Transfer from the task-based classroom to the real world:
How do ESL students reflect on their learning by doing daily survival tasks?

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I. INTRODUCTION

One of the main benefits for L2 learners to study in the society where the target language is dominant is that they can have various types of experiences using the language (Shively, 2008). Compared to EFL context, ESL learners can have more opportunities to interact with people outside of school and to practice the target language (e.g. restaurants, department stores, work, school and so forth). Despite the benefits, learners do not always succeed in simple daily tasks such as how to send a money order or how to take a bus because those real world tasks are seldom taught in school.

Working at the front office in an ESL program and helping the students with the daily questions, I have seen many students struggling with their daily survival problems that they could have solved easily in their L1. Living in a different country and adjusting themselves in a new circumstance is sometimes frustrating in addition to learning English. I strongly feel that the students also need to learn the language in order to solve questions in “the real world” because it is expected that learners will be able to live more comfortably in a different country if they know more about how to survive with the language. Plus, by feeling more comfortable, they may be more able to pursue more interaction involving the L2, which might enforce their L2 learning development. Thus, teaching these kinds of how to do in the real world can be very meaningful and useful to ESL learners. This study examines the learners’ second language development by doing the daily tasks in an ESL classroom.

Tasks inside and outside of classroom

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has received increasing recognition in the field of second language studies since the 1980s (e.g., Breen, 1989; Long, 1985; Prabhu, 1987; Nunan, 1989; Skehan, 1996). According to Van den Branden, Bygate, Norris (2009), “The introduction of ‘task-based language teaching’ articulated with modern views on the learning of complex functional abilities and catered for a model of second language education along holistic, meaning-focused, learner-driven lines” (p.5). Unlike the traditional pedagogy in language teaching, TBLT focuses on
learner-centered, goal-oriented (Prabhu, 1987; Bygate, Skehan and Swain, 2001) and focus on meaning (Skehan and Foster, 1996; Bygate, Skehan and Swain, 2001), related to the real world (Long and Crookes, 1992; Skehan, 1996) and also needs-based (Long and Crookes, 1992).

Many empirical studies in TBLT examined learners’ performance inside of the classroom such as studies on tasks with information gap (e.g. Pica, 2005; Pica, Kanegy & Falodun, 1993), repetition of the task (e.g. Bygate, 2001), task planning (e.g. Foster and Skehan, 1996; Ortega, 2005), motivation (e.g. Dörnyei, 2002), assessment (e.g. Norris, Brown, Hudson and Bonk, 2002). One of the evidence that can be useful to the present study is that repeated tasks can help improve learners’ performance in a number of ways. Bygate (1996) found learners could improve their complexity and fluency when they repeated the same tasks in the same condition.

There are also interesting researches that show planning on tasks are helpful for fluency (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Ortega, 1999). Foster and Skehan (1996) examined different task types and different planning conditions affected learners’ attention and language performance. The findings revealed that the fluency was improved when the learners were given an opportunity to plan for the narrative tasks over the decision making tasks and the personal information exchange tasks. Ortega (1999) found that L2 Spanish learners improved their speech rate on a story-telling task after they planned for the narratives. Also, she analyzed further with the interview data how the learners used their strategy in their planning for the tasks in her 1995 and 1999 studies (Ortega, 2005).

Recently, a lot of researchers are interested in investigating language programs and classrooms that reflects learners’ real world needs such as in immigrants studies (Wong, Duff, and Early, 2001 and 2005), English for Occupational Purposes (Flowerdew, 2005), or Study Abroad program (e.g. Cohen and Shivery, 2007; Shivery, 2008). The concept of the real world is important in the present study because the learners are expected to apply what they have learned when they take a step forward to the real world. In other words, learners will be able to see more meaning and benefits in their classroom learning when they can apply it outside of the classroom.

Shively (2008) wrote her dissertation by conducting a qualitative longitudinal research on
Study Abroad in Spain. She examined how American university students learned politeness in a service area. Seven participants were asked to bring the audio recorder to record their performance in service encounter. She found that the participants were able to develop politeness in requests, opening and discourse markers throughout the semester program.

Wong, Duff, and Early (2001) conducted a qualitative study with nine immigrants in Canada. They found that a program that combined ESL and occupational skills training helped newcomers acquire the confidence and motivation to seek out opportunities to speak English, rather than relying on a more isolated social network of individuals who shared their first language. They also conclude that it is important to give instructions to help immigrants solve the real world issues (e.g. finding a job, applying for a job) in the program.

How L2 learners reflect on learning is essential for second language acquisition because “real-world experience may also help students make better use of the time spent in the language classroom” (Springer and Collins, 2008, p. 41). Springer and Collins (2008) conducted a case study with two adult learners in Canada both inside and outside of classroom, examining the identity and language application of the immigrant learners in Canada. The participants engaged in volunteer work as a tutor for the English speaking high school students and helped them with their homework after school. The researchers compared two students in two different contexts and compared selected aspects of oral interaction in an ESL classroom and in the volunteer tutoring. Their study revealed that the participants perceived their oral performance differently as well as their identity as language learners and users inside and outside of the classroom.

