

Introduction to the Special Issue: Future Educators Bridging Theory and Practice in Language Education

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Language education is an ever-evolving field that requires educators not only to be masters of pedagogical theory but also to be adaptive practitioners who can apply that theory effectively in diverse classroom settings. As such, the process of reviewing scholarly texts plays a critical role in the development of future educators and researchers. In this special issue, graduate students of language education engage with and critically assess a range of key texts that address pressing themes in the field. Through these book reviews, the contributors not only deepen their own understanding of the theory and practice of language teaching but also contribute valuable perspectives that can inspire innovation in the classroom and guide future research.

The act of reviewing books such as those featured here—works on ESL/EFL skills development, intercultural communication, teacher identity, and the lived experiences of language educators—offers students a unique opportunity to engage with the core ideas that shape language education today. Rather than simply reading for content, writing these reviews requires that students synthesize information, analyze differing pedagogical approaches, and critically reflect on how these ideas can be translated into practice. In doing so, the graduate students involved in this special issue are gaining a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by language educators worldwide.

As these reviews were chosen by future language teachers, it is not surprising that two selections focus on merging theory with practical teaching approaches: Jonathan M. Newton and I.S.P. Nation's *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking* (2nd ed.), reviewed by Akito Murata and I.S.P. Nation and John Macalister's *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* (2nd ed.), reviewed by Chia-An Tsai. Both texts focus on foundational skills that are critical for language learners—skills that often present significant challenges to new teachers. By reviewing these books, graduate students not only assess the theoretical frameworks presented by the authors but also reflect on how these frameworks can be adapted to real-world teaching environments. The process of analyzing these texts allows students to think critically about the effectiveness of different strategies for developing fundamental language skills, especially in diverse, multilingual classrooms. As they engage with these ideas, they become better equipped to design their own lessons and implement evidence-based strategies in their future teaching practice.

Another area of interest by students of this issue is the exploration of teacher identities and intercultural dynamics, themes central to understanding the broader context of language education. June Ha Kim's review of Takaaki Hiratsuka's *Team Teachers in Japan: Beliefs, Identities, and Emotions* examines the interpersonal and emotional aspects of teaching in cross-cultural teams. Graduate students reviewing this work are able to reflect not only on the personal challenges and rewards of teaching in a foreign context but also on how their own identities as future educators will shape their teaching practices. These reflections encourage students to think about the emotional and relational dimensions of teaching, often a critical but overlooked

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component of effective language instruction. Fred Dervin's *The Paradoxes of Interculturality: A Toolbox of Out-of-the-Box Ideas for Intercultural Communication Education* challenges readers to think outside traditional frameworks of intercultural education. Through her review of this text, Queena Xu is exposed to innovative pedagogical tools and concepts that push the boundaries of how intercultural communication can be taught. Writing a review of such an idiosyncratic text allows her to critically engage with novel ideas, assessing their relevance and applicability to her future classrooms. This process sharpens her ability to think creatively about curriculum design and intercultural pedagogy, empowering her to foster more inclusive and dynamic learning environments.

Similarly, books like *Language Socialization in Classrooms: Culture, Interaction, and Language Development* (edited by Matthew J. Burdelski and Kathryn M. Howard) and *Foreign Female English Teachers in Japanese Higher Education: Narratives From Our Quarter* (edited by Diane Hawley Nagatomo, Kathleen A. Brown, and Melodie L. Cook) offer valuable insights into the social and cultural contexts that shape language learning. For Rie Kawamura and Sarina Sugawara, reviewing these works provides an opportunity to reflect on how language socialization and identity formation impact language acquisition. It also encourages them to consider how their own cultural backgrounds and experiences will influence their teaching. Such reflections are essential for educators who must navigate complex classroom dynamics and promote inclusive, culturally responsive teaching practices.

Finally, *The Development of L2 Interactional Competence: A Multimodal Study of Complaining in French Interactions* by Klara Skogmyr Marian exemplifies the growing importance of interactional competence in SLA research. By reviewing this book, Wing Yiu gains an understanding of how specific speech acts, such as complaining, are learned and performed in a second language. This text offers a valuable model for thinking about how to teach students pragmatic and interactional skills, which are essential for effective communication in real-world settings. Exploring this area deepens a future educator's understanding of multimodal research methods and encourages them to consider how they might apply similar methodologies to their own teaching and research.

By engaging with these diverse texts, graduate students not only expand their academic knowledge but also hone their critical thinking and analytical skills, both of which are crucial for their professional development as language educators. In reviewing these books, they are tasked with evaluating key ideas, situating them within the broader landscape of language education, and considering their implications for practice. This process helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, allowing students to contextualize the research they encounter and to reflect on how it can inform their own teaching. Furthermore, writing these reviews contributes to the scholarly discourse surrounding language education, offering new insights and perspectives that can benefit the wider community of language educators and researchers. The reviews in this special issue underscore the importance of engaging critically with foundational texts in language education. For graduate students, this process is more than an academic exercise—it is a vital part of their journey toward becoming reflective, informed, and adaptable educators.

***Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking (2nd ed.)*. Jonathan M. Newton and I.S.P. Nation. Routledge, 2021.**

Reviewed by Akito Murata, Akita International University

Reference:

Murata, A. (2024). [Review of the book *Teaching ESL/EFL listening and speaking (2nd ed.)*, by Jonathan M. Newton and I.S.P. Nation]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 3-5.

Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking (2nd ed.) gives teachers an overview of English teaching, as well as plenty of example activities or tasks of teaching English listening and speaking. Although it has a companion book, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* (see review, this volume), *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking (2nd ed.)* provides basic ideas for teaching English reading and writing as well. It first defines what the well-balanced teaching comprises: “meaning-focused input”, “meaning-focused output”, “language-focused learning”, and “fluency development”. These are called “the four strands” for effective English teaching in the book. The difference between the first edition and the second edition is that the second edition has two more chapters: *Extensive Listening* and *Teaching Using a Course Book*. These chapters also talk about how important it is to make English learning well-balanced.

According to *Results of the state of implementation of English education in AY 2023-2024* (MEXT, 2023), foreign language education in Japan has been developing wonderfully and English proficiency of both students and teachers has been improved, compared with the survey by MEXT in 2013. For example, it says the percentage of senior high school students who have CEFR A2 level or higher proficiency level was 50.6% in 2023, compared with 31.0% in 2013. Another example is that the percentage of senior high school teachers who have CEFR B2 or higher proficiency level was 80.7% in 2023, compared with 52.7% in 2013. The survey also says that more than 90% of class time was spent on children using English for communication in elementary schools, while 54.3% of class time was on students using English for communication in senior high schools in 2023.

