier for Ahmad to process. Moreover, as Ranta (2006) argues, the extended use of the progressive could well be regarded as a characteristic feature of ELF which has the potential to increase explicitness and expressivity (pp. 113-114, see also Extracts 7.2 and 7.3). For another possible explanation, omission of a copular verb 'be' and frequent use of present progressive forms (to be discussed in the explanation of Extract 7.3) are common characteristics of Englishes spoken in Singapore and Malaysia (Honna 2008) and Tatsuro, who has worked in Singapore for nine months, may be familiar with this syntactic feature and uses it himself to show alignment. Thus, Tatsuro and Ahmad, BELF speakers who do not conform to native speaker norms and would be 'counted as communicatively incompetent on these grounds', to borrow

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[5] In the car, Ahmad is in the driver's seat and Tatsuro is seated in the back and eye contact is difficult, which makes communicating with each other more challenging.

Widdowson's (2012) words, are 'perfectly capable of communicating' (p. 22).

The next extract (Extract 7.3) also shows how Tatsuro and Ahmad negotiate meaning in the small talk, using English as their own, while establishing a good working relationship and enjoying their talk. This sequence is initiated by Tatsuro, who tries to gather information necessary for his job—how hard and how long Sato is working at the construction site, including weekends:

Extract 7.3 (Repeating for elaboration and 'language play')

53   T: an(d) (0.3) is he taking a holiday?

54   A: °takin[g holiday°]

55   T: →   [Sunday?   ] only Sunday? how about Saturday?

56   A: → every day he working

57   T: hhh. every day?=

58   A: =EVE[RY day] he work[ing]

59   T: [er::m]   [er] including Saturday? ah Sunday?

60   A: Saturday Sunday every day he working

61   T: ah::: really

In Extract 7.3, Tatsuro tries to find whether Sato works on weekends as well as weekdays. In line 53, Tatsuro asks Ahmad, 'Is he taking a holiday?', to which Ahmad repeats 'taking holiday' (line 54) in a low voice. This is what Tannen (2007) calls 'stalling', repeating the question 'to fill the response slot without giving a substantive response' and 'to slow down the conversation' (pp. 72-73). Cook, G. (2000) also argues that the very act of repetition 'allows greater time for processing' (p. 30). Thus, Ahmad is able to buy time to understand Tatsuro's question, simultaneously indicating his non-understanding in an indirect manner (see also Kaur 2014: 162).

Meanwhile, before Ahmad finishes the repetition in line 54, Tatsuro realises himself that his question has been vague in meaning, and paraphrases the word 'holiday' to 'Sunday' and further adds 'only Sunday? how about Saturday?' (line 55), meaning he is quite sure Sato works on Saturdays but wondering if he also works on Sundays. In other words, responding to Ahmad's 'stalling' (Tannen, 2007) repetition, Tatsuro transforms his question with elaboration as 'reformulation' (Murata 1995) or 'expanding' (Tannen 2007) repetition. Thus, Tatsuro and Ahmad negotiate meaning by using repetitions effectively.

Responding to the clarified question, Ahmad answers 'every day he working', emphasising 'every day' (line 56). Tatsuro laughs 'hhh' and repeats the word 'every day' with a rising intonation (line 57), showing that he is somewhat surprised as well as confirming the information he tries to obtain. Noticing Tatsuro's strong interest in his answer, Ahmad continues his rhythmical way of talking, repeating what he has said in line 56, this time emphasising the word 'every' even more strongly, 'EVERY day he working' (line 58). The stronger emphasis on 'every day' and the way it is latched to Tatsuro's utterance in line 57 demonstrates Ahmad's active participation. As Cogo (2009) discusses, repetitions latching to the original utterance are often observed in ELF corpora and used as a strategic device, a timely alignment to the interlocutor's speech (p. 262). This is how Ahmad tries to form a friendly connection with Tatsuro, being hospitable to his guest. Again, talking about the absent other is safe as a topic, and especially when the interlocutors aim humour at an absent other party, they unite in a clear bond (Boxer and Cortés-Conde 1997: 280, Pullin Stark 2009: 162). Thus, repetition is used as 'a resource for humor' and the rhythmical way of repeating amplifies the effect (Tannen 2007: 71) in this exchange.

Tatsuro, in turn, needs to make sure what Ahmad means by 'every day he working' in line 58. While understanding the importance of creating rapport with Ahmad in order to settle in the new work environment, he needs to find out precisely how frequently Sato visits the construction

167

site, which would affect his own job schedule. In other words, Tatsuro does not forget about the purpose of the small talk to facilitate his job while responding to Ahmad's 'language play' (Cook, G. 2000). Thus, Tatsuro paraphrases 'every day' into 'including Saturday?', then reformulates it as 'Sunday' (line 59), since, as explained earlier, not Saturdays but Sundays are the days Tatsuro is not sure whether Sato works or not.

Ahmad responds to this request for confirmation, again with a prosody corresponding to Tannen's (2007) 'exaggerated chanting manner', saying 'Saturday Sunday every day he working', emphasising each word (line 60). Thus, Ahmad repeats the utterance 'every day he working' for the third time (lines 56, 58 and 60), incorporating the words in Tatsuro's clarifying question (line 59), namely 'Saturday' and 'Sunday'. This brings about the dramatic or 'poetic' effect (Tannen 1987, 2007) of the repetitions. In Cook, G.'s (2000) terms, the act of repetition, or 'language play' creates more secure and relaxed atmosphere (p. 30). Thus, Tatsuro and Ahmad elicit necessary information and simultaneously enjoy their exchanges, which enhances solidarity between them, satisfying both 'interactional' and 'transactional' needs of communication (Brown & Yule 1983).

As also seen in Extract 7.3, Tatsuro and Ahmad consistently concentrate on the content of each other's message and do not pursue 'correct' forms on the basis of NS norms, just like they do in Extract 7.1. For example, in line 56, Ahmad says 'every day he working', omitting the copular verb 'be', but Tatsuro makes it unmarked and repeats only the content words ('every day' in line 57). As observed in Extract 7.1, syntactic simplification and extensive use of the progressive are effective for explicit and expressive ELF communication (Meiercord 2004, Ranta 2006) and the two interlocutors make 'creative use of what is possible in the language code, drawing on it as a resource to express themselves' (Widdowson 2012b: 22) without conforming to native speaker norms.

The final extract from the small talk data analysed in this section is a continuation of Extract

168

7.2, in which Tatsuro elicits further information necessary for his job, after Ahmad chooses to return to the 'safe' topic (i.e. talking about the mutual acquaintance, Sato):

Extract 7.4　(continued from Extract 7.2) (Repeating for clarification)

74　A:　every day working he go morning,

75　T:　umh

76　A:　coming night only

77　　　(0.7)

78　T:　<u>night?</u>

79　A:　ah

80　T:　around (.) what time?

81　A:　oh aro- sometimes <u>ten</u> sometime <u>nine</u> sometime (0.3)

82　T:　nine or ten pm

83　A:　ah [ten] pm sometime eleven

84　T:　　[ah]　　　　　　　　　I see

In line 74, Ahmad uses a slightly modified phrase of 'every day he working', which he has used three times in Extract 7.3 (lines 56, 58 and 60), namely, 'every day working' followed by 'he go morning'. Responding to Ahmad's slightly rising intonation at the end of the statement, Tatsuro gives a short back-channel 'umh' to prompt the conversation (line 75). Ahmad further adds new information on Sato, 'coming night only' (line 76), meaning 'Sato works until (late at) night'. This new subtopic—how many hours Sato works every day—draws Tatsuro's attention. Tatsuro repeats the word 'night' in line 78 with an emphasis and a rising intonation, which shows his fair amount of interest in this matter. After Ahmad's affirmation 'ah' (line 79), Tatsuro asks more

specifically 'around what time (Sato stops working to be picked up by Ahmad)' in line 80. Ahmad repeats the word Tatsuro has uttered ('around') halfway, stating 'aro-', but instead inserts 'sometimes', and then offers the answer to the question in line 81. Here, Ahmad repeats the word 'sometime(s)' three times rhythmically as if he is playing with the language again (Cook, G. 2000, see also Extract 3). On the other hand, Tatsuro keeps his focus on gathering the information by clarifying what Ahmad has said, using chronological order 'nine or ten pm' (line 82). Ahmad affirms this with 'ah', to which Tatsuro replies, also saying 'ah' in line 84 overlapping Ahamad's talk. Stressing Sato's hard work, Ahmad further adds an even later time ('eleven'), again using 'sometimes', after repeating 'ten pm' (line 83). Thus, Tatsuro successfully elicits further information on Sato, asking for elaboration and confirming the information again, this time, utilising lexical repetition and paraphrasing, compared to syntactic repetition used in Extract 7.3. Ahmad plays a role of information giver, creating friendly atmosphere with his playful way of talking, utilising repetition effectively.

Thus far, this section has analysed a small talk at first-time business encounter, in which the interlocutors explore 'safe' topics, build solidarity, and exchange information, utilising overlaps, syntactic and lexical repetitions, paraphrasing, and syntactic simplification effectively. In so doing, the section has exemplified that small talk is by no means produced to merely socialise, but the interlocutors co-construct interactions to gather information that would facilitate their success in their respective job fields. In other words, these professionals use every minute available to facilitate their job, from the very moment they meet.

In order to further shed light on the preference of time efficiency in BELF communication (Ehrenreich 2009, Louhiala-Salminen 1996), the next section analyses examples of talk-in-interaction during business meetings, which take place under more significant time constraints

compared to small talk situations (Wolfartsberger 2011: 176).

7.3 Communication strategies for efficient and effective communication in BELF meetings

Business meetings in many cases are categorised as an outcome-oriented business interaction, in which 'efficiency' is the key word (Ehrenreich 2009, Louhiala-Salminen 1996). In these settings, unlike in general small-talk situations, interactants need to get to the main point as quickly as possible and avoid misunderstanding. It is especially relevant for BELF communication since interlocutors have different linguacultural backgrounds, 'yet have specific objectives to fulfil, usually under time constraints' (Pullin 2015: 36).

This section (Section 7.3) analyses the way professionals communicate in BELF meetings, paying attention to interactional strategies to get the job done as efficiently as possible, including the use of direct expressions, unmitigated negation in particular, repairing the interlocutor's utterance unpretentiously, supplying a word or a phrase for the interlocutor, the speaker changing his/her own speech style to resemble that of the interlocutor, and code-switching (cf. Bjørge 2012, Cogo 2012a; Cogo & Dewey 2006; Firth 2009a, 2009b; Kaur 2009; Klimpfinger 2009; Wolfartsberger 2011).

In what follows, after providing the contextual information of the business meeting data (Section 7.3.1), Section 7.3.2 presents the findings and discussions drawn from the analysis.

7.3.1 The business meeting data

The data sets analysed in this section were recorded at the Singapore office of Itabashi Corporation, where Tatsuro has spent three and a half months by the time of the recording. One data set was recorded from a weekly web meeting with local engineers in Malaysia. Tatsuro chairs the meeting, using a web meeting software (GoToMeeting), which enables the attendees to see one another,

draw and highlight points to be discussed on a shared screen.[6] At these meetings, Tatsuro checks

on how the factory construction is progressing. If any problems are reported, he changes the design

on the screen and gives relevant instructions to the local staff on the spot. While Tatsuro chairs

these meetings, his supervisor, Daisuke, another Japanese architect, occasionally joins him.

Daisuke had been posted to Thailand for four years and then to Vietnam before coming to the

Singapore office and thus is a more experienced BELF user than Tatsuro. The system of the web

meeting and common languages in each office/between both parties can be illustrated in 7.1

below:
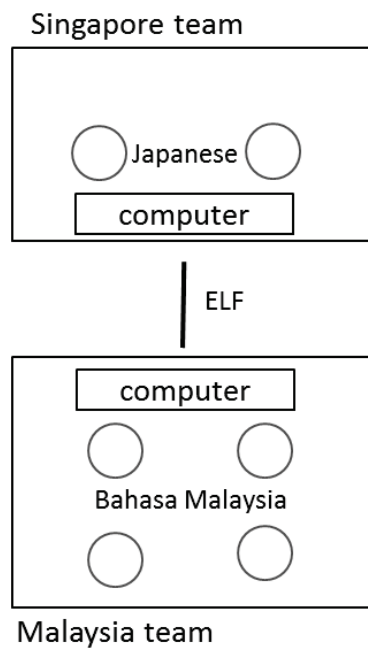
Figure 7.1 Web meeting and common languages in each office/between both parties

Another data set was recorded during an in-person meeting held in the office, in which

Tatsuro, Daisuke, and Roy, a Singaporean system supplier (L1 Chinese), sit to talk in-person over

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[6] Only the audio-recording of the meeting was provided for the analysis for the sake of the protection of corporate and technical information (see Section 4.7.3, Chapter 4).

a design drawing of the factory building. In this meeting, Tatsuro and Daisuke explain what kind of water drainage system they need for the factory and asking for a quotation from Roy's company, which means Tatsuro and Daisuke are potential clients to Roy.