However, there are not so many studies on the comparison of the task-based learning between classroom and the real world. For example, although Springer and Collins’s study (2008) has rich data to analyze how the learners see their oral performance between in and outside of the classroom, the nature of the difference in performance is not well documented. Ellis (2003) states “there has been no research comparing the learner production that results from a second performance carried out under ‘private’ conditions publicly” (p. 259). Therefore, this comparison between the first
round classroom task and the target task in the real world can be very beneficial to the research in the field of Second Language Acquisition.

In this study, I conducted a case study to analyze learners’ performance both inside and outside of classroom and their reflection on learning. Springer and Collins (2008) stated that “task in the real world must usually be completed the first time round” (p. 55). It might be true in many cases. However, I hypothesize when learners experience the tasks before and plan ahead, they will find it easy to complete the task in the real world. I address this issue by examining by oral performance of three ESL learners. The goal of this research is to examine how ESL students learn how to do daily tasks by doing. My research questions are:

1. What kinds of situations do the ESL students feel more struggling in their daily life?
2. To what extent do the students learn how to do things in the real world within the classroom context?
3. To what extent are the students able to perform in the real world after they receive instruction?
4. To what extent do the students reflect their performance on their learning?

II. METHOD

After receiving the ESL Program Director’s and the instructor’s permissions of my research, I applied for the exempt research involving human subjects to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). As soon as my proposal was determined to be exempt, I started collecting data in an ESL class. On the third week after the class started, I collected consent forms to agree to participate in my study from 14 students in the class.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were adapted in this study. For the RQ 1, background questionnaire (Appendix A) was collected to understand the learners’ daily survival needs. In order to answer the RQ 2 and the RQ 3, I recorded the participants’ oral performance and collected self-evaluation questionnaires (Appendix B). For the RQ 4, self-evaluation questionnaire
and the follow up interviews were used. Also, criteria (Appendix C) was distributed to the students before the pedagogic tasks.

**Classroom**

This research was conducted in an Intensive English program on the state University campus. The classroom in which I implemented tasks has 14 adults L2 users of English, both male (n=4) and female (n=10). Their first languages are Japanese (n= 7), Korean (n=3), Mandarin (n=1), Thai (n=1), Turkish (n=1) and Arabic (n=1). All the students’ ages are 19-29 years old except one female student who is in her 60s. The class level is the most advanced level in the program and students’ TOEFL ITP score varies from 400 up to 580. The class is taught for 65 minutes everyday from Monday through Thursday.

In this class, students study English language skills and strategies that will help them succeed in a variety of US academic and professional settings. They learn how to communicate clearly in spoken and written English with professors, bosses, and classmates. Activities are aimed to practice these skills in class and then carry out various real-world tasks. For example, students learn how to write clearly and appropriately in English for a variety of academic and professional purposes (e.g. emailing a professor, requesting a letter of recommendation), and speak clearly and appropriately in a variety of academic and professional contexts (e.g. during office hours with a professor, a group discussion with classmates).

The objective of the class is to the students prepare how to pursue their goals in their life such as academic purpose, professional, or social oriented goals using the target language. On the first week, the class instructor collected the students’ assignments stating their five goals that they want to pursue from this class; 1) academic goals, 2) professional goals, 3) social or entertainment oriented goals, 4) volunteer goals and 5) free choice goals. Since the emphasis of this research is on the daily tasks, among those five goals, I research on the students’ performance on tasks relevant to social oriented goals and implement a task which is related to their social goals.
Participants

The participants in this case study are three ESL learners from Japan. I analyzed needs from 14 learners but I focus on analyses with three female students.

Hiroko is in her 60s. She has been in Hawaii for 3 months. She was an English teacher at a cram school for 25 years in Japan and now she wants to apply for a graduate school. She was also Spanish interpreter and instructor before engaging in English education.

Rie is in her late 20s and she was a nurse before she came to Hawai’i. She has been in Hawai’i for 8 months. She is outgoing and talkative. She enjoys talking about various topics with her classmates and her instructors. Her speech style and her personality is relatively direct, she does not hesitate to explain clearly about things which she disagree on.

Mami is 19 years old and an exchange student from a university in Japan. She has been in Hawai’i for four months. As I observed, she is modest and does not speak up very much in the classroom but she is willing to work hard.

Data collection procedures

Based on the questionnaires collected, I analyzed the data to see in what situations the students had difficulty in English outside of class. Based on the questionnaires, I decided the target tasks, which is communicating on the phone and designed two telecommunication pedagogic tasks.

Pedagogic tasks were implemented in the classroom with 11 students since three students were absent on that day. During the pedagogic tasks, the students’ performances with classmates were audio recorded. The next day, each student was pulled out to an individual room to record their performance with the real world interlocutor. After the target tasks, the follow up interviews were conducted for about five minutes with each participant. Self-evaluation sheets were collected both after the pedagogic tasks and the target tasks.

1 pseudonyms
2 pseudonyms
3 pseudonyms
Tasks

Lesson 1: Pedagogic tasks (Making a reservation)

Two target tasks were implemented in the classroom. After learning the useful expressions on the phone (Appendix D), students make a pair with another classmate to practice the first pedagogic task (making a reservation at a restaurant). Each student has a card with all the information. The goal is to fill in the gap in the blank and make / take a reservation. The purpose of the first task is to make them feel comfortable to accomplish the information gap tasks before recording. The students’ performances in the second pedagogic tasks (making a reservation for skydiving) were recorded.

