Lesson Study in Higher Education: Mediating Language Teacher Conceptual
Development Through Shared Inquiry

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Dedication

Para mi querida abuela Daisy,
con mucho cariño.

"Poco a poco se va lejos."

For my dear grandmother Daisy,
With much love.

"Little by little, you go far."

Abstract

Targeted research is needed to better understand the key elements and practices that can promote the learning of tertiary-level language teachers participating in inquiry-based groups, particularly teachers of the less commonly taught languages. This study examines one such inquiry group, composed of three instructors of Arabic and Japanese.

Conceptually, this study is grounded in sociocultural theory broadly, and cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) more specifically. Methodologically, it takes an interventionist approach and uses a methodology inspired by CHAT: Developmental Work Research (Engeström, 2009). Participants first used video recordings and classroom observations to focus their attention on student learning; subsequently, transcripts of group conversations about classroom observations served to stimulate awareness of moments of teacher learning.

This study focuses on the interaction and learning of two Japanese language instructors as they participated in this inquiry group, in the context of support from the leadership of the Japanese language program. In particular, it explores how elements of a multilingual language instructor inquiry group serve to mediate language teacher conceptual development within the broader sociocultural context. Data were gathered as the researcher facilitated a small teacher inquiry group comprised of three college instructors of Arabic and Japanese. Drawing from both the exploratory practice model (Allwright, 2009) and the *jugyou kenkyuu* "lesson study" framework (Yoshida, 1999;

Lewis, 2004), an inquiry cycle was designed to engage the participants in collaborative investigation of collective problems of practice.

A combination of activity theoretical and micro-interactional analysis reveals multiple and interacting mediating means which afforded language teacher learning in this study. The findings include the following. Observing each other's teaching serves to introduce a new – and disruptive – mediating means into the instructors' existing, socio-culturally-historically created system. In response to this disruption, the content of the inquiry group's conversations shows that they wrestle with contradictory ideas and evidence, and consider different perspectives to address core questions. Analysis of the conversational *structure* of the meetings shows that the instructors carefully negotiate face-threatening and face-saving comments in ways that allow them to discuss these contradictions in productive ways. Finally, and importantly, increasing flexibility and openness in the Japanese Program has allowed a recursive relationship to develop where instructor agency, regarding issues of pedagogy, curriculum, and professional learning, mediates further opportunities for instructor agency, self-growth, and program development.

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List of Acronyms

ACTFL   American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

AP   Advanced Placement

ASOP   Activity System Observation Protocol

CBI   Content-based instruction

CoE*   College of Education

CHAT   Cultural Historical Activity Theory

CAS*   College of Arts and Sciences

CLT   Communicative Language Teaching

DAL*   Department of Asian Languages

DWR   Developmental Work Research

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ELT   English Language Teaching

ESL   English as a Second Language

FL   Foreign Language

IPA   Integrated Performance Assessment

L2   Second language

LC*   CAS Language Center

LCTL   Less Commonly Taught Languages

LFP Project*   Language Flagship Proficiency Project; Language Flagship grant received by the Language Center to support proficiency-oriented teaching and learning of foreign languages across CAS

LPD*   Language Program Director

LRC   Language Resource Center (federally funded by Title VI funds)

MLA   Modern Language Association

NS   Native speaker

NNS   Non-native speaker

OPI   Oral proficiency interview

PCK   Pedagogical Content Knowledge

PD   Professional Development

SCT	Sociocultural Theory
TA	Teaching assistant
UiM*	University in the Midwest

* Pseudonyms

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction: Getting here from there

Eleven years ago, in the summer of 2005, I was just beginning my second year of work on my Masters in Education at the University of Oregon, with the goal of becoming a social studies teacher. In addition to the regular slate of teacher preparation courses I had registered for, I discovered that a professor I particularly enjoyed would be leading a credit-bearing research group on something called "lesson study." Intrigued, I signed up. Throughout the summer a group of us, middle/secondary in-service and pre-service teachers from across content areas, met in-person and online to learn about and then implement our own lesson study. By the end of the summer, the social studies members had created a nine-week course of study loosely organized around the topic of globalization. Recently, I rediscovered the reflection I had written about this experience; it seems that what I had most appreciated were the conversations we engaged in as a group.

Three years later, in 2008, I had just started my second year of teaching sheltered social studies courses at a high school in Portland, Oregon. During my first year, I had tried to make sense of developing rigorous – and language rich – social studies courses for English learners across proficiency levels. Even with amazing mentoring, that first year had been, quite honestly, rough. With a new year ahead, I knew that I wasn't going to make it if I kept trying to go at it alone. Looking back, I don't really remember exactly

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how it started, but that year three of us – all new teachers – began co-writing the curriculum of the global studies course we taught. We met almost every weekend over coffee. We brainstormed. We created. We revised. We debriefed. We argued. My colleagues' teacher training had been noticeably different from mine, and their perspectives on both content and pedagogy disrupted – and then reconstructed – my teaching practice. Today, these two women are among my dearest friends; the "team" that we created is *the* reason I made it as a teacher.

Both of these experiences inform who I am today as a teacher educator, and they also inform much of the focus and design of this study.

In the Fall of 2014, my fourth year of doctoral work had just started. That fall, I was lucky enough to join a team of post-secondary language educators whose goal it was to raise students' language proficiency levels by supporting the curricular redesign efforts of language instructors across "the college." I was captivated with the work. As I worked over the next two academic years to support professional development opportunities for post-secondary language teachers, a vexing problem of practice rose to the surface for me: how could instructors of the less-commonly taught languages (the LCTLs) benefit from some of the collaborative possibilities afforded to their colleagues in departments focused on the most-commonly taught languages (e.g. Spanish, French and German)? What might happen, I wondered, if people partnered *across* languages, rather than simply *within* them?

As part of this effort, I was introduced (for the first time, as I had previously focused on K-12 language issues) to the influential commissioned 2007 report of the Modern Language Association (MLA): "Foreign languages and higher education: New

structures for a changed world" (hereafter, the 2007 MLA Report). Nearly a decade has now passed since the release of this report. In the words of the authors - the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages - they "[were] charged with examining the current language crisis that has occurred as a result of 9/11 and with considering the effects of this crisis on the teaching of foreign languages in colleges and universities" (page 234), 2007). In their report, the committee called for foreign language education in higher education to focus on the development of "translingual and transcultural competence," shifting focus from the learning objective of native-like proficiency, and moving towards the objective of ability to understand and negotiate a space between two languages and cultures (MLA ad hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, 2007).

To enable learners in language departments across the nation to attain this goal of translingual and transcultural competence, the 2007 MLA Report called for "overarching changes in curricular content and departmental governance practices" in language programs at the tertiary level (Allen, 2014, p. 177), identifying as a major obstacle a de facto "two tier structure" that existed in virtually all postsecondary foreign language departments across the nation. The upper tier of this structure in almost all foreign language departments was composed of tenure-line faculty who specialized in literature, history, and cultural studies, and the lower tier was composed of non-tenure-line annually-renewable instructors and lecturers who taught language courses. Autonomy was awarded, in most institutions, to only the upper tier, to legitimize not only the work of tenure-track faculty, but also the primacy of literature, history and cultural studies over language study. Decisions of consequence for the lower-tier language curriculum were most frequently made by the upper tier tenured faculty, in spite of the fact that these same

faculty typically had less knowledge of language pedagogy and/or applied linguistics than the instructors actually charged with implementing the language curriculum. While not all foreign language departments in higher education fell into this extreme, the MLA Report argued that most of them did.

Today, the MLA Report is best known for exposing and critiquing the dominance of this national two-tier structure. This was neither a new observation or a new call (Allen, 2014; Byrnes, 2008), but did act to bring the issue up for national debate, fueling efforts in many foreign language departments to improve their curricula and student outcomes. The MLA Report's entry in Google Scholar had been cited by 162 other papers as of December 2016; this is likely a low estimate of the document's impact, as it has been the subject of an untold number of internal documents, conference presentations, and, certainly, conversations since it was first published.

It is in this national context that the present study takes place. The study sits at the intersection of my own formative experiences as a teacher engaged in collaborative learning, and as a language teacher educator testing a model of *substantive* professional development for foreign language teachers in U.S. higher education.

1.2 Language teacher learning

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the conceptual development of a group of three language teachers from two language programs engaged in collaborative inquiry at an institution of higher education in the United States. I ask how different conceptions of professional development, embedded within supportive departmental structures, might serve as possible models for the nation to change that structure. More specifically, the present study imagines what foreign language (FL) instructor

professional development might look like if built around the understanding that teacher learning is situated, social, contingent, complex, and distributed. Put differently, what this means is that I view teacher learning as socio-culturally mediated, and thus hold that the transmission model cannot account for how individuals actually become *and continue becoming* teachers. Inquiring into professional development design from a sociocultural perspective, then, the present study focuses on how this small group of language instructors experience an alternative form of professional development – one based around and guided by their own inquiry into the problems of practice of their own classrooms.

A growing body of research on language teacher learning suggests that an important mechanism to promote teacher learning is instructor-directed inquiry, that is, professional development activities that support language teachers' own action research and structure opportunities for reflection on their own teaching practices (Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Allen, 2014). One such type of activity is an instructor inquiry group. An instructor inquiry group brings instructors together on a regular basis to engage in inquiry around questions and issues that the instructors themselves raise.

This study is certainly not the first to suggest the use of something like this (i.e. Allen, 2014) in teacher education in the U.S.; however, its use in foreign language programs at the tertiary level is virtually non-existent (Tasker, 2014 is a welcome exception). In a 2011 review of language teacher cognition research, Borg concluded that "the study of language teacher cognition involving teachers of foreign languages other than English does take place but does not currently have a high international profile" (p. 26). Targeted research is needed to better understand the key elements and practices that

can promote the learning of tertiary-level language teachers participating in inquiry-based groups, particularly teachers of the less commonly taught languages, as I will explain below.

1.3 Rationale for Study Design

The current study aims to address this gap and is guided by the following research question:

> *How do elements of a multilingual language instructor inquiry group serve to mediate language teacher conceptual development within the broader sociocultural context?*

To address this question, I designed a qualitative, interventionist study of an inquiry group composed of three undergraduate world language instructors from two different language programs. This study will focus on three of those individuals: Yukiko, Hinata, and Amina.[1] I strategically implemented methodological guidelines and theoretical frameworks that could work in concert to allow a simultaneous view into macro and micro levels of activity within this group. Thus, conceptually this study is grounded in sociocultural theory broadly, and cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1987) more specifically. CHAT is a particularly powerful framework for theorizing the dynamic nature of human interaction and cognition, in large part because it treats activity itself as the unit of analysis.

Methodologically, I took an interventionist approach and used my own derivation of a CHAT-inspired methodology: Developmental Work Research (DWR) (Engeström, 2009). In DWR methodology the research first mirrors back to participants the

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[1] Participant names are all pseudonyms.

contradictions that exist in and between the various activity systems they inhabit. As an example, for a foreign language instructor a common contradiction exists between expectations on the one hand to "cover" the textbook, and on the other hand to use pedagogies based in student interest. After mirroring these contradictions back to the participants, the researcher then introduces a new symbolic or concrete tool into the system. This has a dual purpose. For participants, the hope is that the tool will be helpful to them in addressing the contradictions in their system(s). For activity theorists, providing this tool creates a situation where mediation can be observed at the microgenetic level.

Finally, in this study, the tool I introduced into the participants' system was a framework for their inquiry – lesson study. Lesson study (*jugyou kenkyuu*) is a powerful form of teacher inquiry that has been in use in Japan for over one hundred years (Yoshida, 1999; Lewis, 2006). In lesson study teachers come together to identify a problem of practice, collaboratively find and read literature about that issue, and then create a "research lesson" which applies ideas gleaned through the process of reading. That research lesson is then taught by one of the teachers to a live set of students as the other teachers observe – an event to which, in Japan, individuals from outside the school can be invited. The process concludes with group reflections on student learning that did or did not occur in the lesson, and, typically, a group presentation of their project to the wider professional community.

1.4 Overview of Chapters

Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** elucidates the theoretical

framework which guided the design of this study – sociocultural theory broadly, and

cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) specifically. In this chapter I also review

relevant prior research in language teacher cognition. In **Chapter 3** I explain my

methodological approach to answering the research question, in particular detailing how I

modified Developmental Work Research (DWR), a CHAT-inspired methodology, using

the tool of lesson study to fit my particular context. I lay out the study design, introduce

the participants and their context, and describe how I collected and analyzed data.

Chapter 4 is the heart of the study, the findings; I describe in detail the work of the focal

participants using lesson study to reflect on their pedagogical practice. Finally, in

Chapter 5 I discuss the implications of this study for the broader field and the nation's

foreign language programs in higher education.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework & Review of Related Literature

The overarching goal of this study is to examine how language teacher learning can proceed when a group of teachers of different languages use a modified form of lesson study to guide their own inquiry into a shared problem of practice. In order to explore this complex, multifaceted process, I take a syncretic approach to design; that is, I strategically implement methodological guidelines and theoretical frameworks that can work in concert to allow a simultaneous view into learning at the macro and micro levels (Gutierrez & Stone, 1998). Such a syncretic approach is useful in studying teacher cognition – the central construct that this study explores – because of the inherent complexity of human mental functioning. Teacher learning is embedded within the sociocultural histories of individual teachers, students, and the larger institutions within which those individuals are associated. These histories are simultaneously durable and emergent, stable and improvisational. The individual and society are mutually constituted over time. To study this irreducible complexity, studies must adopt methods which examine activity at both cultural-historical and microgenetic levels – as well as along the continuum that runs between the two.

In this chapter I detail the theoretical lenses and research literature which guided the conceptualization of this study. I begin with a review of scholarly work on language teacher learning, looking at both general conceptions of teacher learning and those specific to *language* teacher learning. After introducing sociocultural theory (SCT) which is woven throughout this dissertation, I then move to the literature on the specific incarnation of SCT that frames this study, cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), and in particular, a CHAT-inspired methodology: developmental work research (DWR)

(Engeström, 2009). Next, I review the literature on lesson study, which is used as a tool for the second stimulus in this DWR-derived study. I conclude with a detailed description of a compelling recent study of EFL teacher learning that takes a similar approach combining CHAT, DWR, and lesson study – Tasker (2014). Figure 2.1 below offers a visual overview of how these theoretical constructs, frameworks and research methodologies fit together in the present study of language teacher learning.

Figure 2.1: Research design overview (adapted from Tasker 2014)

Theories

Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

Key scholars:
- Vygotsky

Salient concepts:
- mediation
- double stimulation
- internalization

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)

Key scholars:
- Leont'ev, Engeström

Salient concepts:
- activity
- contradictions in / between activity systems
- expansive learning / transformation
- theoretical framework & methodology

Communities of Practice (CoP)

Key scholars:
- Lave & Wenger

Salient concepts:
- Situated / distributed cognition
- Legitimate peripheral participation

Methods

Developmental Work Research (DWR)

Key scholars:
- Engeström

Salient concepts:
- Expansive learning in organizations
- 2nd Stimulus

jugyou kenkyuu / 授業研究 / **lesson study**

Key scholars:
- Yoshida, Lewis

Salient concepts:
- Collaborative, teacher-driven inquiry
- Focus on student learning
- Cyclic

Analysis

Content Analysis

Miles, Huberman, Saldaña

+

Activity System diagramming

+

Micro-interactional Analysis

Key scholars:
- Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson

Salient concepts:
- Turn-taking
- Cooperative interruptions

2.1 Language teacher learning and cognition

The present study is situated within and addresses research broadly concerned with language teacher learning and cognition. Conceptualizations of learning and cognition have been, and continue to be, referred to using a wide variety of terms. In fact, Borg (2003) identified no fewer than *sixteen* different terms used to describe language teacher cognition. This terminology ranges from personal pedagogical systems (Borg, 1998) to conceptions of practice (Freeman, 1993). I align with Borg who uses *teacher cognition* "as an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers' mental lives" (Borg, 2003, p. 86). Further, I view language teacher cognition as composed of not only "what second- or foreign-language teachers think, know and believe," but additionally such things as "attitudes, identities and emotions, in recognition of the fact that these are all aspects of the unobservable dimension of teaching" (Borg, 2012 pg. 11). In the sections below I outline the core literature related to this topic of language teacher cognition, so defined.

2.1.1 Historical look at views of teacher learning. Today it is widely accepted that "teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs" (Borg, 2003, p. 81). Historically, though, this multi-dimensional, post-modern view of teachers and of research that views them as such has only been the norm for roughly the past thirty years.

Within the larger field of educational research, inquiry into teacher learning and cognition is relatively new, beginning in earnest during the early 1980s. Prior to the mid-1970s, mainstream education research was dominated by both the transmission model (a

teacher-centered model which views teaching as transfer of knowledge from the teachers to the students), and the process-product paradigm (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974). Situated within the broader framework of behaviorism, process-product research examined the impact of teachers' actions on student learning, viewing teachers as the "implementer(s) of other people's ideas" (Freeman, 2002, p. 5). Views of teaching and learning in the seventies were marked by "attempts to model individual cognitive processes on the information processing capabilities and processes of the digital computer" (Crookes, 2015, p. 488).

However, from 1975 forward, research increasingly began to shift toward a focus on teacher decision-making. Several key events marked this critical turning point, beginning with Walberg's (1977) foundational paper "Decision and perception: New constructs for research on teaching effects." In coining the phrase "teachers' mental lives" he shifted focus from the exterior (i.e., measurable teacher actions) to the interior (i.e., internal decision-making). Similarly, Lortie (1975) brought teacher's experiences in the classroom to the fore.

The 1980s, which Freeman (2002) calls the decade of change, saw the introduction of concepts now widely accepted. New constructs such as Denscombe's (1982) hidden curriculum, Lortie's (1975) apprenticeship of observation, and Shulman's (1987) pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) were developed, and in the case of Lortie, taken up widely, during this decade. All three of these constructs emphasized - indeed were built upon the idea - that prior learning experiences shape teacher cognition and serve as 'de facto guides' for teachers in the classroom (Borg, 2003, p. 88). "In contrast to the teacher as doer, the teacher was now largely seen as 'knowing what to do' (Freeman

1996)," having developed this knowledge over 13+ years of observation as a student (Freeman, 2002, p. 6).

The 1990s were the decade of consolidation of this line of thinking in teacher education. "On a macro-level, research orientations had shifted and the interpretative paradigm moved towards a post-modern perspective that asserts that any knowledge depends on a plurality of views, reflects a relativity of position in establishing those views, and can be promoted or 'silenced' depending on how power is used" (Freeman, 2002, p. 8). This decade was marked by concepts like Britzman's (1991) positionality of knowing and Cazden's (1988) contexts of the mind, the central thread in both being the non-fixed and variable nature of being and doing. Put differently, the idea is that:

> ...a teacher will think about and know her teaching and her classroom differently from a non-teacher who spends time there, regardless of the parity, care, and thoroughness that the outsider may invest in the research process. Part of the challenge is that knowledge in the classroom is widely networked; it brings together past experience and future goals within the context of present activity and interaction. (Freeman, 2002, p. 9)

2.1.2 Language teacher learning and cognition. This trajectory of change in research on teacher cognition in general occurred roughly in parallel with changes in research specifically on second and foreign language teacher cognition and its development. Prior to the mid-1970s, language teaching was viewed through the process-product paradigm; teachers needed to master linguistic and meta-linguistic content and then deliver it, packaged in specific pedagogies (e.g., audiolingualism, grammar translation, direct method, communicative language teaching) (Freeman, 2002, p. 4).

Attention to teacher decision-making, though originating in the late 1970s, came of age as a convenient and "discrete unit of analysis" during the 1980s. The first appearance of this construct with the English language teaching (ELT) literature came with Devon Woods (1989). Similarly, Lortie's (1975) construct 'apprenticeship of observation' inspired studies like Bailey et al.'s (1996) investigation into how the language learning histories of MA candidates might shape their teaching philosophies and practices (Borg, 2003, p. 87).

Today, language teacher cognition is understood to be dynamic, networked, and negotiated through social interaction. Borg's (2003) review of the literature on language teacher learning identified 64 studies published between 1976-2002. Within this range, the bulk of the research occurred from 1990 forward; only two studies on language teacher learning were identified during the 1970s and 1980s. This distribution is what we might expect, given the timing of shifts in mainstream education research, and the reality that research in language education tended to follow that in mainstream education. The studies on foreign language teacher development fall within three broad themes: (a.) the role of prior language learning experiences in teacher cognition, (e.g., Golombek, 1998), (b.) the role of language teacher education in teacher cognition, (e.g., Cumming, 1989; Freeman, 1993), and finally, (c.) the dialogic relationship between classroom practice and language teacher cognition (e.g., Johnson, 1992).

Recently, Borg (2012) updated his review of research on language teacher cognition. After summarizing 25 empirical studies published in 2011 (written in English), Borg characterized current language teacher cognition research as "international in scope," and inclusive of non-native English speaking, practicing ESL/EFL teachers as

participants (this is as opposed to the "captive audience" of native English speaking teacher candidates which were the predominant focus in past research). Methodologically, Borg found that 24 of the 25 studies used mixed methods or solely qualitative methods, and that of these studies, most were multi-method, with interviews the most popular method of data collection.

2.2 Viewing teacher learning through a sociocultural lens

Assuming then, that teacher cognition is dynamic, networked, and negotiated through social interaction, it is unsurprising to find that teacher learning has increasingly been viewed through a sociocultural lens, as *situated* within - indeed constituted in socio-historical-cultural space. In this section I briefly introduce sociocultural theory (SCT), which informs this entire study. Later in the chapter, I discuss in detail the particular incarnations of sociocultural theory called cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) and Developmental work research (DWR) which guided the study's theorization and methodological decisions, respectively.

2.2.1 Sociocultural theory. Sociocultural theory is a genetic, developmental theory that maintains that human activity can only be understood in its cultural-historical context. In general, sociocultural theory holds that "human action is mediated by language and other symbol systems within particular cultural contexts" (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007 p. 5). Put differently, "…the goal of a sociocultural approach is to explicate the relationships between human mental functioning, on the one hand, and the cultural, institutional, and historical situations in which this functioning occurs, on the other" (Wertsch, del Río, & Alvarez, 1995, p. 3).

Broadly speaking, SCT comes directly out of Soviet psychology, and indirectly from the pre- and co-developing field in continental Europe. In particular, Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) is of paramount importance because of the influence of his ideas, and those of his students and colleagues, on the development of the cultural-historical approach to psychology.

2.2.2 Vygotsky. It is remarkable that Vygotsky was able to achieve the recognition that he did, both in the 1920s and now. Though a student of law, linguistics, semiotics, and literature, he entered the field of psychology having had no formal training in it whatsoever. Yet, not only did he thrive in the field, he came to quickly become a leader of his "more experienced colleagues" (Valsiner, 1988, p. 118). Modern-day scholars of Soviet psychology, particularly Valsiner (1988), have argued that someone of his relative inexperience and lack of training could only have risen to prominence during the unusual climate just following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Marxist ideology made academia ripe for its own type of class struggle in the first few years of the Soviet state, giving novices like Vygotsky a brief opening to influence. Yet, by the time of Vygotsky's death in 1934, Stalin had been in power for seven years, and the Communist Party's grip on intellectual freedom had tightened considerably. Sources disagree on whether Vygotsky's writings were suppressed in the Soviet Union between 1936-1956, as is generally held; whatever the case, the reality is that they were only translated and available in English beginning in the 1960s (Valsiner, 1988, p. 153; Cole & Scribner, 1978, p. 10).[2]

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[2] Fraser & Yasnitsky (2012) provide a compelling critique of the "widely acknowledged and frequently cited" ban on Vygotsky's work. It's an interesting example of how complex matters can become more and more oversimplified with each successive citation. However, it is outside the scope of this paper to go into any more detail on the matter.