7.3.2 Findings and discussion

Analysing the business meeting data, the following sections show how the interlocutors pursue efficiency of BELF communication, utilising direct expressions of negation, namely, not to 'let it pass' for explicitness (Section 7.3.2.1.1) and raw negation and disagreement (Section 7.3.2.1.2). Moreover, Section 7.3.2.2 analyses the meeting attendees' act of code-switching or multilingual practice (Cogo 2012a, Jenkins 2015b, Pitzl 2016). Finally, Section 7.3.2.3 discusses how the interlocutors negotiate meaning using English creatively and efficiently as their own communicative tool, prioritising speedy and quick turn-taking over politeness.

7.3.2.1 The use of direct expressions of negation

While ELF communication is reported to be cooperative and co-constructive in nature (Seidlhofer 2004, see also Section 2.4.1, Chapter 2), it is common practice for BELF users to deal with hard negotiations and conflicts in business meetings (Bjørge 2012, Ehrenreich 2009, Wolfartsberger 2011). This section analyses the use of direct expressions among interactants, the expressions of negation in particular, which is one of the frequently observed features of competitive talk (e.g. Bjørge 2012, Pullin 2013).

7.3.2.1.1 *Not* to 'let it pass' for explicitness

Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.1.1) has discussed Firth's (1996) argument that ELF users do *not* 'let pass' potentially problematic features to avoid misunderstanding (see also House 1999, Mauranen 2006

and Tsuchiya & Handford 2014). This strategy is important especially in business because 'misunderstandings can cause extra work and incur additional costs' (Kankaanranta, Louhiala-Salminen & Karhunen 2015: 131). Paying attention to the '*not* let-it-pass' function, Tsuchiya and Handford's (2014) corpus-assisted discourse analysis of a professional ELF meeting focuses on the use of repair or reformulation. The authors argue that the meeting Chair's use of other-repair functions as '*not* let it pass', showing more emphasis on strong transactional than interactional goals to clarify what the speaker means for the sake of the other participants (p. 124).[7]

The data for the present research also show that direct expressions including other-repair are preferred in this particular context to enhance job efficiency, while establishing a workable relationship. In Extract 7.5, Roy, the Singaporean supplier, employs both 'let it pass' and *not* 'let it pass' strategies (Firth 1996) simultaneously, when discussing what kind of drainage system should be installed in the factory building with the Japanese architects, Tatsuro and Daisuke:

Extract 7.5 (in-person meeting) (*Not* to 'let it pass' for explicitness)

R: Roy, a Singaporean supplier (L1 Chinese)

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1   T: here we have a box gutter

2   D: um huh

3   T: and is your system mmmmm uh::::::::m working↑

4   R: YES [yes

---

7 Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) is relevant to the present research because of the similarity of the context: an international construction project in an Asian country.

5   T: [if we have the box gutter here

6→R: (0.7) um I don't understand

7   you mean you have a downpipe↑

8   T: (.) yeah here [is the downpipe=

9   R: [yeah

In line 1, Tatsuro explains the design drawing to Roy, showing where he intends to have a 'box gutter'. Roy however does not say anything at this stage, although, as we can see later in line 6, he obviously doesn't understand what Tatsuro means by 'box gutter'. In response to this, in line 2, Daisuke supports Tatsuro's utterance by saying 'um huh'. Judging from his clarification later in lines 6-7, Roy could have asked for clarification here but just 'lets pass' at this stage. In line 3, Tatsuro asks whether Roy's water drainage system will work all right in Tatsuro's factory building by stating 'is your system working', and Roy answers it 'YES yes' decisively (line 4). This is natural because Roy is eager to sell a drainage system to Tatsuro anyway. Before Roy finishes his second 'yes', Tatsuro points at the drawing and says 'box gutter' again (line 5). There is a relatively long pause (0.7 second) and hesitation marker 'um' in line 6, which indicates 'delicacy' in talk (Firth, 1996: 251). Roy then decides to say 'I don't understand'. This is a fairly overt expression of non-understanding, but in Firth's (2009a) words, the need for disambiguity in this business interaction appears to prevail over the need for interpersonal alignment and attunement (p. 161). What is more, in line 7, Roy repairs Tatsuro's utterance without waiting for Tatsuro to self-repair, which deviates from existing conventional CA findings such as 'self-repair predominates over other-repair' (Schegloff et.al, 1977: 361). Although the other-repair is somewhat mitigated by the use of 'you mean' and rising intonation with 'a possible understanding of prior turn' (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977:368), it could potentially be face-threatening to Tatsuro. Considering Roy

is in the middle of an important business talk and Tatsuro and Daisuke are potential clients for him, a more mitigated way of clarification request may be preferred. However, Tatsuro does not make Roy's other-initiated other-repair marked. In line 8, after a micro pause to understand Roy's correction (i.e. 'box gutter' to 'downpipe'), Tatsuro accepts it unmarked, incorporating Roy's suggestion 'downpipe' in his explanation naturally and continues his talk (line 8). There seems to be a consensus that 'perceived problems in understanding must be dealt with immediately, rather than being allowed to "pass"' (Firth, 1996: 250) between Tatsuro and Roy. This phenomenon to prioritise efficiency of communication can be called 'the institutional need for economy' in Bowles (2006)'s terms. Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) also report that there are numerous uses of other-repair in their institutional data, which lead to the assumption that construction communication has a very strong transactional focus, and having interactants' utterance repaired is less likely to be a face threat than might be the case elsewhere (p. 126). While Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) find that a sanctioned individual, that is, the chair of the meeting in their study, mainly initiates other-repair, the fact that Roy, who has relatively less power in this context, does not hesitate to repair his client's utterance can be regarded as an exemplification of the transaction-oriented nature of construction communication all the more.

Besides the expression of non-understanding, more assertive negative expressions, namely raw negation using the word 'no' are also observed in the data, to which I now turn.

7.3.2.1.2 Showing raw negation and disagreement

The use of 'no' in professional situations has been highlighted by Seedhouse (1997) and Richards (2009) because negative expressions require considerable sensitivity. Richards (2009) shows that 'no' occurs only in the context of disagreement about facts, and professional disagreement are managed without recourse to 'no'. However, the use of plain 'no' is frequently observed in the

business meeting data for the present research. In Extact 6, Tatsuro is discussing where to arrange doors in the factory building with Mohd, a Malaysian engineer, at the web meeting. Mohd, pointing at the design drawing on the shared screen, explains how one door is blocking another on the actual construction site, using direct negation:

Extract 7.6 (web meeting) (Showing disagreement on a technical matter)

M: Mohd, a Malaysian engineer

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1 M: this one this one

2   (1.8)

3 T: yeah we can move the door

4   (0.9) ((clicking sound: Tatsuro starts to make a modification on the shared screen))

5 M: oh

6   (2.0) ((clicking sound continues))

7 M:→ canNOT because °xxxxxxxx[xxxxxxxx]xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx°

        ((Mohd talks to other members of the meeting in Bahasa Malaysia))

8 T: [like this]

9   (16.0)

        ((Mohd continues to talk with his colleagues while Tatsuro draws on the screen))

10 T: like this

In line 1, Mohd uses the shared computer screen to show the doors in question, saying 'this one,

this one'. Tatsuro, who is in charge of the factory design, says he can change the design to solve

the problem (line 3), and tries to modify the design on the spot using the shared screen. Mohd is

a little surprised by the idea and responds, saying 'oh' (line 5). He thinks for a moment while

Tatsuro continues to draw and then loudly says 'canNOT' with an emphasis on 'not' (line 7),

which is an equivalent of 'no' in Southeast Asia (Honna 2002)[8] before Tatsuro finishes drawing

the modified design on screen. Turning down Tatsuro's professional suggestion in such an

abrupt way may be face-threatening to Tatsuro, who is the chief designer as well as the chair of

the meeting and contradict Richards (2009)'s argument that the occurrence of 'no' is exceptional

where professional issues are at stake. Mohd here, however, clearly answers in the negative and

moves on to discuss the design problem with his Malaysian colleagues in their L1, presumably

Bahasa Malaysia.[9] Mohd may be sure that the door cannot be technically moved and discussing

the reason with his colleagues. However, it should be kept in mind that Mohd is an engineer,

who works under the direction of an architect (i.e. Tatsuro). On the other hand, Tatsuro just

passes Mohd's reactions in lines 5 through 7 unmarked and continues drawing to show his idea

that the door can be moved, saying 'like this' in lines 8 and 10. In other words, expressing

negative opinions to the interlocutor's technical suggestion is not marked in this context, and the

architect and the engineer seem to prefer exchanging opinions instantly as well as frankly in

order to speedily solve technical problems.[10]

The most conspicuous example of plain 'no' in the business meeting data is shown in

Extract 7.7, where Roy, the Singaporean supplier, is asking Daisuke, a Japanese architect as well

as Tatsuro's supervisor, a technical question:

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[8] Honna (2002) states that people in Southeast Asian countries use yes/no and can/cannot interchangeably.
[9] The talk between Mohd and his colleagues is unintelligible because they talk off the microphone.
[10] See Extract 7.9 for the continuation of this sequence.

Extract 7.7 (in-person meeting) (Using raw negation to express professional belief)

R: Roy, a Singaporean supplier (L1 Chinese)

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1   R: Endo-san[11] I'm surprised that you you you allowed the factory to flow(.)

2   that's I'm very surprised tha[t

3 →D: [no no no no (.) I'm not saying (.)

4   we I allowed for factory to flow

5   R: uh

6   D: I allowed to it overflow on the ground le[vel

7   R: [on the ground level=

8 →D: =I don't allow overflow [on top

9   R: [I xxxx that °ok°

10→D: that means I do NOT ALLOW the overflow coming inside to the building

11   even in the ground floor

12 R: it's true right↑ you you don't want that yeah↑ umm

13   because [that'll be affecting uh many factories=

14 D: [if you

---

15   D: =<u>yes</u> of course=

16   R: =yeah=

17→D: =I'm <u>not</u> gonna allow that

18   R: yeah

Roy asks Daisuke whether he allows raw water from the factory to be discharged at a certain point in the design without a drainage system. Roy's repetition of 'you' three times in line 1 shows his hesitation to bring it up, indicating that he recognises it is a delicate issue that can affect Daisuke's professional 'face' (Goffman 1967). As soon as Daisuke finds what Roy is talking about, he immediately interrupts Roy by saying 'no' four times in combination with 'allowed'. (line 3). This is what Murata (1994b) calls 'disagreement interruption', which occurs when the next speaker disagrees with what the current speaker says (p. 390). Taking the floor instantly as well as aggressively with this interruption, Daisuke uses the subject 'we' once but self-repairs it into 'I' (line 4) and continues to use 'I' four consecutive times (lines 6, 8, 10 and 17), which shows Daisuke takes this decision as his personal responsibility. Then he explains specifically where the water should be discharged, pointing at the design of the building in lines 6 and 8. He enunciates 'NOT ALLOW' loudly in line 10 and makes it extra sure in line 17 by saying 'I'm <u>not</u> gonna allow that'. The repeated 'no' has a strong effect on Roy to realise how important this issue is for Daisuke. As explained in Section 7.3.1, Daisuke is an experienced BELF user, and his use of raw negation is not due to the 'lack of pragmatic fluency (House 1999: 81), but for the sake of effectively and efficiently clarifying his professional belief.