As for the survey, it seems that the portion of listening and speaking was well-balanced in the senior high school English communication activities because approximately 50% of the time for such activities was for listening and speaking. However, it was not clear what 45.7% of the total class time was used for since 54.3% shows students’ use of English for communication in class. The survey seems to show a well-balanced portion of four skills of English education such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking in communicative activity time; nevertheless, the time accounts for 54.3% of total English class time. If all the rest of the time is for language-focused learning, the teaching plan will not be well-balanced in terms of “the four strands”. In other words, the idea of “the four strands” can guide English teachers to make well-balanced English teaching plans. Although it describes English teachers in approximately 40% of senior high schools spending more than half of the class time in speaking English, it was still less than 10% of senior high schools where English teachers spoke English for more than 75% of class time.

For senior high schools, since most students stay at school for only three years, totally different students are in senior high schools in ten years, which is a long term. However, teachers’ situations are different. Although public school teachers need to transfer from one school to another, many of them are still teachers in ten years. They want to or are encouraged to

change their teaching within their career so that their teaching approach is more effective to their students. The communicative language teaching movement began in the 1970s (Celce-Murcia et al, 2014), but it seems that the movement came to Japan more recently since the new course of study started to strongly encourage English teachers to use English in class in 2018 (MEXT, 2018). English teachers have been required to develop themselves, to adjust their teaching for their students, and to introduce new methods to their class for the past ten years. It is probable that this type of shift will affect them for the next ten years as well. They need to think how effective or ineffective it is to teach in the way they have done for a long time such as the Grammar-Translation method, and what their students need to improve for their better communication in English. It is necessary that they consider what well-balanced English teaching should be, what advantages and disadvantages English activities have, and which level learners each activity is suitable for.

It is important that both new teachers and experienced teachers should think about these and gain an overview of English teaching; *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking* (2nd ed.) will work well for them. It can encourage teachers to consider the two problems: the good balance of class activities and their need to speak English in class especially for promoting “meaning-focused input” and “fluency development”.

Moreover, this book also introduces how teachers should choose and use course books, and how they should assess their students. Each textbook has its own features designed by their authors or principles. One suggestion of this book is about the proportion of studying English features and its use. It says half of the course book should give students opportunities to use English. The opportunities include repetition, and there are two types of repetition: “verbatim repetition” and “varied repetition”. Newton and Nation (2021) suggest that students brush up their English competence through encountering both the same and similar experiences or learning. They also argue that well-designed language courses should encourage students’ autonomy. They need to learn how to learn. When course books cannot provide enough materials for good balance learning, teachers should prepare substantial materials for students to learn autonomously.

This would be one reason the book illustrates what and how important extensive listening is, and how learners should be supported. Extensive listening is a task for learners to work on outside the classroom, which prompts them to use English. Vocabulary size can be a problem, so the book compares several movies in terms of vocabulary size. It also proposes learners should have repeated experiences and interaction with peers so that they can build on vocabulary and process both meaning-focused input and output.

This book gives many examples of tasks feasible in class. One example is about dictation. Many dictation tasks are introduced according to learners’ proficiency levels. Such tasks involve explanations, which provide knowledge that how they work and when they are not very helpful. Furthermore, it also explains that tasks can enhance learners’ working memory, and that “metacognitive strategies” (Richards, 2015) such as reflection are helpful. Through reading this book, experienced teachers can learn the reason why what they did actually worked or did not work before; new teachers can gain knowledge of tasks they were given when they were at school and what their learners need to improve their English.

The principle of “Learn a little, use a lot” (Newton & Nation, 2021, p.21) is the authors’ message, which seems consistent in this book. Ten-year progress in English education in Japan is remarkable; teachers have been still developing themselves. This book is highly recommended for those who want to go back to the basics or to get an overview image for English teaching.

Hale, C.C. (Ed.). (2024). Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, 19(1), 1-24.

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***Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing (2nd ed.)*. I.S.P. Nation and John Macalister. Routledge, 2021.**

Reviewed by Chia-An Tsai, Akita International University

Reference:

Tsai, C.A. (2024). [Review of the book *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing (2nd ed.)*, by I.S.P. Nation and John Macalister]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 6-8.

Reading and writing are important skills for language learners; however, how to make reading and writing lessons effective is always challenging for teachers who teach English as a second or foreign language. *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* is a book that offers guidelines for those teachers. The book is written by internationally renowned and distinguished scholars of applied linguistics and language teaching, I.S.P. Nation and John Macalister. This best-selling book now has its second edition, which is part of the ESL & Applied Linguistics Professional Series published by Routledge. The book can be used as a guidebook for pre- or in-service ESL/EFL teachers who seek to deepen their knowledge of teaching English reading and writing.

Including the three new chapters, the second edition of *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* comprises twelve chapters in total, covering a variety of useful teaching techniques for reading and writing. The first six chapters focus on the various strategies for teaching reading, while the following five chapters concentrate on the different approaches to teaching writing. The last chapter gives attention to both reading and writing skills, serving as a conclusion of the book. The order of the chapters is systematically organized, so readers can easily follow the progression. In addition, a list of three tasks and a recommendation for further reading can be found at the end of each chapter. It offers readers, especially pre-service or novice teachers, more opportunities to reflect, self-evaluate, and search for more related information or findings if needed.

The greatest difference between the first and the second edition of *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* is that three new chapters are added to provide more information in the field. Chapter 2, “Using the Four Strands to Plan a Reading or Writing Course,” introduces the four strands of language learning: meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development to design a reading and writing lesson. Notably, this second edition emphasizes the importance of the four strands, so most activities and lesson plans mentioned in the book are designed based on this framework. The other new chapter, Chapter 9 “Writing and Digital Technology”, focuses on how the writing process has changed because of technological advancement. In addition, Chapter 12, “Applying Principles to Reading and Writing Courses,” is a new chapter and the last chapter of the second edition. It wraps up the book with the details of applying principles in real-life teaching and learning. The new additions deal with more issues in teaching reading and writing and will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

The book begins with “Learning to Read in Another Language,” which compares techniques of teaching young native speakers reading with L2 learners, so ESL/EFL teachers can pay attention to the differences. As mentioned earlier, Chapter 2 is a chapter that provides an outline of how to apply the four strands of language learning. According to Nation (2007a, 2013b, as cited in Nation & Macalister, 2021), “the four strands is a principle used primarily to guide course design” (p. 15). Therefore, this chapter can benefit novice teachers who usually struggle with planning lessons to understand how much time they should allocate to each activity or skill to have a well-balanced lesson. Moreover, in terms of teaching reading, intensive reading is usually the most common

approach in a reading class. Teachers can find Chapter 3 instrumental since it clearly explains how different types of comprehension questions should be designed to assess students' understanding and how various exercises and activities can be used to teach vocabulary and grammar through intensive reading. The next chapter deals with extensive reading and how it can help readers develop reading fluency and boost vocabulary. It also provides research to encourage teachers to use graded readers for extensive reading programs. The nature and the strategies for developing learners' reading fluency are discussed in Chapter 5, in which readers can also find the advantages and disadvantages of reading faster. Finally, the reading section ends with the methods and guidelines for teachers to evaluate learners' reading process. For example, teachers can use cloze tests and multiple-choice tests to measure learners' reading proficiency.