Before the students started each tasks, they were allowed to plan how to say things for three minutes.

Pedagogic Task 1: Restaurant Reservation (Practice)

Work in pairs. Student A turn to Card A. Student B should turn to card B.

A: You work at the Moon Restaurant.

The restaurant can arrange any kind of party such as weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

The restaurant will provide free dessert for birthday parties. Also, the staff will sing and dance for the birthday person.

There is Happy Hour from 4pm to 6pm with only $3 martini. Live Hawaiian music is played from 7pm to 9pm. Seats are available near the ocean (outside) or the inside the restaurant. Today, somebody calls to make a reservation.

When you receive the reservation, you want to confirm the number of party at least a day before the event day. Find out when, how many and what kind of parties they want to plan. You can suggest anything that would be good to the customer.

Fill out the form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer's name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of the reservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What occasion? Any special event?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other information that you need to remember.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B: You are planning to have a birthday party for your friend. She is your best friend and you want to have a special party for her. So you want to surprise her with a birthday dinner. You will invite six friends to join and the birthday girl. However, you are not sure how many people are coming yet. Find out if the restaurant offers special plan for birthday parties and make your reservation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date / time of the reservation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any party package?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By when do I have to confirm the reservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other details?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Pedagogic Task 2: Skydiving Reservation (Recorded)**

A: You work at the Happiness Tour Company at the North Shore. Someone calls you to book a skydiving plan in your tour company. Your task is to make a reservation and select the date and number of people will come. The information of your skydiving tour is below.

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*Price:* $200 (Tourist) $150 (Kamaaina: need the ID).
*Morning Course:* 10am-11:30am
*Afternoon Course:* 1:30pm-3pm.
*A DVD and a set of photos by a professional photographer are included.*
*Pick up service:* All hotels in Waikiki. (8am pick up, 12pm pick up)
*It is very safe. The instructor will dive together.*
*A long sleeve shirt and pants are needed.*

**Your skydiving company schedule of a week 12/20-12/26**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>20 Sun</th>
<th>21 Mon</th>
<th>22 Tue</th>
<th>23 Wed</th>
<th>24 Thu</th>
<th>25 Fri</th>
<th>26 Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>booked</td>
<td>booked</td>
<td>available (3 people)</td>
<td>available (2 people)</td>
<td>booked</td>
<td>closed</td>
<td>booked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>booked</td>
<td>available (8 people)</td>
<td>available (5 people)</td>
<td>available (5 people)</td>
<td>available (2 people)</td>
<td>closed</td>
<td>booked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please fill out the booking form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer's name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of customers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning class or Afternoon class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick up time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 2: Target tasks: Calling to the real world

The participants were given three choices of which they could call: 1) To make a reservation in a restaurant, 2) To book a tour or some other things, and 3) To get information from places (e.g., library hours, store information). All the three participants chose to call in order to get some information. The objectives and the places they made a phone call to were following (table 1).

Table 1: Choices of places to call and the goals of the target tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Goals to be accomplished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiroko</td>
<td>a travel agency</td>
<td>a) To get information about flight availability to Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) To compare the prices of two airlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rie</td>
<td>a pizza store</td>
<td>a) To get the information of the price of a pizza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) To get the information of the sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) To get the information of delivery time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mami</td>
<td>a bakery</td>
<td>a) To know whether they sell a birthday cake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) To know the business hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis
Background questionnaire was analyzed based on the comments and situations the students wrote.

The oral performance in both pedagogic tasks and target tasks were audio recorded and transcribed for the participants and the interlocutor.

III. RESULTS

RQ 1: What kinds of situations do the ESL students feel more struggling in their daily life?

Table 2: Needs Analysis for learners’ difficulty in the real world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation in which the participants feel difficulty</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Bank</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Hamburger shop, Restaurant system</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Shopping (clothes, cosmetics)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Hospital</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e On the phone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f Signing the contract such as housing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g Tae Kon Do</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some of the respondents answered more than two situations.

Based on the questionnaire, the average of hours that student spend using English outside of class is 16 hours per week. Table 1 shows in which situation the students have difficulty with English outside of classroom. The results were sorted based on the similar contexts. Over all, there are seven different situations where they have felt frustrated in the target language outside of class.

a) Bank:

Four students answered that they have had difficulty in the bank such as opening an account. One student answered her frustration as following:

“I want to make a bank account, but the lady speaks fast and use words that I have never heard.”

The setting such as the bank, where the learners use the terminology which are not used or learned much such as deposit, withdraw, wire the money, and so on. Also, the system itself might be different from ones in their home country such as personal checks are not common in Japan.
b) Hamburger shop and Restaurant

Three students answered that they had difficulty in a hamburger shops and a restaurant. Due to the cultural difference such as tipping or paying at table in a restaurant, it makes the learners nervous although they want to try the food there. One student wrote,

“Subway I have to tell what size, some vegetables so never eaten before.”

Another student wrote the different system in restaurant.