As have been discussed, the ELF speakers in these professional contexts use a number of strategies such as 'let it pass' and *not* 'let it pass' to co-construct and clarify the meaning of conversations. In particular, they are found to express non-understanding or disagreement to the

interlocutors' remarks plainly. Expressions of raw negation appear a number of times, but they are unmarked and freely distributed among participants. While they also use various forms of mitigation such as long pauses, hesitation/delay markers such as 'um' and 'oh', the degree of articulation in expressing 'no' is quite assertive.

There are several possible reasons for this stronger articulation of negative expressions. First of all, in these business situations, efficiency of communication is most important. While it is preferable to save 'face' (Goffman 1967) with one another, disagreements have to be articulated immediately by the listener (Grässel, 1991, cited by Wolfartsberger, 2011:173), because of the danger that superficial consensuses and diplomatic and optimistic let-it-pass behaviours may hide misunderstanding (Firth 1996, House 1999, Mauranen 2006), often leading to business losses. It is assumed that interlocutors in this study make their communication efficient and robust by *not* 'letting it pass' and plainly using negative forms. Second, 'adversarial nature' of construction engineering (Tsuchiya & Handford 2014) should be taken into consideration. Professionals engaged in construction projects place less emphasis on face concerns than might be the case elsewhere for safety is their crucial concern[12] and exchanging information clearly and concisely is given the highest priority. Thus, in this specific context, both the interlocutor with relatively more power and the one with relatively less power exchange their opinions freely and frankly to reach the shared goal: building the factory with the best design and equipment possible within a set construction schedule. The tendency to prioritise time efficiency of communication for achieving transactional goals over relational concerns can be observed in the interactants' use of code-switching, to which now I turn.

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[12] Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) discuss 'safety' as follows: fatalities do occur as a result of poor design and construction, and it is therefore imperative the issues and discussion points are understood before making a decision (p. 126). See also Handford & Matous (2011) for the discussion of the significance of safety in the construction industry.

7.3.2.2 Code-switching for the sake of time efficiency

The business meeting data demonstrate how these BELF users communicate speedily and efficiently by using code-switching[13] frequently as well as blatantly. In Extract 7.8, Roy, the Singaporean supplier, explains why his company does not intend to have a deep sump in the factory building:

Extract 7.8 (in-person meeting) (Code-switching for a quick exchange of information)

R: Roy, a Singaporean supplier (L1 Chinese)

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1   R: do you know why we don't do that here ↑ (0.2) mosquito=

2   D: =mosquito

3   R: ° yeah°

4   (1.0)

5   D:→[*ka* {mosquito} mosquito]

6   T: [ah:::::]   *un* {yeah}

7   *dorodame tsukunnainsuka* {don't they install sumps?}

8   T: [*ma tonan ajia deha* {well in Southeast Asia}]

9   D: [when you have sump the] the drop um sump drop

10 R: [well you know]

---

[13] As discussed in Section 2.4.1.2.2 in Chapter 2, code-switching is now gaining more attention among ELF researchers as 'multilingual practice' or part of 'translanguaging' (Cogo 2012a, 2016b; Jenkins 2015b; Pitzl 2016).
.

The simple reason why they do not intend to install a sump given by Roy was 'mosquito' (line 1). Daisuke responds to this instantly, repeating the word 'mosquito' (line 2), and Roy confirms it by saying 'yeah' softly (line 3). Tatsuro meanwhile remains silent, and there is a 1.0 second pause (line 4). Here, Daisuke code-switches to Japanese to make sure Tatsuro has understood the word 'mosquito', providing both the literal translation in Japanese ('*ka*') and the original English word 'mosquito' (line 5). What Daisuke does using code-switching in this extract is the opposite to what Klimpfinger (2009) terms 'appealing for assistance' (Klimpfinger 2009), that is, *offering* assistance.[14] Upon hearing this, Tatsuro says 'ah' simultaneously and gives a backchannel '*un* (yeah)' in Japanese, accepting Daisuke's linguistic assistance (line 6). Daisuke's code-switching seems to have encouraged that of Tatsuro, and Tatsuro continues to speak Japanese to Daisuke, saying '*dorodame tsukunnainsuka*' ('don't they install sumps?') in line 7. Tatsuro adds in the next line '*ma tonan ajia deha*' ('well, in Southeast Asia') to show his acceptance of the suggestion meaning that perhaps it can't be helped in Southeast Asia. Tatsuro speaks in Japanese to specifically show Daisuke that he is following the discussion properly as well as to confirm a technical matter quickly. Since Japanese is the common L1 between Tatsuro and Daisuke, it is the most secure and efficient way to reach faster understanding (Klimpfinger 2009: 363). Confirming that Tatsuro understands the content of Roy's message, Daisuke then code-switches to English again and continues the discussion with Roy (line 9), while Roy cuts in by saying 'well you know' simultaneously (line 10).[15] In terms of Cogo's (2012a) categorisation of functions of code-switching: selecting their addresses and including and excluding them (p. 304), Daisuke's code-switching can be analysed as follows. His first code-switching from English to Japanese indicates that a specific utterance is made only for Tatsuro (i.e. exclusive) and the following switch from

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[14] Klimpfinger (2009) classifies code-switching into four functions: specifying an addressee, signalling culture, appealing for assistance, and introducing another idea.
[15] Thus, Tatsuro, Daisuke and Roy speak simultaneously in lines 8-10, and Daisuke eventually takes the floor.

Japanese to English manifests the end of his assistance to Tatsuro and invites Roy to join the conversation again (i.e. inclusive). Pitzl (2016) also discusses inclusive/exclusive functions of code-switching (or 'multilingual practice'/'non-English speech' in her terms). In addition, Pitzl argues that business meetings can be part of either the front-stage or the back-stage (Goffman 1956) sphere, drawing from Cogo (2016a) (Pitzl 2016: 17-18). Considering Extract 7.8 is taken from a meeting in which representatives of two different companies negotiate (i.e. front-stage), Daisuke might have switched back to English in line 8 to avoid another L1 Japanese sequence not to exclude Roy further. Meanwhile, Roy starts his utterance in line 10, passing the exchange in Japanese between Tatsuro and Daisuke (lines 5-8) unnoticed. It seems, in line with Klimpfinger's (2009) argument, code-switching is a common feature of ELF communication (p. 366) and Roy does not feel uncomfortable with it.

Code-switching between Tatsuro and Daisuke is more frequently observed in back-stage (Goffman 1956, see also Cogo 2016a and Pitzl 2016) in the business meeting data. Moreover, it is utilised without an apology or preface (cf. Ehrenreich 2010, 2016[16]) even by interlocutors in a subordinate position. In the web meeting held only among internal staff, Malaysian engineers code-switch to discuss a technical matter, as shown in Extract 7.9 below, which is an extended version of Extract 7.6:

Extract 7.9 (web meeting) (Code-switching as a normal practice)

M: Mohd, a Malaysian engineer

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

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[16] The interviewees in Ehrenreich (2010) are reported to always apologise for code-switching in case a quick exchange between colleagues who speak the same L1 is necessary in meetings (p. 423). Ehrenreich (2016) also introduces an instance of Italians using Italian during a phone conference between Germany and Italy, which is prefaced by 'just a second for Italian' (p. 149).

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1 M: this one this one

2   (1.8)

3 T: yeah we can move the door

4   (0.9) ((clicking sound: Tatsuro starts to make a modification on the shared screen))

5 M: oh

6   (2.0) ((clicking sound continues))

7 M:→ canNOT because °xxxxxxxx[xxxxxxxx]xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx°

        ((Mohd talks to other members of the meeting in Bahasa Malaysia))

8 T: [like this]

9   (16.0)

        ((Mohd still continues to talk with his colleagues while Tatsuro draws on the screen))

10 T: like this

        (8.0)

        ((Mohd continues to talk with his colleagues while Tatsuro draws on the screen))

11 T: OK?

12   (15.0) ((Mohd further continues to talk with his colleagues))

13 D:→ *chotto kou tatewakuno kotchiyori nantonaku sono*

        {a little this way more on this side of the door jamb for some reason it}

14 T: *hai* {yes}

15 D: *nakani kui- nomikonderundakedo mienai*

        {is bit- built inside and can't be seen}

In line 7, after saying 'cannot' decisively (see Section 7.3.2.1.2 for the analysis of this utterance), Mohd code-switches to Bahasa Malaysia to discuss the technical matter with his Malaysian colleagues. They keep talking in their L1, while Tatsuro shows the design he is drawing on the shared screen, using English ('like this' in lines 8 and 10 as well as 'OK?' in line 11). Mohd and his colleagues' L1 talk is unintelligible for Tatsuro and Daisuke in two ways—the Malaysian engineers are talking off the microphone and Daisuke and Tatsuro do not speak Bahasa Malaysia, but Tatsuro, the chair of the meeting, does not stop them or confirm the content of their L1 discussion, although he inserts 'OK' in line 11 in rising intonation to check the Malaysian colleagues' understanding of his suggestion. Mohd and his colleagues, however, keep their discussion in Bahasa Malaysia. At this point, in line 13, Daisuke on his part starts to talk in Japanese, looking at the design of the factory building. Tatsuro responds to this by saying *hai* ('yes' in Japanese), and then Daisuke and Tatsuro further continue to talk about the design problem in Japanese, while Malaysian engineers continue their discussion on their side. The parallel use of the languages can be illustrated in Figure 7.2 below.[17]
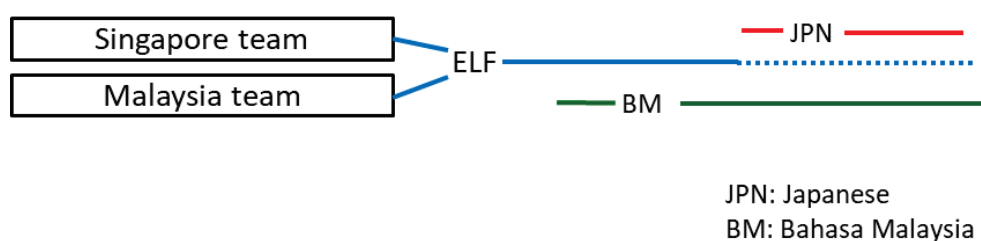
Figure 7.2 Web meeting and the parallel use of the languages

In other words, in this specific context, code-switching or 'multilingual practice' (Cogo 2012a,

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[17] It should be interesting to analyse how both parties code-switch back at some point and resume the discussion in English. Unfortunately, however, the web meeting data were cut off here by Tatsuro when he sent it to me, presumably because he thought all I needed was talk-in-interaction in English.

Jenkins 2015b, Pitzl 2016) among colleagues who share the same L1 is frequent and normal as a communication strategy to enhance job efficiency. Pitzl (2016) finds in her data that the amount of L1 side sequences increases in the course of the meeting, as the meeting participants get to know each other better. If that is the case, it is natural in this web meeting, in which the same internal staff members get together weekly (i.e. back-stage practice), that code-switching can be frequently observed and unmarked. Because of the 'length of relationship' (Ehrenreich 2011, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010) they are familiar with communication styles of one another and do not need to hesitate to use their own L1 for the purpose of achieving the shared goal (i.e. to complete the construction project properly by the due date). Moreover, since the two parties are physically separated in Singapore and Malaysia and connected only through the web meeting system, it might be easier for them to code-switch to their own common languages (i.e. Japanese in the Singapore office and Bahasa Malaysia in the Malaysian office), as has been illustrated in Figure 7.1 (see Section 7.3.1):

To sum up, Extracts 7.8 and 7.9 exemplify cases of code-switching in a goal-oriented talk where speakers collaborate to clarify problems and arrive at conclusions as quickly as possible. To use Cogo's (2009) terms, these are 'an expression of the bilingual or multilingual competence' (p. 263) rather than a sign of linguistic deficiency. Unlike in the EFL classroom, where using only English is often encouraged, BELF users utilise linguistic resources at hand freely to facilitate efficient and effective communication and eventually to achieve the business goal. Another feature which is closely related to this is speedy and quick turn-taking .