Writing sections start with Chapter 7, which outlines many approaches and tasks, including experience tasks, shared tasks, guided tasks, and independent tasks, for teachers to assist learners in writing and to "close the gap between their learners' proficiency and the demands of the learning tasks facing them" (Nation & Macalister, 2021, p. 120). Moreover, it can be observed that many ESL/EFL learners have difficulties collecting ideas and organizing them into the written text. Chapters 8 and 9 divide the writing process into several subprocesses and propose some techniques and activities for teachers to guide learners through each stage of the writing process. The difference is that Chapter 9, one of the new chapters, offers readers plenty of resources and examples to integrate technology into their classroom and keep up with the latest teaching trends. Chapter 10 focuses on information transfer and topic types. Teachers can use a topic-type approach to guide learners in analyzing different types of topics and learning how to use guiding questions or information transfer diagrams to gather their ideas. To conclude the writing section, Chapter 11 covers different sources, forms, and methods of giving feedback, which is essential in developing students' writing skills. The last chapter of *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* once again calls attention to the four strands and other principles of language learning, such as time on task, repetition, quality of processing, cost/benefit as well as autonomy (Nation & Macalister, 2021), and most importantly, how to apply these principles in reading and writing lessons.

After reading the book, it is worth noting that the main aim of this book is practical teaching methods and approaches. As a result, the book may not be suitable for readers who wish to delve into comprehensive teaching theories. However, a key strength of this book is that it provides many techniques and activities with clear instructions. Different kinds of examples and research are also included, supporting the teaching techniques mentioned in the book. The book even includes Q&A sessions in some chapters, in which readers can find many frequently asked questions are answered. In this case, even teachers without many teaching experiences can quickly adopt the suggestions and integrate them into their lessons. The other impressive aspect is that although it contains a lot of information related to teaching approaches and strategies, not much terminology or specialized vocabulary is used. Tables and lists are also displayed to summarize the primary data and ideas, which allows readers to scan and grasp what they need to know immediately. Thus, teachers can easily absorb the knowledge and follow a framework to plan their lessons.

Overall, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* is a user-friendly book. It clearly lays out the teaching techniques, approaches as well as activities that teachers can apply to teach English reading and writing. Apart from teachers, this book is also recommended for students who are studying TESOL or enrolled in English teaching programs. The comprehensible information and guidelines this book provides are undoubtedly valuable resources and effective tools for people who want to acquire more practical knowledge and skills in teaching English reading and writing.

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***Team Teachers in Japan: Beliefs, Identities, and Emotions.* Takaaki Hiratsuka (Ed).
Routledge, 2023.**

Reviewed by June Ha Kim, Akita International University

Reference:

Kim, J.H. (2024). [Review of the book *Team teachers in Japan: Beliefs, Identities, and Emotions*, by Takaaki Hiratsuka (Ed.)]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 9-11.

Team teaching in Japan, where a Japanese Teacher of English (JTE) collaborates with an often foreign Assistant Learning Teacher (ALT), involves navigating complex dynamics in communication and relationships. *Team Teachers in Japan – Beliefs, Identities, and Emotions* explores these intricacies through various teachers' experiences. Editor Takaaki Hiratsuka organizes the book into four sections: “Power Balance and Lived Experiences,” “Teacher Perceptions, Selfhood and Feelings,” “Teacher Learning and Development,” and “Team Teachers in Elementary School.” Each section provides a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities within team teaching.

The first section, “Power Balance and Lived Experiences,” compiles research data and personal narratives from JTEs and former ALTs. A notable chapter by Kyoko Miyazato titled “Native vs. Non-native and Novice vs. Expert,” discusses the strengths and dynamics between native and non-native English speakers, as well as the novice-expert relationship. This chapter further explores how these factors impact the effectiveness and chemistry of team teaching, highlighting the influence of cultural differences and perceptions. Further readings in this section include a research by a JTE on team-taught classes, offering insights into improving team teaching by understanding the challenges ALTs face. An autoethnography by an ALT explores their identity as a foreigner in Japan, identifying their strengths and opportunities while struggling to learn Japanese and teaching English simultaneously. The section concludes with an analysis by Nelia G. Balgoa, titled “From Housewives To ALTs”, about non-native English speakers from the Philippines who became ALTs, detailing their struggles with language barriers and perceived inadequacies while also being considered similarly foreign learners of English. This section addresses not only classroom power dynamics but also underlying factors influencing these dynamics. JTEs and non-native speakers may feel unqualified to teach English, while ALTs face the dual challenges of adapting to a new culture and teaching English without sufficient experience or Japanese proficiency.

The second section, “Teacher Perceptions, Selfhood and Feelings,” explores the concept of teacher identity for both JTEs and ALTs. This section opens with “JTEs Can Learn From ALTs” by Natalie A. Donohue, which outlines the symbiotic nature of the working relationship between JTEs and ALTs, as well as the history of ALTs in Japan and the beliefs various JTEs have regarding ALTs. The writings included are particularly useful for JTEs in understanding the identities non-native ALTs may construct as foreigners adapting to life in Japan or navigating their role as novice teachers. For ALTs, the reflective data provided can aid in constructing a professional identity and effectively communicating with their JTEs. By promoting metacognitive awareness of multiple teacher identities, this section promotes mutual understanding and collaboration between JTEs and ALTs.