“It is hard to understand system in humburger (hamburger) shops or restaurants.”

“I wanna make a reservation in restaurant but I don’t know how in here”

That kind of anxiety might cause limitation of students’ willingness to try things in the target language.

c) Shopping

Shopping is another common place that students use English in daily life. Although this student has no problem buying the products in her home country but she expresses the problem that she had in the past.

“I need to buy make-up but I have no idea at all about items in information and specific vocabulary on making-up field. So it (is) difficult to explain what I need to buy and detail about it.”

Another student wrote the reason why she had difficulty at a shop is because she does not have any knowledge in the electronic products, saying

“I always have difficulty to ask things which are not familiar with my knowledge. For example, when I have to buy electronic stuff at Store A, I don’t know how to ask due to a lack of knowledge and technical vocabulary.”

d) Hospital

Being sick is another big and severe event that L2 learners might come across since they find it more difficult expressing in terms of medical terms. A student wrote,

“When I need to go to a hospital, there are many difficult vocabularies to explain my system.”

e) On the phone
The questionnaire reveals that L2 speakers feel more nervous to communicate on the phone compared to face-to-face communication. Two of the students answered that they feel uncomfortable in telecommunication.

“I want to apply a tour by phone. Phone communication made me more confused because I can’t see the person’s attitude or gesture (gesture).”

“It is so hard when I use English on the phone.”

f) Taekondo

Sometimes the difficulty occurs in an area in which learners feel familiar with. This student is teaching Taekwondo in English, which he found difficult because he was not able to use the language fully to explain with the knowledge that he has.

“When I teaching the tae-kgon-Do, sometimes I don’t know how to pronunciation about some words.”

The reason why the students find the situation difficult is considered because of unfamiliarity in the context (e.g. I do not know much about the thing in that field) and their L2 proficiency (e.g. my language proficiency is not good enough to communicate fully). In the former case, learners need to learn more about the content and in the latter case, learners need to know how to say things to survival daily life.

In addition to those situations, one student wrote that “I’ve learned some text-book English so I tend to use the English quite a lot. When I face native English speaker, I sometimes confused because their English is very authentic and different from mine.”

This comments shows that they need authentic materials which TBLT is suitable for.

RQ 2. To what extent do the students learn how to do things in the real world?

The goal of the pedagogic tasks was to make a reservation for skydiving. The caller and the receptionists were required to fill in the blank (e.g., date, time, the price) of the worksheet. All of the participants were able to make a reservation and exchange the information.
Often times, negotiation of meaning was observed during the conversation toward the goal. For example, Mami, who was a caller made sure whether the information was correct by repeating what the interlocutor said:

1 Student A: Do you want to do (3.0) in the morning? or afternoon.
2 M: In the morning (1.0) please.
3 A: In the morning. Ten to Eleven thirty, it’s okay?
4 M: Ten to eleven thirty?
5 A: Yeah.
6 A: All you need to bring is a long sleeved shirt (1.0) and pants
7 M: Okay, so, we have to bring only a long sleeved shirt (1.0) and uh. sorry I forgot.
8 A: And long pants.
9 M: Long pants (2.0) Long sleeved shirts and long pants

Mami asked her partner to repeat because she forgot what the partner said (line 7). Not only asking for repetition, repeating what she heard (line 4 and line 9) is another way to show her comprehension and confirmation. Also, both Mami and her partner ended call appropriately saying thank you after they received all the information which they needed.

Hiroko and Rie, who were partners in this pedagogic task. Their conversation was smooth until they found a hard time understanding each other. Rie was a receptionist and Hiroko was a caller.

10 R: There is some optionals.
11 DVDs and professional photographs are included.
12 They have (1.0) ah it’s very safe (2.0) instructors, well, dive together.
13 So you don’t have to worry about (1.0) you know.
14 H: Okay, so how much do you charge? How much do you charge?
15 R: Oh.. two hundred dollars each.
16 H: Oh it’s okay. We don’t have to. We don’t want it.
17 So, it’s okay. Because it is separate right?
18 R: (5.0) Mmm. Yeah? You are not gonna come on twenty third?
19 You are not gonna make a reservation?
20 H: (4.0) mmm? (3.0) What did you say? This is ah
21 R: Because you said “it’s okay. 200 dollars”
22 H: We don’t want that
23 R: So if you are not gonna come on twenty third…
24 H: Okay, I mean I thought you said that the DVDs and the picture are 200 dollars.
25 R: Oh, no-nonono! included!
26 H: Oh, it is included. Oh, then that’s okay.

Rie’s speech is very clear, loud and slow while Hiroko’s speech is soft and fast without much pause in a sentence. Their speech style shows how they communicate differently during the pedagogic tasks. For example, Rie found herself too casual. She mentioned in the self-evaluation, “I found out
that I didn’t say politely when I get nervous. So I will try to be polite next time even if I get nervous.” Then, she also mentioned that “I would like to speak not casual next time.” On the other hand, Hiroko was more focusing on getting information which she felt necessary. Line 12 and 13 tells us that she was no longer listening to Rie when there was some other information that she did not need (line 12-13).