7.3.2.3 Prioritisation of speedy and quick turn-taking over politeness

This section analyses the way in which interactants prioritise speedy and quick exchange of information over grammatical correctness. Extract 7.10 shows how professionals at work

concentrate on the content of the talk and prioritise the job efficiency, especially in the case of an experienced ELF speaker, by use of concise expressions. In Extract 7.10, which takes place prior to Extract 7.9 in the data, Daisuke, an experienced ELF speaker, shows this tendency when Mohd points out the design problem regarding the doors in the factory building, to which Tatsuro and Daisuke respond as follows:

Extract 7.10 (web meeting) (Prioritising speedy exchange of information over grammaticality and politeness)

M: Mohd, a Malaysian engineer

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

D: Daisuke, Tatsuro's supervisor, a Japanese architect

1 M: this door will eventually (0.2) clash with the (0.2) xxxxx here↑ (0.2) and

2   blocking the door here

3   (4.0)

4 T: um↑(.) ummm I'm sorry um=

5→D: =again please

6 T: could you again please

Here in line 1, part of Mohd's utterance is unintelligible. For four seconds, Tatsuro and Daisuke try to understand what Mohd seeks to tell them verbally as well as on the computer screen where they can see the design drawing. In line 4, Tatsuro gives up and shows his non-understanding with the hesitant marker 'um' and a rising intonation. Then he moves on to a more overt way of clarification, starting with the apology 'I'm sorry'. He is most likely to request 'but could you say

that again?' subsequently, but Daisuke cuts in and says 'again please' sharply in line 5 to ask Mohd to repeat what he has said. In line 6, Tatsuro continues to say what he intended to state before he was interrupted by Daisuke. In doing so, he incorporates what Daisuke said, that is, 'again please' in his utterance after 'could you', which is politer and more elaborated than Daisuke's. Here, Tatsuro is trying to follow what he has learned in the classroom: to be formal and make grammatically correct full sentences. Despite his effort, what he has actually produced in line 6 is an approximate to a grammatically 'correct' version , and the politeness is rather redundant or 'counter-productive' (Seidlhofer 2011: 18) for efficient business communication, especially considering that Mohd is in a subordinate position to Tatsuro. Daisuke, on the other hand, knows how to shortcut and convey a request more concisely and clearly using the minimal expression. This is in line with Hülmbauer's (2009) argument that it is 'reasonable for ELF users to do away with redundant features and complexity whenever irrelevant to their communicative purposes' (p. 328). Daisuke's interruption is therefore relevant since business meetings are, unlike small talk, primarily outcome-oriented (Wolfartsberger 2011: 172).

Another example of short turn-taking with which interlocutors negotiate meaning efficiently as well as effectively is observed between Tatsuro and Roy as seen in Extract 7.11:

Extract 7.11 (in-person meeting) (Short turn-taking to negotiate meaning efficiently and effectively)

R: Roy, a Singaporean supplier (L1 Chinese)

T: Tatsuro, a Japanese architect

1   T: and here connect the [sump

2   R: [sumps

3   R:→   su[mp

4   T: [sump

5   R: umh=

6   T: =yeah=

7   R:→   =there's sump booth here

In this extract, turns are very short and may appear to be 'incomplete' from a native speakers' viewpoint, but looking at them closer, it becomes more evident that the interlocutors collaboratively and efficiently confirm technical information for the construction. In line 2, Roy speaks simultaneously to Tatsuro's utterance in line 1, offering the term 'sumps', voluntarily speaking up and supplying the word that Tatsuro is going to say. In Murata's (1994b) terms, this can be explained as 'co-operative interruption', which shows 'interest and actual participation in the conversation' (p.388). For Roy, Tatsuro is an important prospective client, and thus Roy needs to demonstrate his enthusiasm as well as understanding in the construction project. At the same time, Roy is trying to contribute to getting business done more speedily, supplying the word Tatsuro was going to say. According to Kaur (2009), this type of simultaneous talk, or what she calls 'cooperative overlap', contributes to the joint production of talk (p. 107) and is found to be common in ELF talk.

Roy's co-operative and accommodating manner can also be observed in line 3, where he changes the word 'sumps', which he originally offered in line 2, to the singular form 'sump', as Tatsuro uses the latter form. As Cogo and Dewey (2006) argue, this type of accommodation has two purposes: efficiency and alignment (p.72). Although Roy knows that there are more than one sumps at the site, he adopts Tatsuro's form and simply repeats it in order to be more accommodating to his client as well as more intelligible. Thus, he continues focusing on the topic,

the location of a sump system, for the sake of efficiency of business and perhaps because he does not want to offend his client. In line 4, Tatsuro repeats the singular form of 'sump' and Roy affirms it by saying 'umh' in line 5. It is after Tatsuro replies 'yeah' (line 6) that Roy tries to clarify the content of their talk. That is, in line 7, Roy substitutes 'sump' with 'sump booth' so that he and Tatsuro can reach a clearer understanding about the technical matter without correcting Tatsuro's utterance. It is also remarkable that Roy accomplishes all these things by providing only content words without constructing full sentences (lines 2-6),[18] doing away with redundant features and complexity irrelevant to his immediate communicative purposes (Hülmbauer 2009: 328), which effectively facilitates faster understanding among the interactants. In other words, the interlocutors possess 'capability' (Widdowson 2003, 2013, 2016) to creatively exploit linguistic resources at hand. As Widdowson' (2012a) argues, once learners of English step out of the classroom, they accumulate experience as ELF users and 'construct their own version of the language they are being taught' (p. 23).

7.5 Summary

The present chapter has analysed the reality of ELF use in the workplace where the participants are dispatched after the intensive English training program. It has argued that BELF communication in this specific context prioritises effectiveness of communication over grammatical correctness or politeness to enhance their job efficiency, while relational work is still important, especially on the side of interlocutors with relatively less power. The analysis of talk-in-interaction in this chapter has been carried out in two domains: small talk at initial encounter and business meetings both online and in-person. The single case analysis of small talk has

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[18] House (1999) also argues that the fact that participants' individual turns are all very short is one of the noticeable characteristics of ELF interaction (p. 81).

explicated the interactants' use of various pragmatic strategies such as careful selection and presentation of topics, use of overlaps, repetition, paraphrasing, and reusing the interlocutor's utterance. The BELF users co-construct conversation successfully utilising their linguistic resources without being constrained with NS norms. Skilfully monitoring the ongoing talk, they not only build rapport and solidarity through small talk, but also share and gather information, which enhance the efficiency of their upcoming jobs. Second, analysing the talk-in-interaction in business meetings, which requires more time efficiency than general small talk, the present research has confirmed empirically how the BELF users prioritise efficiency of communication, while the collaborative nature of ELF communication is also observed. More specifically, the interlocutors are found to employ a number of communicative strategies such as using direct expressions of negation, 'letting pass' or *not* 'letting pass' (Firth 1996) the interlocutor's utterances depending on the necessity to prevent misunderstanding, code-switching, and making their turn-taking quick and short avoiding redundant or too complex grammatical features. Furthermore, the present chapter has argued that the use of strong articulation of negative expressions which could be regarded as face-threatening elsewhere is possibly a unique feature of communication in the construction industry due to its strong goal-oriented nature.

The way in which interactants in BELF settings focus on the content of communication using English as their own tool to get the job done makes a sharp contrast to the language-focused interactions observed in the classroom (see Chapter 6). With this discrepancy in mind, the next chapter (Chapter 8) investigates how the participants of the intensive English program perceive English taught in the classroom as well as English actually used in their respective workplaces.

Chapter 8

The participants' perception of English and English language teaching/learning

8.1 Introduction

The present chapter analyses how the participants perceive English taught in the classroom/used in their respective workplaces by focusing on the participants' 'voices' (Murata 2011) collected through interviews. In particular, the chapter sheds light on their ambivalent and complex attitudes towards ELF communication, which are affected by both their past learning experiences as EFL learners (Iino & Murata 2016) and the necessity for them to speak 'proper' English to achieve success in their respective fields accommodating to the specific contexts as well as status/power of their interlocutors (Cogo 2012; Ehrenreich 2010; Gill 2009). Conducting individual/focus-group interviews multiple times at the beginning of/during/after the intensive English course, the chapter also analyses how the participants' perception of the language changes/does not change through the process in which they develop into experienced BELF users.

In the following sections, I first review previous research on ELF attitudes and provide rationale for the present research (Section 8.2) and then discuss findings (Section 8.3), focussing on the participants' emphasis on the importance of the content of communication over grammatical 'correctness' (Section 8.3.1) and their strategic conformity to NS standard (Section 8.3.2) respectively.

8.2 Previous research on ELF attitudes and the rationale for the present research

As discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5), attitudes towards English are made up of and influenced by a variety of factors. Above all, the significant power of language ideology has been repeatedly argued in ELF research (e.g. Cogo 2016a; Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011, 2018a). It has also been

193

pointed out that Japanese users of English tend to adhere to 'standard' English, although there are signs of change, especially among younger generations, to develop more positive attitudes towards ELF communication (e.g. Galloway 2013; Galloway & Rose 2013; Iino & Murata 2016; Murata, Iino & Konakahara 2017, 2018).

At the same time, previous research into ELF attitudes has also revealed the way in which one can possess ambivalent and complex perceptions of English (e.g. Cogo 2012a, Ehrenreich 2010, Galloway 2013, Iino & Murata 2016). In BELF research, while business people have been reported to prioritise accuracy and clarity of information over grammatical correctness (e.g. Cogo 2012a, Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010; see also Section 3.3.1.1 in Chapter 3), they are also reported to be aware of the power of language ideology and strategically choose to use 'correct' English referring to NS norms, especially when they communicate with interlocutors from outside the company (e.g. clients, shareholders) or those who have relatively more power than those inside the company (e.g. supervisors, management) (e.g. Cogo 2012a, Ehrenreich 2010, Gill 2009; see also Section 3.3.1.2 in Chapter 3).

Another finding from BELF research on attitudes is that non-native business people generally feel it difficult or intimidating to communicate with native speakers (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2012, see also Gill 2009).[1] Ehrenreich (2010) argues that NS English often appears to be difficult to understand due to their rate of speech, 'sophisticated' vocabulary, and lack of accommodation skills (pp. 421-422). Moreover, she reports her participants' comment that 'native speakers frequently use their native competence as an instrument of power and that it is especially challenging in situations of conflict, where asking for clarification can be seen as a 'display of weakness' (p. 422). Similarly, Louhiala-

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[1] On the other hand, studies have found that ELF users feel more relaxed and generally positive when communicating with other non-native speakers (Cogo 2010, House 2003, Hülmbauer 2009, Iino & Murata 2016).

Salminen and Kankaanranta (2012) quote an interviewee's comment that (s)he feels manipulated when a native speaker uses difficult structures, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions to gain an advantage in a discussion (p. 266).

Having overviewed the existing research on attitudes, the present chapter analyses the perception towards English of the four Japanese construction engineers. The analysis can contribute to the research on ELF attitudes in three ways. First, while research on attitudes towards English in Japan has been carried out both in academic (e.g. Galloway 2013, 2014; Galloway & Rose 2013; Iino & Murata 2013; Murata et al. 2017, 2018) and business settings (e.g. Kubota 2016, Takino 2016, Terauchi et al. 2015, Konakahara, Murata & Iino 2017), no research on attitudes so far has focused on both settings, following the same participants, which the present research aims at. Thus, it is expected to shed light on the way in which the participants change (or do not change) their attitudes towards English as the setting changes and time passes. Second, most research on ELF attitudes in business settings has been conducted at multinational companies in Europe (e.g. Cogo 2012a, 2016a, 2016b; Ehrenreich 2010; Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2012), whereas the current research is located in Southeast Asian countries, featuring Japanese BELF users. More research in expanding circle countries outside Europe is called for, as Ehrenreich (2016) explicitly states (p. 152). The participants in the current research are construction engineers working for a Japanese company which has become oriented to globalising its business relatively recently. In other words, as revealed in Chapter 5, the engineers entered the company with little or no prospect of using English for work. Thus, the present research helps us understand ELF perceptions of Japanese professionals who possess relatively low English proficiency and little confidence (see also the discussion in Section 3.5.1 in

Chapter 3). Third, there has been little ELF research on attitudes, as far as I know, which discusses how the power relationship in the workplace affects ELF users' perceptions towards English. The participants of the current research are constantly exposed to complicated power relationships between clients/contractors/subcontractors, permanent/contractual employees as well as superiors/subordinates[2] and their attitudes towards the concept of 'correct' English are likely to change depending on the status of and relationship with their interlocutors.