A significant issue JTEs often face is the lack of teaching experience among many ALTs, compounded by their limited cultural understanding. The third section, “Teacher Learning and

Development,” addresses this issue. Ideally, ALTs would be hired based on their teaching and Japanese language experience, but this is not always the case. The articles in this section discuss research on training and mentoring ALTs in an expert/novice framework, as well as designing collaborative classes. One included study by Chris Carl Hale titled “Negotiating the Expert/Novice Positions” examines JTEs and ALTs navigating around or into novice or expert positions, demonstrating how they can dynamically shift identities. This study could potentially help both teachers understand how to collaborate more effectively. These studies highlight the importance of professional development and ongoing support for ALTs, emphasizing the need for a structured approach to training that includes both pedagogical skills and cultural orientation.

The final section, “Team Teachers in Elementary School,” discusses the challenges of elementary school teaching in Japan. This section begins by addressing the transition to the new Course of Study established by MEXT, which requires English classes for third through sixth graders, with their homeroom teachers (HRTs) responsible for English instruction, ideally with an ALT. Due to the recent implementation, many HRTs struggle to teach a language they are not formally trained in or feel unqualified to teach. The pertinent chapters analyze the difficulties and challenges faced by HRTs and suggest strategies for managing their anxiety through teacher training courses and the inclusion of specialized native Japanese teachers of English. A notable chapter in this section by Tomohisa Machida, “Developing HRTs’ Confidence Toward Team Teaching,” emphasizes how effective team teaching with an ALT can enhance elementary English classes. The final chapter of the book by Akiko Kano and Takaaki Hiratsuka, titled “Elementary Senka/Specialized English Teachers (SETs),” discusses an emerging English teacher position in Japanese schools, the “senka” or Specialized English Teacher. This chapter is particularly poignant as it highlights the challenges these Japanese teachers face in terms of their sense of belonging in the schools and the shared issues they may experience alongside the ALT.

Hiratsuka’s compilation provides a comprehensive examination of team teaching in Japan. The first section’s exploration of power dynamics and lived experiences sheds light on the real-world challenges and successes of JTEs and ALTs. By presenting diverse perspectives, this section emphasizes the importance of understanding the unique contributions and difficulties faced by each type of teacher. The second section’s focus on teacher identity offers valuable insights into the personal and professional growth of educators. It encourages JTEs and ALTs to reflect on their roles and identities, cultivating a deeper mutual understanding that can enhance their collaboration.

The third section’s emphasis on teacher learning and development highlights the critical need for ongoing professional development. The research presented advocates for a more structured and supportive approach to training ALTs, addressing both pedagogical skills and cultural adaptation. This section also calls for a reevaluation of hiring practices and training programs to ensure that ALTs are better prepared for their roles. Finally, the fourth section’s discussion of elementary school teaching provides a timely analysis of the challenges faced by HRTs in implementing the new Course of Study. By addressing the emotional and professional needs of HRTs, this section offers practical solutions for improving English education at the elementary level.

Overall, *Team Teachers in Japan – Beliefs, Identities, and Emotions* is a valuable resource for anyone involved in English language education in Japan. Hiratsuka’s work provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities of team teaching, offering practical insights and recommendations for improving collaboration and quality of English education. The book is particularly beneficial for JTEs, ALTs, and HRTs, as well as prospective teachers and those

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involved in teacher training and development. By highlighting the importance of cultural understanding, professional identity, and ongoing support, this book makes a significant contribution to the field of English language education in Japan.

In conclusion, English education in Japan is continuously evolving, and Hiratsuka's compilation offers critical insights into the dynamics of team teaching. The comprehensive research and personal narratives presented in this book aim to enhance the quality of teaching and the professional development of JTEs, HRTs, and ALTs. This book is essential for educators and those seeking to improve English language education in Japan, resulting in a roadmap for effective collaboration, elevating EFL educators in Japan.

The Paradoxes of Interculturality: A Toolbox of Out-of-the-box Ideas for Intercultural Communication Education. Fred Dervin. Routledge, 2022.

Reviewed by Queena Xu, Akita International University

Reference:

Xu, Q. (2024). [Review of the book *The paradoxes of interculturality: A toolbox of out-of-the-box ideas for intercultural communication education*, by Fred Dervin]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 12-15.

Dervin (2023) explores the paradoxes found in interculturality in education and research through a unique reading experience in his book *The Paradoxes of Interculturality: A Toolbox of Out-of-the-box Ideas for Intercultural Communication Education*. This book explores the “polysemous and flexible notion” (p. i) of interculturality which has no definite description. The author provides ‘fragments’ of writings allowing the reader to piece together bits and pieces of interculturality to form their own perspective on the subject. The author also provides ‘interthinking’ questions which challenge the reader to unthink and rethink the mainstream concepts and Western notions of interculturality. This book provides ways to seek alternatives to the paradoxes forming around interculturality, asking the reader to reflect on the knowledge they have gathered from reading this book. Published in 2023, Dervin includes perspectives from the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, making it a contemporary and relevant source. For scholars, students and educators in the fields of intercultural communication education, applied linguistics, and education philosophy, Dervin’s book will no doubt be an essential ‘toolbox’ to critically think about interculturality.

The Paradoxes of Interculturality is divided into two parts with a total of eight chapters. The book starts off with chapter 1 as the introduction of the main arguments included in this book, how the book is structured, and how the reader can utilize the book. Part I encompasses the next three chapters. Chapter 2 describes how interculturality is constructed as *doxa*, which “means ‘opinion’ and ‘praise’ in Greek” (p. 14). Chapter 3 looks at different stances on interculturality and how the readers can reflect on how alternative knowledge is treated. Chapter 4 gives insight into the “*Achilles’ heels*” (p. 15) of interculturality in research in education, exploring its weaknesses and shortcomings. Part II, encompasses the final four chapters, looking at how paradoxes of interculturality can be dealt with. Chapter 5 looks at ways to infuse diversity in intercultural communication education. Chapter 6 examines the “criticality (of criticality),” (p. 15) to view ourselves from a distance. Chapter 7 asks readers to unthink and rethink, letting go of the ideologies that have influenced us and instead, learning from the discomfort and contradictions as a part of intercultural research and education. Finally, Chapter 8 concludes with a summary of the challenges and concepts readers will have been exposed to through the fragmented entries of this book. The book concludes with a useful appendix of terms proposed by the author, many of which are neologisms (newly formed terms).