Hiroko misunderstood that the DVD and photos cost another 200 dollars, which she thought that she did not want it. The miscommunication (line 16- line23) is likely to happen in our daily communication often. Here, their misunderstanding might be due to the word “optional” that Rie used although she mentioned those are “included” (line 11). Then, Hiroko misinterpreted that it was a separated from the original price. As observed, Hiroko was always talking fast until Rie was confused stating, “You are not gonna come on twenty third?” (line 18 and 19). After a long pause (line 18 and 20) they were able to realize they needed to fix the misunderstanding to the right track by negotiating meaning (line 24 and 25).

Over all, the pedagogic tasks of skydiving reservation seemed easy for the participants. Mami said, “It was easy when I speak about my own things.” Hiroko mentioned that “These topics are so familiar that I haven’t have so much trouble. They were daily-base topic so I’m familiar with them.” All of the participants rated that the task was interesting, useful and the level was appropriate. All of them answered that they learned useful expressions in today’s task.

**RQ 3. To what extent are the students able to perform in the real world after they receive instruction?**

A day after the participants performed pedagogic tasks, they were requested to bring the information where they planned to call. The participants were given the criteria (Appendix C) before the performance. The criteria were revised based on the one which instructor was often using for presentation criteria in his class. I scored the participants’ performance based on the criteria and give them feedback orally and with written format after the target tasks. Although I am not going to write
deeper about the assessment in this paper, it is informative and helpful for the participants to understand what criteria they have to accomplish.

Unlike the pedagogic tasks in which both the caller and the receptionist understood the goal of the phone call, the participants had to clarify what they wanted in the target tasks in the real world. One of the important things on this target telecommunication was to state the purpose of a phone call with sufficient information. All of the three participants chose to get some information from the places such as the bakery, the travel agency and the pizza store. Mami, who chose to call to a bakery started her conversation as following:

27 Bakery: Hello this is XXX bakery, Daniel\textsuperscript{4} can I help you?
28 M: Uh, hello, I’d like to ask you, do you sell birthday cake?
29 B: Uh… excuse me?
30 M: (2.0) Do you sell birthday cake?
31 B: Yeah.
32 M: Oh, okay, I, if I wanna get one, do I need to make a reservation?
33 B: (1.0) Yeah, you call at least maybe in advance our turn around is one day. Hello?
34 M: Uh, sorry, pardon?
35 B: Yeah, can, yep. Uh, just need one day notice.
36 M: (3.0) Okay and I, I have one more question when is the business time?
37 B: Uh (1.0), four o’clock in the morning but it won’t be ready until eight o’clock.
38 M: Four o’clock am to eight o’clock pm?
39 B: Uh, no no no
40 M: Hmm?
41 B: Four am to, uh, ten pm
42 M: Ten pm?
43 B: Yeah, that’s when we close.
44 M: Okay, thank you.
45 M: Okay.

Though Mami stated the purpose of her phone call (line 28), she was not able to make the interlocutor understand for the first time. After the interlocutor answered her questions, he continued that “you call at least maybe in advance our turn around is one day” (line 32). His fast speech made her confused and she asked for repetition (line 34). The interlocutor was able to make it simpler by rephrasing “just need one day notice” (line 35) instead of “turn around is one day” (line 33). This interaction is an example of clarifying things by negotiating of meaning. Not only repeating the same words, speakers often rephrase it simpler or talk more slowly when it comes to the repetition.

\textsuperscript{4} pseudonyms
Another negotiating of meaning occurred when Mami misunderstood what time the bakery was open. The interlocutor meant that the cake would not be ready till 8am but Mami misinterpreted that it was the business hour, saying “Four o’clock am to eight o’clock pm?” (line 39). As seen in her pedagogic task performance, she is good at confirming what she heard by repeating. This strategy prevents from misunderstanding about the time and she was able to clarify business hour (line 39-44).

Hiroko called to a travel agency to get information about air tickets to Japan. Her goals of the target task were to check the seat availability and to compare the price for two air lines.

48 Travel agent: XXXX Travel how may I help you?
49 Hiroko: Ah, yes, uh I have a plan to go back to Japan on the twentieth of December.
50 T: I would like to know if, uh air ticket is available on that day.
51 H: Japan Airline?
52 T: Uh, no, Japan Airline or All Nippon Airways. ANA. ANA or JAL.
53 H: Yeah.
54 T: Wh, which destination in Japan?
55 H: To Narita
56 T: Narita okay?
57 H: Yep.
58 T: December twentieth?
59 H: Yes, one person.

When making a phone call, callers usually state the purpose prior to the conversation. How much a speaker discloses herself is depending on the situations or the interlocutor. Yet, the disclosing statement is essential to give some ideas to the interlocutor about what kind of help she needs. Hiroko clearly stated the purpose of the phone call (line 49). However, she did not state that she was looking for a one-way ticket till line 75. That caused a miscommunication below.

61 T: When do you return?
62 H: Yes.
63 T: (4.0) When’s your return date?
64 H: Ohhhh, um I am not sure. (4.0) Just um
65 T: You don’t know when you are coming back.
66 H: I’m not sure because, uh, I have uh, something to talk about in Japan
67 so I do not, how long does it take. So at the present, I am not sure.