With these features in mind, the present chapter aims to investigate Japanese construction engineers' perceptions towards ELF communication, analysing the interview data during and after the intensive English training.

8.3 Findings and discussion

The results illustrate the participants' ambivalent and complex attitudes towards English, which are influenced by a number of factors. Section 8.3.1 discusses the engineers' claim that the intensive English training should be more content-focused (Ehrenreich 2009), reflecting their actual workplace interactions. Section 8.3.2, on the other hand, explains the ways in which they simultaneously and unconciously adhere to NS norms for a number of reasons, retaining attitudes as an EFL learner (Section 8.3.2.1) and choosing to strategically use 'correct' English for success in business (Section 8.3.2.2).

8.3.1 Prioritising communicative function over language form

This section discusses the participants' comments on the gap between language-focused

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[2] See Handford and Matous (2015) for the complicated power relationships and hierarchies surrounding Japanese construction company employees working overseas.

(Ehrenreich 2009) English language training and actual communication at the workplace, emphasising the communicative function of the language. As analysed in Chapter 6, classroom interactions were largely teacher-centred focusing on grammatical 'correctness' throughout the intensive program. The participants were aware that the classroom interactions do not actually reflect what would be observed in most actual workplace exchanges.

The issue was brought up spontaneously by one of the participants, Tatsuro. The opportunity arose on the same day as the examples of the language-focused interactions in the classroom illustrated in Chapter 6 (Extracts 6.1, 6.2, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8) were recorded, when I was having an advising session with the participants after all the lessons for the day were finished. As a part of the advising session, I was explaining confusing or useful English expressions,[3] and after that, I asked if there were any questions. Then, Tatsuro said, 'Can I ask one thing? I'd like to know what to say in a situation like this'.[4] When I answered 'sure', he started to express his feelings about a teacher's relentless pursuit of language 'correctness'. Tatsuro explained what he wanted to tell the teacher in English as follows:

Extract 8.1 (focus-group interview: Tatsuro)

I'd like to say a sentence in a breath without paying attention to something like— when using the subject 'I', you don't need the third person present tense –s —for the moment. But some teacher corrects me point by point, such as 'has' or 'have', every time (by interrupting my utterance). I appreciate it, but if possible, I'd like him to let me pour out everything I want to say first, and then to tell me that 'Tatsuro, that should have been "has".' or something like that.

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[3] Since I was frequently in class observing the interactions between the teacher and the participants as a researcher/learning advisor, I was able to sort out expressions that the participants should be familiar with for better communication in English.

[4] Conversation during the advising sessions was held basically in Japanese, our mutual mother tongue. All the Japanese conversations in this chapter are translated by the current author.

主語が I だから三単現の s がつかないとか、そういうことをとりあえず気にしないで、セ
ンテンスでドバって言いたいとこなんですけど、先生によっては、こう逐一、has だとか
have だとか毎回直されちゃって、で、ありがたいんだけど、できればドバって全部吐き出
してから、「Tatsuro、それは has だぞ」とか、そういう風に言ってほしいんですけど。

The teacher whom Tatsuro is talking about in Extract 8.1 is Chris, the native speaker of English
from the United Kingdom (see Chapter 6). Tatsuro, who had been responsive and amenable to
the teacher's grammar "corrections" in class, confessed that he was actually confounded by the
teacher's strictness in terms of language accuracy. Listening to what Tatsuro said, all the other
three students burst into laughter, showing that they instantly recognised whom Tatsuro was
talking about and that they had been feeling the same way, although Tatsuro did not specify the
name of the teacher. Tatsuro himself laughed and continued:

Extract 8.2 (focus-group interview: Tatsuro)

Haha. When I have things to talk about in mind, if I say 'He have', it gets corrected as 'has' right
at the moment, which dampens my fighting spirit, and I cannot continue speaking in a breath. So
in situations like that, (I would like to say) something like 'I'm sorry, but if possible, could you
correct me after I finish everything I want to say?', although I'm the one who makes mistakes.
While I am aware that this is a good opportunity to learn grammar, probably in actual business
situations, you have to keep talking anyway by all means (whether you make grammatical
mistakes or not).
はは。He have なんちゃらかんちゃらとか続けて思った矢先に has とかこう言われると、
もう戦意喪失というか、なかなか、ドバっとこうしゃべりたいところを。だから、そうい
う時に、「I'm sorry, but できれば全部言ってから、注意してくれないか」みたいな、ことが

（言いたい）。まあ間違ってるのは私なんですけど。*文法を勉強できる機会ではありつつも、*
たぶん実務だともう全然とにかくしゃべらなきゃみたいなところ。

Here in Extract 8.2, Tatsuro used the word 'fighting spirit（戦意）' to signify the challenge in speaking in English and his enthusiasm to get it over, and claimed that he would not be able to afford to pay much attention to grammar but *have to speak anyway by all means* in actual business situations (実務だともう全然とにかくしゃべらなきゃ), because his priority is placed on communicating necessary information for the ongoing project as swiftly as possible even without grammatical accuracy.

 Another participant, Satoshi, the deputy manager of the Nuclear Facility Department, agreed with Tatsuro's opinion that business people need to concentrate their energies on getting their messages across without being afraid of making grammatical 'mistakes', sharing his experience in communicating in ELF at work as seen in Extract 8.3:

Extract 8.3 (focus-group interview: Satoshi)

As far as I've observed, those people who want to speak out (in a meeting), speak in such a loud voice. No matter what other people say, they keep speaking anyway. At meetings, (they have) a strong will to continue speaking.

私の見た中では、そういうしゃべりたい人はもうでっかい声でしゃべってるわけですよ、人の話が何言われようがとにかくしゃべってるっていう、そういう、あの、ミーティングの、xxxxxxxxx しゃべり続けるという強い意志で。

As explained in Chapter 5, Satoshi had had quite a few opportunities of attending meetings with international clients as well as international conferences held by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory

Commission. At those meetings and conferences, he had seen that people concentrated on conveying a message with fortitude, which was expressed in 'a loud voice'.[5] Repeating the verb 'speak (しゃべる)' four times, he stressed that it is important to speak up and keep speaking without being disturbed by what other people say, let alone by grammatical 'mistakes' one might make. The comment parallels Kubota's (2016) interviewee's remark that the ability to convey meaning 'even without grammar' is necessary rather than communicating with 'proper' vocabulary and grammar (p. 168). After all, in Widdowson's (2016) terms, 'many features of correctness are communicatively redundant' (p. 219), especially in the transaction-oriented workplace, where conveying meaning is prioritised over language accuracy.

The other two participants, Koichi and Hajime, did not offer their opinions on this matter, but the way they laughed hard showed that they were also being annoyed with the teacher's strict approach to the participants' grammatical 'mistakes'.[6] Thus, it is confirmed that the program participants were aware that there was a discrepancy between what is taught in the classroom and what is given priority in the workplace. In other words, the teacher's focus on language is perceived to be too narrow for these participants, who are more 'content-focused' (Ehrenreich 2009) and questioning the one-sided and strictly 'form-focused' instruction.

It should be noted, however, that their attitudes towards English are not always that straightforward. In the following section, I turn to the analysis of extracts illustrating the participants' ambivalent and complex attitudes towards English, focusing on the identifying function of the language.

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[5] Gill (2009) also argues that loud and confident voice compensates for variation in the syntax of the language when spoken in the workplace, referring to comments from Malaysian managers in her study (p. 148).

[6] Individual interviews with these two participants also confirmed that they were aware of the teacher's extreme focus on grammar.

8.3.2 Conformity to the native speaker standard

While the participants are more oriented to communicative effectiveness than to language 'correctness', the analysis of the interview data also reveals that they also contradictorily adhere to the NS norms. The adjective 'proper' (きちんとした／ちゃんとした) is frequently used in describing English they think they need to speak (see Extracts 8.5 and 8.7 below). The participants' adherence to 'proper' or 'correct' English is caused by a number of factors: the standard language ideology, their past learning experience as EFL learner (including the intensive language training), and their relationship with interlocutors. In order to comprehend the complex and dynamic nature of their attitudes, this section elucidates the contexts in which two of the participants, Tatsuro (Section 8.3.2.1) and Hajime (Section 8.3.2.2), form their perceptions towards ELF.

8.3.2.1 Ambivalent feelings as ELF learner/ELF user— Tatsuro's case

This section highlights Tatsuro's ambivalent and somewhat contradicting attitudes towards English and his identity formation, i.e. how he would like to be regarded as an English speaker. Although Tatsuro was critical towards Chris's strict approach during the intensive English program (Section 8.3.1), he always complied with the teacher's instructions, accepting the teacher's power over him. In the English language teaching industry in Japan, a 'native speaker' is promoted as a key selling point and becomes a symbol that represents 'authentic' and 'correct' English (Seargeant 2009: 96). This presumably makes Tatsuro admit the privilege of native speakers as norm-providers (Kachru 1992), and hesitate, in this specific case, to criticise the British teacher's teaching style more directly, despite the fact that being a native-speaking teacher does not necessarily guarantee that (s)he is a well-qualified, skilful teacher. As a consequence, Tatsuro's perception towards English based on NS norms may have become reinforced through the intensive English program, and he retained it after he started working in an ELF environment,

as this section reveals.

As explained in Chapter 5, Tatsuro was sent to the Singapore office of Itabashi Corporation, where he designed a factory building in Malaysia working with local engineers. One month after he started working in Singapore, he told me via email that he was having trouble with the local varieties of English, especially Singlish, as seen in the following extract:

Extract 8.4 (email communication: Tatsuro)

What causes me trouble is, of course, Singlish! Once in a while, I feel *something may be wrong with my English* because I can neither get through nor understand messages. There are times, depending on whom I'm talking with, when their English sounds just like Chinese to me.

I know I have no choice but to get used to it, but it is unpleasant that local people think I cannot speak English because we cannot communicate. So *I shall master the traditional English like Chris speaks* and show them a thing or two (lol).

困ったことと言えば、当然シングリッシュ！に尽きます。時々、*自分の英語がおかしいのではない*かと思うくらい通じない、聞き取れないことがあります。話す相手によっては中国語にしか聞こえない時も。これも慣れるしかないと思っていますが、ローカルの人と会話が通じず英語がしゃべれないと思われるのは不愉快なので、こちらは*クリス式伝統英語*をマスターして目に物をみせてやろうと思っています（笑）。

In this email message, Tatsuro shows his concern about his image as not being able to communicate in English, when he thinks the responsibility lies in the accented English local people speak, i.e. Singlish. He describes the way he struggles to get used to the English variety new to him. At the same time, he thinks, although jokingly on the surface, that the English he has learned in the classroom, i.e. the Inner-Circle (Kachru 1992) native speakers' English, is

more 'proper' than the English the local people, that is, in this case those in the Outer Circle speak, stating that he would 'show them (local people) a thing or two' (目にものを見せてやろう) by mastering 'the traditional English (伝統英語)' like the British teacher speaks.

Tatsuro's perception of Singlish is assumed to have originated from his EFL learning experience at school, including the intensive English training he attended just before being dispatched to Singapore, which made him constrained by NS norms (Iino & Murata 2016) or the native English speaker episteme (Galloway 2013, Galloway 2014a). Since Tatsuro had no exposure to varieties of English other than the Inner Circle NS models, the Singlish accent is most difficult for him to understand (cf. Terauchi et al. 2015, Terauchi & Maswana 2015): he comments that it sometimes all "sounds just like Chinese", depending on the interlocutor (話す相手によっては中国語にしか聞こえない).[7] No matter he likes it or not, Tatsuro thinks that he has no choice but to become familiar with this variety of English to survive in the country. The phrasing ('I only have to get used to it' (慣れるしかない)) shows both his reluctance to accommodate to the Outer-Circle variety and prioritisation of communicative function of the language to communicate with local people for his job.

With regard to his own English, Tatsuro states that he would feel offended if the local people think that he cannot speak 'English' (英語がしゃべれないと思われるのは不愉快) because he does not understand Singlish. The measure of success in EFL learning is often held to be the amount of foreign accent one retains (Cook, V. 1999: 195), which appears to make Tatsuro sensitive on this matter. In other words, he considers that the accent he has been taught and familialised with, i.e. the Inner Circle native speakers' accent, is more 'authentic' than Singlish.