Dervin writes this book in ‘fragments’ of varying lengths. The fragments are written in alphabetical order, however Dervin explains that they can be read in any order. Each chapter centers around a theme in which he explores using the fragments. The fragments are written almost like journal entries, occasionally including his personal experiences and opinions. There are multiple characters in this book, with interculturality addressed as ‘she/her’, the author addressed as ‘he/him’, and the readers themselves. Throughout the book, interculturality, while an abstract

concept, is personified, taking a life of her own. This book review will also address interculturality in the same way as the author. Dervin inserts himself as a character, often alluding to and criticizing his own works, which he suggests all scholars should do in order to 'do' interculturality better. The readers also play a role in the book as Dervin engages us directly with thought-provoking questions throughout the fragments and in the 'Interthinking' sections at the end of each chapter. This book is intended for audiences that work in fields related to intercultural communication or education. Background knowledge ideologies pertaining to interculturalism, (non-)essentialism, general knowledge of sociology, politics, economics and some knowledge of art is necessary to thoroughly digest the book.

The main content of the book starts at Chapter 2, "The doxa of interculturality," with fragments meant to question both himself and the reader of the 'obvious' definition of interculturality, although she is intentionally left undefined. However, as part of Dervin's argument, interculturality is not something that should be "caged in a simplistic take" (p. 4). This chapter deals with the paradoxes found in interculturality, challenging readers to reconsider the presumed concepts that "goes without saying" (p. 21). The challenge here is for readers to question their preconceived notions of ideas involving interculturality. He suggests that "we accept that there are different ideologies about and for interculturality across the world," in other words, the need to "interculturalise interculturality" (p. 29). The interthinking section at the end of this chapter starts to break down our thinking in order to build up a different perspective of interculturality later on.

Chapter 3, "Stances towards alternative knowledge," looks at the stances that scholars have already taken in intercultural research and education in order to challenge the protocols in academic writing and research, such as using citations from the "dominating sphere of the 'West'" (p. 14), and instead, listen to alternative knowledge. Dervin urges us to "liberate [ourselves] from the orders dominating [our] thoughts about interculturality" (p. 43). Dervin draws extensively on his experience in the field of intercultural communication, reflecting on many of his experiences in China. He compares his Western perspective on interculturality compared to those of his Chinese students, reflecting how their stances differ to his and what we can learn about interculturality from these reflections. Dervin argues that other voices need to be considered in intercultural dialogue; however, many are silenced or chosen based on the perspective of the West, further perpetuating the gap between the Global South and Global North. The interthinking questions challenge the reader to examine their stance on 'alternative' knowledge of interculturality, to face the discomfort of intercultural research and education, and be liberated from the limited scope of knowledge we possess when thinking about interculturality critically.

Chapter 4, "The Achilles' heels of interculturality," continues the discussion by looking at weak points in discussions about her. Dervin argues that contributions to the study of interculturality need to be reconsidered for its real motivation and intention. One weakness he points out is the notion that publishing research in interculturality has been of "imitation, repetition, devotion, self-promotion, [and] illusions" (p. 60). He asks scholars to question our motivation and real intentions behind publishing, the authors we cite, the ideas we circulate, and whether or not we are actually making transformation within the field. Motivations behind publishing can include money, prestige, power, pride, but Dervin argues that "[contributing] to (new) knowledge rarely appears to be the (promoted) motivation" (p. 59). In the interthinking section, Dervin challenges us to look for "potential transformations" (p. 61) in the works of our favorite scholars and in our own work.

Starting with Chapter 5, "Towards a diversity of thoughts," the book begins to shift towards ways to tackle the issues brought up in Part I. Dervin looks into the diversity of thoughts, the

‘alternative knowledge’ as mentioned in Chapter 3, moving us away from “single dominant ideologies” to “trying out new things [by] arguing, revising, testing and trying again and again” (p. 67) as a way to make movement in interculturality. He proposes that we engage in fields outside our own, and even in genres such as fiction, art, and music to diversify our thinking; to look at contradictions, ‘folk discourse analysis’, metaphors, other voices and the like as sources of inspiration rather than cocooning ourselves in our own ideologies. The readers also come into play as Dervin reassures us that “he [Dervin] does not wish to impose anything on [us]” but rather “move forward and backward in all directions together” (p. 80). Dervin emphasizes the importance of including readers into the process of writing as part of a diversification of thoughts. The interthinking section questions what a diversity of thoughts can do for research and education in interculturality.

Chapter 6, “Criticality (of criticality),” proceeds to discuss the meta notion of being critical of criticality. Dervin coins the term “criticality of criticality” (p. 86) as being critical of oneself, looking at one’s position through the “looking-glass” (p. 86), from a distance. Without doing so, Dervin argues that politics, education, and values will continue to be decided by those who have the power to talk, silencing “disruptive voices” (p. 87). If we are unable to criticize our own thoughts, the impact of our critiques will be limited. The role of the scholars is “to disrupt, to displease, to help rethink, to note the ‘disturbable’” (p. 90). A powerful argument he gives as a “privileged Western scholar” is the fact that “he is free to spread ‘his’ ideas about interculturality,” while “millions of people are ‘violenced’ through ideas being imposed onto them” (p. 95). Again, Dervin is urging scholars to take a step back and view their position being from a place of privilege. The interthinking section provides readers with questions to reexamine their own critiques.

The penultimate chapter, “Unthink and rethink,” provides ways to repair the ideologies that have been broken down in previous sections of this book. To unthink, Dervin suggests that we be unfaithful to our own ideas, to let go of our comfortable way of thinking, because without doing so “we cannot move forward” (p. 111). To rethink, Dervin suggests learning new languages; not only knowing the language, but also to be able to evaluate the connotations of the language. Additionally, creating new words to talk about interculturality, such as neologisms (combining two already existing words) will form new ways of thinking. Dervin states that we do not need to find the answers to all the questions asked about interculturality, rather, the reader is encouraged to step outside of their comfort zone and beliefs. Dervin reminds us that while the privileged are able to choose who they can engage with, others will suffer in silence. The fragments start to convene to form a picture of what interculturality could look like when viewed critically and from an outside perspective. However, reaching this point does not mean doing the work of interculturality has been finished.

We arrive at the conclusion in Chapter 8 where Dervin summarizes key points of his argument. Interculturality should not be approached in a straight line, but as a process that “weav[es] itself ceaselessly” (p. 123), much like the fragments in this book. We must confront the doxas surrounding interculturality, along with accepting disagreements, discomfort, and being unfaithful to our ideologies. Only when we unthink the so-called ‘Western’ critical perspectives can we yield the floor to “other unnoticed voices, especially the Global South” (p. 122). Dervin urges his readers to be critical of criticality by detaching and creating again and again, “[liberating] others – and in the process ourselves!” (p. 123). The book ends with Dervin addressing our feelings while reading his book and suggests what to do with his book afterwards. The book is now ours to use as a ‘toolbox’ with each of the chapters and fragments readily available anytime we want to revisit. In the end, it is up to us to determine how we should proceed with interculturality.