When there was miscommunication about the return date, Hiroko became confused by the unexpected question (line 63). As observing her speech style, she is fluid and focuses on what she
needs to get. After hearing the interlocutor say “You don’t know when you are coming back” (line 65), her confidence levels dropped because she did not expect that question. Then, she started explaining about her situation (line 66), which was not successful to make the interlocutor comprehend. Then, the interlocutor started asking about her nationality and found out that it was a one-way ticket.

68 T:  Well, uh, which passport holder are you?
69 H:  Un.
70 T:  (3.0) Which passport holder, which nationality?
72 T:  You are Japanese passport?
73 H:  Yes, I have a Japanese passport.
74 T:  Okay, so you just buy a one-way?
75 H:  Yes, just one way, to buy, uh, one way.

This is a unique negotiation of meaning by asking nationality. Hiroko later wrote on the self-evaluation questionnaire, “I couldn’t understand the relation between the nationality and one-way ticket.” The interlocutor might have wanted to get the information so that she could assume that Hiroko is legally allowed to stay in Japan as long as she wants without the return ticket. However, the reason why nationality matter was not clear to Hiroko. It could have saved some time if Hiroko disclosed her situation more (e.g., “I am looking for a one-way ticket to Narita but I’m just calling to compare the price of the two airlines, ANA or JAL) or the interlocutor asked about one-way or round trip in the beginning of the conversation. They continued the conversation as below:

76 T:  Okay. (15.0) Okay, Japan Airline want seven hundred thirty one, including tax.
77 H:  Seven hundred thirty one dollars?
78 T:  Yes.
79 H:  That is including tax.
80 T:  Yes.
81 H:  Okay.
82 T:  You just have to choose your departure...
83 H:  Okay.
84 T:  When it is available.
85 H:  Yes. Is it available?
86 T:  Yes.
87 H:  Is it ANA, All Nippon Airways.
88 T:  This is a Japan Airlines.
89 H:  Yes that is the Japan Airlines I talked about,
90 but I would like to know the other price of ANA.
91 T:  ANA? ANA is seven hundred seventy six.
As observing her comprehension in the target task, she sometimes did not answer appropriately what the interlocutor asked (line 54, 62, 69). Each time, the interlocutor rephrased it clearer and simpler. Though the negotiating of meaning, Hiroko achieved to get information about the price of two airlines and whether seats were available. She also politely thanked the interlocutor and ended the call (line 98).

Rie chose to call to a pizza store to get information about the price, pizza sauce and delivery.

5 pseudonyms

Before calling, Rie was nervous because she had never called to a pizza place to ask questions without ordering. She started the phone calls asking a question, “I would like to know-- how much, um, size of pizza?” (line 102). Her question was not clear to the interlocutor (line 103) and she tried
to clarify again. Still, her description of pizza was too broad such as “medium size of pizza” (line 104) or “just simple one” (line 106) that the interlocutor could not comprehend clearly. To Rie, it was a simple question to ask about pizza price, while to the interlocutor, it was too broad to answer the question specifically. As observed, Rie was getting more and more nervous when the conversation was not smooth.

Sometimes, people give up asking the same questions over and over when there is miscommunication between the two. After negotiating meaning for a while (line 102-109), Rie suddenly changed the question and started asking about the sauce. She recalled, “I found out myself that every time I rush, I lose my purpose and can’t speak English.” The fact that she was not making sense to the interlocutor made her hurry in her speech and skipped a question without solving it.

One of the reasons why Rie failed to achieve to get all the information was because her focus on her delivery of speech was only to accomplish her goals (information of price, sauce and delivery). In another words, she did not disclose any other reason why she needed the information instead of just asking the random questions such as “Can you make the sauce lighter and not too salty?” She could have said that “I am just getting information about a pizza price for 10 people.” or “I cannot take too much salt but could you make it not too salty?” Although the interlocutors were used to various kinds of questions, the callers always had to pay attention to organization and delivery of speech in order to make it clear.

**RQ 4. To what extent do the students reflect their performance on their learning?**

Willis (1996) recommends asking students to report on how they did the task and on what they discovered. I asked each participant how they felt after their target tasks and also collected the self-evaluation questionnaire. The table 3.1 shows the participants’ self evaluation after the skydiving tasks.
Table 3.1: Self-evaluation questionnaire (Pedagogic task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) About the task</th>
<th>Mami</th>
<th>Hiroko</th>
<th>Rie</th>
<th>mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) The task was interesting.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The task was useful in my daily life.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The level of the task was appropriate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) It helped me improve English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) About my performance on the task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) About my performance on the task</th>
<th>Mami</th>
<th>Hiroko</th>
<th>Rie</th>
<th>mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) I had this (task) situation outside of class before.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) I enjoyed communicating with my partner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) When I didn’t understand, I asked my partner about the meaning.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I learned useful expressions in today’s task</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree, 4=strongly agree

Table 3.2: Self-evaluation questionnaire (Target task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) About the task</th>
<th>Mami</th>
<th>Hiroko</th>
<th>Rie</th>
<th>mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) The task was interesting.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The task was useful in my daily life.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The level of the task was appropriate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) It helped me improve English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) About my performance on the task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) About my performance on the task</th>
<th>Mami</th>
<th>Hiroko</th>
<th>Rie</th>
<th>mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) I had this (task) situation outside of class before.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) I enjoyed communicating with my partner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) When I didn’t understand, I asked my partner about the meaning.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I learned useful expressions in today’s task</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree, 4=strongly agree

Mami felt difficulty speaking fluently and also she felt that she did not understand the interlocutor very much. She stated that she would prepare more in advance before calling next time.