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[7] According to Tatsuro, he works with speakers of various linguacultural backgrounds both inside/outside the office in Singapore. Thus, by Singlish, it is likely he does not refer only to English spoken by local people whose L1 is English but also to English spoken by L1 Chinese/ Malay (or another language) speakers. What he describes 'Singlish sounds just like Chinese' actually can be English spoken by L1 Chinese speakers in Singapore.

He then adds jokingly that he should master 'traditional' English, represented by Chris (クリス式伝統英語), whom he criticised previously. The expression again demonstrates that Tatsuro regards native speakers' accent as 'a badge of authenticity' (Seargeant 2009: 101).

It also should be noted that Tatsuro aims at mastering English as a native language, not as his own, which shows his view of Japanese-accented English as something deficient (Jenkins 2000, 2007). This attitude corroborates Galloway's (2013) finding that Japanese students tend to have an ideology that 'only NSs speak good English' (p. 788) and contrasts sharply with those of the IT staff in Cogo (2010), who perceive local accents are more normal and comfortable. Knowing, however, that acquiring English like native speakers is an unattainable goal for him, and as he remembers his resistance to Chris's strictly NS norm-based teaching, he added the 'laugh out loud' mark ('lol' or （笑）) at the end of his ambitious and ironic remark. While he regards the language predominantly as a tool to fulfil his communicative goals as he previously stated, he is still constrained by his past EFL learning experience and identifies more with English as an Inner Circle native language than with English spoken by the people in the country where he actually lives and works. When there are breakdowns in communication, he does not want the local people to regard him as incompetent language user, but instead, transfers the responsibility to them, that is, those who do not speak the Inner Circle English.

In order to see the change in his perception of the local English as well as his own English, I conducted another individual interview with Tatsuro via Skype, two months after the first email exchanges. The interview revealed that while he got used to the way local people speak English, he has still ambivalent feelings about it because he is unconsciously identified with NS English. According to Tatsuro, he still has problems with Singlish, and English his Malaysian colleagues speak is easier to understand, presumably because he regularly holds web meetings with them and also has met them in person quite a few times when visiting the construction site in Malaysia. To

put it another way, the length of relationship has helped Tatsuro to establish effective

communication with his local colleagues (Ehrenreich 2011, 2016; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010).

While familiarity with other varieties of English is reported to change one's attitudes towards them

positively (Galloway 2013; Yoshikawa 2005), Tatsuro's familiarity with his colleagues' Englishes

causes mixed feelings in him, as seen in Extract 8.5:

Extract 8.5 (individual interview via Skype: Tatsuro)

It is particularly because I'm in Southeast Asia and working with Southeast Asian people, I feel that

they do not try to, or actually do not speak that *beautiful* English, for example, (in terms of) grammar

or singular-plural distinctions. Consequently, or how can I put this, there are two ways to react to this

situation. One is to have a looser approach towards English myself, thinking 'anything goes as long as

I can get my meaning across' and speak just desperately. Another is to feel the need to master proper

English all the more. Well, I have both feelings.

特に東南アジアにいて東南アジアの人と仕事しているからだけど、相手の人もそんなきれ

いな英語を話そうとしていないというか、話してないっていうか、文法とか単数複数とか。

だから、だからっていうのもおかしいけど、うん、なんだろう、それが２つ受け取り方が

あって、だから自分も適当でいいやっていったらあれだけど、通じればなんでもいいやっ

ていうふうにがむしゃらに話すっていう方法もあるし、きちんとした英語を身につけたい

なって、だからこそ思うところもあるし、ま、そうですね、両方ですね

In Extract 8.5, Tatsuro again shows his ambivalent and contradicting attitudes towards the local

English by describing that people in Southeast Asia 'do not speak that *beautiful* English'(きれい

な英語を話していない). By 'beautiful (きれいな)' English, he means 'correct' English based on

NS norms by listing the 'singular-plural distinction' as a specific example, which was emphasised

by the teacher throughout the language program. Tatsuro then self-questioningly and haltingly expresses his ambivalence between two approaches to communication with his local colleagues: first, to follow the way they speak, assuming 'anything goes as long as I can get my meaning across (通じればなんでもいいや)', or second, to resist and try mastering 'proper' English himself (きちんとした英語を身につけたい). Here, Tatsuro's ambivalent feelings between communicative (i.e. getting one's message across) and identifying (presenting himself as a speaker of 'proper' English) function of English are clearly observed.

Responding to my probing question, he elaborates that what he means by 'proper English' is American or British English. In other words, although Tatsuro has become a competent ELF user, who can chair meetings with the local people, he still retains characteristics of an EFL user, who regards the language spoken by non-Inner-Circle speakers as something deficient, and thus simultaneously holds on to his own idea of achieving NS standard even more.

While the adherence to native-speakers' English Tatsuro demonstrates is frequently observed among Japanese learners of English (e.g. Galloway 2013, Galloway & Rose 2013), the present chapter discusses that there are other reasons why professionals regard 'correct' or 'proper' English as an advantage. In order to explore the question, I now turn to the examination of the interview data of another participant, Hajime.

8.3.2.2 Necessity to use 'proper' English in business — Hajime's case

Hajime commented on the need to use 'proper' English both inside and outside the company to be successful in his profession, especially when his interlocutors have power and authority (i.e. clients and superiors). He was found to be concerned with language 'correctness', believing it helps him to create a good image of the company and himself.

As explained in Chapter 5, Hajime was sent to the Hong Kong office after participating in

the intensive program. He was assigned a position in a joint venture for a new extension project for the Metro Transit Railway in Hong Kong and engaged in the tendering process for three months. I had a chance to interview him in person at Itabashi Corporation's headquarters in Tokyo when he came back from the three-month project, before he was sent to Vietnam to engage in another joint venture.

While he has a relatively relaxed approach to speaking English in general, there are times for him to feel nervous with the pressure to speak 'proper' English. During the intensive English program, Hajime was able to ask questions in class quite casually when other participants did not speak up, although his English skills were the lowest of the four.[8] In the first individual interview conducted at the beginning of the intensive program, he described his way of speaking in English as follows:

Extract 8.6 (individual interview at the beginning of the intensive program: Hajime)
When I think of something I want to say, it's only fragments, and well, for some reason, in my case, I do not rehearse in my mind and tend to talk randomly on the spot.
言いたいこともね、断片的なので、うん、なんとなくなんですけど、僕の場合って、頭の中で要約せずに、ぽっとなんかしゃべったりしちゃうんすよ

As seen in Chapter 6, even though his lack of grammatical knowledge to compose sentences was obvious, he did not get embarrassed or hesitated, and continued talking until he got the answer to his question from the teacher.

However, during the interview I carried out when he came back from Hong Kong, he said

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[8] This is confirmed by the teachers who taught the class as well as his TOEIC score being the lowest of the four.

that there were times when he got nervous and hesitated to speak up spontaneously at work. One of the reasons he gave was because he thought he should speak 'proper' English with local clients as seen in Extract 8.7:

Extract 8.7 (individual interview held after the job assignment in Hong Kong: Hajime)

In formal meetings, for example, with a client, external, really. On such an occasion, I feel I must speak *proper* English, you know? It is not an atmosphere that permits mere listing of words to communicate extemporaneously.

かしこまった打ち合わせ、たとえば施主がいるとか、よそのホントに。そんなところに行ってたらなかなか、ちゃんとした英語しゃべらなきゃいけないと思うじゃないですか。単語並べてたらいいとかっていうオーラじゃないんで。

Hajime emphasised the word 'clients (施主)' strongly, showing their power and importance over contractors. He adds the word 'external (よそ)', implying he feels more pressured to speak 'proper (ちゃんとした)' English externally. This comment parallels Ehrenreich's (2010) findings about the perceptions of executives at a German multinational corporation towards English that 'correctness' is more important when the language is geared towards wider public, especially to their clients or customers (p. 418, see also Gill 2009), because of the dominant language ideology that conformity to NS norms is relevant to express company identities formally. Furthermore, Hajime also points out that he feels he must use 'proper' English in the office as well, when he talks with superiors such as the project manager, who is from the United Kingdom, as seen in Extract 8.8:

208

Extract 8.8 (individual interview held after the job assignment in Hong Kong: Hajime)

In the office, to give an extreme example, he [Hajime's superior] is somebody like the president in the office, not exactly, but in a position like that, who manages the entire project. When it comes to talking to the president, you have to think in advance to some extent, don't you? I can get through the message even if I talk randomly on the spot, but in my consciousness, I feel it's not good. Then I tend to hesitate to speak up and lose the chance.

その事務所の、極端な話、ま、事務所の中では、社長じゃないですけどそういうポジションの人なんですよね、プロジェクトをまとめようとしている人なんで。

ま、社長にしゃべるとなったらある程度考えていかないといけないじゃないですか。

そのでまかせぽっぽっぽって言っても、通じるんですけど、それじゃダメだっていう、自分の意識の中が、で、そうなると、逆に、なかなかちょっと場を逸しちゃうみたいな感じですね。

As seen in Extract 8.8, Hajime assumes that speaking 'proper' English is a necessary skill to make a good impression when talking not only with clients externally, but also with higher-level personnel inside the company. According to Hajime, if the manager judges that someone is not capable enough in his/her job, he/she has the authority to send the person back to the previous post even in the course of the joint venture.[9] By contrast, this could explain why Ehrenreich's (2010) German managers see conformity to the NS English as 'a fairly irrelevant concept' inside the company (Ehrenreich 2010: 418); being in a higher position, those managers can afford to have more relaxed attitudes towards English internally.

    Another reason why Hajime feels he must speak 'proper' English could be that the manager

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[9] In Gill's (2009) words, the manager can be called a gatekeeper, who has control over the workplace opportunities (p. 146).

is a native speaker of English. He becomes more careful or feels nervous about his 'segmented' or 'simplified' English due to the challenge of speaking with a native speaker (House 1999; Ehrenreich 2010, Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2012) and his past learning experience with Chris. As Holmes and Stubbe (2015) discuss, it is beneficial for a subordinate to express themselves politely or with deference to a superior (p. 6). For Hajime, speaking 'proper' or grammatical English to the British manager is a way of showing his deference, which implies his internalised 'standard' English ideology is in operation (Seidlhofer 2011).

At the same time, however, Hajime emphasises the superior's power more as the project manager than as a native speaker of English in the interview, when I asked a probing question to clarify the reason why Hajime feels the need to speak 'proper' English: whether it is more because the boss is a British, or rather because the boss is in a superior position. According to Hajime, linguistic skills are one of the tools to demonstrate his professional competence, along with other professional skills. This is in line with findings from previous BELF studies (e.g. Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen 2013, Kankaanranta and Planken 2010; see also Kubota 2016) and is reminiscent of Ehrenreich's (2016) argument that it is essential to take into account the contexts of communication when analysing professional attitudes towards English. The next section explicates the situation in which Hajime needs communication in 'proper' English more in detail and compares it with Tatsuro's case.

8.3.2.3 Influence of power relationship on ELF communication in the workplace

Analysing the dynamic and complex power relationships surrounding Hajime and Tatsuro demonstrates how business people shift their focus from one function of the language to another according to the power and status of their interlocutors. As is explained in 8.3.2.2, Hajime was assigned a position in a joint venture and engaged in the tendering process in Hong Kong. His

main task was to understand tender specifications provided by the potential client, i.e. Metro Transit Railway, plan the construction and obtain quotations for the tendering procedures in order to calculate the cost. Thus, he needed to communicate with a number of interlocutors of different status both internally and externally: clients, other engineers and sales personnel in the office, the project manager and local subcontractors who have different L1s (cf. Handford & Matous 2015). Hajime felt he had to conform to NS norms to show his professional identity, especially when he communicates with clients and the supervisor.