Vygotsky's unique sociopolitical context – that is, revolutionary Russia (1917) and the emergent Soviet Union (1922) – had a tremendous impact on shaping his work. In particular, Marxism – a theory with economic, political, social, and intellectual components – shaped not only Vygotsky's working environment, but equally the nature of his ideas. Vygotsky's life and work are in many ways a brilliant illustration of the complexity that sociocultural theory attempts to explicate. As he experimented, thought, wrote and generally *acted*, so too did his cultural-historical surrounding *simultaneously act upon him.* His work existed in the space opened by multiple, historically unique *affordances* and *constraints.* Perhaps the most important of these were the wide ranging theories of Marx and Engels. In particular, the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels framed Soviet psychology in the 1920s by changing the point of departure from mind-body dualism and classical logic (that is, bivalence, viewing everything as either true or false), to a dialectic orientation (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008, p. 3). Valsiner (1988) describes dialectics as:

> …opposite forces confined in the same whole. These opposite forces are in conflict with one another, resulting in the advancement of the internally conflicting whole to a qualitatively new state of organization. The new state of the whole may in some of its parts be similar to an earlier state, but its total organization is nevertheless of new quality (p. 18)

Unlike the scholars who adamantly and openly critiqued Marxist doctrine, or those who pieced in quotations from Marxist sources solely to avoid scrutiny, Vygotsky and his colleagues genuinely "sought to develop a Marxist theory of human intellectual functioning" by refashioning inquiry in a dialectical way (Cole & Scribner, 1978, p. 1;

Valsiner, 1988, p. 125). The influence of Marxist dialectical materialism is nowhere more evident than in Vygotsky's reconceived methods of inquiry in psychological experimentation. In his writings we see the intersection of dialectics with stimulus-response theories (reflexology) and continental European scholarship, particularly *gestalt* theory.

The field of psychology in Russia and the U.S. during the first half of the 20th century was dominated by reflexology (i.e., the conditioning of a specific response to a specific stimulus; e.g. Pavlov's dogs salivating in response to a bell). Vladimir Bekhterev[3] and Ivan Pavlov's work with classical conditioning in Russia (later the Soviet Union), and John Watson's and B.F. Skinner's work with behaviorism in the United States, framed the intellectual landscape of the time. Numerous psychology labs opened for the first time across the US, including the influential Chicago School. Being contemporary with these leading reflexologists, Vygotsky's theories at once extended and critiqued the Behaviorist idea of stimulus-response. In *Mind and Society* (1930-1934/1978)[4] he argued that "a stimulus-response framework for constructing

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[3] Interestingly, in the 1920s it was Vladimir Bekhterev – not Pavlov – who had the most impact on the development of behaviorism in the US (cf. Watson's writing). Geopolitical forces, both in the Soviet Union and globally, led to the legitimizing of Pavlov's name and the simultaneous diminishing of Bekhterev (Valsiner, 1988, p. 51-52).

[4] Stephen Draper makes a convincing argument for an alternative citation of Vygotsky's *Mind in Society* (http://www.psy.gla.ac.uk/~steve/courses/cereRefsVyg.html). I am persuaded, and have chosen to use the following citation for several reasons. My goal is to make more apparent: (1) that *Mind in Society* is a collection of Vygotsky's works, rather than a complete text; it is very possible that Vygotsky never would have intended the contained works be combined in one book, (2) that the texts were originally written during the span of time 1930-1934, (3) that all of these works, as published in 1978, are English translations by various individuals, and finally, (4) that the 1978 English book also contains text from other authors (cf. *Mind in Society,* editors' note, pg. x):

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner & E. Souberman., Eds.) (A. R. Luria, M. Lopez-Morillas & M.

experimental observations cannot serve as the basis for the adequate study of the higher,

specifically human forms of behavior" (p. 60). To this end, he explained that "current

methods" only allowed for the description of "quantitative variation in the complexity of

stimuli," and then advocated for a "new methodology" which would be "based upon a

dialectical materialist approach to the analysis of human history, [seeing] that human

behavior differs qualitatively from animal behavior to the same extent that the

adaptability and historical development of humans differ from the adaptability and

development of animals" (p. 60).

Figure 2.2: Vygotsky's triangle of mediation
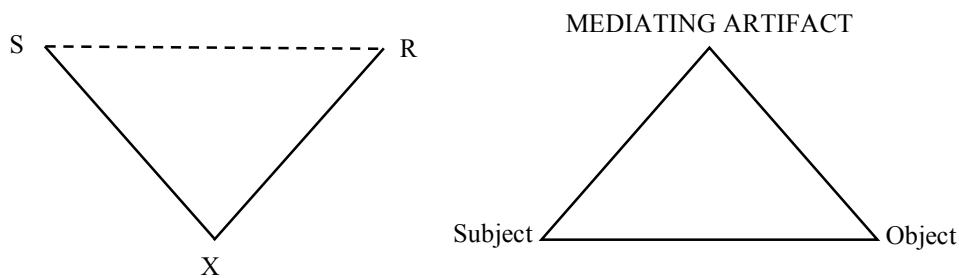
(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 40)

This new methodology was centered on a novel conceptual framework -

Vygotsky's famous triangle (see Figure 2.2). In the left triangle, the dotted line represents

reflexology's theory of a direct, unmediated path between S (stimulus) and R (response).

Vygotsky's addition of the X, as well as the path from S → X → R, illustrates the

mediating role of signs and tools - i.e., culture - in determining responses to stimuli.

Vygotsky (1978) explains:

Cole [with J. V. Wertsch], Trans.) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. (Original
manuscripts [ca. 1930-1934]).

The intermediate link in this formula is not simply a method of improving the

previously existing operation, nor is it a mere additional link in an S — R chain.

Because this auxiliary stimulus possesses the specific function of reverse action, it

transfers the psychological operation to higher and qualitatively new forms and

permits humans, by the aid of extrinsic stimuli, to control their behavior from the

outside. The use of signs leads humans to a specific structure of behavior that

breaks away from biological development and creates new forms of a culturally-

based psychological process. (p. 40)

The triangle on the right refines this concept of mediation, placing the mediating artifact

between the subject (the person) and the object (the task). Vygotsky's intellectual

descendants extended the concept of mediation to be able to look at entire systems of

human activity such as second language acquisition.

2.2.3 Connection to the current work. The fact that I have chosen to take a

syncretic approach to study design is rooted in sociocultural theory. Following Vygotsky

and his followers, I view human cognition and learning as constituted in the social

environment, rather than isolated within individual bodies and minds. Further, I see

human cognition as distributed and "spread out" across and through individuals, in both

current and historical time. Further, sociocultural theory – in particular, its derivative,

cultural-historical activity theory, provides a useful way of viewing the various mediating

factors in this complex view of human cognition and learning.

2.3 Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT)

Cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) provides a useful theoretical frame for

examining the complexity of teacher cognition. Through the modeling of interconnected

and interacting activity systems, CHAT – or more simply, Activity theory – allows researchers to visualize and theorize how various factors may play a mediating role in language teacher cognition.

While some point to Leont'ev as the "father" of Activity theory, others, in particular Engeström, argue that Vygotsky's work represented the first generation of activity theory, and Leont'ev's work the second. Regardless of who is viewed as the 'founder' of Activity theory, Engeström's framework of three generations of activity theory most usefully highlights the major concepts of the theory and how they have changed over time.

Using Engeström's heuristic, and for the sake of creating a broad brushstroke picture of CHAT, we can say that Vygotsky - and thus the *first generation* - contributed the central concept of *mediation* (discussed earlier via Vygotsky's "triangle," Figure 2.2). The concept of mediation revolutionized psychology, bridging the gap between the individual and the social structure. "The individual could no longer be understood without his or her cultural means; and the society could no longer be understood without the agency of individuals who use and produce artifacts" (Engeström, 2009, p. 54). Connected to *mediation* is the central concept of *internalization*, that is, the mediated transformation of external, social interaction into "internalized psychological tools for thinking" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p. 1).

Leont'ev carried these concepts forward, beginning the *second generation*. One of the key shifts in his work was his conception of the unit of analysis. Whereas Vygotsky had viewed the *individual* as the unit of analysis, Leont'ev expanded his unit of analysis to human *activity* (Engeström, 2009; Cole & Engeström, 1993; Sannino, Daniels, &

Gutiérrez, 2009). With this expansion, theorists could now make more sense of the

complex systems of relationships between individual and community. The graphical

representation of an activity system – as described in Leont'ev's work – was later created

by Engeström and published in his (1987) seminal work, *Learning by expanding: An*

activity-theoretical approach to developmental research.

Figure 2.3: Third generation Activity Theory
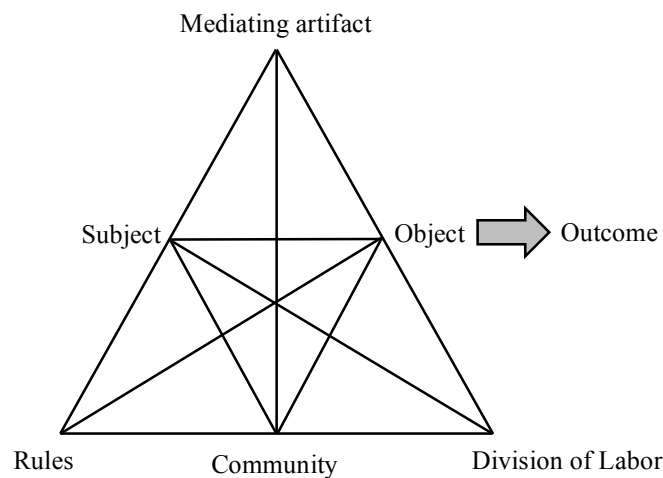
(adapted from Engeström, 1987, p. 63)

To Vygotsky's original triangle (notice it at the top of Figure 2.3), Leont'ev added

the affording and constraining factors of *rules, community,* and the *division of labor* in

order to theorize "a holistic view of human activities as well as human agency within

these activities" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p. 9). The interacting components of the

system are thus defined:

Subject: This refers to the individual or group (who share the same *object* of

activity) at the center of the analysis.

Object → Outcome: The object of the subject(s) activity can be thought of as a

problem space; using *mediating artifacts* – physical and symbolic – the subject(s)

transform the object into an *outcome.*

Community: These are the other individuals who share the same *object,* but are

not the focus of the analysis.

Division of Labor: Within a *community* there exists an implicit and explicit

distribution of power and status. The organization of work follows from this

division of labor.

Rules: Rules mediate the relationship between the community and the individual.

These are the norms, stated or not, which afford and constrain certain types of

human interaction within the activity system. (Engeström 2009; Johnson &

Golombek, 2011)

Importantly, the activity system as a whole, with its components, "has emerged from and

become stabilized through its sociocultural history" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p. 10).

Finally, the *third* and current generation of activity theory centers primarily

around the work of Yrjö Engeström and the Helsinki school of activity theory. In this

latest incarnation of CHAT, scholars seek to better visualize "dialogue, multiple

perspectives, and networks" of interaction through analyzing, at minimum, two

interacting activity systems at a time (Engeström, 2009, p. 55).

Cole and Engeström (1993, p. 9) provide a useful list of the key concepts of

CHAT. I paraphrase these below:

1. Psychological functions shared by humans and pre-human ancestors - the "lower"

   mental functions, so to speak - are genetically determined and develop differently

from the cultural, "higher" mental functions which modern-day humans alone possess;

2. Cultural mediation is recursive and bidirectional - changes in the individual result in changes to the environment, and vice versa;

3. Humans use tools - both material and symbolic - to mediate interaction with the world and self;

4. Language is the central tool;

5. The knowledge of prior generations becomes embedded in the material and symbolic tools - the cultural environment. As such, we can think of culture as "history in the present" (Cole & Engeström, 1993, p. 9). We could also say that every object has a "unique, culturally accepted way of using the object" (Burmenskaia, 1997, p. 217)

6. Social interactions are the key site of cultural mediation, and thus must happen as a pre/co-requisite for development.

2.3.1 Contradiction as expansive. Activity theory has explanatory power *not* because it allows us to map life onto a diagram, but instead because through that exercise we are able to identify contradictions, and thus development, in the system. Foot (2014) explains:

> Contradictions are a sign of richness in the activity system (not weakness) and of mobility and the capacity of an activity to develop rather than function in a fixed and static mode. Contradictions reveal the growing edges of the activity system—the places where "growth buds" are able to form and expansive development take place (p. 337)

There are four levels of contradictions possible:

- *Primary:* A primary contradiction exists when there is an inner conflict *within one node* of the activity system. As an example, the mediating means of a textbook might be simultaneously affording and constraining for a language teacher, as it provides a trove of possible curriculum, but perhaps also a limited number of interesting topics.

- *Secondary*: A secondary contradiction describes a tension *between two nodes* (e.g., between mediating means and rules). Taking the textbook again, in the case of a secondary contradiction the limited interest of students in the book's topics (*mediating means*) may come into conflict with the *rule* that teachers cover all chapters in a textbook.

- *Tertiary:* A tertiary contradiction arises when an object from *outside the system* is introduced into the system (e.g., a protocol guiding group inquiry). "The motive for introducing a new object to an activity system is typically to find relief from one or more secondary contradictions and the tensions stemming from them. The introduction of a new object can also trigger the developmental phase through which the activity system will be redefined and reconfigured" (Foot, 2011, p. 23).

- *Quaternary*: A quaternary contradiction exists *between two activity systems*. Though not always, quaternary contradictions are typically triggered by work within one activity system to resolve a tertiary contradiction. As the tertiary contradiction is addressed through changes to

the activity within the activity system, neighboring activity systems are potentially impacted.

2.4 Developmental work research (DWR)

Developmental Work Research (DWR) is a CHAT-inspired methodology developed by Engeström (1987). As implied by the name, DWR is meant as a guide for *organizational* (as opposed to individual) learning. The fundamental metaphor of DWR is expansion, which Engeström explains is the learning of something that no one yet knows.

> The basic argument is that traditional modes of learning deal with tasks in which the contents to be learned are well known ahead of time by those who design, manage and implement various programs of learning. When whole collective activity systems, such as work processes and organizations, need to redefine themselves, traditional modes of learning are not enough. Nobody knows exactly what needs to be learned. (Engeström, 2011, p. 88)

The structure of DWR relies on the Vygotskian concept of "double stimulation." In a "double stimulation" experiment, researchers first present the participant(s) with a problem to be solved – the *first stimulus* – and then an ambiguous tool that can be used to solve that problem – the *second stimulus*. From the perspective of researchers, double stimulation experiments enable study of *how* the participants imbue meaning into a tool that is ambiguous in its utility (the second stimulus) and thus use it to mediate work on the object (that is, the problem space, or contradiction that was identified in the first stimulus).

Engeström (2011) calls the instantiation of this process within the context of DWR methodology the "The Change Laboratory." The Change Laboratory begins as

researcher(s) gather ethnographic data on the activity system – the workplace. The critical incidents and contradictions that appear in this initial ethnographic stage are then *mirrored back* to the participants. Engeström (2011) explains that "this 'mirror material' is used to stimulate involvement, analysis and collaborative design efforts among the participants" (p. 84). To mediate the participants' work with the mirror material – that is, their negotiation and resolution of the inherent contradictions in their activity system – the researcher(s) provide as the *second stimulus* conceptual tools they can use in this work. In the current study I use a modified form of lesson study as the second stimulus.

2.5 Lesson study as an Approach to Teacher Education (授業研究; *jugyou kenkyuu*)

The premise behind lesson study is simple: If you want to improve teaching, the most effective place to do so is in the context of a classroom lesson. If you start with lessons, the problem of how to apply research findings in the classroom disappears. The improvements are devised within the classroom in the first place. (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 111)

Lesson study (*jugyou kenkyuu*; 授業研究) in Japan is an inquiry cycle where teachers engage together in creating, delivering, and then reflecting on a single "research" or "study" lesson (*kenkyuu jugyou;* 研究授業). Though it may seem strange to center so much effort around only one lesson, the idea is that the lesson is simply a vehicle for exploring teachers' research goals (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004, p. 7). In Japan, *jugyou kenkyuu* typically spans the course of a year; during this time teachers go through several lesson study cycles, each of these cycles themselves composed of multiple meetings to plan and discuss the focal lesson (C. C. Lewis & Hurd, 2011; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999;

Yoshida, 1999). Makoto Yoshida, largely responsible for helping bring lesson study to the

United States, described the process of *jugyou kenkyuu* in Japan in great detail in his 1999

dissertation. *Jugyou kenkyuu* cycles vary somewhat, but in general can be broken down

into eight major steps:

Step 1: Defining the problem
Step 2: Planning the lesson
Step 3: Teaching the lesson
Step 4: Evaluating the lesson and reflecting on its effect
Step 5: Revising the lesson
Step 6: Teaching the revised lesson
Step 7: Evaluating and reflecting, again
Step 8: Sharing the results

(Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 113)

In Japan, the majority of the work of *jugyou kenkyuu* is done in small group "Grade Level

Meetings," where teachers come together around a problem of practice; however, the

process extends into school-wide "All Teacher Meetings" as well. Figure 2.4 is Yoshida's

conceptualization of a typical lesson study cycle.

Figure 2.4: A Typical lesson study cycle

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Group Meetings:          │
│     (Research & Preparation)    │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
                 ⇩
         ╭───────────────────╮
        (  Research Lesson 1   )
        (   (Implementation)   )
         ╰───────────────────╯
                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Group Meetings:          │
│    (Reflection & Improvement)   │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
                 ⇩
         ╭───────────────────╮
        (  Research Lesson 2   )
        (   (Implementation)   )
         ╰───────────────────╯
                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Group Meetings:          │
│ (Reflection & Filling the Records)│
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```
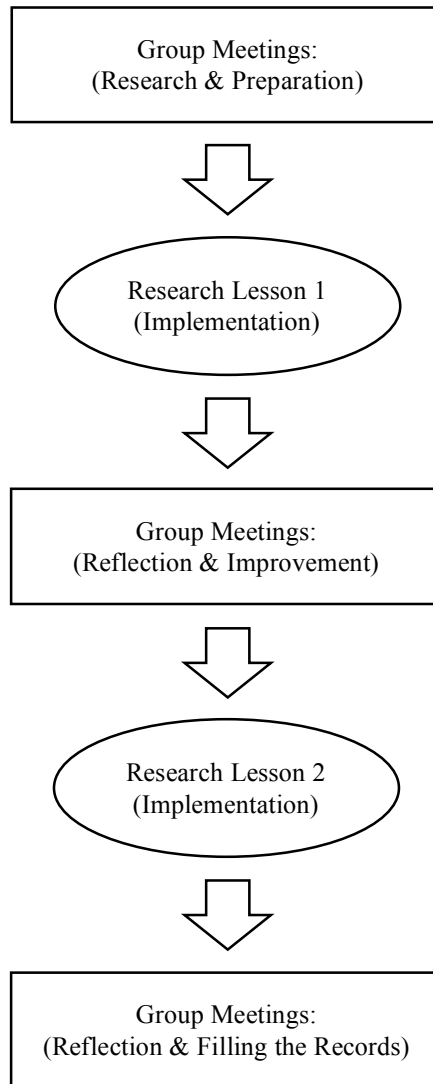
(Yoshida, 1999, p. 58)

Steps 1 & 2: Defining the problem and planning the lesson. During the initial Grade Level Meetings, teachers come together to define the focus of the lesson study cycle. Sometimes teachers focus on a problem of practice, something related to a particular content area or topic. Often though, teachers focus on cultivating habits of mind or dispositions towards life and learning. For example, Lewis and Tsuchida (1998) observed the following goals: "'take initiative as learners,' 'be active problem-solvers,' 'be active problem-seekers,' 'develop scientific ways of thinking,' and 'develop their individuality'" (p. 14). Whatever the selected goal, the teachers then build their understanding collaboratively, through activities such as reading research literature, examining published study lessons, or observing other teachers. After consulting a variety of resources, the group eventually drafts a "research lesson," which applies ideas gleaned through the process of study. This first draft of the lesson is presented to the entire staff at an "All Teacher Meeting" in order to elicit feedback.

Step 3: Teaching the Lesson. After the lesson is modified, copies are given to all teachers who will be present at the implementation - "Research Lesson 1." This is a central and defining characteristic of lesson study: lessons do not remain simply theoretical, on the page, nor are they tried in artificial environments; rather they are taken into the dynamic and unpredictable reality of a classroom to see how they do and don't work. One of the members of the grade level team actually teaches the research lesson, while the remaining members of the grade level team observe and take detailed notes. Often, teachers from the entire school are invited to attend (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999; Yoshida, 1999).

Step 4: Evaluating the lesson and reflecting on its effect. The grade level team meets to discuss and reflect on their observations, typically on the same day as the lesson while their memories are fresh. The goal of this time is to critique the *lesson* not the *teacher*, by focusing on *student* rather than *teacher actions.*

Step 5: Revising the lesson. After the first round of implementation, the process of refining the lesson begins. Through additional meetings, the lesson is adjusted and reworked in light of what the team learned through the first implementation.

Step 6: Teaching the revised lesson. Eventually, a different member of the grade level team teaches a revised version of the research lesson - "Research Lesson 2." Typically, the entire school, as well as sometimes an outside advisor, are invited to view this second implementation session.

Step 7: Evaluating and reflecting, again. Most often, an "All Teacher Meeting" follows this session, in order to give all observers a chance to reflect on the lesson itself, and the larger "problem of practice" which served as the focus of the work (Yoshida, 1999). "Not only is the lesson discussed with respect to what these students learned and understood, but also with respect to more general issues raised by the hypotheses that guided the design of the research lesson. What about teaching and learning, more generally, was learned from the lesson and its implementation?" (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 115)

Step 8: Sharing the results. *Jugyou kenkyuu* is meant to impact teachers beyond the local school context. In addition to the larger principles for teaching which *jugyou kenkyuu* hopes to discover and cultivate, the study lessons themselves become valuable artifacts meant for broad consumption. Because Japan has a national curriculum, the

seemingly narrow focus of one lesson actually can have far-reaching applicability for teachers around the country, as they too try to teach particular concepts to particular grade levels (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 115). Typical ways that the study lessons are shared are through publishing collections of the lessons, or through hosting "lesson fairs" at the conclusion of school years that boasted a productive *jugyou kenkyuu* season.

  2.5.1 Lesson study in the United States. During the same time period that Makoto Yoshida, Jim Stigler, and Jim Hiebert were bringing the ideas of lesson study to the U.S. through Yoshida's dissertation work and Stigler and Hiebert's international research in math teacher practices, Catherine Lewis was investigating lesson study after learning about it while doing research for her 1995 monograph, *Educating Hearts and Minds: Reflections on Japanese Preschool and Elementary Education*. Hers became the first scholarly article on lesson study to be published in the U.S. - "A Lesson is like a Swiftly Flowing River" (*American Educator*, 1998). By 2005, lesson study groups had formed at over 335 schools, in 32 states, and had been taken up in the research community at conferences and in published reports and articles (C. Lewis et al., 2006, p. 4). At the time of this writing, lesson study has primarily been utilized in the United States at the K-12 level in elementary mathematics. It has almost never been used in language education.

  2.6 Gap in research: Tasker (2014)

  The only study in language education of which I am aware which has combined CHAT, DWR, and lesson study is Thomas Tasker's (2014) dissertation. This interventionist study was designed to respond to a sobering fact about EFL education; between 50-70% of EFL teachers leave the profession after 3-5 years (Borg, 2008). This

low retention rate has led to calls for research into professional development for practicing EFL teachers, and in particular, systematic exploration of the impact of *inquiry-based* approaches to professional development on teacher professional learning (Johnson, 2006). Tasker (2014) further adds:

> …what is missing from these studies is an understanding of EFL teacher *cognitive development as it unfolds*, and how the development is shaped by the social and institutional context, particularly the norms and values of the institution, and how development leads to changes in teaching practice. (p. 6, emphasis added)

Towards this end of *observing unfolding cognitive development*, Tasker designed a fourteen-week study of three EFL teachers at a private language school in the Czech Republic. Using cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) as a theoretical framework, and CHAT-inspired Developmental Work Research (DWR) as methodology, he explores:

> how the trajectory of teacher learning is shaped by the sociocultural context in which the teachers work. Specifically, [he considers] how the interaction between the teachers, the teachers' students and administrators offer[s] affordances and constraints to teacher learning, and [leads] to collective and personal conceptual development." (p. 1)

More specifically, and in accordance with DWR protocol, he conducted eleven workshops with the participants, each one to two hours long; in these workshops he first mirrored back to the participants the contradictions in their system – the *first* stimulus – and then led them through the process of addressing those contradictions through lesson study – the *second* stimulus.

He began by conducting semi-structured interviews of the three teachers all in their late twenties – a female Slovak with eight years of teaching experience, a male Dane with five years of experience, and a male American with six months of experience. The interviews were transcribed and then coded for "emotive or negative language about teaching and learning issues" (p. 73). Coded excerpts were then copied and presented to the teachers as the first stimulus – the *mirror data* – for discussion during the second workshop. Out of this discussion, the group identified dissonance between their shared belief that student learning should take place outside of class, and the reality that students rarely completed homework (p. 115). Identification of this dissonance served simultaneously as the first stimulus of the DWR study and also the first step in the DWR second stimulus – the inquiry-based professional development protocol of lesson study.