In terms of accomplishing her goals, Mami was happy to achieve her goal to get information.

Hiroko felt that she needed to improve her listening skills since she sometimes did not catch what the interlocutor said. She also found the target task was a little more complicated than the pedagogic tasks because she did not understand some parts in the conversation. Especially, she was
confused when it came to nationality and one-way ticket. She also explained that since she did not write down about the questions before the task, she felt she would need to prepare more next time.

Rie was worried if the interlocutor was nice enough to answer her questions even if she did not plan to order a pizza. She later explained about her task, “The purpose was not order for pizza, so it was kind of hard just get information.” She also mentioned about her interaction with native speakers of English: “If I have confidence to talk with English native speaker, I can overcome my problems.” the students in the ESL program do not have much interaction with native English speakers in daily basis, some learners feel nervous communicating with the native speakers.

Rie did not achieve all the goals which she initially planned. She regrets that she did not achieve one of her goals: to get the information about the pizza price. She later recalled as following:

“I should asked him the average of price. He seemed to be busy and I rushed. I will pay attention that try to not rush and try to be polite. I will not give up until I get information or result which I want. Even though he/she feels lazy to tell me again (because of my poor listening), I will ask him/her to say again.”

Interacting with the real world interlocutor is different from interaction in the classroom. This experience makes Rie reflect on her oral communication. Her goal for the next step is to try to make herself understood things even if things are not working smoothly in conversation.

**IV. DISCUSSION**

The background questionnaire reveals that the ELS learners have encountered various types of situations in which they felt difficulty in the real world. It shows that they had a hard time when they engaged in daily survival tasks such as making a reservation, shopping, eating out and so forth. Learners feel frustrated and nervous when they do not feel confident using the language and unfamiliar with the system in a different culture.

It also reveals that learners set a limit to do what they really want to do if they have anxiety. For example, some learners answered that they did not shop cosmetic products because of lacking in
the L2 vocabulary. Their anxiety level increases when it comes to telecommunication compared to face to face communication. Mami told me about her experience of calling to a tour company. Prior to talking to a receptionist, she had to listen to the voice machine and press to reach a representative. She needed to redial more than five times to understand what the machine was saying. When she reached the representative, she was very upset because the representative asked her, “Tour is in English, are you okay?” Another story which Rie told me was that “I always feel frustration when I talk on the phone. Even though he/she is my friend, I do. Because of my poor listening, I do not understand what he/she says. We have miss communication sometimes.”

For the RQ 2, as table 3.1 and 3.2 show, all of the participants strongly agreed that they learned useful expressions in the pedagogic task. They also enjoyed the pedagogic tasks and they were able to ask their partners about the meaning if they did not understand. They were able to comprehend through a lot of negotiation of meaning. Overall, the participants were communicating well in order to achieve their tasks and fill out the information gaps.

For the RQ3, by comparing the participants’ performance between in the pedagogic task and in the target task, it does not explicitly reveal their improvement after they receive instruction. Rather, I found the participants feel more nervous speaking with the real world interlocutor. One of their challenges was how to make the interlocutor understand their purpose of phone call with enough degree of disclosing. Compared to the skydiving tasks in which all the participants already knew what the goals were, the real world tasks were more complicated because the participants needed to start from giving a reasonable statement of the caller’s needs. This is why the participants faced quite a few miscommunications in the target tasks.

Recording the participants’ performance let them identify what they usually feel difficult and aware about their communication style. For instance, Mami comprehend what the interlocutor said by repeating. Her communication style was observed both in the pedagogic tasks and the target tasks. Hiroko recognized that her weak point as listening comprehension. Rie reconfirmed that her
speech became more rough and faster when she did not understand. Those kinds of awareness can affect their next performance in the similar situations.

**Limitation**

There are several limitations in this study. First, detailed rubric is to be created for comparison of the oral performance. Secondly, I did not have a chance to do a follow up lesson after the target tasks. If the participants repeat the task in the follow up lesson, they would have known what kind of things they should be careful about or how they could say things to avoid miscommunication.

**V. CONCLUSION**

I received a question from Mami a week after I recorded her task performance. She e-mailed me asking if I could provide her the transcription of her performance since she really wanted to know exactly what the bakery was saying on the phone. Her willingness to explore her task performance impressed me and made me realize that this kind of research can be a great help for learners to reflect on learning.

As a language teacher, recording of the performance will be also a great opportunity to reflect on their task implementation and task design. Although it seems almost impossible for a teacher to record and transcribe each student’s oral task in every lesson, it helps teacher improve their teaching. Also, these kinds of opportunities enable teachers to think about their roles. Teacher’s feedback plays a great role to make a learner aware something they did not notice and reflect on their learning as well.