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The Paradoxes of Interculturality is a toolbox of out-of-the-box ideas for those who are looking for ways to expand the way they think about interculturality. Not only does the book offer insights into Dervin's thoughts on the matter, the readers are constantly challenged to question their stances, ideologies, and to find reasoning behind their reactions and ways of thinking. What this book does not offer is actual concrete solutions or definitions to interculturality and the concepts Dervin includes. Instead, it is up to the reader to grapple with the concepts themselves and reexamine their way of thinking, in other words, to 'do interculturality' itself.

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Language Socialization in Classrooms: Culture, Interaction, and Language Development.
Matthew J. Burdelski and Kathryn M. Howard (Eds.). Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Reviewed by Rie Kawamura, Akita International University

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As an essential means of fostering an individual's social and cultural identity and conveying a sense of belonging, the role of language goes beyond the ideology of enabling communication with one another. Language, a semiotic tool, is crucial in socialization, which prepares an individual, often starting from early childhood, to fulfill the expectations of the specific community. On this basis, Matthew J. Burdelski and Kathryn M. Howard have edited a comprehensive book, *Language Socialization in Classrooms: Culture, Interaction, and Language Development*, enlightening educators engrossed in comprehending the complexity behind the concept of language development in early childhood. The complex socialization process exhibited by the respective authors collectively through the 10 case studies presented highlights and demonstrates the conception that language and cultural development are reciprocally connected.

In the first chapter of the book, Burdelski, and Howard hypothesize that despite the variability degree of knowledge and societal influence, language socialization is “bidirectional in that not only are novices socialized by experts but also experts are socialized by novices into new identities, stances, and actions” (p.3). Through the medium of language socialization, the authors elucidate the involvement of discourse and language acquisition within the classroom, covering socialization in various topics. Primarily, the multi-perspectivity of classroom interactions is theoretically illustrated through the ethnographic research methodology, manifesting the process of language socialization in depth.

By means of socialization through language, focusing primarily on the influence of classroom practices, learners realize the cultural customs and traditions socially accepted by the cultural community, acting appropriately concerning the situation. In chapter 11, “Talking about Lunch: Diversity, Language, and Food Socialization in a Danish Kindergarten Classroom,” Karrebæk's study, which took place in the context of a Danish kindergarten with a high population of international students, concentrates on the socialization of food, specifically Danish rye bread, a preferred basic food in Denmark, through the use of language. Impressively, the ultimate goal of discussing food preferences is to implement the ideology of healthy eating, encouraging students to opt for Danish rye bread, thus cultivating young children to follow the Danish culture.

Similarly, in chapter 10, “Embodiment, Ritual, and Ideology in a Japanese-as-a-Heritage-Language Preschool Classroom,” Burdelski focuses on how Japanese preschool students attending a Japanese heritage language school based in the United States are educated concerning Japanese customs. In particular, the focus is on the preschool graduation certificate collection method during the graduation ceremony. Burdelski analyzes the mock rehearsals in the classroom before the official event. Wherein through the demonstration of both the unacceptable and acceptable method of receiving the graduation certificate acted out by the teachers, in addition to physically correcting the preschool children's bodily movements to obtain specific

body movements, the language socialization technique depicts the acquisition of an adequate level of discipline through classroom practices. In sum, the discipline culture is illuminated to the preschool children through repetitive warnings that performing dissimilar acts from the other classmates will be an embarrassment for oneself.

In chapter two of the book, “Interactional Contingencies and Contradictions in the Socialization of Tolerance in a Spanish Multicultural School,” García-Sánchez emphasizes the teacher’s practices at an elementary school in a Southwestern rural community in Spain, constituting a high population of Moroccan immigrants. Ultimately, the school aims to promote ethnic diversity by implementing tolerance education during the performance arts program class. However, the author notices that despite the teacher’s efforts, the Moroccan students are intentionally excluded from the activities by the Spanish students. Due to the teachers refraining from drawing attention to discrimination straightforwardly, implementing tolerance education could have adverse effects. It is intriguing that due to diversity in the classroom, students are more vulnerable to forming cliques with their culturally similar peers, though an authority figure takes precautionary measures.

Instead of focusing on social and cultural reproduction, language socialization is analyzed across a spectrum of conditions. The socialization of how language is employed to contribute to the reconstruction and reorganization of the existing culture is exemplified through the classroom setting. For instance, in chapter three, Klein’s study, “Shaping Sikh Youth Subjectivities in a US Gurdwara: Discursive Socialization of Religious Heritage in Sikh History Classes,” attests to the abovementioned statement. Through the “diaspora” framework, Klein studies the Punjabi Sikh education program at a Sikh temple in Southern California, through which the Sikh youth are not solely educated about Sikhism but regarding the belonging of the Sikh communities in the United States during the history classes. Employing the language socialization theory, it can be deduced that the classroom is where the teaching of the cultural and religious values of Sikhism as well as Sikh history to young Sikhs to prepare Sikh Americans on the manner to approach individuals with illiteracy towards Sikhism.

In the final chapter, Duff outlines the studies by each author of the 10 case studies, noting the relevance of the executed research to the language socialization theory. Additionally, Duff emphasizes that language socialization research has shifted to covering a more comprehensive range of topics. For instance, there is a deviation from research on language socialization focusing on daily practices at home to language socialization research. Specifically, looking at socialization in a classroom setting concerning multiple aspects, such as languages and regional settings, broadens the research scope. However, it should be noted that among the 10 case studies presented in the book, the research participants involved are mainly young children. The research focuses principally on young children because it enables teachers to perceive how language shapes children’s sense of belonging to society. However, future research on language socialization is anticipated to cover a broader range of topics.

Through language socialization research in classrooms, among the 10 case studies, how daily classroom practices significantly impact an individual’s disposition and kinship in society is grasped. On a personal note, the book provided great insights into how an individual’s social identity is developed not only through family discourse but also through the classroom setting; in particular, the pedagogy draws attention to the perception that culture, though not the sole factor, shapes an individual’s identity. The book will be crucial in helping teachers better understand students’ behavior by being aware of and subsequently comprehending the various factors that have shaped the student’s social identity.