Over the course of the first few sessions, the teachers honed this dissonance into their lesson study research goal:

> We would like our students to take more responsibility for their English language learning outside of class. We feel that this overarching goal, although broad and difficult to measure, will have the most lasting impact on our students' English development in both the short- and long-term (p. 120).

One challenge to this goal, Tasker points out, was the difficulty of operationalizing the amorphous concept of *responsibility*. In the design of their research lesson plan (the central component of the lesson study protocol), the group decided that the students would demonstrate responsibility by not only completing the homework, but by doing more than was required. A collaboratively created research lesson plan was designed around the school's new initiative to have teachers (and by default, the students) use

graded readers. The lesson study group created tasks to be used along side these readers, and piloted them in their classes during the observed research lesson. The data in Tasker's study included: "…transcripts of teacher and administrator interviews, teacher workshops, teacher journal entries, meetings with the school's administrators, and the research lesson plan created by the teachers" (iii).

Using grounded content analysis, Tasker (2014) identifies five major findings:

(1) school administrator involvement is necessary to effect school change;

(2) outside experts might need to take a more active, longer-term role to help teachers adopt a critical perspective;

(3) EFL teacher professionalization should include participation in professional development activities;

(4) Lesson study is a viable 'second stimulus' in DWR methodology that has the potential to provide teachers with an effective conceptual tool to mediate their learning and bring about expansive transformation;

(5) sociocultural theory provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how teachers learn through participation in lesson study (Tasker, 2014, p. iv).

Through this work, Tasker has contributed to the field of language teacher education, expanding our understanding of inquiry-based teacher learning in general, and the application of inquiry-based learning to ongoing professional development for EFL teachers more specifically. Methodologically, his study serves as an illustrative example of how DWR and lesson study can work synergistically to serve the needs of both teachers and theorists. What his work does *not* do – and what the present study aims to accomplish – is document how this framework might also be useful in promoting and

tracing teacher learning in *diverse, multilingual groups of teachers* who neither teach the same language nor even necessarily work within the same administrative structure. With the overarching goal of improving our understanding of language teacher learning, the present study intends to investigate the usefulness of this framework in a different, and significantly more complex language teacher learning context.

In this chapter I have described the theoretical lenses and research literature which framed my inquiry into the following question:

> *How do elements of a multilingual language instructor inquiry group serve to mediate language teacher conceptual development within the broader sociocultural context?*

I began with a look at the trajectory of research in language teacher learning, and detail how the field moved from viewing learning through a *transmission model* to seeing teacher cognition as dynamic, networked, and negotiated through social interaction. I then outlined the central tenets of sociocultural theory and cultural historical activity theory (CHAT). Importantly, I explained how, following these tenets, I view human cognition and learning as constituted in the social environment, rather than isolated within individual bodies and minds. From a discussion of CHAT I moved to my guiding methodology in this study: CHAT-inspired developmental work research (DWR) (Engeström, 2009). DWR is meant as a guide for *organizational* learning; by helping to uncover contradictions within and between activity systems, DWR has the potential to promote expansive development in a system. Buildling on Vygotsky's double stimulation experiments, a DWR cycle begins by stimulating disruption, and then follows with a second stimulus – a possible tool to address that disruption. In this study, I adapt a

version of Japanese lesson study for this second stimulus. I concluded the chapter with a look at an exemplary (and unique) study – Tasker (2014), which combines these same theoretical and methodological influences in a student of EFL teacher professional development.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter I detail the methods which guided the design of the present study in answering the research question:

How do elements of a multilingual language instructor inquiry group serve to mediate language teacher conceptual development within the broader sociocultural context?

In this study, "multilingual language instructor group" refers to three female instructors of Japanese and Arabic at the University in the Midwest (UiM), a research-intensive university in the midwestern region of the United States.[5] The observable "elements" of this group *include engagement with conflicting pedagogical concepts in discussions, the structure and dynamics of those discussions, direct and indirect observation of each other's teaching, and meta-reflection mediated by transcripts of previous group meetings.* "Language teacher conceptual development" is operationalized as instructor comments and actions which show disruption of existing understandings, consideration of alternative understandings, and/or anticipation to implement new pedagogies. Finally, the "broader sociocultural context" is defined as those past and current institutional memberships, explicit and not, which contributed to the instructors' formation as teachers and individuals.

I begin by introducing the broader context and the participants. As this is a socio-cultural-historical study, I include relevant context of the institutions where participants were located. Next I describe data collection methods, explaining in particular how the

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[5] All institution names are pseudonyms.

context – and researcher involvement – guided the *how*, *when*, and *what* of data collection. Finally, I delineate the process of data analysis, illustrating how macro-level activity theory and micro-level discourse analysis worked synergistically to illuminate processes of teacher learning. I conclude the chapter with reflections on various ethical considerations, including trustworthiness of the data.

3.1 Context

The research question was addressed using data gathered during a unique time of focus on professional development by language instructors at UiM. This period of time was marked by widespread introspection and change, and thus the time and place were ripe for an in-depth study of language teacher development. In the paragraphs that follow, I introduce the institutional context(s) and individuals central to the study: Department of Asian Languages (DAL), a College Language Center (LC), a federally funded Language Resource Center (LRC), and a world language education program in the UiM College of Education (COE).[6]

3.1.1 Department of Asian Languages - context. First, I briefly introduce the home department of the three instructor participants in this study – the Department of Asian Languages. Housed within a college of arts and sciences, DAL was home to several language programs, including eastern and southeastern Asian languages.

Administratively, each of the language programs within the larger DAL was hierarchically organized and only partially autonomous in their programmatic decision making. Chinese was by far the largest program in the department, but the Japanese and Chinese programs held the distinction of being the oldest programs in DAL.

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[6] All pseudonyms.

Two of the study participants were members of the Japanese program. At the time of this study, instructors of beginning and intermediate Japanese at the UiM shared only a common textbook. All other facets of course design – including syllabus construction, number and type of exams, and pedagogical stance – were left to individual instructors to determine. The third study participant was a member of the Arabic program, which had within the last two years been reorganized, with substantial support for instructor decision-making.

3.1.2 The CAS Language Center and the LFP Project. Another entity within the College of Arts and Sciences is the CAS Language Center (LC), which is an autonomous unit outside the language departments that reports directly to a College dean. Though the instructors in this study were not directly involved with the LC, they were connected to it in several meaningful ways. To begin with, they often utilized the classroom labs located in and administered by the LC to hold their classes. More significantly, though, they were connected to the LC through my role there as part of a larger grant project – the Language Flagship Proficiency (LFP) Project. The paragraphs below provide more detail about the LFP Project, the unit in which it is housed – the CAS Language Center – and my role in both the project and the Language Center.

The CAS Language Center (LC) at the University in the Midwest supports language teaching and learning by providing various resources for instructors and students of the more than 25 language programs housed in different departments within the College. When the LC started in the 1980s, its core focus was on helping language instructors make use of relevant, language-learning technologies. Since then, the LC has grown tremendously in size and scope, having made the jump from analog to digital

technologies, and expanded through a Language Flagship Proficiency grant to include the

LFP Project foci of assessment, self-assessment, and professional development (LC self-

study, pg. 34). These new foci, in general, and the LFP Project, in particular, were

spurred in large part by both the leadership of a new director (hired in 2010), and the

recommendations of three College Working Groups. These groups, composed of key

stakeholders and experts in second language teaching across CAS, were convened in

order to "address the relevance of second languages for the liberal arts and for life in the

twenty-first century" (CAS LC self-study, pg. 4). In particular, it was the third working

group (2013) whose work most directly provided a foundation for the grant application

which was funded and became the LFP Project in 2014.

> The third working group, in 2013, developed a statement of support for languages
>
> in the liberal arts, proposed learning outcomes for students both at the level of the
>
> language requirement and at the completion of the major as well as
>
> recommendations to build infrastructure necessary to attain these goals, and
>
> recommended systematic professional development for language instructors in
>
> CAS. Recommendations in these reports strongly influenced the charge to …[the
>
> committee that] provided guidance for LC initiatives, and formed the basis of a
>
> major federally funded grant project housed in LC that is currently underway (LC
>
> self-study, pg. 4).

In the early Fall of 2014, within this institutional context (itself framed by the broader

national context created by the 2007 MLA Report) the LC became one of just three

university programs nationally to receive an annually renewable grant from The

Language Flagship Proficiency project. This project was designed to apply a "proficiency

assessment process to established academic foreign language programs to measure

teaching and learning, and to evaluate the impact of such testing practices on teaching

and learning" (The Language Flagship, January 2014, p.1).

The LFP Project at the University in the Midwest consists of three interrelated

components: proficiency testing for students across seven included languages (two Asian

languages, one Slavic language, three Romance languages, and one Germanic language),

self-assessment protocols for language students across CAS, and professional

development opportunities for all language instructors at the University in the Midwest.

Important for the current study is that the LC has used this project to develop and

continue to develop and implement a systematic professional development program for

instructors in every language program at the institution. Though the LFP grant

particularly targets seven of the languages taught at the UiM, all language instructors,

graduate students, and faculty from all of the more than 25 languages offered at the

institution are invited and encouraged to participate in various professional development

opportunities that are funded by the LFP Project.

Between August and November of 2014, during the first months of the LFP grant,

I served as the interim coordinator of this professional development program. In this

capacity I organized two workshops for language instructors from across CAS. The

workshops, led by an applied linguistics professor, focused on looking at learner

language through Exploratory Practice (Allwright & Hanks, 2009). I initially met the

participants in this study through my role coordinating these events.

At the same time, and in the same role, I helped organize the first meeting of a

Professional Support (PS) team. This team brought together representatives from the

seven language programs targeted in the LFP Project, as well as representatives from the

LC and the Language Resource Center. Ultimately, two of the three participants in the

present study became members of the PS Team (Yukiko and Amina). The PS Team was:

> tasked with building and sustaining energy around a culture of continual and
>
> collaborative professional development in the various language departments at
>
> UiM…. The purpose of the PS team, then, is to serve as a central conduit between
>
> the data derived from assessment and the professional inquiry into this data. More
>
> broadly, the PS team will serve as a conduit between the various departments and
>
> the CAS Language Center (which functions as the administrative hub of the LFP
>
> Project), between colleagues across languages, and centrally, between questions
>
> of practice and collaborative projects to pursue answers ("CAS Language
>
> Center", 2014, p. 1).

In December 2014, I transitioned to a position supporting LFP Project communication.

From then until June 2016, I remained an active member of the PS Team and supported

various professional development initiatives, including those that are the focus of this

study.

3.1.3 The Language Resource Center (LRC). The Language Resource Center

(LRC) played a pivotal role in shaping the professional development environment of the

instructors in this study. The LRC is a federally funded (U.S. Department of Education

Title VI) Center housed within the University in the Midwest. As part of their wide-

reaching work, the LRC provides more than ten intensive, week-long summer institutes

each year for practicing K-16 language teachers. Two of the three instructors in this study

had attended several of these institutes; in Chapter Four I detail how participants talked

about the impact of these institutes on their pedagogy. The LRC director partnered with the CAS Language Center on the LFP Project (described above), co-sponsoring events, providing leadership on the project administration, and serving on the PS Team as well.

       3.1.4 Interconnections between Institutional Contexts. As orientation to the various interconnections between these different institutional contexts, Figure 3.1 illustrates instructor and researcher membership within this complex system. The three language instructors who are the focus of this study – "Amina", "Yukiko", and "Hinata" (all pseudonyms) – came from two language programs – Arabic (Amina) and Japanese (Yukiko and Hinata), respectively. In addition to all being members of the inquiry group which sits at the center of this study, several of the participants were also involved in the PS Team.

Figure 3.1: Participant and researcher participation in institutional structure
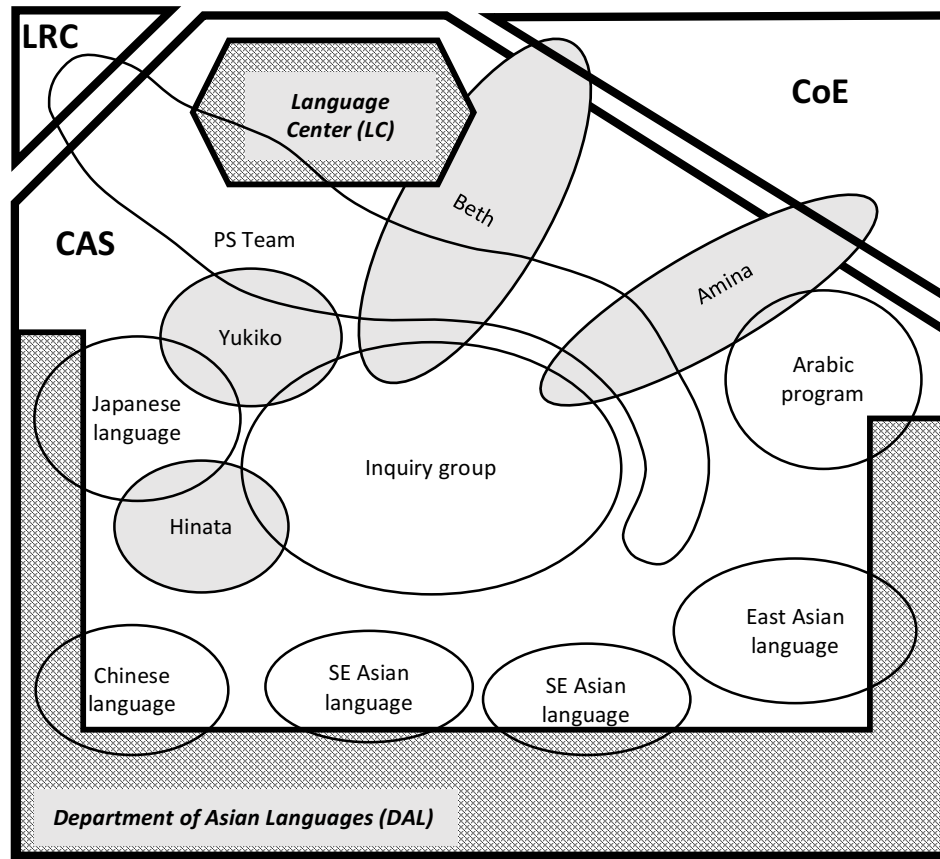
3.2 Participants

The participants in this study are Hinata, Yukiko, and Amina (all pseudonyms). Hinata and Yukiko were both Japanese instructors, and Amina was an Arabic instructor. All three individuals are women, native speakers of the language they taught, and despite their years of experience, were more junior members of their departments, as non-tenure track instructors. At the time of the study, they varied in length and type of experience. Though all had entirely or primarily taught at the tertiary level, all three had also received training to teach at the K-12 level. Table 3.1 below summarizes these details; in the

following sections, I introduce each participant, describing their educational and

pedagogical backgrounds.

Table 3.1: Overview of participants in the present study

Name	Gender	Approximate Age	Language taught	Native Language	Highest degree	Courses taught at UiM 2014-2015	Years of teaching experience		
							Total	**K-12**	**13+**
Hinata	F	30	Japanese	Japanese	MA	1st & 2nd year	4.5	0.5	4
Yukiko	F	50	Japanese	Japanese	Ph.D.	1st & 2nd year	24	8	16
Amina	F	40	Arabic	Arabic	M.Ed.	2nd year	11	10	1

3.2.1 Hinata. At the time of the study, Hinata was approximately 30 years old.

Since she had been a teenager, Hinata had imagined that she would be a teacher. As an

undergraduate student in Japan, she majored in both Japanese studies and the teaching of

Japanese as a second/foreign language. Interestingly, at that time she had little interest in

learning foreign languages, even though she planned to be a language teacher; the study

of English had been mandatory throughout practically her entire educational trajectory,

and she had always found it challenging. Though she took Spanish as a foreign language,

she found herself to not be particularly motivated.

During her junior year she studied abroad, an experience that she credits with

developing her multilingual and multicultural perspective. As an international student at a

mid-sized university in the Midwestern United States, she took courses in English as a

Second Language (ESL), the humanities, as well as an introductory linguistics course.

These courses added to her knowledge of and interest in language; importantly, though, it

was interaction with fellow students that did the most to shift how she viewed language

study. By seeing her home country of Japan through the eyes of others, she was

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awakened to the role that language study could have in developing a multicultural perspective. In my interview of Hinata she shared,

> And I, when I was studying … I figured out there were so many students that were interested in Japan, and Japanese, and also other countries…and so through the instruction- eh eh interaction with students, that kind of students and friends, I got more and more interested in learning foreign languages, as well as teaching… (Hinata interview, July 17, 2015).

In addition to having a direct impact on her decision to teach, this experience seems to have also mediated the type of teacher she became (and was becoming).

When she returned to Japan for her senior year, she completed a three week teaching practicum in a middle school, and, at the conclusion of the year, was awarded a Japanese teaching license. Rather than teaching in Japan, Hinata enrolled in a Master's in Japanese linguistics and pedagogy program at a large, research-intensive university in the Midwestern United States. Over the course of her time there, she was a teaching assistant (TA) of Japanese Beginner I & II, and Intermediate I & II. In her program she took a wide variety of courses, including: conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, and functional linguistics.

When the inquiry group began meeting, Hinata had taught for a total of four years at the undergraduate level – two as an instructor in at the UiM, and two as a graduate assistant at her prior institution. For the most part, she did not create original curriculum when teaching at her prior institution; she described the curriculum used at that time as textbook based and communicative. During the 2014-2015 academic year – the year the inquiry group met – she was teaching both beginning and intermediate Japanese.

3.2.2 Yukiko. At the time of the study, Yukiko was approximately 50 years old. Like Hinata, Yukiko had wanted to be a teacher since she was young. She studied education and trained to be a middle school teacher. She also earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in a Slavic language. Prior to moving to teach at the University in the Midwest (UiM), she taught in an impressive and wide range of contexts. These included public secondary schools (both internationally and in the United States), special programs for adult language learning, and finally online teaching through a university. Across these contexts, Yukiko used a wide variety of pedagogies, including thematically-organized units and lessons in Japanese for special purposes. She expanded on these knowledge bases at the University in the Midwest.

3.2.3 Amina. Amina was roughly 40 years old at the beginning of the study. In her home country of Egypt, she studied the teaching of English as a Foreign Lanugage (EFL) and received an undergraduate degree in the field. An experienced teacher, she had taught at the K-12 level for ten years before moving into higher education. In Egypt, she taught middle school English for two years. After moving to the United States, she taught grades K-8 for seven years, and then at the high school level for one year. In the Spring of 2014, Amina, already an experienced teacher, received her Master's of Education (M.Ed.) from the world language program in the College of Education at the University in the Midwest. She was then hired in the Fall of 2014 – the same term in which the inquiry group began meeting – as an instructor in the Arabic Program within the College of Arts and Sciences at the University in the Midwest. During that term, her first experience teaching undergraduates, she taught intermediate level Arabic.

Of these three participants, I chose to focus this dissertation study primarily on

Hinata and Yukiko. Teacher professional development studies often find that teachers'

conceptual development is constrained by by lack of administrative support (e.g., Tasker

2014). All three participants served as an illustrative case of *what is possible with rich*

administrative support by their language programs.

3.3 Data collection

This section describes *how* and *when* data were collected, and also explains the

rationale behind data collection decisions.

Data collection spanned the months of October 2014 to January 2016, with the

bulk of collection between October 2014 and May 2015. The group began meeting

together in late Fall 2014 to exchange ideas and provide collegial support to one another.

Significantly, the group came together in an organic way; it was the *instructors*, not the

researcher, who invited members to the group. In the Fall of 2014, and in my capacity as

the interim coordinator of LFP professional development, a fourth instructor (not

included in this study) and I met for tea to discuss different strategies she was trying in

her classroom.[7] We decided to meet again; that time she invited Hinata and Yukiko, who

she knew were also trying new things in their courses, and might be interested in these

conversations. In Spring 2015 the group was rounded out when Amina, a brand-new

instructor in the Arabic department, was invited.

These early meetings were informal and unstructured. For example, someone

might bring an Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) that they were designing and

ask the group for feedback. Another time everyone brought their textbook and we

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[7] The founding member of the group has requested to not be included in this dissertation study.

discussed ways of using the textbooks as tools. Much of the time we talked about struggles and dilemmas in the classroom. Over the course of these first three sessions, the participants got to know me – and each other – in ways that functioned similarly to the first stimulus in a DWR cycle. In Chapter 4, I will discuss in detail how the conversations the women had during Sessions 1-3 uncovered contradictions within their activity systems. The first three sessions were not audio-recorded; however, in my capacity as staff at the CAS Language Center I took notes and photos. I asked for (and received) approval to use these data for the purpose of my dissertation after the fact.

I introduced the idea of using a modified form of lesson study as a model for our work going forward at the fourth session, in April 2015. I had briefly introduced the idea earlier, in an email to the group (January, 2015); at that same time I had also suggested we might share our work at an upcoming international conference to be held nearby that Spring. At the fourth session I described lesson study in more detail, and we discussed how we would modify it to fit our purposes. On page 29 ff., we saw that lesson study typically implements the following eight steps:

Step 1: Defining the problem
Step 2: Planning the lesson
Step 3: Teaching the lesson
Step 4: Evaluating the lesson and reflecting on its effect
Step 5: Revising the lesson
Step 6: Teaching the revised lesson
Step 7: Evaluating and reflecting, again
Step 8: Sharing the results
(Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 113)

The most obvious challenge that we anticipated with lesson study was the fact that the women taught courses in two different languages at both the beginning and intermediate levels. For this reason, the group decided that they would adapt lesson study

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and not collaboratively create a shared lesson; instead, they would focus their work on observing each other's teaching towards the end of shedding light on their chosen common inquiry goal of building and sustaining student engagement.

The introduction and adapted use of lesson study – an ambiguous tool – served as the second stimulus in this DWR-derived intervention cycle. Having uncovered various contradictions during the first three sessions, the last four sessions were devoted to using lesson study as a mediating means to resolve – or at least explore – some of the uncovered contradictions. During the month of April, the group completed two partial inquiry cycles.

The first cycle centered around an observation of Amina's teaching. She had just recently video-recorded one of her classes and asked the group to give her feedback. We agreed that using Amina's pre-existing video would be an efficient and low-impact way to begin. On April 6, 2015 Amina sent the group a link to her teaching video. We met four days later (Session 5), on April 10, 2015 to debrief Amina's lesson. The present study does not focus on this first cycle.

For the second cycle, we observed Hinata's teaching live (4/13/2015). The class session was video-recorded, not only to allow Hinata to re-view herself teaching, but also to allow Yukiko, who taught at the same time as Hinata, to be able to fully participate in the debrief session. We gathered on April 20, 2015 to debrief Hinata's lesson. This meeting – Session 6 – was audio-recorded and transcribed. Our final meeting – Session 7 – was a meta-reflection stimulated by participant reading and discussion of the transcript of Session 6. To my knowledge, this use of transcription to mediate participant meta-

reflection is new to both lesson study and Developmental Work Research (DWR). Table

3.2 below provides an overview of the seven sessions:

Table 3.2: Overview of Sessions

	Session	Date	Content	Who			
				Amina	Beth	Hinata	Yukiko
1st stimulus	1	10/29/2014	Hinata + Yukiko discuss an IPA		x	x	x
	2	2/6/2015	Inviting Amina		x	x	x
	3	2/25/2015	Textbook dilemmas	x	x	x	x
2nd stimulus	4	4/1/2015	Formal beginning to modified-lesson study cycle	x	x	x	x
		4/6/2015	Video of Amina's lesson sent to group*				
	5	4/10/2015	Debrief of Amina's lesson*	x	x	x	x
		4/13/2015	Observation of Hinata's class	x	x	x	
	6	4/20/2015	Debrief of Hinata's lesson	x	x	x	x
	7	5/1/2015	Meta-reflection	x	x	x	x

*Not included in the current study.

Data analysis for the present study will focus broadly on background events in

Sessions 1-4, then in depth on the video-recorded observation of Hinata's class and

Sessions 6 & 7.

3.4 Data sources

The data for this study consisted of researcher notes, observations and

audio/video-recordings as part of the inquiry cycle, interviews, course-related documents,

and instructor reflections. These are described below, organized by type of data collection

"event."

3.4.1 Researcher notes. During the first four sessions I took notes (and a few

photos) as part of my work with professional development at the CAS Language Center.

These notes were especially important because the organic start to our group meant that the first four sessions had not been audio-recorded. As stated above, I asked the women for permission after the fact to use these notes for the purposes of this study. I continued to take detailed notes throughout data collection, though with the added data source of audio-recordings of Sessions 5 and 6.