On the other hand, Tatsuro was sent to the Singapore office after Itabashi Corporation won the order for the construction of the factory building in Malaysia. Thus, he did not need to be involved in general sales or marketing activities. The relationship between his company and the client company had been established already, which means he did not need to strive to make a good impression of himself with 'formal' or 'correct' English. To put it another way, he is able to concentrate on communicating technical information, even when he interacts with people from the client company. Moreover, most of the other interlocutors he communicates in the process of actual construction are engineers, foremen, local staff and suppliers, who are in lower positions to him in the decision-making hierarchy, which again puts relatively less pressure on him to present himself in a formal way. Since he has relatively more power bases than other interlocutors, he is able to use simple or more direct language (Watanabe 2009). Furthermore, his supervisor is another Japanese architect with whom Tatsuro shares L1 as well as expertise in architecture, thus Tatsuro needs relatively less effort to communicate with his superior, which shows a good contrast to the situation Hajime was placed in. These differences between Hajime and Tatsuro naturally influence the motivations and perceptions of both professionals towards the necessity to use formal or 'proper' English.

Professionals, therefore, pursue language 'correctness' not only because they try to conform

to NS norm based on their learning experience as EFL learners (Iino & Murata 2016), but also because they know the practical benefits of speaking 'correct' and 'proper' English in creating what they perceived to be a good impression of themselves, which, in turn, shows the significant influence of language ideology (Cogo 2016a, Jenkins 2007, Seidlhofer 2011) deep-seated in their work settings.

8.4 Summary

The present chapter has highlighted BELF users' ambivalence in perceptions of English, paying close attention to the context in which they use English for work (i.e. Japanese construction engineers working abroad) and different functions of the language, especially communicative and identifying functions. On the one hand, their preference for efficiency and effectiveness of communication over 'correctness' based on the NS norms was identified. Prioritising the communicative function of English, the participants are aware of the discrepancy between the language-focused instructions in the classroom and the content-focused interactions in the workplace. On the other hand, the chapter has also revealed that the participants have also mixed feelings towards their own and their interlocutors' Englishes at work, favouring, at times, NS norms.

There seem to be two reasons for the participants' adherence to 'standard' English. For one, they are constrained by their past learning experiences as EFL learners (Iino & Murata 2016), in this specific case, including the intensive language training provided by the company. They try to approximate to a native speaker, considering the native 'standard' as a symbol of authenticity and correctness (Seargeant 2009: Seidlhofer 2011, 2018a; Widdowson 1994) and regard their own or their interlocutors' Englishes as something 'inferior' (Iino & Murata 2016, Jenkins 2007).

For another reason, professionals in the present research pursue language 'correctness'

because they know the practical benefits of speaking formal and 'proper' English in both internal and external communication. While they use English predominantly as a tool when working with interlocutors who have relatively less power (e.g. subordinates, subcontractors), they are aware of the identification function of the language and feel that they need to be careful to speak 'proper' English when communicating with people with more power and authority (e.g. superiors and clients) for practical purposes (e.g. assessment, promotion). In other words, business people strategically choose to adhere to 'standard' English when they need to create good impressions of both themselves and their company to pursue their professional goals, even though they are aware that 'correct' English can be unnecessary or redundant in order to get the message across. Thus, there is a tension in their attitudes between preference for communicative function of ELF and acceptance of identifying function of NS English.

Analysing the interview data, this chapter has complemented findings from Chapters 6 and 7, which have analysed actual talk-in-interaction in the classroom and the workplace, in order to provide a holistic view of the participants' use and perceptions of English. The next and final chapter (Chapter 9) summarises the key findings of these three chapters and discusses pedagogical implications.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

The aim of the present research has been to investigate how Japanese business people, who have gone through intensive English language training provided by the company, use and perceive English as a lingua franca. Analysing both classroom and workplaces interactions, it highlighted the gap between the reality of English language training and that of actual communication in BELF settings. Furthermore, analysing the interview data, it explored the participants' perception of English communication and how it changed or did not change as they developed into more experienced BELF users. This chapter presents a summary of the main findings and pedagogical implications, followed by limitations of the research and suggestions for further research. Having identified the discrepancy between what the participants study as learners and what they need to communicate in actual BELF settings, it is hoped that this research can provide useful implications for English language teaching.

9.2 Summary of findings

Using a multi-source, multi-method, multiple-administration research design (see Chapter 4), the present research has analysed the same participants' use and perception of English from multiple perspectives. Section 9.2.1 summarises the key findings from the analysis of talk-in-interaction, while Section 9.2.2 discusses the main findings from qualitative analysis of the interview data.

9.2.1 The gap between classroom interaction and BELF interaction

Analysing talk-in-interaction both in the classroom and workplace, the present research has

identified a significant discrepancy between what is taught/how it is taught in the classroom and how English is actually used in BELF situations. In the former, classroom contexts, it has been found that a native English teacher is intensely 'language-focused' (Ehrenreich 2009) and forces the participants to conform to NS norms, even during the free conversation time for warm-up/wrap-up. The natural flow of communication is disrupted by interruptions and insertion sequences for the sake of teaching 'correct' grammar. Moreover, because the teacher always controls the interaction, choosing the topic to talk about and selecting which participants to speak, the program participants do not have much opportunity to choose topics or take turns spontaneously. As a result, the participants remain passive learners, refraining from speaking up until the teacher call upon them and retaining their inferior complex that their English is deficient compared to NS English.

On the other hand, in BELF settings, interlocutors have been found to focus more on the content and efficiency of communication (see Chapter 7). Analysing two aspects of business communication, namely, small talk and business meetings, the present research has scrutinised how the interactants use English as a lingua franca along with other language repertoires available to get the job done effectively as well as creatively. The analysis of the small talk data has explicated BELF users' careful choice of topics to establish a good work relationship. Furthermore, the ways in which the interlocutors use repetition, paraphrasing and syntactic simplification in order to facilitate their BELF communication have been analysed. Utilising these pragmatic strategies, they co-construct conversation successfully and creatively without necessarily being constrained by NS norms. Interruptions are made in order to show interest and active participation in the conversation (Murata 1994b). Repetitions are used not only to confirm or elaborate the information but also to create rhythm and relaxed atmosphere (see Chapter 7, Section 7.2.3.2). In other words, the results exemplify BELF users' capability to use a knowledge of language as a

resource for the creation of meaning (Widdowson 2003, 2012a, 2016, 2019).

The analysis of the business meeting data has also investigated BELF users' capability, explicating how they collaborate to exchange information effectively with short and quick turns, accommodating to one another. Under more significant time constraints, the goal-oriented nature of BELF communication is more evident in the business meeting data than in the small talk data, demonstrated in the use of *not to 'let it pass'* (Firth 1996), direct expressions of negation, and code-switching/multilingual practice (see Chapter 7.3.2). The use of direct expressions or unmitigated negations, including repairing the interlocutor's utterance is unmarked in this BELF setting, which also supports Tsuchiya and Handford's (2014) argument on the 'adversarial nature' of construction engineering.

To sum up, the present research has found that the same participants behave significantly differently in the classroom and workplace. While they tend to be passive learners in the classroom, speaking up only when the teacher calls upon them and being very careful not to make grammatical 'mistakes', they are active BELF users in the workplace, initiating and leading the conversation, communicating effectively without necessarily conforming to NS norms.

The participants were aware of this discrepancy between the language-focused instructions in the classroom and the content-focused interactions in the workplace (Chapter 8). The next section (Section 9.2.2) summarises findings about the participants' perception of English.

9.2.2 The participants' perception of English

The analysis of individual/focus-group interviews with a longitudinal perspective has revealed the participants' ambivalent and complex attitudes towards ELF communication and how they changed/did not change as they accumulated experience as BELF users, namely, prioritisation of communicative function of the language and orientation to NS English. On the one hand, the

participants have been found to be critical about the language-focused instructions, being aware of the gap between the talk-in-interaction in the classroom and actual interactions in the workplace. They commented that they were inwardly annoyed with the teacher's incessant 'corrections' of their grammar even during the free conversation time, because in actual business situations they need to prioritise the content of communication over grammatical accuracy based on NS norms.

On the other hand, there are times when the participants are oriented to NS English both consciously and unconsciously, influenced by a number of factors. For one, the present research has pointed out that the participants are constrained by their past learning experience as EFL learners, including the intensive language training program provided by the company. They think the native 'standard' as a symbol of authenticity and correctness, downgrading their own/colleagues' English as something 'inferior'. For another, the participants pursue language 'correctness' because they believe it is beneficial for them to create good impressions of their company/themselves when communicating with their clients/superiors. This, in turn, shows the strong influence of 'standard' language ideology (Cogo 2016a, 2016b; Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011, 2018a). The participants strategically adhere to 'standard' English because it is widely believed to be more authoritative and intelligible, even though they are aware that 'correct' English can be unnecessary or redundant in order to get the message across. In other words, as Seidlhofer (2011) argues, it is part of their capability that they can choose to defer to standard norms when they find it necessary (p. 198). Thus, BELF users try to construct their own English communication out of what they have learned, depending on the context of use.

Having confirmed the importance of capability in BELF communication, the next section (Section 9.3) presents pedagogical implications for English language teaching.

9.3 Pedagogical Implications

Drawing on the findings of the present research, this section provides pedagogical implications for English language teaching (ELT) in general and in-house English language training at Japanese companies in particular. The main argument is that incorporating an ELF perspective into ELT can contribute to fill in the gap between classroom interaction and actual BELF communication (Section 9.3.1). In what follows, Section 9.3.2 suggests ways to raise awareness among learners[1] of realities of English and providing opportunities to communicate in ELF settings. Section 9.3.3 discusses strategic skills for successful ELF communication and the role of the teachers in ELF-oriented lessons. Finally, Section 9.3.4 questions the relevance of current practice of testing, especially the widespread adoption of the TOEIC test by Japanese companies.

9.3.1 Incorporating an ELF perspective into the classroom

In helping learners to develop a capability for their communicative success and become confident (B)ELF users, the present research proposes introducing an ELF perspective into the classroom and raising learners' awareness of the use and function of English as a lingua franca. This should be started by critically considering what kind of English is appropriate to learn and use in the globalised world (Murata 2019; Murata & Iino 2018; Seidlhofer 2011, 2018b; Widdowson 2016, 2019). In the case of Japan, as pointed out in Chapter 3, ELT practice is largely oriented to NS English, and for most learners of English at Japanese schools, the 'E' of the subject English equals English as a native language. The conformity to NS English inhibits, in Widdowson's (2019) terms, 'the natural capability for learning and using language as a communicative resource' (p. 5). The present research argues that getting familiar with the use and function of English as a lingua

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[1] While using the term 'learners', I would like to emphasise that the same person, who is an English learner in the classroom, can be a regular user of English whenever he/she steps outside.

franca today empowers and encourages non-native speakers to exploit their linguistic resources in their own right. To this end, the following three sections (Section 9.3.2-9.3.4) discuss suggestions for ELF-oriented pedagogy

9.3.2 Raising awareness of realities of English and providing opportunities to experience ELF communication

In order to raise learners' awareness towards realities of ELF communication, several measures can be taken: referring to ELF research data, increasing exposure to ELF communication/varieties of Englishes, and providing opportunities to experience actual ELF communication.

First, ELF research can help learners become more aware of realities of English used in the globalised world with ample examples of actual ELF communication. Learners can not only read books and papers on ELF but also look in corpora such as VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English), ELFA (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings) and ACE (Asian Corpus of English), which offer naturally occurring data of ELF communication. The ways in which ELF users negotiate meaning collaboratively, creatively and successfully without necessarily adhering to NS norms will encourage and empower the learners. In addition, reading comments from experienced ELF users in a variety of contexts collected through questionnaires and interviews, learners can picture and prepare themselves as future ELF users.

Second, increasing exposure to ELF communication/varieties of Englishes can be practiced by taking advantage of video sites such as YouTube, even where actual face-to-face communication is limited. Exposure to non-native speakers' Englishes is expected to enhance learners' comprehension (Cogo & Jenkins 2010, Pullin 2015) and influence their attitudes positively towards non-native Englishes. Furthermore, in the case of professionals who are going to be on an overseas assignment, this is a good way to become familiar with people, language(s)

and culture(s) in the destination.

Third, and most importantly, providing opportunities to actually communicate with people of different linguacultural backgrounds in English is recommended (see also Murata 2019). This will be effective for many Japanese learners of English, who have few opportunities to speak English outside the classroom or with other non-native speakers. If there are only L1 Japanese speakers in the classroom, tele-/video- conference equipment, email, or social networking services enable learners to meet and communicate with people of diverse linguacultural backgrounds.[2] In addition, recruiting multilingual English teachers with various backgrounds can increase learners' experience of communicating with people who speak different Englishes on a regular basis. Moreover, those teachers can serve as role models as successful ELF users. Experiencing ELF communication first-hand, learners can understand diversity of communication and what is (and is *not*) actually needed to make communication successful. Above all, it is expected that they will realise by themselves the importance of interaction skills for successful communication, which has been pointed out in the present research as well as previous research on ELF. The next section (Section 9.4.3) discusses those skills and what teachers should do to help learners acquire them.