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***Foreign Female English Teachers in Japanese Higher Education: Narratives from our Quarter.* Diane Hawley Nagatomo, Kathleen A. Brown, & Melodie L. Cook (Eds.). Candlin and Mynard, 2020.**

Reviewed by Sarina Sugawara, Akita Prefectural University

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Sugawara, S. (2024). [Review of the book *Foreign female English teachers in Japanese higher education: Narratives from our quarter*, by Diane Hawley Nagatomo, Kathleen A. Brown, & Melodie L. Cook (Eds.)]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 19-21.

Despite the erudite discussions and persistent attempts to combat gender inequalities in Japan, there have been only very subtle improvements over the decades. The notion and existence of traditional gender roles in society seems to linger on, including at tertiary level educational institutions. According to Dr. Honda from the University of Tokyo, Japan was awarded gender gap index of 125 out of 146 countries in 2023. Honda continues that it is undeniable that there are considerable amounts of “normative expectations” (para. 1), floating in the culture and it has been visibly disadvantageous being female in the system, even just by looking at the limited opportunities for administrative jobs and wage disparities. As Simon-Maeda mentions in the beginning, it is a collective autobiographical work that gives insights of what comes along with enhancing one's career, in a multiple marginal state (p. vii). Being a foreign born or raised entity, a female, a parent, a researcher, non-caucasian, a language faculty in the ICT department and being a part of the LGBTQIA+ in Japanese society itself entails a moderate level of hardship to begin with; with these prerequisites, working in male dominated academia would be tantamount to playing consecutive away games. The book offers genuine insights to those who are at the early to middle stages of their professional academic journey, notably beneficial to the females, but also those who are interested in constructing a stronger teaching identity by avoiding unnecessary tensions in the Japanese context.

Gaining a position in academia generally requires sheer persistence and perpetual progress over one's career. Many of the authors seem to have established non-contract, tenure status, yet according to 2006 National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP), a division of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the data generously provides evidence that it is extremely difficult for foreign women to be able to land in a fulltime position. According to the research, the ratio of fulltime university faculty employment, 25.6% were Japanese females, 69.2% Japanese males, 3.5% foreign males and 1.7% foreign females (Kato et al., 2012 , p.20). The researchers have concluded that “women face different obstacles to maintaining employment within universities” (Kato et al., 2012, Abstract section), and approximately 18% of females and 82% of men are newly granted fulltime positions in 2006 fiscal year, showing visible discrepancy and instability of female employment status. (Kato et al., 2012 , p.18). Nagatomo updates the number of foreign female entities in academia referencing Huang's 2018 data, to 18% (p.3). With market-driven reforms and gender equality employment permeating to the society, slow movements towards affirmative action have been noted by the author.

All of the authors give ethnographical and descriptive data of what came along with their ‘foreign’ status to establish individual professional careers. The chapters are written narratively,

easily comprehensible which, should appeal to a wide range of readers. While retaining its legibility, a considerable amount of references, quantitative and qualitative data supports their claim to be academically relevant, differentiating the work from a typical scholarly writing. The book offers solid guidance to the female career seekers, mainly in the ELT and social science fields while it generously compares and contrasts Japan to western society, which could be easily applied to the general career development in academia. Chapter 22 successfully closes the book, rather than enumerating the negative aspects, the author offered tools to overcome adversities and motivating ways to construct strong academic leadership.

Chapter 3 by Mason was the most convincing chapter positing that, while many institutions do encourage researcher identity development, not all Japanese universities are fond of teachers pursuing a PhD in the midst of their contract (Nagatomo et al., 2020, p.46). Administrators often do not visibly deny doing so, yet many universities exhibit ambivalence towards faculty pursuing terminal degrees. A reason I have been given for this by some fulltime professors is that faculties are considered to be “established and archived,” meaning, that an individual teacher expanding his or her educational attainment results in a different faculty make up. Thus, teachers who are not fully committed to their duty (like part-time doctoral, in-service faculties) do not qualify as ‘proper’ teachers. Interestingly, according to the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy, in 2019, 42% of the doctorate degree seekers were working, in-service students, a percentage which doubled since 2003 (2020, Figure. 3-2-4). It is understandable that the teachers are expected to devote themselves to duty as their priority, if one has agreed to do so as listed in the contract; however, denying their professional endeavors could adversely cease one's professionalism and motivation in the long run. Chapter 4 by Collins is the most controversial chapter, offering insights to the job security of foreign faculties. The infamous discriminatory term “revolving door” (Burton, 2010) was quoted in the chapter, whereas nowadays, both Japanese and non-Japanese seem to go through these hardships.

In recent history, the term native or non-Japanese language teacher as a category seems to be more ramified than ever. The comment, “being a foreign academic in Japan is truly a double-edged sword” seems to portray both joy and misery at the same time (Nagatomo et al., 2020, p54). The ‘returnees’ who have had considerable time spent outside their homeland, who are often perceived as not native enough but also not foreign enough, surprisingly were not included in the study. The fact is, returnees, including myself, are repeatedly reminded of our extremely rare existence in higher education; we often operate incognito and seem placed in a kind of identity purgatory. In my experience, I have seen only one middle aged or late career returnee Japanese national, who did not complete their primary to senior schooling in Japan, in a fulltime university position.

Working in higher education with an extra non-traditional background is indeed a humbling but rewarding lifestyle. Not having a typical Japanese heritage name occasionally requires extra explanations, which I can share with mixed feelings that Fujimoto in Chapter 19 have gone through. I am curious how the authors would classify returnees, like myself, who looks like Japanese native but with limited cultural backbones.

These narratives could play a crucial role as a prologue for future research, of a foreign researcher's venture in Japanese academia. Supplementing narratives and works performed during mid-2000 and onwards with updated practices, if any, could provide a closer view of the current situation. As several authors have mentioned, there are still inconvenient truths hidden in society. The idealized native profile, being under 40, and vulnerability of the ELT's impermanent positions does seem to linger to this date (p.54). Except for Chapter 7, the vast majority of the

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authors were affiliated with humanities or social science departments; I would be curious if any prospective writers who are assigned to the natural or hard sciences would be offered to write a chapter in this volume, which could be a good opportunity to contrast experiences of a more diverse population of educators. All the chapters were written in a clever, strategically modest manner, avoiding unnecessary emotional adjectives. Reflecting on their dedicated work, it has brought me a new research question, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to come into contact with this book.

Finally, these manuscripts have prompted the thought that people who belong to the ambiguous state, including myself, did seem to share similar anxieties with foreign-born educators, when they were in the early stages of their professional careers in Japan.