3.4.2 Observations and Audio/videorecordings as part of inquiry cycle. In the present study I focus on the second inquiry cycle completed by the inquiry group. As discussed earlier, the structure of the inquiry group was modeled on exploratory practice (Allwright & Hanks, 2009) and *jugyou kenkyuu* – lesson study (Yoshida, 1999; Lewis, 2011). In the present study, the inquiry cycle was adaptation of Japanese lesson study and included the following steps:

1. Class observation (4/13/2015): Hinata's class session was observed by the other members of the group, with special attention paid to *student* actions, and also with the group's inquiry focus on student engagement in mind. The class session was also video-recorded (but not transcribed) to allow for re-viewing. Yukiko was not able to attend the live session due to her teaching schedule, so it was imperative to have a video to give her access to the class session.

2. Debrief of Hinata's lesson (Session 6 – 4/20/2015): One week after the class observation, the group came together to share thoughts from the observation visit. Though we had hoped to meet sooner, schedules and illnesses precluded it. I served as the facilitator of this meeting. The meeting was audio-recorded; I later transcribed it and shared the transcription with the rest of the group in preparation

for the second debrief meeting. This debrief session lasted for one and a half
hours.

3. <u>Meta-reflection (Session 7 – May 1, 2015)</u>: Between the initial debrief and the
meta-reflection session, I transcribed portions of the debrief session (the first 45
minutes in detail, the last 40 minutes in outline form). Physical copies of the
transcription were brought to the meta-reflection session. The group of instructors
reconvened to discuss their reflections on the transcript and initial debrief meeting
in general. As researcher and facilitator, I led the discussion and took detailed
notes throughout.

3.4.3 Interviews. Two of the four participants (Hinata and Yukiko) were
interviewed during Summer 2015 in order to build background on prior teaching and
professional development experiences. Due to outside circumstances, the other
participant could not be interviewed face to face; instead, she responded to a selection of
the interview questions via email. Based on the collegial relationships I have with the
three participants, informal information-sharing or reflecting also occurred outside of
these more formal interviews between Fall 2014 and Fall 2015; when possible, this
information was captured in researcher journals within the same week.

3.4.4 Course-related documents. Hinata shared with the group her lesson plan
and related materials for the day of instruction that we observed.

3.4.5 Instructor personal reflections. The two focal participants, Hinata and
Yukiko, both reflected briefly in writing about their experiences with lesson study. Hinata
listened to the recording of Session 6, which had been focused on debriefing her lesson,
and made detailed notes about the content of the conversation. She annotated these notes

with realizations stimulated by both the conversation itself, and by listening to the conversation after the fact. Both Hinata and Yukiko also reflected in writing in preparation for the presentation they (and I) gave at an international conference in May 2015.

3.5 Data analysis

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using content analysis, activity theory diagramming, and micro-interactional analysis. I focused first on a broad analysis of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic context, addressing this through a combination of content analysis (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) and the use of activity theory diagramming. The main data sources that informed this aspect of the analysis were: interviews with Yukiko and Hinata (focal participants) and background knowledge of the language and language-support programs at the University in the Midwest, gained informally as an employee of the CAS Language Center. Interview data were transcribed to allow for content analysis; in the beginning I used a combination of inductive and deductive coding. More specifically, I used descriptive coding as a way to inductively make sense of participant statements. In descriptive coding, the research assigns a "word or short phrase – most often a noun – [to] the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Descriptive coding is particularly helpful for taking a first pass through data because it allows for an initial indexing. I also coded these interviews deductively, using the six elements of an activity system as codes (see Table 3.4 below).

Table 3.3: Activity system deductive codes

Elements of activity system	Description of code
Subject	Participants in activity; share the same object
Mediating means	Material and symbolic 'tools' used to work through the problem space
Object	Problem space; focus of the participants' activity
Outcome	Desired and undesired results of the activity; What is the work in the problem space working towards?
Rules	"explicit and implicit regulations, norms and conventions that constrain actions and interactions"*
Community	"multiple individuals and/or sub-groups who share the same general object"*
Division of Labor	"horizontal division of tasks between the members of the community and to the vertical division of power and status"*

*(University of Helsinki – Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research, "The Activity System")

Activity theoretical coding was directly guided by the use of the *Activity System Observation Protocol (ASOP)*, an analytical tool designed to guide researchers in their look at activity documented in their fieldnotes (Lewis & Scharber, 2012). In this study, I used the ASOP's extensive guiding questions to focus my analysis of activity captured in both fieldnotes and transcriptions. I provide a few sample prompts here:

Community

- What are the assumptions about community embedded in the activity?

Rules for interaction in activity

- What are the rules or norms for actions and interactions within the activity?

- How do social actors enact or respond to or transform or resist the norms?

Division of labor

- Are any social actors privileged or marginalized in this distribution?

- Is the distribution smooth? Are there tensions? Explain.

Tools and signs

- What is their competence and willingness to experiment?

- What are the affordances of the tool?

<div align="right">(Lewis & Scharber, 2012)</div>

Pivoting back and forth among the codes developed inductively, and the data coded deductively, I eventually began sketching out the sociocultural / sociolinguistic context of the participants as viewable in activity system diagrams. I found these diagrams (presented on p. 23) to be invaluable in helping me visualize not only the interconnections, but the contradictions within and between the participants' activity systems.

Having analyzed and described the broader sociocultural / sociolinguistic context, I then focused my analysis in-depth on those elements of the inquiry group which served to mediate language teacher cognition. The data that informed this stage of analysis were: video-recording of Hinata's lesson, audio-recording of the debrief session after that lesson, researcher notes, materials used in Hinata's lesson, Hinata's written reflection, and finally, a powerpoint presentation that Hinata, Yukiko, and I prepared in May 2015. As before, I began with a content analysis of the data; this time, however, I used a combination of deductive and inductive coding from the beginning. Deductively, I looked in the data specifically for moments of contradiction (in the activity theoretical sense), as well as examples of mediation. Once broadly identified, I then inductively coded these moments of contradiction and/or mediation in order to makes sense of what was happening in (and as a result of) those moments. Data reduction and synthesis was then achieved through pattern coding - that is, meta-coding or the pulling together of

similar codes into explanatory codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These codes were collapsed and reorganized into the key themes pictured on the next page in Figure 3.2.

The final step in data analysis was the use of micro-interactional analysis to look at *how* the structure of the group conversations – especially during these moments of contradiction – was itself a mediating means in teacher development. Towards this end I first transcribed *in detail* those portions of Hinata's debrief meeting which contained the most salient moments of contradiction. These detailed transcriptions were produced using a modification of Jefferson's (2004) model (see Appendix B) and then analyzed in a recursive manner, adding and modifying coding choices in ever expanding circular visits of the data.

Figure 3.2: Analytical framework to identify key themes in current study
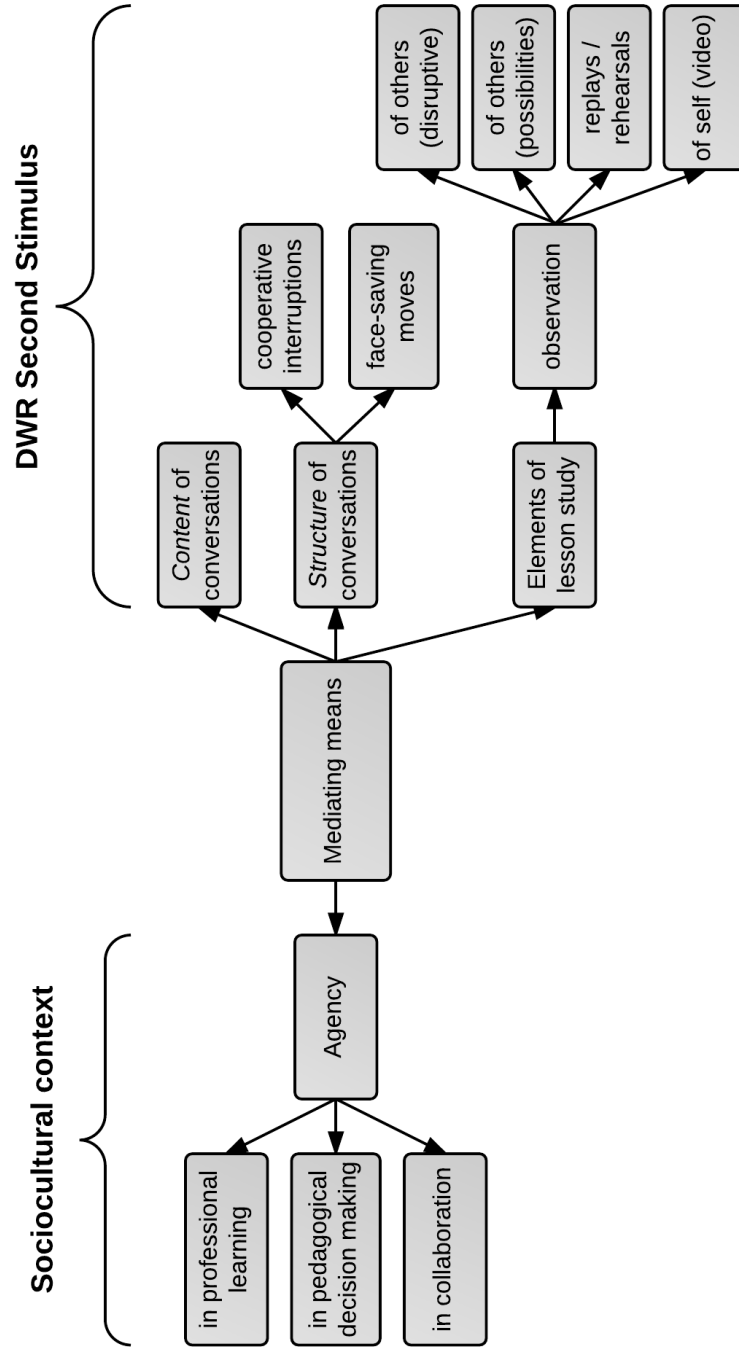
Coding focused on the following salient features of participant interaction, which are explained below:

- turn-taking patterns, through the coding of turn-construction units (TCUs) and turn-relevant places (TRPs) (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Liddicoat, 2011).
- cooperative interruptions (Schegloff, 2000)

3.5.1 Turn-taking patterns. One of the key premises of the turn-taking mechanism described by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) is the serial nature of conversation. In their words, "overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time" (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 700). How is it that individuals seem to simply 'know' when and how to take their respective turns in conversation? Conversation analysis elucidates the implicit nature of this process. The various turns that individuals take in conversation can be coded into turn constructional units (TCU) and turn relevant places (TRP). A TCU is equivalent to one turn, as marked by its expected end point, the TRP. The TRP marks the place where it would be acceptable for a speaker change to take place, though of course in reality individuals often talk past TRPs in their own speech, or interrupt others and begin talking prior to that individual having reached a TRP. A TCU can vary in length from a word (or sound) to a full sentence. Though the components of a TCU can be described in terms of their structural-linguistic units, TCUs are determinable only within the internal context of the surrounding turns; that is, whether or not the utterance is recognized as possibly complete within the trajectory of the conversation (Liddicoat, 2011, p. 84-85). Put differently, TCUs in speech need not follow the same rules of "completeness" that sentences do in writing.

In Excerpt 3.1 below, examples of these coding decisions are shown. TRPs are marked by a shaded horizontal line | .

Excerpt 3.1: "Vocabulary"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 00:05:22-00:05:30

```
1   Amina:    But I I see the students also like using the target language│and [you said this is=
2   Hinata:                                                                    [ah:::::::::::::│
3   Amina:    =first class to teach this topic│[so   I'm curious to know did you (.) like teach
4   Hinata:                                    [mm                         mm
5   Amina:    = the vocabulary be↑fore│or you give them a sheet to study at ↑home│or
6             [anything like that?│
7   Hinata:   [yeah:::::::::       so we have (.) vocabulary sheet right? ↑│And=
```

In this example, Amina successfully maintains the floor by talking past four TRPs. In the first line her first turn (TCU) ends after "language," because, contextually, her utterance would have been complete at that point. Hinata (in line 3) responds accordingly, beginning to take turns *as if Amina would have stopped at the first TRP*. Amina continues, though. The same pattern repeats in lines 4 and 5, when Hinata begins her backchannel at Amina's second TRP, in preparation for a possible speaker change. Amina continues again, and repeats the pattern by speaking through two more TRPs in line 6. It is her TRP after "home" which Hinata takes as a signal that indeed speaker change is imminent. Hinata begins with "yeah," but extends the sound until the point at which Amina does finally release her turn.

3.5.2 Cooperative interruptions. Implied in the concept of turn-taking is the idea that when more than one party *is talking,* talk must be *repaired.* However, when looking at natural conversations, especially those which are multi-party, it quickly becomes clear that quite often parties do *not* talk one at a time. Now, here I do not mean schisming (the breaking of one conversation into multiple sub-groups having individual conversations). Nor do I mean that multiple people can successfully talk outside the same trajectory, simultaneously, while still being part of the same conversation. What I do mean is that

there are ample examples of multi-party speech which are actually richer *because of* the overlapping, cooperative speech that characterizes them.

Overlaps and interruptions are not the same thing. As was mentioned above, the turn-taking mechanism initially described by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson was premised upon one-at-a-time talk. Referring to studies which invalidated arguments that people could only process messages from one source at a time, and suggesting that in at least one community such simultaneous speech was the norm, Edelsky (1981) argued that theories built on the premise of one-at-a-time talk were misguided.

Twenty-five years after this seminal work was written, Schegloff wrote a helpful paper on overlapping talk in which he added nuance to the original framework. He said, "The occurrence of overlap is problematic for an organization of talk-in-interaction designed for, and predicated on, one speaker talking at a time. Overlapping talk represents a departure from the turn-taking premises of this organization of interaction, and various elements of the organization of interaction press for its resolution. The integrity of the organization of interaction, and of any of its occasions, is indifferent to how the overlap is resolved – to who ends up with the turn" (Schegloff, 2000, p. 29). His premise then is that overlaps must be repaired *unless* they fall into four categories. These are:

1. **Terminal overlaps:** Speaker two begins their turn after a turn relevant place (TRP) in speaker one's speech. However, speaker one talks past their TRP, causing the listen two to overlap with speaker one.

2. **Continuers:** Context relevant utterances, such as "uh huh, mmhm, oh" which communicate successful receipt of the speaker's message. Backchannels are included in this category.

3. **"Conditional access to the turn":** The speaker, mid-turn, yields his/her turn to someone else for several possible reasons: a) request for assistance (e.g., help thinking of a word); and b) utterance completion

4. **"Chordal" or "choral":** Interactions which are "not to be done serially, not one after the other, but to be done simultaneously." (e.g., giving congratulations)

(Schegloff, 2000, p. 5)

Schegloff goes on to explain why he excludes these categories of talk from his discussion on repair of overlap. In the excepted categories the overlapping seems to occur cooperatively rather than competitively. Thus, rather than a need for repair, or "management of overlap" as he calls it, "the orderly practice of producing what will count as appropriate simultaneous production" (Schegloff, 2000, p. 6).

With these exceptions in mind, and their ability to contribute to rather than take from coherent discourse, the term "interruption" as applied to conversation becomes problematic. For one thing, the lay and technical understandings of the word are easily conflated. Warren points out that "Most interruptions do not fit the dictionary definitions and are not perceived as unhelpful or obstructive by the participants" (Warren, 2006, p. 219). Edelsky (1981), in her paper on the development of different floors in multi-party speech, said that "One also misses the fact that some transcribed interruptions are not 'felt' as interruptions while some transcribed one-at-a-time 'turns' are." (p. 399) Most helpful in this dilemma is Sinclair's (1991) distinction between co-operative and assertive

interruptions. Assertive interruptions take, for all practical purposes, the layman's meaning. Co-operative interruptions, on the other hand, correspond fairly evenly to Schegloff's four exceptions listed above.

3.6 Researcher Positionality

Finally, I discuss my own positionality. From the beginning, my role in the group was different from that of the instructors. As an employee of the CAS Language Center, I represented this institution, as well as the goals and initiatives of the LFP Project (described earlier). Though my position was in no way supervisory to them, my affiliation certainly carried with it an advisory connotation. Further, my status as a doctoral student in language education positioned me as an "outside expert" in the eyes of the other members. On at least two occasions that I remember, this came out explicitly in comments like, "Well, you're studying this (Beth) - what do you think we should do?"

Another crucial difference between myself and the other members was the fact that I was not teaching language in higher education as they were. Though I have taught ESL at the secondary level, and though I had taught and was teaching courses on language pedagogy within CoE at the University in the Midwest, the reality was that there were many experiences we did not share.

Finally, my participants and I came from different racial, ethnic, language, and national backgrounds. Hinata and Yukiko, as mentioned above, are Japanese women who grew up in Japan. Amina came to the U.S. from Egypt. As a white, American woman with Cuban heritage who grew up in the United States, certainly many of my core, implicit assumptions about "how to do/be human" were different from those of my participants. This was unavoidable, and honestly was part of what made the meeting of

this group of women a powerful space. Their inquiry – and mine – was not limited to pedagogy, but extended out to a curiosity about each other. Through learning about the different perspectives that we each had, we in turn questioned some of our own assumptions, including those we had of our students.

These various elements of who I am, individually, but also in contrast to my participants, certainly has shaped how I view the data. Interviewing was an important means for better understanding how the women perceived me and my role; however, I picture this as peeling back only a layer of an infinitely layered onion. We can strive for greater understanding, but it is always partial and incomplete.

Chapter 4 – Findings

In the following chapter I discuss various mediating means that interacted in specific ways, within the broader sociocultural context of Asian Language Programs at the University in the Midwest, to mediate the language teacher conceptual development of the focal participants – Yukiko and Hinata – within an instructor inquiry group. Specifically, I describe how the supportive environment of the Japanese program *afforded* Hinata and Yukiko particular pedagogical opportunities as language teachers. With this important context in place, I move to an analysis of the instructor inquiry group which sits at the heart of this study.

It's particularly appropriate that Hinata and Yukiko came together through professional development events; both Hinata and Yukiko talked about the importance of these types of in-service professional learning events in furthering their pedagogy. More specifically, their comments suggest that they experienced (at least) two levels of benefit from events like the LRC Institutes – pedagogical content knowledge and interaction with colleagues. The topic of the event served to mediate acquisition of "knowledge" about and for teaching (see line 8 in excerpt 4.4 below); the structure of the event, and the extent to which that structure explicitly opened spaces for small group interaction, mediated the conversion of that "knowledge" into practice. For Hinata especially, it was interaction that brought together theory and practice. She explains the role of interaction in her learning in Excerpt 4.1 below.

> **Excerpt 4.1: "Learning and then Implementation"**
> **Source: Hinata Interview / Time stamp: 00:18:46-00:20:32**
>
> 1   Beth: okay, alright. (.) um, talk about some of the different professional development.
>
> 2   So you brought up LRC Institutes and CAS Language Center and like our small

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3		group. What do you feel like (.) not compare them, but, what do you get out of
4		the different types? Does that make sense?
5	Hinata:	yeah yeah yeah. So, from Regional institutes or local workshops I get
6		knowledge. For example, last year we learned uh expert way practice
7	Beth:	action research
8	Hinata:	action research. and IPA and I took IPA classes in an institute last summer, so
9		I got knowledge. And kinda like there I start thinking about how I can you know
10		implement what I have learned into my own teaching. And in the small group
11		like we have or more smaller, like smaller even smaller, with Yukiko, I kinda,
12		those places are um like good good ones to kinda think more you know about
13		how I can implement those like knowledge into your teaching. So like at the
14		workshops or institutes, like learning, learning and then implementation
15		– or like, planning, actual planning gets more in depth, in small groups
16	Beth:	yep, yep, yep. Well one thing I think about is then you have to figure out how to
17		make it real
18	Hinata:	So internalize it.

In lines 6-15 Hinata traces her process of pedagogical change, from learning about a new pedagogical method, to considering its utility and applicability, and finally to implementing it in her curriculum and instruction. She talks about how the professional development event gives her "knowledge" and a place to "start thinking about how I can you know implement what I have learned into my own teaching." Importantly, she points to small group interaction (naming both the inquiry group *and* her co-teaching partnership with Yukiko) as "those places [that are] good ones to kinda think more you know about how I can implement those like knowledge into your teaching."

4.1 Activity system of the inquiry group *during DWR-derived intervention*

I now move to the heart of the research question – what elements of this diverse language instructor inquiry group served to mediate language teacher conceptual development? Towards this end I first recount in detail Hinata's lesson study cycle. I explain how I as the researcher, and the instructors as part of an inquiry group, implemented aspects of developmental work research and lesson study respectively. I conclude the chapter with a detailed examination of the salient mediating means by focusing on the group's interaction about one particularly vexing, absorbing, and illustrative problem space – how to engage students in vocabulary learning.

4.1.1 DWR First stimulus (mirroring): Informal Sharing. As a reminder, Developmental Work Research (DWR) is based on the Vygotskian concept of "double stimulation," that is, where the first stimulus is a problem (or contradiction), and the second stimulus is an ambiguous tool. From the perspective of researchers, DWR enables study of *how* the second stimulus, the ambiguous tool, is used to mediate work on the object (that is, the problem space, or contradiction that was identified in the first stimulus). Typically, a DWR cycle begins by eliciting information from individuals across an activity system; the more knowledge the researcher has about the work goals and conditions, the better s/he can map out the interactions within and between activity systems. Through this process, the researcher can apply the first stimulus by first identifying existing contradictions in the system, and then secondly, *mirroring* those contradictions back to the work group.

The use of DWR in the present study was different. In most DWR studies – including Tasker (2014) – the researcher is unknown to the participants until the

beginning of the DWR process; unfamiliar to either the institutional history or the current working conditions, and needing this information in order to map and then mirror the activity system to the participants, during the first stimulus the typical DWR researcher must fill in their own knowledge gaps through interviews and document study. In the present study, however, I got to know the participants and they got to know me – and each other – in an organic way over the course of the year (and longer for Hinata and Yukiko). In addition, as an employee of the CAS Language Center, myriad informal conversations with the Director and other colleagues built my historical understanding of the Language Programs at UiM. Thus, the first stimulus – where the researcher first identifies existing contradictions in the system, and then secondly, *mirrors* those contradictions back to the work group – took place organically during a series of four sessions beginning in Fall 2014. By the time I initiated the second stimulus by suggesting the idea of lesson study to the group in the Spring of 2015, much of the information that would have normally come to the surface during initial DWR interviews had already been talked about during those four sessions. Thus in Spring 2015 I found myself in an organically developing situation where the environment was rich for elements of DWR and lesson study to come together to support the professional development of these instructors. To this end, the first stimulus "mirroring" process was accomplished organically during the first four sessions. During the first three sessions the women shared their ideas and experiences, as I guided them in uncovering contradictions in both their own and our shared activity systems. Then, at the fourth meeting I used notes that I had taken during these initial, informal meetings to "mirror back" to the group contradictions which had appeared during those conversations.

Though messy, the organic nature of this process was invaluable towards building trust within the group. Indeed, Viskovic (2005) points to organic group development as a necessary factor in success in communities of practice. I imagine that the conversations the group held would have been quite different had the women not already built these bonds of trust in a non-researched environment. Nevertheless, this organic start to the group presents a challenge for data analysis, because these early conversations were not audio-recorded. However, because of my role in professional development with the CAS Language Center, I had taken detailed notes during and after these meetings in order to think about professional development initiatives.

   4.1.1.1 Initial DWR sessions. As described in Chapter 3, the inquiry group met on an informal basis three times before the intervention (lesson study protocol) was adopted – once in Fall 2014 and twice in Spring 2015.[8] The fourth session served as a transition session, with elements of both the first stimulus (mirroring back to the group contradictions in their system) and the second stimulus (introduction of the tool of lesson study). The fourth and subsequent sessions will be described in the next major section: DWR Second stimulus (4.2.2). Amina joined the group at the third meeting. As stated on p. 69, the present study views this period as equivalent to a first stimulus for the group, replacing the usual first stimulus consisting of formal interviews with a more organic period in which the teachers and I interacted with ("interviewed") each other. Below I describe the issues raised by the group in each of the pre-implementation meetings based on my notes and artifacts such as print materials the participants distributed, and photos.

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[8] Complete listing of inquiry group meeting dates can be found in Table 3.3 of Chapter 3.