9.3.3 Developing interaction skills for successful ELF communication and the role of teachers

The importance of pragmatic competence for successful ELF communication has been repeatedly emphasised in previous research (e.g. House 1999, 2002; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen 2013; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010; Mauranen 2006), and the present research has also corroborated the argument. More specifically, BELF users in this research have been found to be

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[2] Needless to say, this should be carried out under close supervision of teachers, especially in the case of younger learners, to avoid any risks inherent in using Internet or social networking services.

able to do the following: accommodating to one's communication to the interlocutors, clarifying information, asking for clarification, and creating a good work relationship. Repetition, interruption, paraphrasing, short and quick turn-taking are used effectively for these purposes. In order to help learners to develop such strategic skills, more time should be spent to let them engage in negotiation of meaning on their own and less to 'correct' their grammatical 'mistakes', which actually often do not hinder communication success (Seidlhofer 2004, 2018b).

This shift of focus from language to communication entails the shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred interaction in class (Widdowson 2012a, 2019). Accordingly, the role of teachers should be changed. As the present research has shown, typical EFL teachers tend to spend too much time and energy on getting their students' grammar 'correct', while spending too little time on letting students apply their creative and adaptive ability to use what they have learned (Seidlhofer 2018b). Moreover, teachers control most of the interaction while leaners speak up only when appointed by the teacher (see Chapter 6). In ELF-oriented classrooms, teachers should create more opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning by themselves, practicing spontaneous and natural turn-taking. Thus, instead of giving one-sided instruction, teachers should play a role of facilitator (Murata 1994) or collaborator (Dudley-Evans & St John 1998), prompting active participation of learners in meaningful interaction, creating contexts similar to their actual use. In the case of in-house English training program in particular, as Dudley-Evans and St John (1988) explain, most language teachers do not have first-hand experience of the context of business in which learners work and thus need to collaborate with experts of relevant fields, including learners themselves. This collaboration provides teachers with opportunities to draw on learners' knowledge of the content, which leads to meaningful and genuine exchange of information.

Along with the shift from language to communication in class, assessment based on NS norms should be questioned, to which now I turn.

9.3.4 Questioning the widespread adoption of TOEIC by Japanese companies

The field of testing has been critically reviewed by ELF researchers for its NS orientation without fully reflecting realities of ELF communication (e.g. Cogo 2015b; Galloway 2017; Jenkins 2006d; McNamara 2012, 2018; Widdowson 2019). The heated discussion on this issue between ELF researchers and language assessment researchers is still ongoing (McNamara 2012, Sawaki 2016) and beyond the scope of the present research. Nonetheless, one problem should be highlighted by the present research, i.e., Japanese companies' extensive use of the TOEIC test to assess their employees' English proficiency and improvement regardless of contexts of use.

As touched upon in Chapters 3, TOEIC is extremely popular (Saito & Shibata 2011, Kubota 2011) and the number of Japanese companies which adopt TOEIC to measure their employees' English proficiency has been steadily increasing.[3] Itabashi Corporation, the company for which the participants of the present research work, also uses TOEIC scores when it recruits new employees, assigns overseas projects to current employees, and decide who to participate in the intensive program/study abroad programs (see Chapters 4 and 5). Moreover, the company uses TOEIC to measure improvement of English proficiency of employees who participate in the intensive English program, administering the tests at the beginning and the end of the course. Considering that preparation for the TOEIC test occupies only a small portion of the entire program (approximately 10%), it is irrelevant to rely solely on TOEIC to assess the improvement of the participants' English proficiency. It is also questionable in that those participants are most likely to use English in BELF settings, negotiating meaning orally, while TOEIC tests assess test

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[3] According to the press release from The Institute for International Business Communication, the total number of test takers of TOEIC in Japan in 2017 is 2.7 million, showing 18% increase over the previous year (https://www.iibc-global.org/iibc/press/2018/p092.html).

takers' listening and reading abilities with questions which assume only one correct answer based on NS norms. As Galloway (2017) argues, assessment in the class of learners who are to use English as a lingua franca should prioritise accommodation skills and refrain from penalising for language forms unless they lead to miscommunication (p. 16). As for a solution, in the case of the learning context of the participants of the present research, one possible way to achieve this is to take advantage of the Presentation Skills module (see Chapter 4), in which each participant prepares for a 15-minute presentation regarding his/her own job and expertise, together with a question and answer session. On the day of the final presentation, teachers of other modules, staff members of Chiyoda Institute as well as the personnel department of Itabashi Corporation are invited and asked to ask questions. With some adjustment, this can be made into a relevant way to assess what they have learned during the intensive program.

Having discussed pedagogical implications for more ELF-oriented English language teaching, the present research concludes with a discussion on limitations of the present research and suggestions for further research.

9.4 Limitations of the present research and suggestions for further research

The present research has focused on one particular case of language training for BELF users and the results should not be overgeneralised to other contexts. Even within the context of the intensive English program, the British English teacher's strict focus on language accuracy may be an extreme example and I am aware that there were other teachers whose approach to grammatical correctness is more relaxed. However, as discussed in Chapter 6, the fact that he was chosen as the anchor teacher by a language training provider which has a long history of collaborating not only with Itabashi Corporation but also other Japanese companies of various industries, shows that this

type of instruction is preferred or at least regarded unproblematic. For further research, analysing talk-in-interaction between the same participants and other teachers can produce interesting results.

Another limitation is that I was able to obtain only a small portion of the recordings of talk-in-interaction in the workplace. To make up the shortage of workplace data, the present research has looked at the same participants in detail from many angles by adopting the multi-source, multi-method, multi-administration design. Having said that, additional analysis of longer recording data or video recording will further support the findings of the study, although gathering data on corporate sites is a great challenge (Cogo 2016a, Edwards 2000, Ehrenreich 2009, Ehrenreich 2016, Holmes 2000, Kubota 2016, St John 1996). Approaching to smaller companies may have a better chance, because it will be relatively easier to make direct contact with a small business owner, obtain a permission to get into the company and observe/record how employees use English for work.

Despite the limited size of the talk-data in the workplace, the present research has shed light on realities of Japanese BELF users—how they learn, use and perceive English. It is hoped that the accumulation of context-sensitive case studies like the present one contributes to 'across-research-site triangulation' (Ehrenreith 2016: 136), in which findings from BELF research in different regions, disciplines and analytical frameworks are compared. Having identified the gap between the classroom interaction and actual communication in BELF settings, it is also hoped that the present research is able to give insights on making ELT more practical for BELF users to develop their capability to exploit their linguistic resources in their own right.

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Appendices

Appendix 4.1 Questionnaire (original in Japanese)

Name :＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1．現在お持ちのTOEICその他のスコア、資格を教えてください。
・TOEIC （　　年　　月受験）　　　点　　　・英検 （　　年　　月合格）　　　級
・TOEFL （　　年　　月受験）　　　点　　　・その他 （　　　　　　　　　　）

2．社会人になってから、どんな方法で英語を勉強したことがありますか／していますか。
あてはまるものに〇をつけてください。
（　　）全く勉強していない
（　　）市販の教材で自習　（教材名：　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）
（　　）学校に通う（学校名：　　　　　　　期間：　　　　　　　　）
（　　）その他　（　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

3．海外滞在経験があれば教えてください。
（　　）留学　（国名：　　　　　　　期間：　　　　　　　　）
（　　）仕事　（国名：　　　　　　　期間：　　　　　　　　）
（　　）旅行　（国名：　　　　　　　期間：　　　　　　　　）
（　　）その他（国名：　　　　　　　期間：　　　　　　　　）

4．現在どのような部署でどのようなお仕事をされていますか。

5．今後、海外赴任・出張のご予定があれば教えてください。

6．現在、または将来のお仕事で、日本語、英語以外の言語を使うことがありますか。あれば具体的に教えてください。

7．現在、どのような場面でどのくらい英語を使っていますか。またこの講座を受講後、どのような場面で英語の使用が想定されますか。
1= 頻繁にある、2= 時々ある、3= まったくない、のうち該当する番号をそれぞれの欄に記入してください。

	現在	将来	
電話を受ける			
電話をかける			
Eメールを受け取る			
Eメールを送る			
技術文書（マニュアル、論文等）を読む			
技術文書（マニュアル、論文等）を書く			
一般的なビジネス文書を読む			コメント：
一般的なビジネス文書を書く			
顧客の案内をする			
スピーチ、プレゼンテーションをする			
交渉をする			
ミーティングに参加する			
ミーティングの議長を務める			

8．現在のご自分の英語力についてどう思いますか。
1＝自信がある、2＝少し自信がある、3＝あまり自信がない、4＝まったく自信がない、のうち該当する番号をそれぞれの欄に記入してください。

読む	
書く	
聞く	
話す	

コメント：

9．この研修で、現在のご自分の英語力をどう改善し、どのような能力を身につけたいですか。
その他、この研修について疑問、要望等があればお聞かせください。

Appendix 4.2 Questionnaire (English translation of the original)

Name : _____

1. Please specify any scores or qualifications you have on English tests such as TOEIC, and when you took the test.

・TOEIC(score:　　, the date taken:　month/　year)　　　・STEP（score:　　, the date taken:　month/　year)

・TOEFL(score:　　, the date taken:　month/　year)　　　・Others（score:　　, the date taken:　month/　year)

2. How have you studied English after graduating from university? Tick one of the options below.

（　　）Did not study at all

（　　）Self‒taught with commercial textbooks　(title:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

（　　）Went to school (name:　　　　, length:　　　　　　）

（　　）Others　（　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

3. Have you ever been abroad?

（　　）For study　(country:　　　　　　　length:　　　　）

（　　）For work　(country:　　　　　　　length:　　　　）

（　　）For travel　(country:　　　　　　　length:　　　　）

（　　）Others　(country:　　　　　　　length:　　　　）

4. Please describe the roles and responsibilities of your jobs in as much detail as possible.

5. Do you have any specific plans to go overseas for work?

6. Do you have any chance to use any languages other than Japanese and English? Please specify if any.

7. How much do you use English in your current job?

And how much do you think you will need to use English after graduating from this course?

Use the following scale for your answers: 1= often, 2= sometimes, 3=never

	Current	Future	
Receive phone calls			
Make phone calls			
Receive email messages			
Send email messages			
Read technical docmuments (manuals, research papers, etc.)			
Write technical docmuments (manuals, research papers, etc.)			
Read business documents in general (quotations, minutes, etc.)			コメント:
Write business documents in general (quotations, minutes, etc.)			
Welcoming guests and show them around			
Give speeches and presentations			
Negotiate with clients or subcontractors			
Participate in meetings			
Chair meetings			

8. How do you feel about your current English proficiency?

Use the following scale for your answers.

(1 = confident, 2= somewhat confident, 3 = not very confident, 4 = no confident at all)

Reading	
Writing	
Listening	
Speaking	

コメント:

9. How would you like to improve your English proficiency, and what kind of skills would you like to acquire through the course?

Appendix 4.3 Transcription conventions

[　　　　　the point of overlap onset

=　　　　　latching

(0.7)　　　an interval between utterances

(.)　　　　a very short untimed pause

uh:::　　　lengthening of the preceding sound

?　　　　　a rising intonation

.　　　　　a falling intonation

,　　　　　a slightly rising intonation

↑　　　　　a much higher pitch than the other talk

↓　　　　　a sudden fall in pitch

word　　　underlining indicates speaker emphasis

CAPITALS　especially loud sounds relative to the other talk

° °　　　　utterances between degree sings are quieter than the other talk

(words)　　the transcriber's best hearing of the talk

xxxxxx　　unintelligible speech

((actions))　non-verbal actions

→　　　　　features of special interest

<u>word</u>　　　speaker emphasis

>　<　　　utterances spoken faster than surrounding talk

<　>　　　utterances spoken slower than surrounding talk

…　　　　　section of transcript omitted