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***The Development of L2 Interactional Competence: A Multimodal Study of Complaining in French Interactions.* Klara Skogmyr Marian. Routledge, 2022.**

Reviewed by Wing Yiu, Akita International University

Yiu, W. (2024). [Review of the book *The development of L2 interactional competence: A multimodal study of complaining in French interactions*, by Klara Skogmyr Marian]. In C.C. Hale (Ed.), Future educators bridging theory and practice in language education [Special issue]. *Accents Asia*, (19)1, 22-24.

The book *The Development of L2 Interactional Competence: A Multimodal Study of Complaining in French Interactions* presents to educators and researchers 2-year longitudinal research investigating how L2 speakers of French develop their interactional practices for complaining in interactions. With rich conversation data collected for 2 years and analyzed by a multimodal Conversation Analysis (CA) approach, this book provides clear evidence of the development of interactional practices for complaining over time and across proficiency levels. It also shows the importance of social interaction in developing interactional competence (IC) in the target language. It can further help educators design pedagogy for teaching and learning L2 interactional skills.

Interactional Competence (IC) is the ability to employ appropriate and effective verbal and nonverbal practices in social interactions to achieve one's speech ends. The anthropologist and linguist Dell Hymes (1972) pointed out that language users need to understand not only the set of rules for composing grammatical sentences but also the rules for using an appropriate and effective way to speak and communicate in a particular language-speaking community. It is always challenging for second/foreign-language learners to master pragmatic skills to perform certain speech acts in the speech community because it requires an understanding of the norms of interaction, which is usually not taught in the language classroom. Complaining is one of the speech acts that occurs frequently in everyday life. It "refers to the action of expressing grief, discontent, or some other types of negative stance toward a person, an object, or a situation" (Marian, 2023, p.2). By complaining, people can share their troubles, express their problems, and get emotional support and sympathy from others. This can help strengthen one's social relationships with others and can help build a sense of membership in the language community. However, complaining is a complex speech act because it is regarded as a face-threatening act. Whether you can receive support for your negative assessment from other participants, or whether you can show the complaint-worthy nature of the complaint to get the floor to speak, there is a potential to threaten the positive or negative face of the speaker, the hearer, or both (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, by studying the sequences and turn-taking organizations of complaining from L2 learners, we can understand better if they are interactionally competent in the particular speech community. The current literature lacks the study of complaining in a longitudinal and multimodal approach, this book aims to address this research gap.

This book is divided into eight parts, with Part One introducing the aim of the research and the outline of the book. Part Two outlines the historical roots and current understanding of L2 IC, reviews existing CA research work on L2 IC, and summarizes what the existing research has already covered and the research gap of current literature. Part Three shows features, structures, and interactional resources for complaining in L1 interactions. Part Four then explains the research method. Parts Five to Seven are the research findings, conversation data, and discussion that explain the IC development for complaining in terms of the complaint structures, interactional

resources, and the interactional history of a *complainable*. Part Eight discusses the implications of the findings for possible teaching pedagogy and presents seven consequences of the findings for the understanding of the development of L2 IC. It also reflects on the possible future research that this research is not able to address.

This book provides some key findings in understanding the development of L2 interactional competence. First, the complaint structure remains the same over time and across proficiency levels. The data shows that an indirect complaint made by elementary or advanced learners includes the same components: the expressions of a negative stance, evidence, and the explanation of the complaint-worthy nature through various means like storytelling with direct reported speech, or reenactments. Language learners can make use of their experiences in their L1 when they engage in complaining in the L2. Second, the turn-taking organization of complaining changed when learners' proficiency improved. The research data showed that elementary speakers tend to use a 'round-robin format' and speakers tend to initiate complaints by using negatively valenced components and the recurrent use of specific linguistic formats. Upper-intermediate or advanced speakers tend to construct joint complaints and upgrade the first negative assessment, of which the turn-taking system is more similar to spontaneous L1 interactions with more participation from co-participants. Third, more advanced learners use diversified methods in complaint sequences. The pre-complaint sequence tends to be longer because they employ more strategies to prepare the grounds for the task, and do not use linguistically negative elements to initiate complaints so that the participants' faces would not be threatened. Also, by preparing their co-participants for the upcoming complaints, the chance of receiving affiliative and supportive responses will be increased. Fourth, there is a change in speakers' interactional uses of linguistic resources in L2 and multimodal practices such as prosody, gestures, facial expressions, etc. when their level becomes more advanced. Finally, shared experiences and the development of participants' changing social relationships promoted more co-participated complaint construction and more displays of affiliation and sympathy than earlier. This suggested that shared interactional histories and better social relationships help L2 learners accomplish context-sensitive talk, which is a key component of IC.

This book gives readers insights into the progression of the development of interactional competence through the study of complaining by learners of French from different countries. Although participants have different backgrounds and purposes for learning French, they tend to complain about the difficulties, such as language, weather, and culture, they encounter as students learning a new language and as newcomers to a foreign country. By complaining and showing sympathy and support, these strangers build relationships with each other. Following the participants for two years, this research shows us what changes the participants have, such as linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural knowledge. It can also reflect how learners handle complex speech acts over time and across proficiency. For pedagogical implications, educators and practitioners can incorporate activities that promote the use of multimodal resources, such as verbal and nonverbal, and give learners opportunities to practice different speech acts like complaining, apologizing, asking questions, etc.

Whilst *The Development of L2 Interactional Competence* provides invaluable insights into the development of interactional competence, the research only focuses on the learners of French, it should be noted that further research should be done to explore if the developmental patterns found in this research apply to learners of different languages and who have different cultural backgrounds.

While the book may seem more suitable to researchers, academics, or graduate students whose fields of interests are SLA, IC, CA, or sociolinguistics because of the terminology used in the book, despite the terminology, the easy-to-follow explanation makes it suitable for language teachers without any research backgrounds. Teachers can benefit from the rich conversation data to understand second language learners' development of interactional competence for complaining. They can also get insights into the suitable pedagogy for teaching interactional competence in class.

In conclusion, *The Development of L2 Interactional Competence: A Multimodal Study of Complaining in French Interactions* contributes to the study of second language acquisition and interactional competence. It offers valuable insights into the development of interactional competence in L2 French learners. The use of a multimodal conversation analysis approach provides us with not only the verbal utterances in turn-taking organizations, but the non-verbal information also lets readers have a more thorough view of learners' interactional competence in different stages. It can advance our understanding of L2 learners' management of complaints and offer us a framework and model for studying other aspects of interactional competence in a multimodal context.

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