4.1.1.1.1 Session 1 (October 29, 2014). The first meeting (October 29, 2014)

focused on Hinata and Yukiko's recent implementation of an Integrated Performance

Assessment (IPA) in their Intermediate level course.[9] First Hinata and Yukiko talked

generally about how they had been making the move to such thematic based units, having

been motivated by the LRC summer institutes which they had attended that summer;

Hinata had studied assessment and Yukiko Content Based Instruction (CBI). Hinata

shared the IPA she and Yukiko had created and used as a mid-term exam that Fall.

The topic of the IPA was "announcing social events." The first task – the

interpretive task – asked students to first work with flyers which Hinata and Yukiko had

found online from a Japanese university. These flyers announced various club events in a

mixture of Japanese and English. Students needed to find key info about the events

advertised by the flyers and then tell their friends about the event. The second task – the

interpersonal task – asked students to work in pairs, each with a different flyer, and

negotiate which of the two events to attend. By design, this task required students to use

one of the key grammatical and pragmatic skills of the unit – polite refusal. The final task

in the IPA – the presentational task – involved learners working in groups to plan an

event and create their own flyer.

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[9] The Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) was designed in 1997 through a US DOE grant
received by ACTFL. As taught in the LRC Assessment course, the IPA is predicated on
backwards design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), guiding curricular design with a stipulation of
"the end in mind." An IPA unit is thus designed around those authentic tasks that students should
be able to do by the end of the unit. Put differently, it is a *performance* assessment because it
measures what students can *do* with language, as opposed to what they know *about* language. The
IPA unit that leads up to the final demonstration of achievement of learning objectives is made up
of three instructional sub-tasks, each built around one of the three communicative modes:
interpersonal, presentational, interpretive. These three sub-tasks build on one another and are
centered around the same topic, thus making the assessment *integrated.*

Hinata explained how the IPA – and the corresponding unit more generally – connected to one of the chapters in the textbook. There are multiple entry points to curriculum design; Hinata and Yukiko described using the textbook as a tool, looking first at which vocabulary, grammar, and topics were included in the textbook. From there they then thought about *perceived* student interests and tried to develop thematic IPA units that would unite the existing chapter material with student interest. This was not unidirectional, though; they described how, as they designed the IPA, they thought of different ideas which led them back to seeing how they might leverage the textbook in originally unintended ways. Guerrettaz & Johnston (2013) document how an instructor creatively leverages a textbook in the "ecology" of the language classroom to support student learning in ways the textbook author could not have predicted. This research been praised by language materials experts (Garton & Graves 2014). The participants in this study leverage their textbook in a similar way in the ecology of their own language classrooms. In my notes, I wrote about how the work they described was a "dialogic, ongoing pivot between instructor-created materials and the textbook" (researcher journal October 29, 2014).

4.1.1.1.2 Session 2 (February 6, 2015). The group of three instructors came back together early in the Spring 2015 semester (Week 3). At this meeting it was suggested that we invite Amina to join our group. The idea was quickly and enthusiastically received. Amina was a new first-year instructor of Arabic in Department of Asian Languages, and the women were eager to make her feel welcome in the department. It had also become clear – both to the women in the inquiry group, and to leaders in the Arabic Program and the CAS Language Center – that Amina was herself a rising leader.

Already in December 2014 she had been asked to present at a CAS Language Center sponsored "teacher sharing meeting" (the same event where Yukiko and Hinata had shared their IPA). Amina had also recently been tapped to join the PS Team as a representative for the Arabic program. At this point, then, everyone in the inquiry group but Hinata was also part of the PS Team.[10] The three instructors also worked in close proximity, facilitating the building of both social and professional connections.[11] In sum, conditions were ripe for the women to connect both socially and professionally.

4.1.1.1.3 Session 3 (February 25, 2015). The group of three instructors that met in Session 3 included Amina. Though not the first time that the textbook had been discussed, it was in this meeting that the most animated conversations centered around how to use the textbook. Yukiko, for example, argued that one of the strongest reasons for adopting thematically-based IPA units was because their use enabled students – by design – to cycle back to much of the vocabulary, building on it throughout a semester. In general, the women discussed how they aimed to build curriculum which utilized the textbook in creative, engaging ways – as Guerrettaz & Johnston (2013) would say, within the ecologies of their own classrooms.

4.1.1.2 Themes in initial sessions data. Over the course of the three initial sessions, the group's conversations spanned a variety of topics – and yet also began to revolve around common, recurring tensions. Two fundamental thematic contradictions

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[10] Over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year, the PS Team met eight times. Beth was a member throughout the entire year. Yukiko joined the team at the third meeting (in November). Amina joined the team at the fifth meeting (in January).

[11] The Department of Asian Languages (DAL) offices were organized in a central area within a large building on campus that housed the majority of world language programs. Yukiko and Hinata were housed within a large office shared by instructors in the Japanese department and had desks facing one another. Amina had a desk within the Arabic instructor office just down the hall from the Japanese office.

emerged, one around using the textbook and the other around gaining/keeping student engagement.

4.1.1.2.1 Supporting role of the textbook. During the first three sessions just described, we have seen that one of the more frequently discussed topics was the role of the textbook. Each of the instructors discussed experiencing, to differing degrees, a contradiction commonly experienced by world language teachers – that is, the dissonance between textbooks designed with no particular context in mind, and the teachers' need to meet the specific learning needs of students in the context of their classrooms. Just as in Guerrettaz & Johnston's (2013) research (discussed above), the instructors in this study skillfully adapted the content of their textbooks to better fit the ecology of their own classroom. Hinata and Yukiko had flexibility in their curricular approach and were able to guide *how* they used the textbook within the ecology of their classroom. Thus they experienced this contradiction in an expansive way – they talked about being able to make changes to their curriculum in ways that resolved this contradiction.

Similarly, Amina had the freedom to design her own units and lessons. The year prior, she had completed her Master's in Education in the World Languages Program of the College of Education at the University in the Midwest. As I had been an instructor in that program at the time (though never Amina's instructor), it was clear to me that much of Amina's pedagogy bore the signature of those principles and content that defined the teacher education program.

For all the women, the different ways that they each utilized their textbooks within their activity systems mediated group and individual brainstorming for their own curricular development. Thus, the contradiction between the different systems of each of

the participants, and the resultant mirroring that took place in the sessions, served as a new mediating tool.

      4.1.1.2.2 Gaining/keeping Student Engagement. The second contradiction that emerged in these discussions focused on student engagement, which was referenced as an implicit criterion for decision-making in lesson planning and curricular choices. By "student engagement," the instructors seemed to picture students who were active (as opposed to displaying or even directly expressing boredom), cheerful (as read through facial expressions, laughing), and diligent (studying outside of class). There was also the implication that an *engaged* student would use the target language as much as possible during class. That these qualities and behaviors would lead to language acquisition was the implied goal; however, to have students enjoy the classes and the process of learning a new language was the directly spoken goal.

      The women agreed that planning with student interest in mind went a long way towards the end of "student engagement." Concrete examples of them doing this came up during the first three sessions. For example, Hinata and Yukiko talked about how they had taken student interests into consideration when developing their IPA unit (Session 1). The women also talked about how making these curricular decisions with student interests in mind resulted in the types of behaviors that they associated with student engagement.

      The same was true in regard to pedagogical strategies; the instructors talked about how using activities that got students out of their chairs, or interacting with peers, brought energy into the room. As an example, at the December 2014 CAS Language Center sponsored "teacher sharing meeting," Amina had shared the "gallery walk" strategy, an

activity to get students writing / speaking in the target language. In this activity, the instructor places a series of images (or short pieces of writing) around the room and has students visit each of the "exhibits" in the "gallery." A teacher may choose to have a different prompt at each exhibit, or one prompt that students successively add to as they circle the room (and these are just a few of the number of variations that can be made). Sometimes students respond to these prompts in writing, either on their own paper or by adding to poster paper at each exhibit. Students can also go through the "gallery" in pairs or small groups, discussing the prompts orally at each exhibit. They may then prepare a written report on their insights, all in the target language. This one pedagogical strategy, common in K-12 settings, was new to the instructors in our inquiry group. By the time Amina joined the group in February 2015, everyone in the group had used the "gallery walk" in at least one of their classes; they reported that students appeared to enjoy this new type of activity.

If the instructors were experiencing successes in raising student engagement through the use of both curricular and pedagogical changes, why then was student engagement an area of contradiction? Here the instructors' reading of their students' level of engagement – and importantly, pedagogical and curricular responses they desired to make in response to their readings of low engagement – came into conflict with the textbook.

4.1.2 DWR Second stimulus (New mediating artifact): Lesson study. The mirroring of a group's activity system – especially the contradictions in that system and between it and other systems – comprises the first stimulus in a DWR Project. That is, the first stimulus helps the group to identify a salient problem space for focus throughout the

rest of the DWR project. The problem space in the present study, focusing on the innovative use of textbooks and encouraging student engagement, emerged organically as the inquiry group met in the three sessions just described. Once this problem space has been identified, the second stimulus – a new mediating artifact – can be introduced. In this study lesson study served as the second stimulus. The next sections describe the second stimulus of lesson study in the present study, and recounts how the lesson study cycle proceeded.

 4.1.2.1 Beginning lesson study: Session 4 (April 1, 2015). We began implementing elements of the lesson study protocol at our fourth meeting on April 1, 2015. However, I had first brought up the idea of using lesson study much earlier in the Spring in a January 15, 2015 email. In it, I asked the group if they would be interested in both trying out lesson study and sharing reflections on our small group conversations at an upcoming conference (Spring 2015). I said:

> I thought it might be interesting to others if we shared about what we are learning
>
> from meeting together informally in a small group. We could even do lesson
>
> study together? (You've probably heard of this...it's an idea to come out of
>
> Japanese education...*jugyou kenkyuu*. I was part of a lesson study group eight
>
> years ago and found it so helpful! (Email, January 15, 2015)

The group, and especially Hinata and Yukiko, loved both ideas and so I drafted an abstract for us to submit. Lesson study didn't come back up in a significant way in the inquiry group until the fourth session; however, at the third session, when Amina joined us for the first time, we did share that we were thinking about "trying out lesson study," and I gave a very brief summary of what lesson study was about.

4.1.2.1.1 Introducing lesson study. Thus, up until our fourth session on April 1, 2015, we had only talked about lesson study in very broad brushstrokes. To my surprise, the lesson study protocol was new to everyone in the inquiry group except myself. The fact that neither Hinata nor Yukiko was familiar with this Japanese method, despite having grown up and received their teacher training in Japan, suggests that lesson study, though widespread in Japan, is not as universal as many Western reports suggest. Of course, both Hinata and Yukiko had left Japan shortly after receiving their teacher training, limiting their possible exposure to the method. In any case, everyone in the group needed to learn more about what lesson study was, and so during the fourth session I introduced lesson study to the group in detail.

In addition to describing each of the steps in lesson study, I also shared Takahashi and Yoshida's 2004 article "Ideas for Establishing Lesson-Study Communities" with the group. At that time, the aspect of lesson study that most excited the group was the opportunity to observe each other's teaching through the lens of the themes identified during the First Stimulus, and give/receive feedback in subsequent sessions. With this in mind, at the fourth session we discussed which aspects of lesson study were practical and desirable for us to implement, deciding that we would skip the second step of lesson study (Collaborative planning of the lesson). In sum, during the fourth session I introduced lesson study in detail, we completed the first step of lesson study (defining the focus of inquiry), we decided to skip the second step, and we planned the logistics for the third step (observing/teaching the lesson).

4.1.2.1.2 Choosing the lesson study goal. The first step in the lesson study process involves teachers choosing a topic or question to pursue through the entire cycle. Earlier

in this chapter, I discussed the most significant areas of contradiction that arose during the pre-study conversations: what role the textbook could/should play, and how to maintain student engagement. Because I had taken notes during our earlier meetings, and because I filled the role of both researcher and facilitator, in this fourth session I reintroduced ideas that had been previously discussed, and (re)presented to the group the themes that seemed to emerge. I used phrases such as: "It sounds like what x and y are both saying is…," "The comments y and z are making seem to be about…," and "Is (topic) representative of the ideas you have…" My goal was to myself be a mediating tool – and outside other – that could serve as a real-time mirror and synthesizer. At the end of a roughly hour long conversation, the following questions had emerged:

- How do we build and sustain student-centered engagement?

    o intellectual curiosity

    o facilitate a learning environment where this happens

- How can we increase students' vocabulary knowledge in natural ways?

- How can we use the textbook as a tool?

    o maybe also this idea of making connections? (Researcher journal, 4/1/2015)

Ultimately, the group decided that the three questions were connected, in the sense that they wanted to make sense of how to both teach vocabulary and make use of the textbook in ways that "built and sustained student-centered engagement."

The second and third steps in a lesson study cycle involve planning and teaching the "research lesson." It was during Session 4 that the inquiry group chose to depart from the traditional lesson study protocol presented by Takahashi and Yoshida (2004) and

observe each other teaching lessons that each teacher had already created. (This replaced the collaborative creation of a research language lesson that Takahashi & Yoshida present as an invaluable component of the lesson study process). The primary rationale for this decision was that the three instructors in this study taught courses in two different languages and at two different levels; the thought of collaboratively creating a single lesson that might possibly be useful in all of their contexts proved daunting at this stage of the group's evolution.[12] Another rationale was logistical: the group decision to adopt the lesson study protocol came late, mid-way through the Spring semester, making it impractical for them to make large adjustments to their curriculum. These decisions represent some of the challenges of implementing lesson study in world language programs, where programs and departments are often composed of multiple languages represented by few individuals. (This important challenge, and creative ways forward, will be addressed in Chapter 5.)

The group then decided that, in the interest of maximizing what was left of the semester, we would observe one lesson each of Amina and Hinata. For the purpose of this dissertation study, I focus primarily on Hinata's lesson, as she is one of the focal participants. Below, I describe in detail Hinata's lesson.

4.1.2.2 Hinata's lesson. Hinata invited us to observe her Beginning (first year), second-semester course on April 13, 2015. She provided me with an electronic copy of the lesson plan that morning, and gave paper and electronic copies of all materials to the rest of the group as they entered the classroom at the start of class. This course met five days a week, for fifty minutes at a time. Hers was one of eight sections of the course

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[12] Interestingly, at the end of the cycle the group discussed possibly coming together in the future to create curriculum united by theme and language focus, but differentiated by language.

offered in Spring 2015, and she had 15 students enrolled in the course. She estimated that the students' proficiency level was novice-mid (according to the ACTFL standards). The class met in a newly renovated building on campus that was home to the vast majority of world languages (both offices and classrooms). The classroom itself was well lit, having several windows on one of the four walls. Rolling tables were arranged in three rows; students sat two to a table, each in a rolling chair, everyone facing forward. There was a white board in the front, but the presentation screen covered the majority of it. Hinata used the screen, having the presentation up the entire time. There were also white boards which covered most of the back and side walls. The teacher technology podium was in the front of the room, just off of the center. There was also one table in the front for instructor materials.

As researcher, I manned the camera. For the majority of the time I stationed myself on the same side of the room as the windows. Thus, from the perspective of the camera, the front of the room was to the left, and the three rows of students were to the right. However, because one of the core principles of lesson study is to focus on student (rather than teacher) actions during a lesson, I also moved throughout the room during pair/share and group activities, in order to replicate the physical movements an observing teacher would engage in during lesson study. As videographer, I attempted to stay with each pair or group long enough to get a sense of their conversation. The class that day was composed of ten individuals who presented as male, and three individuals who presented as female. Amina observed the lesson live, and sat in the third (back) row in the far right corner (closer to the windows, and farthest from the door). Yukiko taught during this hour, and watched the lesson via video.

The class which the inquiry group observed was the first day of a new content-based unit about "Modern Japanese Society and Cultural Diversity." The lesson focused specifically on "Friendship and Social Networking Services." The full lesson plan, which was distributed to the observers as they walked into the classroom, is included in Appendix C, but I reproduce below the objectives, essential questions, and linguistic goals of the lesson:

Objectives:

- o Students will reflect on their friendship and its relation to their Social Networking Services use.

- o Students will think about what it means to be friends online (and offline).

- o Students will read and view information Japanese young adults' SNS usage and compare it with their own experience.

Essential questions:

- o How do you define "friends"?

- o How important is the use of SNS for you to keep in touch with friends?

- o If you would write a blog post or a personal ad online, how would you describe yourself?

Linguistic goals / can-do statements:

- o Students can get main ideas about Japanese young adults' SNS usage by reading and viewing graphs from an online article, and can produce short sentences based on what they found. (The use of comparison is desirable.)

- o Students can use adjectives and verbs to qualify nouns (noun modification) in the context of describing one's personality, appearance, interests, hobbies, etc.

Two elements of the lesson were immediately and strikingly noticeable: the side role that the textbook played, and the instructor's use of the target language (Hinata only used English once, for less than a minute). As I describe in detail the lesson below, assume that teacher and student talk are in Japanese unless explicitly stated otherwise.

In her lesson plan, Hinata sub-divided the 50-minute lesson into seven sections:

1) Warm-up + quiz

2) Kanji Writing practice 勉強 (*benkyo,* to study)

3) Introductory questions to the new unit

4) Interpretive and interpersonal activity

5) Information gap activity

6) Writing activity

7) Gallery walk

Hinata began class by greeting the class with a hello, 「こんにちは」(*konnichiwa*), to which the students, in unison, replied back the same. She then asked the class about their weekend. At first, the majority of the class replied at the same time, many with simply "eh:::," but others with attempted but indistinguishable replies. Hinata then called on two students; though their responses were short, ranging from 4-10 words, they spoke entirely in Japanese, and with enough fluency and comprehensibility for Hinata to easily respond. Greetings lasted only a few minutes, and Hinata went directly into brief kanji review and quick written quiz. All of this transpired within the first five and a half minutes of class.

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As soon as the quiz was complete, Hinata moved into the day's kanji: 勉強 (*benkyo,* to study). She introduced each of the component kanji, showing how the two combined to create a new meaning. Images 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 show the presentation slides used during this portion of the lesson. As an orientation to the slides, across the top of Slides 4.1 and 4.2 the pronunciation of the key kanji is written in hiragana, one of the two syllabaries used to spell Japanese words. The kanji being studied is in the largest font size, with the English meaning in parentheses just above it. Just to the right or below the graphic is one or more of the component radicals of the main kanji. Radicals function much like root words.[13] For example, within the kanji 勉 (to make efforts, strive) you can see the radical 力 (*chikara,* strength or power). The slide in Image 4.3 is composed differently, as the prior two slides already provided the necessary background for making sense of the new kanji: 勉強. Image 4.3 shows, from bottom to top, the English meaning: "study," the pronunciation in hiragana: べんきょう (*benkyo*), the new kanji: 勉強, and finally, a phrase to remember the component kanji: "Make efforts and be strong!"

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[13] Through learning the 214 radicals, Japanese learners are able to make educated guesses about the meanings of unknown kanji.

Image 4.1: Presentation slide illustrating 勉 (to make effort, strive)
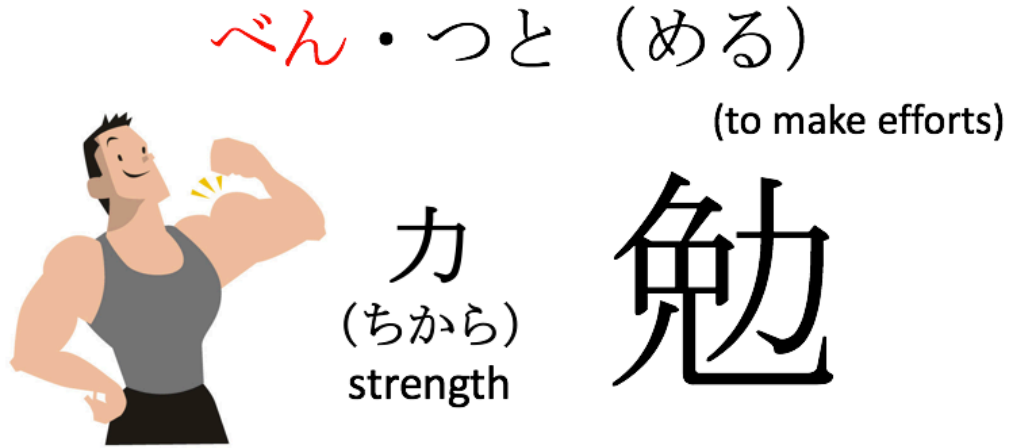
Image 4.2 Presentation slide illustrating 強 (strong)
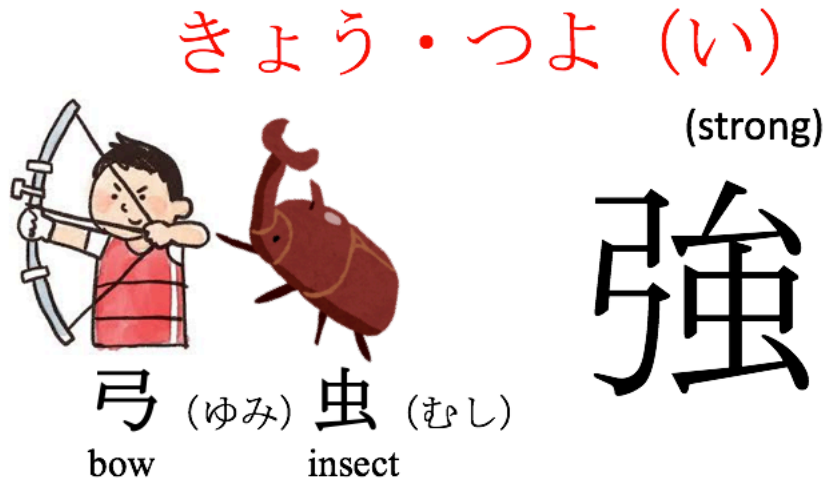
Image 4.3 Presentation slide combining 勉+強 (to study)

Make efforts and be strong!

勉強
べんきょう
study

For each of these slides, Hinata not only talked through the various elements of the kanji, but also slowly wrote the kanji on the whiteboard so that students could learn the stroke order. During this time all the students in the room were silent and copied the stroke order onto their kanji sheet (see sheet at bottom right of Image 4.4).

Image 4.4: Photo of worksheets used during class meeting

To conclude this section, Hinata gave students two prompts using the new word 勉強

(study), and asked them to turn and talk with a partner. The prompts were:

一人で勉強するのが好きですか。	Do you like to study alone?
友だちと勉強するのが好きですか。	Do you like to study with friends?
どうしてですか。	Why?

As was the case throughout class, most of student conversation picked up by the video

camera was in the target language. After a few minutes, Hinata called the class back

together and asked for someone to share their preference and reasoning. One student in

the front row shared, though too quietly for the camera to detect. That said, Hinata's

facial expressions and body language communicated that what he said had made sense.

At ten and a half minutes into the lesson, Hinata moved into the third component

of the lesson: the introductory questions to the new unit. First, she asked students to

define 友だち (*tomodachi,* friend) versus 知りあい (*shiriai,* acquaintance). "What kind

of people do you call friends? What kind of people are acquaintances?" she asked, but in

Japanese. She then moved students to consider whether all of their facebook friends were

also real-life friends. Finally, to prepare students for the day's topic – "Friendship and

Social Networking Services" – she asked students to pair/share around the questions:

"How often do you use SNS to keep in touch with friends? What kind of SNS do you

often use?"

　　　　Throughout this time, students exhibited body language consistent with comfort

and engagement; students were either leaning forward in their seat with elbows on the

tables, or comfortably sitting against the backs of their chairs – in all cases pivoting

between eyes pointed forward and focused on Hinata and/or the presentation, and eyes on

one of the relevant worksheets. During times when students were asked to pair/share,

students often did not make eye contact with each other, instead either looking forward,

or at the materials on their desks. It's difficult to tell from the video, but in most cases, it

seemed that students were not looking at their desks in order to reference materials, but

rather to avoid eye contact. I wonder how the physical set-up of the room – tables all in

rows pointed forward – may have played into this.

　　　　At minute 15, Hinata moved into the day's interpretive and interpersonal activity:

making sense of four graphs about Japanese young adults' SNS usage. She hands out a

worksheet to the students (included in full in Appendix D), asking them to read the

graphs and then respond to the questions about similarities and differences in how youth

in Japan and their country use SNS. In the video, students can be seen annotated the

worksheet and saying words outloud (to themselves, as in private speech) as they worked

to decode the language in the worksheet. These verbalizations were in both Japanese and English. As students worked, Hinata can be seen walking around and providing assistance. At some times she would quickly provide the English translation of a kanji that students couldn't understand. At other times, she would scaffold student understanding, often by using the phrase 「これわ」 (*kore wa* / This is↑) to prompt students to verbalize the surrounding kanji that they *did* understand. In this way she was able to support their understanding through the use of context clues. This section of the lesson was rushed; after only three minutes, Hinata called the class back together and led a debrief of the worksheet questions.