L2 learners face a lot of difficulties which are not usually taught in schools. The daily survival tasks seem easy to achieve and usually considered as something that learners figure out by themselves. However, surviving through the hardship with another language in a different culture is not an easy thing to do. TBLT has a lot of potential to learn how to do things in the real world and also to reflect on their learning into the real world. In order to make the task based classroom more
effective, a needs analysis is essential to prior to designing target tasks. In this study, the focus was on the telecommunication but there are a lot more variety of situations other than that.

Not only having students do a one-shot task, by doing the task in the real world and by self-evaluating on the experience, the learners are able to reflect on learning about their performance. In the future study, the follow up instruction after the target tasks will be needed in order to make it more effective. I also hope that TBLT implementation will greatly help learners live with the target language more comfortably and encourage them to communicate with the language more often outside of classroom.
References:


Appendix A
Background Questionnaire

(1) Age: __________ (option)
(2) Gender: □ Female □ Male
(3) First (native) language (__________) (option)
(4) How long have you been in Hawaii? _________________
(5) Have you ever previously studied or lived in an English-speaking country before Hawai’i?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>How long</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. Canada)</td>
<td>(e.g. 2 weeks, 3 months)</td>
<td>(e.g. homestay, vacation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) On average, how many hours **per week** do you speak English **outside of class**?
(________________________) hours. per week

(7) In what contexts did you speak English **outside of class**? Please list as many contexts as you can think of (e.g., supermarket, bar, coffee shop, parties, etc.).

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

(8) What kinds of difficulties do you have in using English outside of class? (e.g. I want to order café latte with soy milk at the starbucks, but I don’t know how to ask to change to soy milk).

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

(9) If you have any questions or troubles about your daily life (e.g. how to write a check, how to make a reservation, how to order pizza), who do you usually ask? **multiple answers**.
□ (ESL Program) students □ (ESL Program) teachers or staff
OGAWA - Transfer from task-based classroom to the real world

- Host family
- American friends
- I don’t ask anyone. I use the internet or a book to solve problems
- Others ( )
Appendix B
Self-Evaluation Questionnaire
(name:                     )

Question: Please circle the most adequate answer.
1= strongly disagree,   2= disagree,   3= agree,   4= strongly agree

(1) About the task
a) The task was interesting........................................1 2 3 4
b) The task was useful in my daily life. .................................1 2 3 4
c) The level of the task was appropriate.................................1 2 3 4
d) It helped me improve English ............................................1 2 3 4

d) If yes, how did it help you?

If not, why did you think it didn’t help?

(2) About my performance on the task
a) I had this (task) situation outside of class before. ...................1 2 3 4
b) I enjoyed communicating with my partner ............................1 2 3 4
c) When I didn't understand, I asked my partner about the meaning. 1 2 3 4
d) I learned useful expressions in today’s task ..........................1 2 3 4
e) What was difficult when you were speaking? Please write down below.

f) What was easy when you were speaking?

g) If you have another chance to perform the same task, what will you change or how will you change?
Appendix C
Criteria of task performance

Name: ________________________________

Topic: ________________________________

Goal: ________________________________

**SCORING: 1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Somewhat agree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>SCORE:</th>
<th>/ 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- prepared for making a phone call</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>SCORE:</th>
<th>/ 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- comprehend what the interlocutor is saying</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the interlocutor understand what you say</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral skills</th>
<th>SCORE:</th>
<th>/ 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- voice maintained appropriate volume</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- clear delivery of speech (clarity)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- fluent delivery of speech (fluency)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>SCORE:</th>
<th>/ 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- clear introduction of your self</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- state the purpose why you call</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- confirm the content of your phone call</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- end call appropriately</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Achievement of tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE:</th>
<th>/ 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The goal is accomplished</td>
<td>10 20 30 40 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Rating (total points):** 100
Positive or interesting aspects of the task performance

Suggestions for improvement:

Comments & Questions:
Appendix C
Pre-task practice

#1 PRACTICE: Making a Phone call

**Caller**

- Introduce yourself
- Ask to speak to Mr. Bird
- Ask when you can contact him
- You want Mr. Bird to call you.
- Repeat your name.
- Give your number
- End call

**Receptionist**

- “Good morning, (happy language school), how can I help you?”
- Mr. Bird is not in
- Explain that he is out of town - offer to take a message
- Confirm the information
- End call
Useful expression

**caller**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Receptionist Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am ........... from X company.</td>
<td>Hello, this is ........... company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am calling on behalf of Mr. X........</td>
<td>May I ask who’s speaking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could I speak to ........... please?</td>
<td>Hold on a second, please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to speak to ........... please.</td>
<td>I’m afraid he's in a meeting at the moment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sorry. I think you've dialed the wrong number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I leave a message?</td>
<td>Would you like to leave a message?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you give him/her a message?</td>
<td>Would you like him/her to call you back?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you ask him/her to call me back?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you tell him/her that I called?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The line is very bad. Could you speak up please?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you repeat that please?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m afraid I can’t hear you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorry. I didn’t catch that. Could you say that again please?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**let’s practice!**

Practice with your partner. Decide which one makes a phone call and which one receives the phone.

The caller will ask one questions on the phone.

The receptionist will try to answer the questions.