The textbook makes an entrance, though in modified form, at minute 21 of the lesson. One of the readings from the textbook is a collection of four personal advertisements. Rather than having students simply read the four ads and respond to questions, she turned the readings into an information gap activity by obscuring portions of the ads for different people. (See Image 4.4, center worksheet with 'inkblots') She created an A and B version of what was originally in the textbook, and had students work in pairs to not only answer the questions, but also discuss whether they would want to be friends with the people in the article. To conclude, she had the students evaluate the attractiveness of the advertisements. At the end of student sharing, Hinata shows a short promotional video by and about LINE, the SNS popular in Japan.

The final activity of the day built on the prior activity, asking students to now write their own personal ad, this time for a language exchange partner. Interestingly, the slide giving instructions for this activity is the only one in English (see Image 4.5 below).

Image 4.5 Presentation slide giving instructions for collaborative writing activity

「友だちぼしゅう」

You are looking for a language exchange partner online. As a group of three, select one person in the group and collaboratively write a short "personal ad" for the person.
Please include:
- Interesting title
- Description of the person (You may draw a picture, too.)
- What kind of activities he/she likes to do together with a language partner.
- Closing sentence(s)
  [e.g. invitation〜ませんか。Or ましょう。]

Hinata divided students into four groups of three, primarily by their location in the classroom. Three of the four groups spread around the classroom, positioning themselves in front of different parts of the whiteboards. One group chose to write their ad on a piece of paper, and stayed at their table to do so. During this activity, students were able to write the kanji, katakana, and hiragana that they needed quickly, and typically without referring to any written guides. Conversations within each group stayed mostly in Japanese, except for one of the groups, which used English over half the time in social ways.

After 12 minutes, Hinata called the class back together, and quickly explained that each group would now present. She requested, complete with physical motions, for the entire class to come stand around the first group presenting; none of the class complied, opening the question of whether the students did not understand, or whether they did, but

chose not to comply. Each group shared, though quickly, primarily by reading out what they had written on the board.

The class concluded with a ritual closing; Hinata gave a small bow as she thanked the class. As students packed up and left the classroom, I packed up the video camera equipment. We all had commitments immediately after class, and so no discussion of the lesson occurred at that time.

4.1.2.3 Debriefing Hinata's lesson: Session 6 (April 20, 2015). The inquiry group reconvened one week after Hinata's lesson. During the meeting I served as the facilitator, asking probing and clarifying questions, at times synthesizing conversation into core ideas that seemed to be coming up, and also simply moving the conversation along if we stalled. I also took on the role of a co-inquiry group member, sharing my own observations, questions, and ideas as they seemed relevant to the conversation; just as with all the interactions that occurred throughout the study, the conversations during the seventh session were co-constructed by the instructors and myself.

Below, I focus on one illustrative problem space which the instructors returned to throughout the session – how to engage students in vocabulary learning. I describe the salient mediating means utilized (implicitly and explicitly) by the instructors to navigate this problem space. I conceptualize these mediating means as falling into three overlapping categories: those related to the *content* of the conversations, those related to conversational *structure* (i.e., cooperative interruptions, the negotiation of face-threatening and face-saving comments), and those related to the methods of *lesson study* (i.e., observation of others – both as disruptive to one's own experiences and pedagogical

training, and as suggestive of new possibilities, and 'virtual' observation through the use

of *replays* and *rehearsals* (Horn, 2010; Goffman, 1974)).

 4.1.2.3.1 Content of the conversations. We begin our analysis of mediating means

with a discussion of the *content* of the inquiry group's conversations during Session 6.

The focus of the group's conversations fell into eight broad categories: reflection, TL

usage, teaching/learning vocabulary, the use of authentic materials, clarification (for non-

Japanese speakers), differentiation, choosing engaging topics/questions, and finally,

cultural exchange (between instructors and between students). To aid in visualizing how

the session transpired, I have divided the 82-minute discussion into nine portions of time,

the beginning of each portion marked by turns of talk that signaled a shift in the trajectory

of the conversation. For example, a lull in conversation, followed by Hinata's comment:

"Oh, the second thing is that…" marked a shift into a new stage – or portion – of the

conversation. Note that foci often co-occurred during one portion of time, as well as

cycled back into the conversation in later moments; as such there is not a one-to-one

mapping between foci and time. Table 4.2 below maps the *eight* foci onto the *nine*

portions of time.

Table 4.2 Mapping discussion topics to the overall arc of conversation

Portion	Time	Major focus of conversation	Excerpts
1	3:14-5:20 (~5 min.)	- Reflection (on laughter)	4.8
2	5:20-10:25 (~5 min.)	- TL usage - Teaching/learning vocabulary	4.2, 4.6, 4.7
3	10:25-18:05 (~7.5 min.)	- Reflection (on pacing) - Clarification (for non-Japanese speakers)	4.9
4	18:05-19:45 (~2 min.)	- Clarification (for non-Japanese speakers)	
5	19:45-27:50 (~8 min.)	- Reflection (on pacing) - Differentiation	
6	27:50-38:40 (~11 min.)	- Authentic materials - Teaching/learning vocabulary (especially in regards to IPA)	4.3
7	38:40-45:30 (~7 min.)	- Reflection (on pacing) - Teaching/learning vocabulary (especially in regards to IPA)	4.4
8	45:30-53:10 (~8 min.)	- TL usage - Authentic materials	4.5
9	54:10-1:22:00 (~28 min.)	- Choosing topics/questions - Cultural exchange (between instructors) / how to promote this among students?	

Below I elaborate on those foci most clearly connected to the group's lesson study goal of building and sustaining student-centered engagement: *target language usage, authentic materials, and the teaching/learning of vocabulary*. I discuss these three foci in tandem because they co-occurred throughout the session. This makes sense; in order to use authentic materials and/or the 90%+ TL which ACTFL advocates, teachers must accept that *students can make sense* of language input *they haven't explicitly been taught.*

Conversations related to this dilemma arose throughout Session 6, but especially in the portions of talk listed in Table 4.2 as #6, #7, and #8. Amina was the first to bring up the dilemma, and did so within the first ten minutes of our conversation (this initial portion of talk I take up later in detail in a discussion of the mediating role of

conversational *structure*: see Excerpt 4.6). To summarize for now, Amina had started off the conversation with a question about how the students could already use so much of the target vocabulary (TL), and tested her assumption that students would need to learn the vocabulary explicitly through the use of vocabulary sheets with direct English translations. Hinata then confirmed that her students did indeed receive vocabulary sheets, but added complexity to this response, explaining that the TL usage the inquiry group had observed at the beginning of the class only required students to use already-known vocabulary. She added further complexity to her description for the inquiry group of what vocabulary teaching and learning looked like in her classroom. She explained that she did not "control (her) use of vocabulary" and sometimes used "words that students might not know." She then gave a concrete example of the phrase *"chuui shite kite kudasai"* – literally, "listen carefully please" – to argue that, though students might not understand *chuui shite* (carefully), they could still grasp the more frequently used *kite* (listen) and *kudasai* (please). With this example she essentially argued that language learners did not need to understand every single word that they hear or read.

However, Hinata then followed with a counter example – this time from the observed lesson – where students seemingly were *not* able to make sense of her instructions given in the target language. In Excerpt 4.2 below Hinata refers to the very end of the observed lesson. Students had been asked to work in groups to create a personal ad for a language exchange partner and write that ad on one of the room's whiteboards. Class was nearing an end, and Hinata wanted students to view the ads of each group. Excerpt 4.2 presents Hinata's re-telling – and theorization – of what happened.

Excerpt 4.2: "They were just ignoring me!"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 00:8:20-00:09:58

1   Hinata: yeah↓ but in the end of the class uh so after student wrote something on the wall

2   and then (.) I wanted uh students' attention back to one of the >you know<

3   student group and I said please please come to that group, but they didn't

4   understand

5   Beth: ·hhh right, yeah I [noticed that

6   (   ):   mm mm mm mm

7   Hinata: [I wanted them to come [to the group,

8   Beth: ye[p   [yep

9   Amina: [okay=

10 Hinata: =and I wanted to do that a little like gallery walk kind of thing=

11 Beth: mhm

12 Hinata: =but they didn't get that, so I just like, let them sit £down.[14]

13 Group: ((laughing))

14 Amina: okay

15 Hinata: I kinda gave up ((laughing))

16 Yukiko: give up ((said in almost cartoon voice))

17 Amina: okay

18 Beth: huh. (.) I mean what was interesting about that is your <u>body</u> language was

19   communicating

20 Hinata: uh ↑huh, yeah yeah [yeah

21 Beth: [like come over here=

22 Hinata: =yeah

23 Yukiko: [(she did   )]

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[14] The symbol £ indicates laughter while talking (as distinct from laughter apart from words). Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an Introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13–23). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

24	Beth:	[she was doing sort of this,] right?
25	Yukiko:	[(but then-)]
26	Hinata:	yeah:: but they they just like you know (.) £ignore £me! ((laughter))
27	Group:	((laughter))
28	Hinata:	They were just ignoring £me. (.) Sometimes it occur, you know I you know I I'd
29		like stud- you know student to stand up and and then talk each other, because I
30		don't like students just sitting down and then talk to the same partner
31	Beth:	mhm
32	Hinata:	so I frequently give them like a sheet (.) like um and then question on it and then
33		like talk to whatever person that you haven't. And like Yukiko does that always.
34		But (.) you know still I say stand up and then like talk you know like two or
35		three people that you haven't talked to yet. and but still they they should
36		understand that, but they just <u>stick</u> to the the the usual partner.
37	Group:	mmm
38	Hinata:	So sometimes they, obviously they <u>know</u> but they kinda like you know don't do
39		that

In Excerpt 4.2 Hinata theorizes why, during the observed lesson, students did not follow the instructions she gave in the target language. At first, in line 12, she says "but they didn't get that," implying that they did not *understand* what she had said. She then says that she "let them sit down," explaining that she "kinda gave up." As she says this last statement she begins to laugh; one possible reading of her laughter is that she is reacting emotionally to the fact that she is sharing something that *hadn't* gone well in her lesson. In lines 18-21 I then point out – and the group joins me in affirming – that Hinata's body language in the video *did* seem to clearly indicate what she was asking students to do. By line 26, Hinata's interpretation of what happened has changed: "They … ignore me! They were just ignoring me." She sums up her interpretation of

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events in line 38, saying: "So sometimes they, obviously they <u>know</u> but they kinda like you know don't do that."

The conversation captured in Excerpt 4.2 suggests that Hinata's shifted interpretation was mediated by the content of the women's comments (including my own). By presenting evidence that stood in contrast to her first interpretation, we uncovered a contradiction which Hinata then had to wrestle with: If in fact her body language had clearly communicated the meaning behind her words, yet students had not responded accordingly, then perhaps she would need to let go of her original interpretation that they just hadn't understood her.

Twenty minutes later, the question of how students could have made sense of *words that hadn't been explicitly taught* came back up, this time in the context of discussing an authentic text Hinata had used in her lesson. As you may recall, the focus of the observed lesson was on friendship and social networking. One goal Hinata had was to introduce students to the popular Japanese messaging service LINE (similar in function to Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp). She chose to do this by having students examine four charts displaying statistics related to the various social media (e.g. LINE, Twitter, Facebook) used by Japanese college students. The worksheet is reproduced in full in Appendix D. Just before Excerpt 4.3 below, after commenting that students had struggled with this activity, Hinata asked us if, "even with kind of limited ability to read, do you think it's still kind of effective?" Amina responded that it depended partially on what it was students needed to do with the graph – "like what information they need to find or this graph is about." Hinata then proceeded to begin translating for us what the questions were asking. For example, the explained that the first question asked "What kind of social

network Japanese college students used." At this point an individual in the group

wondered aloud about Hinata's decision not to define new, potentially confusing

vocabulary on the handout. Would this make the activity, based around an authentic

material, inauthentic? Excerpt 4.3 displays the conversation that followed.

Excerpt 4.3: "100% authentic versus modified version"
Source: Hinata Debrief / Time stamp: 00:29:23-00:31:60

1 Hinata: well, yeah that's my kind of, the tension between using 100% authentic versus

2 modified version

3 Beth: well, so, you and probably Yukiko as well could best understand what students

4 were saying. How do you feel based on what they were saying. How do you

5 sense what their comprehension was? Do you feel like this was something that

6 they mostly got? or were really confused about? or...and if confused, where did

7 you sense the barriers?

8 Hinata: mmm. so first two graphs, those are simple, it's just like listing up, like

9 Yukiko: in social networking

10 Hinata: so these are simple, but the second and third one, it is actually asking like. this

11 one is how often do you use facebook? and these are kind of tricky - because it

12 says, I don't use it

13 (   ): mmm

14 Hinata: yeah and then they don't know that word, so only Chinese students could

15 understand

16 Beth: could understand it

17 Yukiko: and also like eh LINE LINE LINE is like a some Japanese, mostly Asian know

18 probably, I don't know myself so the thing is like eh I think that Hinata just

19 present this one first and then explain what LINE is ( ) later and she was saying

20 I'm going to explain later.

21 Beth: mmm

22 Yukiko: I don't know, was it, probably it'll be better to talk about LINE first

23	Beth:	mmm
24	Yukiko:	because LINE use
25	Hinata:	ahh
26	Beth:	that's an idea
27	Yukiko:	I know like you want like eh critical thinking you know this thing they come up
28		with oh okay something like social networking and particularly like Japanese or
29		Asian populations. But I think it's too much probably, probably it's better to just
30		say, it's in Japan and there is one more thing, like listing up, I think there's
31		something like uh maybe have students what kind of social networking
32		resources

Hinata explicitly names the surfacing contradiction in line 1: "Well, yeah that's my kind of, the tension between using 100% authentic versus modified version." In doing this, Hinata opens it up for deeper inquiry than the group has thus far taken it.

In response to my prompting in lines 3-7, Hinata then goes on to describe the "trickier" elements of the charts that might have been barriers to learner comprehension. For example, in line 14 she points out a particular kanji that only Chinese students, able to use their knowledge of Chinese characters as context clues, would have been able to make sense of. In line 17, Yukiko also points out a possible area of confusion – that the application "LINE" is likely unfamiliar to the non-Asian students in the class. Yukiko then transitions the conversation from a focus on identifying problems to suggesting changes. Between lines 17-20, she suggests that it would have been better to tell students from the beginning of the activity that "LINE" is a popular SNS in Japan. She asserts in line 29 that the inquiry-based approach that Hinata took, where students would discover this information through analyzing the charts, was "too much probably."

This tension (between providing authentic input vs. scaffolding or modifying the input) surfaces again a little later in the interaction; Hinata responds (line 1) with the honest statement that she's not always sure she strikes the right balance.

Excerpt 4.4: "I'm not 100% sure"
Source: Hinata Debrief / Time stamp: 00:38:50-00:40:50

1 Hinata: oh yeah. (.) I'm still, as a teacher, I'm not 100% sure which one is better↑

2 Beth: mm hmm

3 Hinata: so we're doing integrated performance assessment and then for the IPA part
4   they, uh we don't put any assistance (.) you know, like

5 Group: ah::::

6 Beth: [mhm

7 Hinata: [so I wanted to practice↑ and then get, [y'know, students used to [this

8 (   ):   [ah::::   [oh:: kay

9 Hinata: because in the real world they don't have

10 Beth: right

11 Hinata: like an £English word ((laughter)) They have cell phone to check out

Beginning in line 1, Hinata explicitly names the tension (just as in Excerpt 4.3, line 1: "I'm still, as a teacher, I'm not 100% sure which one is better↑" Then she goes on to explain her rationale (lines 23-31, with backchannels removed for ease of reading):

So we're doing integrated performance assessment and then for the IPA part they, uh we don't put any assistance (.) you know, like, so I wanted to practice↑ and then get, y'know, students used to this, because in the real world they don't have like an £English word ((laughter))

In line 11, the conversation takes an unexpected turn when Hinata presents a counter argument to the claim she has just made (that students don't have access to English translations in the real world). In line 11, Hinata asserts that they DO have that

access in the real world, through use of their cell phones. (This introduces the interesting possibility that use of cell phones to look up English translations is actually authentic, and serves as a helpful scaffold), having students wrestle with texts in order to discover the meaning of words they didn't know takes more class time than either using a vocabulary sheet with pre-defined words or allowing use of devices for vocab look-ups. The tension resonates with the group, and shortly thereafter in the conversation, there are multiple, overlapping affirmations.

The tension unresolved, only five minutes later the inquiry group goes back to the question – how are students making sense of *words they haven't been explicitly taught*? If students don't look up the meaning of the word, how is it that they figure out the meaning? In Excerpt 4.5 below, Hinata and Yukiko both provide examples of how they work with students through the target language to figure out the meaning of new kanji.

Excerpt 4.5: Building on known kanji
Source: Hinata Debrief / Time stamp: 00:45:30-00:47:29

1 Hinata: [yeah they ask (.) for example, they don't

2   know this kanji↑ and then they ask the meaning of it, but I said, like "oh you

3   know this negative, so something about negative"

4 Beth: mm::::::

5 Hinata: and then this is, actually I £gave £them £an £answer £right £away. "this means

6   to [use" so they (don't [u-]

…

7 Yukiko: [cause they know like the kanji

8   for use. Yeah, they learned the kanji for use

… *One of the women wonders what language students use to ask questions in Hinata's class*

9 Yukiko: oh maybe we have to just go like uh first, we know this kanji, and we know this

10   kanji, and just [go through it, like   [okay (   ) you end up getting authentic=

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11	Beth:	[mm:::
12	Hinata:	[ah::
13	Yukiko:	=material, you can just uh you can recognize some kanji and grammatical
14		forms, you can go through with whole class as you say, uh:: (.) and £then
15	Beth:	yeah, see [where they go may[be

Hinata, in lines 1-3 describes how she scaffolds student understanding by helping them make sense of context clues in the sentence, and even within the kanji through looking at radicals. Yukiko then provides another example, again explaining that she would talk students through each of the kanji that they *did* know, in order to try to guess the meaning of the unknown kanji through context.

In sum, through these excerpts we see Engeström's theory at work – that moments of expansion and growth are stimulated by contradiction and tension (2009). The expansion, growth – development – which follows this work within the contradictions can be understood as change, at least in thinking, if not also in action. The content of the inquiry group's conversations shows that they wrestled with contradictory ideas and evidence about how students make sense of new, not explicitly taught language. These ideas and evidence came not only from the recent observation of Hinata's class, but certainly also from their larger socio-cultural-historical experiences. For example, we see evidence of Amina's courses in World Language Education and Hinata's training in the Integrated Performance Assessment. Put differently, observing Hinata's class served as a tertiary contradiction in that it introduced a new – and disruptive – mediating means into the instructors' existing, socio-culturally-historically created system. The conversations that resulted from this disruption in the system show that the women tried to reconcile

these contradictory ideas and evidence, leading to changed interpretations and understandings of their teaching practice.

4.1.2.3.2 Structure of the conversations. Next we examine how the *structure* of the inquiry group's conversations mediated their development as teachers. One of the most noticeable structural aspects of the group's conversations was their tendency to have active, overlapping conversations characterized by *cooperative interruptions.* A clear example of this occurred at nearly the beginning of Session 6. The group had been talking about the comfortable atmosphere that Hinata had created in her classroom when Amina expressed surprise at the students' use of the target language – *even on the first day of a new unit.* This comment launched us into the exchange which follows below in Excerpt 4.6.

Excerpt 4.6: "Using Target Language"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 00:05:22-00:07:15

1 Amina: But I I see the students also like using the target language│and [you said this is=

2 Hinata: [ah:::::::::::::│

3 Amina: =<u>first</u> class to teach this topic│[so   I'm curious to know did you (.) like teach

4 Hinata: [mm   mm

5 Amina: = the vocabulary be↑fore│or you give them a sheet to study at ↑home│or

6   [anything like that?│

7 Hinata: [yeah:::::::::::   so we have (.) vocabulary sheet right? ↑│And=

8 Amina: =so they study at home the vocabulary and then they come ready for the topic?│

9 Hinata: n:::::: (h) ((laughter)) [I would eh say::::: (.)   not always.│You know like=

10 Yukiko: [not always ((laughter))│

11 Amina: =okay.│

12 Hinata: =there some really serious students who do preparation at home=│

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13 Amina: =okay.⌋

14 Hinata: and then they know already like   [(.) what vocabulary they use in cla[ss⌋

15 Amina: [okay⌋   [okay⌋

16 Hinata: but I I would say like maybe half of the students haven't prepared yet (.)⌋ but you

17   know uh the the activity that I did was like just using I used my textbook,⌋ and

18   the vocabulary is also in the textbook too,⌋

19 Amina: okay⌋

20 Hinata: and then the first, um=

21 Amina: =but I mean, if the   [vocabulary in the textbook, do they know the meaning?=⌋

22 Hinata: [yea[h⌋   mm::=

23 Amina: = like, what [is the meaning?⌋

24 Hinata: [yeah   actually this (.) textbook has the:: >you know like

25   eh< English and Jap[anese.⌋

26 Amina: [oh, okay, English and   [Japanese.⌋

27 Hinata: [Both on the same page⌋[so they=

28 Amina: [okay okay

29 Hinata   =can you know, like look back.⌋ And, yeah, although that this topic was first

30   introduced on that day that I was demonstrating, but, mmm, for their warm-up

31   activity they are, they were not you know like uh you know like uh expected to

32   use new vocabulary.⌋

33 Beth: mm mm mm=

34 Hinata: =even though I was introducing like what's social network and then what does it

35   mean to your life.⌋ And, but you- they can use like you know already learned

36   vocabulary⌋ like so (.) yeah⌋

In lines 1-8 Amina introduces a question for the group's consideration: How is it that Hinata's students are able to use the target language on the first day of a new unit? Hinata quickly takes up this conversation direction, providing an extended "ah:::." As the group takes up this question there are two aspects of the *conversational structure* at work to mediate teacher development: cooperative interruptions, and hedging and face-saving.

In Excerpt 4.6, and in particular in lines 1-36, the conversation is an active back and forth, complete with overlaps and interruptions, between Amina and Hinata. Amina, in particular, energetically pursues her question in a way that, at first reading, seems to cut off Hinata and not give her a chance to speak. Coding the excerpt for turn relevant places (TRPs),[15] however, shows that the overall trajectory of talk is preserved, and that Amina's interruptions function to clarify Hinata's meaning; thus the *interruptions are cooperative in nature*. More specifically, Hinata is giving Amina "conditional access to the turn;" that is, Hinata, sometimes in the middle of a turn of talk, yields her turn to Amina for the purpose of clarifying meaning. This is one of the four categories of overlapping speech which Schegloff argues *does not need repair.* In contrast, *un*cooperative interruptions would be marked by shifts in the overall trajectory of talk that are felt as competitive (and, by Schegloff's argument, *would* need repair). TRPs are marked in the transcript above using the symbol |.

Notice how Amina talks past three TRPs before ceding the floor to Hinata at her TRP at the end of line 6. In line 7, Hinata anticipates the start of her turn and begins the utterance "yeah:::," but has to hold it until Amina completes her turn with "…anything

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[15] As a reminder, a Turn Relevant Place (TRP) marks the place where it would be acceptable for a speaker change to take place. It is marked in the transcripts as |

like that?" In line 7, Hinata is able to begin a response to Amina's question, stating that "we have (.) a vocabulary sheet…," however Amina seizes on Hinata's TRP and attempts to clarify what students do with that vocabulary sheet. In line 8 Amina says: "…so they study at home the vocabulary and then they come ready for the topic?" Here Amina seems to be testing an assumption that the students would need to memorize the vocabulary before being able to use it in the context of a class activity. Between lines 9-18, Hinata is able to elaborate on her explanation relatively uninterrupted; however, Amina plays an active role by adding in five "okay" continuers in lines 11, 13, 15 (2x), and 19. As a reminder, continuers are "context relevant utterances, such as 'uh huh, mmhm, oh' which communicate successful receipt of the speaker's message" (Schegloff, 2000). These continuers, as well as Amina's overlap and re-taking of the floor in line 8, are primarily cooperative in nature – they function to continue the talk in the same direction the main interlocutor, Hinata, is taking. This remains true, but takes on a different tone in line 21. Amina retakes the floor as Hinata pauses with an "um," saying: "*but I mean*, if the vocabulary in the textbook, do they know the meaning? Like, what is the meaning?" On the one hand, "but I mean" functions to redirect the conversation, ever so slightly, by implying that what Hinata is saying is *not* addressing Amina's question. On the other hand, it also functions to move the conversation as a whole to a deeper mutual understanding of different ways of teaching vocabulary; for this reason the interruption is cooperative in the broader sense. In response to this clarifying question, Hinata states in lines 24-25 that the textbook has both English and Japanese. It is at this point, on line 26, that Amina finally seems satisfied with Hinata's response – "oh, okay, English and Japanese."

Conversations characterized by cooperative interruptions are mediating, because they facilitate the co-construction of meaning. In the prior section I concluded that the inquiry group's conversations showed that they wrestled with contradictory ideas and evidence; here I argue that *cooperative interruptions* help explain *how* they were able to productively discuss these contradictory ideas and evidence. A group of individuals cannot co-construct meaning if that group cannot maintain productive trajectories of talk – even, and especially, when there is confusion and/or disagreement. The conversation can mediate *deconstruction* of ideas – and crucially, it should, if it is to spur development and co-construction of new knowledge – but conversational structure cannot *itself* degenerate and still be a mediating tool.

Analysis of the conversation structure in Excerpt 4.6 also shows us an example of how the women navigated potentially *face-threatening turns of talk*. Hinata's turns especially seem to reveal an elaborate dance between saving face on the one hand and enacting humility on the other (and really these are two sides of the same coin). First, let's return to Amina's question in line 8: "…so they study at home the vocabulary and then they come ready for the topic?" At the surface level, Amina appears to simply be clarifying her understanding of a classroom procedure. That said, Hinata and Yukiko both respond to Amina's question in a way that possibly suggests they interpreted it as face-threatening. Hinata never says "no," but instead produces a long "n::::" sound followed by laughter and the statement "I would eh say:::: (.) not always." Her utterance is indirect, hedged by a pause and a filler (eh). Yukiko lends support with the overlapping speech of "not always," also followed by laughter. In lines 12-16 Hinata then explains that though there are "some really serious students … maybe half of the students haven't prepared

yet." In these lines she seems to be discursively trying to "save face," not only of herself, but of her students as well. Beginning in line 29, Hinata goes on to explain, however, that the warm-up exercise asked students to use "already learned vocabulary." In addition to building our understanding of what was happening in her class at that moment, her explanation seems to also serve the purpose of displaying humility; the implicit message is that the target language use by her students isn't really *that* impressive. Just after this excerpt, one of the women expressed that she was still quite implied with the fact that the students and Hinata were using so much target language in the classroom. And thus in spite of Hinata's discursive moves to downplay what has essentially been offered as a compliment, the return to comments of praise reinforces the fact that the group is impressed by what Hinata has accomplished in her classroom.

As with cooperative interruptions, such discursive moves designed to navigate face-threatening turns of talk mediated *productive* discussions of contradictory ideas and evidence. Though the women, including myself, came from four different cultural backgrounds, they seemed to understand and enact face-saving in similar ways; as a result, they were able to navigate the disagreements and critiques that were part of the conversations. Importantly, criticism *was* raised, and the women *did* disagree about pedagogy. These disagreements, though, were not characterized by stubbornness or resistance; instead, they were marked by mutual interest in inquiry. Face-saving did not function in this group to make it seem as if everyone agreed; rather it allowed the women to disagree in productive ways which led to the consideration of alternative views. The women's ability to have these types of conversations suggests they constituted a "community" in contrast to a "pseudocommunity." Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth

(2001) contrast "communities" and "pseudocommunities," explaining that

pseudocommunities "behave *as if* we all agree" (p. 955). Horn (2010) elaborates:

> Pseudocommunities lack the communities' capacity to tackle problems of
> practice, thereby disallowing teachers the same kinds of opportunities to examine
> taken-for-granted assumptions and move toward change. The norms of
> pseudocommunities can be counterproductive to inquiry, *because groups increase*
> *their ability to investigate practice when they develop ways of publicly*
> *disagreeing* (Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundy, & Hewson, 2003; Pfieffer &
> Featherstone, 1996). (p. 234, emphasis added)

4.1.2.3.3 Methods of lesson study. Perhaps the most powerful mediating means for

instructor development in this study was observation of teaching, which plays a central

role in lesson study. Through direct observation of one another's classes, the instructors'

own training and teaching experiences came into contradiction with what they actually

saw their colleagues doing in the classroom, or heard about, through the *replays* and

rehearsals that can function as a kind of imagined observation of others. Observation of

one's own teaching through videos is also a powerful mediator. Observation of others –

whether direct or imagined – and observation of self through video thus had the power to

deconstruct previously fixed ideas about teaching, as well as construct new ways of

teaching.

> *Direct observation of others that opens up new possibiltiies*. If one side of the

coin of observation was disruption, on the other side it was also inspiration. Observing

Hinata's teaching not only served as a disrupting force, but also as inspiration – providing

ideas for possible new ways of teaching.

One example of observation opening up new possibilities came at the very beginning of Session 6, in a conversation primarily between Amina and Hinata about target language use in the classroom. Earlier I discussed this conversation (Excerpt 4.6) in light of how the *structure* of conversation, characterized by productive disagreement, served as a mediating means; here I revisit Excerpt 4.6 to look at how the teachers' observation of Hinata's lesson introduced new ideas about teaching into their conversation.

Amina opens this portion of the conversation with a clear statement of what she observed in Hinata's class: "I see the students also like using the target language and you said this is first class to teach this topic" (lines 1&3). Here the 'and' in line 1 functions more as a 'but,' as the illocutionary force of her statement is to put what she observed (target language use) into contrast with what Hinata said (first class of new unit). In the conversation that followed, Hinata and Amina go back and forth. Amina iteratively refined her question to find out whether students received English translations of vocabulary or not; Hinata responded according to Amina's questions, eventually satisfying Amina with the information that, yes, students' textbooks did have English as well as Japanese.

What is important here is the fact that observing Hinata's class spurred this and other conversations in the first place. Though prior to observing Hinata's class the women had talked about the teaching and learning of vocabulary, these conversations had been more theoretical in nature; observing Hinata and her students using the target language grounded the conversations in a real sense of what was possible.[16]

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[16] As a side note, it's worth pointing out that Amina's comments regarding TL usage are curious. The inquiry group observed Amina's teaching prior to Hinata's. In her lesson, Amina used almost entirely TL, a

Imagined observation through replays and rehearsals. Outside of actually being able to observe each other teach, Horn (2010) makes the argument that teachers can gain virtual access to each other's practices – a kind of virtual "observation" – through *replays* and *rehearsals.* As a reminder, a replay is, in the words of Goffman (1974), the recount of "a personal experience, not merely reports on an event" (p. 504, as cited in Horn, 2010, p. 241). Through a replay, typically told in past tense, an individual creates a scene in order to transport the listeners to a prior space and time. In this sense, a replay functions for the listener as a kind of "imagined observation". A rehearsal, which tend to be told in present tense, serves essentially the same purpose, except, instead of looking back, it looks forward.

One example of a rehearsal occurred near the beginning of Session 6 and is shown in Excerpt 4.7 below. In the previous turns, I had stepped into the conversation to ask Hinata how much she thought students could understand of her speech. I observed that, though certainly not everything, "it seems to be enough that they can follow." Hinata responds below in Excerpt 4.7.

Excerpt 4.7: "For example, I say"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 00:07:35-00:08:20

1   Hinata: right and then I'm not controlling my use of vocabulary. You know like I

2   sometimes you know use <u>obvious</u> you know like the you know students the

3   words that students might not kno[w,   obvious[ly.

4   Beth: [mm mm mm [mm mm [mm

5   Hinata: [but I just you know

6   anyway I £use £it. But like, you know, um if students know the eh you know

---

fact that might seem surprising given her comments here about Hinata's TL usage. I take up Amina's growth as an instructor in another manuscript (Dillard, in process).

7		like important words. For example I say like "please listen' and then something.
8		So, "listen carefully" and then like *chuui shite kiite kudasai* and then if that
9		carefully part cannot be understood, but student might know that oh teacher
10		want us to listen to,
11	Amina:	I think it's like um like they get used to a routine, that's why they understand,
12		yeah
13	Group:	((various sounds of agreement: "ah:::" "yeah yeah yeah" "right"))

Beginning in line 7 ("I say like 'please listen'"), Hinata recreates the actual speech she would use – a replay – and then theorizes possible student responses. In doing so, she takes us ever so briefly into her classroom and allows us to 'watch' – in our imaginations – an interaction with her students.

Observation of self on video. Hinata's reflections on both her own teaching and the comments of the inquiry group were woven throughout the session. Indeed, Hinata engaged in active reflection throughout the lesson study process, and shared other thoughts in writing in the final session and in the preparation to share our findings at a conference in Spring 2015. Below are two examples from Session 6 which illustrate how both video of her teaching and the inquiry group conversations allowed Hinata to observe herself, mediating reflection on her teaching practice. Excerpt 4.8 below captures Hinata's reflection to the group on watching herself in the video.

Excerpt 4.8: "I kinda laugh a lot"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 00:03:14-00:04:50

1	Beth:	Well, shall we talk about,
2	Hinata:	↑Yeah ↓yeah, please
3	Beth:	Hinata's lesson, yeah (.) Do you want to start us ↑off (.) Tell us how you::
4	Hinata:	how I felt about [it

5   Beth: [how you felt about it. [Yeah:

6   Hinata: [yeah::: So:: observing £my ((laugh))

7   recorded class, that first of all, I >kinda laugh a lot< in class, >I don't know<

8   that's [my nature you know like,

9   Beth: [mm:::::::

10 Hinata: in casual conversation I £laugh a lot, you know, like £without £any £meaning

11   ((laughter))

12 Group: ((laughter))

13 Amina: This (.) this nice and [instead of giving another face (or [   )?

14 Beth: [I £agree!

15 Hinata: [but you know as a

16   teacher it does- it does look like >you know< I'm really beginning (.) beginner

17   you know=

18 Beth: =euhhhhhhh=

19 Hinata: Beginner teach↑er.

20 Yukiko: ([wa?)

21 Hinata: [I had an- I had an ESL teacher in my- you

22   know like uh (.) back in school in Japan. She- she was ((cough)) she was like

23   that too you know, she's American but she £always £laugh!

24 Group: ((laughter))

25 Hinata: I'm like- I'm like that person. And then (.) I don't know I just want to en- you

26   know get my student >you know< involved in my class [so I   kinda want to be

27   friendly or I don't know=

28 Amina: [yeah

29 Hinata: =just subconsciously I (.) talk and then student says something and then

30   "yea:::::h" and then like eh- give them affirmation and then like £a £little £bit

31   £laugh.

32 Yukiko: ((laughing))

33 Group: [((Laughter))

…

42 Hinata: [Yeah,

43   sometimes it's really interesting, like students' comments is really like eh

44   interesting and funny and then I laugh you know, like and students laugh you

45   know [(.)   each other too

46 Beth: [mhm

47 Amina: mhm

48 Sug: yeah yeah That's good

49 Hinata: And uh ((laughing))=

50 Beth: =I felt like your class was really comfortable.

51 Sug: yeah

52 Hinata: (   ) kinda laid back you know ((laughing))

Like so many of us when we hear our voice or watch ourselves in video, Hinata

isn't necessarily pleased with the way she appears on video. However, in this case her

concern runs deeper than thinking her voice sounds funny, or her mannerisms are

awkward. She realizes, thanks to being able to see herself in video, that she laughs a lot

as she teaches, and now she worries that this makes her look like a "beginner teacher"

(line 19). The group is quick to rebuild her confidence, through compliments (like

Amina's in line 13), and also stories of their own (e..g, a story about getting students to

laugh, shared between lines 33 and 42).

In this next excerpt we see how Hinata's reflections are mediated first by viewing

herself in the video, and second by "seeing herself" mirrored back through Yukiko's

comments.

Excerpt 4.9: "I couldn't do each activity fully"
Source: Hinata's Debrief / Time stamp: 10:26-11:58

1	Hinata:	oh the second thing is that, you know, like, I put so many activities in it and then
2		I felt like haven't you know, like, I couldn't (.) do each of the activity fully,
3		[I needed to-
4	Yukiko:	[that's what I [felt about it=
5	Hinata:	[kinda
6	Yukiko:	=it was good flow (.) but I like uh you know that's kind of because you did man-
7		so many [activities uh=
8	Hinata:	[yeah
9	Yukiko:	=I didn't quite uh sure which one you want to emphasize more
10	Beth:	m[mm:: mhm
11	Hinata:	[right
12	Yukiko:	like eh you know boom boom boom boom like you know it's it's not like climax
13		or coming down, like [( ) or like a closing time
14	Hinata:	[yeah I wanted I think i- =
15	Yukiko:	=it was good though (.) like engaged
16	Hinata:	ye:::ah:: like I think I wanted to put (.) the most emphasis on the writing part.
17	Yukiko:	eh like this one.
18	Hinata:	yeah, the last one (.) so I took like twelve minutes or something
19	Group:	mhm
20	Hinata:	but the before that the like warming up £activity took longer than I thought
21	Beth:	mhm
22	Hinata:	yeah, especially info gap thing, you know (.) that was kind of too much
23	Beth:	and the reading
24	Hinata:	yeah, [reading ssss-
25	Beth:	[that one took a long time I feel like
26	Yukiko:	maybe sections should be separated, reading like and then next day probably do,
27		like uh revisit the same thing, like uh what you did
28	Hinata:	uh huh

29 Yukiko: like with the textbook

30 Beth: yeah

31 Yukiko: and in discussion section. Um, it's gonna, eh, it's I think like it's gonna, uh, like

32   all the materials like for two days, I guess, better to just break in to two days.

33   There's so many things.

The excerpt begins as Hinata shifts the topic of conversation to share that she had felt that the entire lesson was rushed, because she had planned too many activities. Though this is the type of reflection that a teacher can instinctually have after teaching a lesson, and though Hinata's sense of the lesson's pacing might have begun in this way, watching herself on video also served to confirm how she had felt. Yukiko, who had observed the lesson via video, immediately takes up Hinata's reflection as a direction for conversation. In lines 4-13 she proceeds to critique the pacing of Hinata's lesson, building on Hinata's own self-reflection. Below I reproduce Yukiko's words, removing the speech of other interlocutors:

> That's what I felt about it. It was good flow, but I like uh you know that's kind of because you did man- so many activities. Uh, I didn't quite uh sure which one you want to emphasize more. Like eh you know, boom boom boom like you know it's it's not like climax or coming down, like, or like a closing time.

Essentially, Yukiko's argument is that the lesson did not have the more traditional structure of a pre, during, and post activity. Hinata affirms this interpretation in lines 16-22, reflecting on which activities were meant to be warm-up activities, but ended up taking time away from what she had intended to be the main activity of the lesson – the poster writing that came at the very end. Finally, between lines 26-33 Yukiko suggests ways that Hinata could have split the material into two separate days. In sum, Hinata's reflection on her pacing – and ultimately on her lesson plan design – results from a co-

construction of her initial sense of how the lesson had gone, and then the confirmation of that sense through observing herself teach on video, and hearing Yukiko's feedback based on her observations of the same video.

4.1.2.4 Session 7: Meta-reflection. In a typical lesson study cycle, the debrief of the observation of the research lesson would be followed either by a new iteration of the cycle (revision and re-teaching of the research lesson), or the end of the cycle (signified by a sharing of findings with the larger community). Before taking either of these paths, however, I introduced an extra step and final mediating means into the activity system – an opportunity to engage in meta-reflection through reading a transcript of the debrief itself (Session 6) and discussing it within the inquiry group. I was particularly interested in finding out how (re)viewing their own words in their discussions might serve to stimulate new reflection, as well as concretize new insights the women had come to during the debrief session.

Hinata, Yukiko, and I met four days after the April 20th debrief meeting. The group had decided we wanted to present our findings at a conference in May, and so the three of us met to begin the process of constructing our presentation (I describe this in the next section). We talked in general about how we thought the lesson study process had gone, and reflected on our own learning. Hinata also decided to listen to the entire recording of Session 6 – before I had completed the transcription – in order to write down her own reflections and also give me suggestions on which parts of the transcription to focus on.

Using Hinata's suggestions as a guide, I transcribed the first 45 minutes of the Session 6 recording, and included an outline of the final 40 minutes. For Session 7 (May

1, 2015), I brought each member of the group a physical copy of the transcript. During the first 10-15 minutes of the meeting the women individually read through the transcript; for the next hour, they reflected together on what they saw in the transcript as I took notes and occasionally redirected the conversation. Their reflections on the lesson study process in general, and the debrief conversation in particular, overlap with themes identified in Session 6. For example, the women talked at length about how powerful observing each other's teaching had been. The women agreed that "talking helps, but observing is even better," and that "watching a different view makes me a little more open – my eyes and mind are more open that I can teach a different way."

The women also identified – without naming it as such – what made them a community, rather than a *pseudocommunity*. "What's different in our inquiry meetings versus a conference, any conference? What's different?" someone asked. They decided that in a conference, "they talk about their classroom and some teaching method, feeling like a third person. But as a colleague (in the lesson study inquiry group), we want to give good advice, good feedback," (Beth's notes from Session 7). Because they trusted each other and were invested in each other's success, they felt able and compelled to give feedback which wasn't superficial.

4.1.2.5 Sharing the results. Ideally, at the end of a lesson study cycle, the involved teachers share their findings with the broader community. The form that this takes obviously varies greatly depending on the context in which the lesson study has taken place. In our case, we decided to share our process and some of the instructors' reflections at an international conference in Spring of 2015. Hinata, Yukiko, and I co-presented, building our presentation from what the group had discussed during Session 7.

We shared three themes: the benefit of having diverse cultural perspectives in the group, the power of lesson study to empower instructors to take charge of their own growth, and finally, the usefulness of lesson study in helping shift instructor focus.

Yukiko shared first about the value in being a multilingual, multicultural group. She argued that typically, teachers tend to formulate groups that share the same language, culture, or even level-specific course, and there discuss language-specific contents/techniques. In language and culture-specific groups, she stated, teachers tend to focus more on techniques specific to the particular language (e.g., teaching kanji). These language and culture-specific groups are important and useful for certain things. However, Yukiko argued, the homogeneity of these groups can also be negative. For example, she said it is easy in these language and culture-specific groups to oversimplify and overgeneralize culture and get trapped in stereotypical perceptions. In reality, she pointed out, cultures are constantly changing and so are languages. She argued that the group had found that our diversity had removed some of our blinders. In conclusion, she argued that our experiences suggested that inquiry groups benefit highly from conversations where every perspective is valued, and where singular definitions of cultures can be challenged.

Hinata then spoke about how the lesson study process – especially being observed – had been empowering for her. Building on what Yukiko had shared, she first talked about how the group had started by building good relationships with each other, cultivating a community where every perspective was valued. This enabled us to share more valuable and constructive feedback, she argued, allowing the group to go more in-depth, rather than staying at the surface level with people we didn't know as well. She

then gave the example of Yukiko giving her what seemed like critical feedback about her pacing (shared above in Excerpt 4.13). Hinata shared that Yukiko's feedback was ultimately very useful. She concluded that the reason that feedback had been useful was because the *setting (comfortable), makeup of the group (peers), and model (after an observation)* affected a) the type of feedback she received, b) the emotional reception of the feedback, and c) her ability to use the feedback (not a summative end, but a step along the way).

The final theme – shifting focus – referred to how the lesson study protocol had enabled the instructors to view themselves and their students in different ways. Hinata first talked about how listening to the debrief conversation and then discussing it (Session 7) was useful for her. She stated: "During the conversation it seems like you're getting everything – and indeed, you are learning and thinking and processing. But, if you go the extra step and then listen to the conversation and engage in a meta-analysis, listen to the conversation as a 'third person'…you can be your own supervisor" (Hinata's presentation notes). She argued that this was one way that instructors could take ownership of their own professional learning. In regards to the second point – viewing students in different ways – Hinata explained that prior to engaging in lesson study, she was focused on teacher actions. After experiencing lesson study, though, with its focus on *student* actions during the research lesson, she expressed that in the future she wanted to focus on what the *students* were doing and what *learning* was happening. She stated that lesson study served as a powerful reminder that what is taught might be different than what is learnt. In fact, this final section of Chapter 4 has documented the way the process of lesson study mediated several changes in these teachers' beliefs and instructional processes.

Chapter 5

The aim of this study was to examine the question:

How do elements of a multilingual language instructor inquiry group serve to

mediate language teacher conceptual development within the broader

sociocultural context?

In this final chapter I begin with a summative discussion of the study's findings in

relation to previous work. I then comment on the productive combination of activity

theory and developmental work research for shedding light on language teacher

conceptual development. I discuss implications of this research for tertiary language

teacher professional development design. Finally, I outline the limitations of this study

and possible directions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The elements of the inquiry group that served to mediate language teacher

conceptual development included:

- *engagement with conflicting pedagogical concepts in discussions,*

- *structure and dynamics of those discussions,*

- *direct and indirect observation of each other's teaching, and*

- *meta-reflection mediated by transcripts of previous group meetings.*

The transformative force of these mediating means in this particular inquiry group can be

best interpreted through the lens of Grossman et al.'s (2001) distinction between a

community and a pseudocommunity. In a pseudocommunity individuals "behave *as if* we

all agree" (Grossman et al., 2001, p. 955). Indeed,

the maintenance of pseudocommunity pivots on the suppression of conflict. Groups regulate face-to-face interactions with the tacit understanding that it is against the rules to challenge others or press too hard for clarification. This understanding paves the way for the *illusion of consensus*. (p. 955)

In contrast, a "mature *community* is [willing] to engage in critique in order to further collective understanding" (p.980, emphasis added).

The first mediating means of the inquiry group in this study manifested the characteristics of a mature community, as defined by Grossman et al., when it discussed *conflicting pedagogical concepts.* In looking at the topics of conversation, it's clear that the women did not shy away from pedagogical questions that genuinely engendered conflict and challenged them. They discussed their differences of opinion about how much target language to use during class, and about implicit versus explicit vocabulary learning. Even more importantly, they brought their different perspectives on these topics to bear on the discussion in productive ways. This ability to publicly disagree afforded the women opportunities for conceptual development by bringing new evidence into conflict with existing interpretations (Horn, 2010).

In addition to the *content* of the conversations, micro-interactional analysis reveals how the second mediating means of the group, the *structure and dynamics* of the conversations, mediated the group's ability to productively wrestle with such contradictory ideas and evidence. In particular, we saw examples of the inquiry group's conversations that were characterized by cooperative interruptions and face-saving moves. As indicators of active, engaged conversation, cooperative interruptions stand in contrast to "an interactional congeniality … maintained by a surface friendliness," which

marks pseudocommunity (Grossman et al., 2001, p. 955). The women in this study also engaged in discourse moves to maintain face for self and others; however, this was not done at the expense of critiquing ideas, introducing counterevidence, or persisting in calls for clarification. Recall Excerpt 4.9 (p. add correct field here) where Yukiko gives Hinata feedback related to the flow of her activities during the observed lesson. Yukiko seemingly doesn't hesitate to point out areas that could use improvement, and ideas about how to change them. Through such "genuine follow-ups," enacted with cooperative interruptions and face-saving moves, the individuals in the group pushed each other to speak in specifics rather than abstractions. Doing so in a conversational structure that was personally respectful, affirming and supportive allowed assumptions to be tested, differences in definitions to become apparent, and ultimately, contradictions – and opportunities for conceptual development – to bubble to the surface (Grossman et al., 2001).

A third mediating means was *direct and indirect observation of each other's teaching.* Although the prior experiences of the women influenced the ideas they brought to the conversations we had as an inquiry group, *observing* each other's teaching was an element that supported conceptual development because it provided invaluable input of both confirming and contradictory evidence into the discussions. Directly observing one another afforded all members of the inquiry group "transparent access to colleagues' practices," a prerequisite to learning within a community of practice (Levine & Marcus, 2010, p. 396). We saw this, for example, in Excerpt 4.6, as the observation of Hinata's use of target language encouraged Amina to inquire into Hinata's particular way of promoting vocabulary learning. In this case, direct observation of teaching practices

served to disrupt thinking about teaching and contributed to the mediation of conceptual development.

The experience of being directly observed was a powerful variation of this third mediating means for Hinata, as we found through examining Hinata's comments in the inquiry group. In the debrief conversation (Session 6) we saw Hinata reexamine her teaching practice as she was asked to explain her rationale for certain pedagogical moves, or make sense of observation feedback from her colleagues. Further, in her reflections on being observed, Hinata shared that the feedback she received – because it came from peers she *trusted*, was shared in a *comfortable environment*, and had the *concreteness* and *embeddedness* of a specific observation – enabled her to think deeply about her practice. This experience stands in contrast to the sort of experience possible in one-shot teacher education workshops, which in their episodic nature cannot develop these types of long-term, trust-filled relationships. Significantly, Hinata's experience in being observed in lesson study in this instructor inquiry group also stands in contrast to what might be experienced in evaluative observations by supervisors; though perhaps a useful managerial tool, supervisor observations have been shown to be ineffective and sometimes even detrimental *in reaching the goal of teacher professional growth* in higher education (Cosser, 1998). In sum, participating in direct observation was a productive tool for this group of women, both in observing and in being observed, in large part because the inquiry group was a mature community.

Indirect observation was also a variation on this mediating means in this group. Following Horn (2010), the present study confirmed that colleagues can give each other "transparent access" to their teaching via *replays* and *rehearsals* as a kind of 'imagined

observation'. Though it was the live (or recorded) observation of Hinata and Amina's teaching which served as the primary stimulus of conversation, inevitably, and most notably when the live observations introduced contradictions into the system, the women would share contradictory evidence in the form of retrospective *replays* and projecting-forward *rehearsals*, which served as virtual, imagined observations of teaching, or *indirect observation.*

Finally, the present study introduced for the first time a mediating means never before used in lesson study: *meta-reflection mediated by transcripts of previous group meetings.* This kind of meta-reflection was shown to be a productive final element to add to lesson study, with reading and reflection on transcripts of a previous group meeting (a 'debrief') proving to be useful mediators of the process of conceptual development. Through reading and discussing the debrief transcript, the women were able to (re)view their own comments, "hearing" them as if they were outside parties to the conversation. Hinata talks about how this process enabled her to gain more insights from the initial debrief conversation than if she hadn't been able to revisit it by reading and reflecting on the transcript of the conversation.

This study found that the sociocultural context, specifically the supportive environment of the Japanese program, was the most important mediating means of Hinata and Yukiko's conceptual development. In fact, all other mediating means in this study were predicated upon Hinata and Yukiko's membership in this sociocultural context *which afforded choice, experimentation, and innovation.* Hinata and Yukiko's work with Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) units is one of the clearest examples of this; the freedom afforded them allowed Hinata to *choose* to attend a professional

development seminar about Assessment (including the IPA), and to *experiment* with using IPA units in her course. These IPA units not only transformed Hinata and Yukiko's teaching, they inspired ideas of *what was possible* within the inquiry group.

The opening chapter frames this dissertation study within the (even larger) sociocultural context of foreign language teaching and learning within higher education. In particular, the 2007 MLA Report has called for efforts to build the "translingual and transcultural competence" of language learners through, among other things, a dismantling of the prevalent "two-tier structure" in language departments across the U.S. As described earlier, the "two-tier structure" serves to elevate and legitimate the work of the upper tier, that is, tenure-line faculty specializing in literature, history, and cultural studies. Correspondingly, the structure de-legitimizes the work of the lower tier, those non-tenure-line annually-renewable instructors and lecturers who teach language courses. What I didn't fully appreciate at the outset of this study was not only the embeddedness of the two-tier structure, concretized over socio-cultural-historical space, but also the possible openings in and of our work to interrupt the structure, even if in small, incremental ways. A particularly useful way of conceptualizing both the concretizing and the disrupting is legitimation. I will only touch on legitimation briefly here; however, I see legitimation as a potentially salient lens for re-viewing these data.

Following Leeuwen (2007), legitimation is viewed as an answer "sometimes explicit[], sometimes more oblique[], to the question 'Why' – 'Why should we do this?' and 'Why should we do this in this way?' (p. 93). In the case of foreign language teaching and learning, the question could be phrased as: Why should we "do language

teaching" in "the two-tier way?" Put differently, how is it that the two-tier structure is legitimated, preserved over historical time through moment-to-moment negotiation?

A related question is: How is the work of the upper-tier legitimated? Superficially, the work of tenure-line faculty is distinguished from that of non-tenure-line instructors and lecturers through engagement in different activities. Generally speaking, in addition to teaching, tenure-line faculty design and conduct research, report on that research through presentations and publications, attend conferences and other events in order to stay current in their field, serve in leadership positions in professional organizations, run programs and centers, compete for grants, mentor students, and contribute to policy development (departmentally, institutionally, locally, (inter)nationally). Non-tenure-line instructors and lecturers, on the other hand are typically not expected to engage in all these activities, though some in fact may. Instead, they are encouraged to focus nearly entirely on teaching and its associated duties.

The point is not as much these different ways individuals in higher education spend their time, but rather the underlying reasons – implicit and explicit – for these differences. A central explanatory reason is the autonomy awarded to faculty, but not to instructors and lecturers. Tenure-line faculty have, for the most part, pedagogical agency. How will they structure their courses? How will they assess student performance according to particular learning targets? What will those learning targets be in the first place? Tenure-line faculty, by and larger, are given wide berth in these types of decisions. This is quite often *not* the case for instructors and lecturers. Instead, they are often expected to enact the pedagogical decisions of those administratively "above" them; syllabi are pre-constructed, textbooks are chosen, daily expectations for class time are set,

assessments are written. In this environment, instructors and lecturers are positioned as less legitimate members of the wider group of people-who-teach-in-higher-education.

These simultaneous real and symbolic positionings are achieved in part through what van Leeuwen (2007) calls authorization – that is, the appeal to various forms of authority as legitimating. In the case of the "two-tier" structure, we can point to both the "impersonal authority of laws, rules and regulations" and the powerful authority of tradition (p. 96). Tenure guidelines – and the lack of tenure system expectations and protections for annually-renewable instructors and lecturers – serve to legitimate the work of tenure-line faculty. Interwoven with, and ultimately sustaining of the authority of these documents, is the authority of tradition. Van Leeuwen (2007) talks about this type of authority as an answer to the question of "why we do this in this way?" with "because this is what we have always done" (p. 96). It is for these reasons that the work language teaching and learning must always be viewed within its socio-historical-cultural context.

How then can the two-tier structure be transformed? Perhaps one way is through the reimagining of who and what is considered legitimate in language teaching and learning within higher education. This study documented a combination of factors which elevated and legitimated the work of the participants in this study:

(1) *High quality professional development (PD) offerings for non-tenure-line, annually renewable instructors and lecturers*: The women in this study had access to multiple PD opportunities through both the LC and the LRC. The design of these PD opportunities positioned instructors as professionals who were knowledgeable about language pedagogy, and who had authority over their own curriculum design. In doing so, instructors were treated as if they

were part of the upper-tier, thus disrupting the implicit rules of who-does-what in the two-tier structure.

(2) *Inquiry-based PD, such as lesson study*: Lesson study positions group members as inquirers, with questions worthy of asking. It positions them as knowledgeable about their own classrooms and pedagogy, as learners *from* and teachers *of* other teachers. It also positions them as data collectors *and* data analyzers. Finally, lesson study gives individuals the opportunity to share about their work at the end. All of these aspects mirror roles that tenure-line faculty take in their position in the upper-tier; through opening these roles to language instructors – indeed, through encouraging and supporting instructors in this work – the line between the upper and lower tiers can become blurred.

(3) *Programmatic encouragement of instructor participation in professional development*: The prior two points are moot without programmatic support for instructors. As discussed just prior, the supportive nature of the Japanese Program was foundational in Hinata and Yukiko's teaching practice because it allowed them to fully take advantage of the PD offerings through the LC, the LRC, and also the group at the center of this study. Because of the support Hinata and Yukiko received in their department, they were able to not only make choices about *what* professional development they would pursue, but importantly, have autonomy over *how* to develop curriculum in response to their professional learning. In sum, their supportive department enabled and enlarged Hinata and Yukiko's "socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112).

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5.2 Combining activity theory, developmental work research, and lesson study

This study adds to growing evidence that cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) is a robust and useful framework for documenting the process of language teacher conceptual development. CHAT was productive in uncovering the findings discussed above, in large part because of the focus on activity as the unit of analysis (Engeström, 2009). In the present study, CHAT allowed the analysis to pivot among the individuals in the group and the group as a whole, between the present moments shared by the inquiry group and their histories (both those consciously remembered and those culturally-historically inherited). Being able to engage in this type of analysis was crucial to developing a fuller understanding of Hinata and Yukiko's conceptual development as mediated by the inquiry group. An analysis of only their participation in the inquiry group sessions, *without* a view into the broader socio-cultural-historical context of the departmental structure in which they resided, would have certainly painted a much more limited picture of the workings of their conceptual development.

Relatedly, this study's derivation of developmental work research (DWR) proved to be a fruitful methodology for studying language teacher professional development. DWR, as an interventionist methodology for spurring and studying organizational change, is uniquely suited for use with the professional development of in-service teachers in U.S. tertiary level language departments. Unlike the education of *pre-service* teachers, which in the context of a career is relatively short-term in nature, the professional development of *practicing* teachers is and/or should be part of a long-term commitment to the growth of the individual *and the organization*. Put differently,

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whereas pre-service teacher education is centrally concerned with educating the *individual*, in-service professional development is concerned with educating the *individual-in-the-workplace.* In the present study, the notion of organizational change through workplace learning was particularly salient, because the inquiry group was embedded within a larger grant-funded project with an organizational-level goal: "the building and sustaining [of] a culture of continual and collaborative professional development" (CAS Language Center, 2014, p. 1).

Finally, and in line with Tasker's (2014) findings, lesson study is shown in these findings to be a productive second stimulus in a DWR-derived study. Though Tasker's study and this study implemented lesson study differently (as fit the different contexts), both found that the lesson study process gave participants meaningful ways to address contradictions uncovered during a first stimulus. In particular, the present findings suggest that, in a diverse language instructor group, lesson study's emphasis on observation *with an eye toward student actions as data*, can be a particularly salient mediator of teachers' conceptual development. In observing one another's classes, the women's existing conceptual understandings were confirmed or (sometimes) thrown into question. Especially in the case of contradictory evidence, direct observation of *real students* proved compelling in ways that theoretical discussions of pedagogy alone simply would not.

5.3 Designing professional development for language teachers in higher education

The findings of this study support the view that a combination of episodic workshops and longer-term instructional inquiry groups can be particularly effective in

promoting teacher conceptual development. Hinata's comment below eloquently

summarizes the synergistic relationship between episodic workshops/institutes (provided

by the LRC and the CAS Language Center) and sustained professional interaction with

colleagues:

> So, from … [LRC] Institute or … [CAS] Language Center Workshop I get
>
> knowledge. For example, last year we learned [exploratory practice] and IPA and
>
> I took IPA classes in … [LRC] last summer, so I got knowledge. And kinda like
>
> there I start thinking about how I can you know implement what I have learned
>
> into my own teaching. And in the small group like we have or more smaller, like
>
> smaller even smaller, with Yukiko, I kinda, those places are um like good good
>
> ones to kinda think more you know about how I can implement those like
>
> knowledge into your teaching. (Hinata's interview)

On the one hand, it would be tempting to argue that language teacher professional

development should *only* take the form of small, long-term inquiry groups like the one in

this study. The time that the group spent together was not only professionally fruitful, but

personally rewarding and enjoyable. Yet this study has shown that the workshops and

institutes which the women had attended at the LRC and in the LFP Project prior to data

collection were also integral to their conceptual development in that they introduced the

women to new ideas and pedagogies that they could later explore and try out. For

example, Hinata and Yukiko likely wouldn't have been experimenting with IPA units, a

common topic in our conversations, had they not previously attended LRC summer

institutes about assessment and content-based instruction. At the same time, though,

Hinata's reflections suggest that without her partnership with Yukiko, and her

involvement in the inquiry group, the content of the summer institutes might not have been implemented to the extent they were. The present study suggests that language teacher professional development benefits from the pairing of episodic workshops/institutes with sustained involvement with a small group of colleagues; ultimately, this synergistic combination affords language teachers the means to make sense of new pedagogical methods.

As we have shown, the inquiry group in this study exhibited the characteristics of a mature community; for example, micro-interactional analysis showed how the conversational dynamics of the group demonstrated their ability to disagree productively. This characteristic – being a mature community – is critical in language teacher professional development if the members of the group are to be able to truly have a space to test out new ideas. In the present study, the teachers demonstrated and explicitly shared how they trusted one another; they were willing to take risks as a result, be that offering a counterpoint in discussion, sharing a potentially embarrassing teaching example, or welcoming each other into their classroom. It's likely this was not only the fact that the women met over the course of a school year, but also the fact that they *chose* each other and seemed to enjoy each other personally as much as professionally. This is a difficult element to replicate in PD projects in other tertiary educational institutions, especially at scale; however, this study *does* suggest that by providing a fertile environment (openness in the home program, support from an individual like myself, a wealth of high-quality workshops and institutes), these types of groups can take root.

5.4 Limitations of the study and directions for future research

As in any empirical study, this study has methodological limitations. Hearing more of the participants' reflections on the lesson study process (and the conversations during the meetings) would certainly have deepened the analysis and strengthened the study. As the study currently stands, it is heavy on researcher interpretation, and light on participant voice. Along the same line, more extensive interviewing of the participants – especially in regard to their pedagogical leanings prior to joining the inquiry group – would have complicated the analysis in productive ways. Had the situation allowed it, observations of Hinata and Yukiko's teaching would have given me a more nuanced understanding of their comments made during inquiry group meetings. Further, because of the strong collaborative relationship between the two women, it would have been powerful to record and analyze the planning conversations between them. However, my access (and thus insight) into these spaces was limited greatly by language, as I am not a Japanese speaker. The group itself also did not share all of the languages of instruction. Though in some ways this multilingual nature of the group was a strength which brought multiple perspectives to the table, it also made it challenging to implement lesson study. In the future, it would be interesting to design a similar study within one language program, which would allow for more fidelity to the lesson study protocol – especially in the group production of a collaboratively written lesson. This could be extremely informative to our understanding of teacher conceptual development. Finally, the research question I investigated – especially with the emphasis on the sociocultural context as viewed through activity theory – would have benefited from a more ethnographic approach to data collection.

A note worth mentioning in this context is that, as in so many qualitative studies, the goal of this study is not to propose a scalable model. I do not see this as a limitation, as much as a caution to readers of this study. This study captured a unique moment in the life of not only a program – the Japanese Program – but also a supporting unit – the CAS Language Center. As such, there were supports for the instructors in place that might not normally exist at other tertiary institutions, and which could be difficult to replicate – especially at scale. For example, I played an important role in the group; I served as a teacher educator, guiding the framework our inquiry might take, and also as support staff, coordinating the logistics of our meetings through note-taking, transcription, video-recording, and scheduling. The LFP Project freed up some of my time to be able to do this type of work; however, it is unusual to have an individual available to complete these types of support functions, and it would certainly be a challenge for other tertiary institutions to replicate this design, given the usual financial constraints of language departments in higher education.

It is also important to acknowledge the unique characteristics of the participants in this study. They were all experienced teacher-learners, and had training in language pedagogy, either through extensive professional development or through teacher education degrees. This type of pedagogical training is unusual for language educators in higher education, as typically they have received their higher degrees in programs focused on literature, with little to no training in pedagogy. With these characteristics in mind, we see that this particular group of women were uniquely primed for involvement – and success – in an inquiry group like the one in this study. Again, this is not so much a limitation, as it is a defining feature of the "messiness" of qualitative work. Whereas the

unique constellation of individuals and group features came together in this particular case to create a productive environment, similarly and differently composed study circles would likely have quite different experiences.

What *can* be taken from this study, then, is not a particular recipe for "successful" professional development in higher education, but rather a small set of guiding principles for facilitating language instructor professional growth:

- Design opportunities for instructors to engage with each other about conflicting pedagogical concepts in meaningful ways;

- Encourage instructors' observation of others' teaching;

- Support instructor reflection through tools which help them "see themselves" (e.g., video-recording of teaching, transcripts of conversations);

- Build professional development around inquiry, and around the assumption that instructors have interesting, valuable questions to ask.

Of course, each of these principles assumes instructor choice and autonomy. This assumption is critical and essential.

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Appendix A: Interview questions

Semi-structured interview guide

<u>Background building</u>
- educational background (not including post-graduation professional development)
  - prior language learning experiences
  - any teacher training
- experience teaching Japanese (including other levels than tertiary)

<u>Professional development</u>
- What do you do to make yourself a more effective teacher?
  - Resources you use
  - How to cultivate these practices?
- What have you found most beneficial for you in your professional growth?
- What professional development programs have you participated in?
  - departmental level
  - LRC institutes
  - CAS Language Center activities
- Prompt them to elaborate on these experiences:
  - topics
  - instructional model (speaker-centered, group work, online, etc.)
  - memorable moments
  - take-aways
  - impact on teaching practice? examples
- Informal learning -
  - Can you think of any examples of informal moments that prompted you to try something different in your classroom, or to think about your teaching practice differently? (talk with a colleague, article you read, etc.)
- What kind of collaborative activities do you do with other teachers?
- Do you feel there are any obstacles to your professional development?
- What expectations do you feel your department has for you as far as professional development?
  - Ideal vs. reality?

Appendix B: Adaptation of Jefferson's (2004) transcription conventions used in this study

-	truncated word / cut-off	((sniffle))	vocalism
,	'continuing' intonation	**word**	emphasis
?	appeal intonation	[ ]	overlap
.	terminative intonation	:	elongation of a sound
↑↓	rising / falling intonation	(.)	brief pause
.hhh	inhale	(1.0)	timed pause
hhh	exhale	=	latched utterances
°word°	very soft speech	:	prosodic lengthening
( )	unintelligible	<word>	slowed rate of speech
(word)	uncertain	>word<	rapid rate of speech
WORD	louder talk (in comparison)	£	laugh in voice

Adapted from: Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an Introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), Conversation Analysis: Studies from the first generation (pp. 13–23). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Appendix C: Hinata's Lesson Plan

Date & Time	Monday, April 13, 2015. 3:35 pm – 4:25 pm (50 min.)
Course	Beginning Japanese (15 students)
Proficiency Level	Novice-Mid
Unit	Modern Japanese Society and Cultural Diversity
Lesson Topic	Friendship and Social Networking Services (SNS)

Objectives:
● Students will reflect on their friendship and its relation to their Social Networking Services use.
● Students will think about what it means to be friends online (and offline).
● Students will read and view information on Japanese young adults' SNS usage and compare it with their own experience.

Essential Questions:
● How do you define "friends"?
● How important is the use of SNS for you to keep in touch with friends?
● If you would write a blog post or a personal ad online, how would you describe yourself?

Linguistic goals / can-do statements:
● Students can get main ideas about Japanese young adults' SNS usage by reading and viewing graphs from an online article, and can produce short sentences based on what they found. (The use of comparison is desirable.)
● Students can use adjectives and verbs to qualify nouns (noun modification) in the context of describing one's personality, appearance, interests, hobbies, etc.

Materials: Textbook reading material, graphs and charts retrieved online

Communication modes:
1) Interpretive activity: Reading and viewing infographics and textbook materials
2) Interpersonal activity: Pair-work and group discussion on the given topic
3) Presentational activity: Short writing in a small group, and giving a short spoken presentation summarizing group discussion

Notes:
1) Today is a Day 1 of the new unit.
2) The first 5 minutes of class will be spent for a weekly Kanji (Chinese character) writing quiz.

Lesson Plan

Time table	Contents / Activities
0-5	Warm-up questions How was your weekend? What did you have to do on weekend? Quick Kanji Review and Kanji Quiz
5-10	Kanji Writing Practice: 勉強 ("study") Asking questions using Kanji: S-S: Do you like studying alone or with your friends? why?
10-13	Introductory questions to the new Unit 1) How do you define "friends"? What kind of people do you call friends? What kind of people are acquaintances? Do you think all of your facebook friends are real-life friends? 2) How often you use SNS to keep in touch with friends? What kind of SNS do you often use? [Pair → Share]
13-20	Interpretive and interpersonal activity 1) Reading graphs and getting information on current Japanese young adults' SNS usage http://lab.oceanize.co.jp/social-activity/ After looking at the graphs, students will answer the prepared questions on the worksheet and discuss similarities and differences in young adults' SNS usage in Japan and in their own country. [Pair → Share] 2): Viewing a TV commercial of SNS app company "LINE". https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZkKLfOvANg Class discussion: Why is LINE popular in Japan?
20-30	Information gap activity using textbook reading material: The topic of the textbook reading is 'looking for friends' and there are four personal ads. I changed this reading task into a pair-information gap activity. Each student will see two fully complete ads and two limited information (some parts are hidden due to some ink stains). By asking and answering questions, they will see the entire information on each person's ad. After this activity, they will discuss whether they want to be friends with people in the article. They also will evaluate the ads -whether these look attractive, good, or bad. They may think what kind of advices they give to make these ads more attractive.
30-40	Writing activity: As a group of three, students will write an online personal ad to look for a language partner. They need to choose one student in their group and collaboratively write about the selected person. Suggested grammar: noun modification, "I want to…" etc.
40-50	Gallery Walk (walking around and look at each group's work) Wrap up

Appendix D: Handout from Hinata's lesson

【大学生のSNS活用調査】twitter/facebookどのくらい使っている？本当に大学生が利用しているSNSはこれだ！

2014年7月25日　8556 Views　　　　　　　　　　　約**5**分
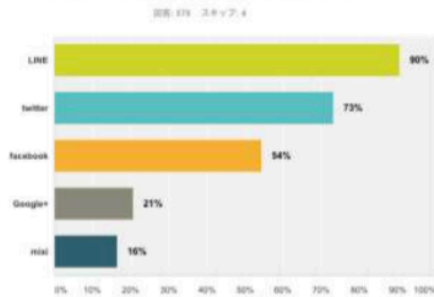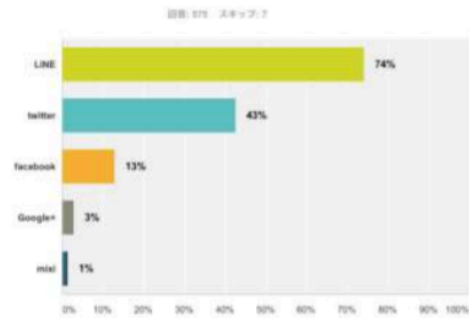学生生活

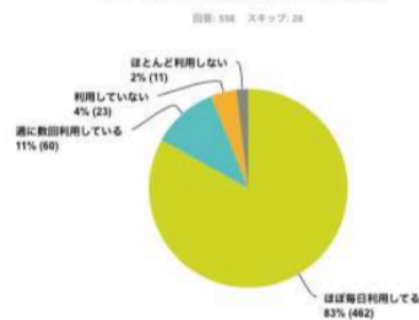学生の半数以上はLINE・twitter・Facebookのアカウントを持っている

アカウントを持っているSNSはどれですか？

回答: 570　スキップ: 4

LINE	90%
twitter	73%
facebook	54%
Google+	21%
mixi	16%

今の学生の連絡手段はLINE

普段一番使っているSNSはどれですか？

回答: 575　スキップ: 7

LINE	74%
twitter	43%
facebook	13%
Google+	3%
mixi	1%

学生の8割がLINEを毎日使用している

LINEをどの程度利用していますか？

回答: 598　スキップ: 28

- ほとんど利用しない 2% (11)
- 利用していない 4% (23)
- 週に数回利用している 11% (60)
- ほぼ毎日利用してる 83% (462)

意外にもfacebookはあまり使われていない！？

facebookをどの程度利用していますか？

回答: 562　スキップ: 20

- ほとんど利用しない 17% (95)
- 利用していない 41% (229)
- 週に数回利用している 19% (109)
- ほぼ毎日利用してる 23% (129)
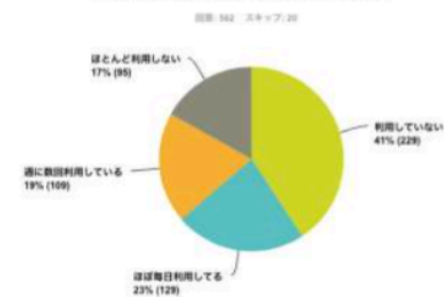
Discussion:

1)日本の大学生は、どの SNS をいちばんよく 使いますか。(つかう to use)

2) Facebook はどうですか。

3) 日本の大学生と、アメリカの大学生とどうちがいますか。(ちがう to be different)
_____のほうが、_____より、_____。