

# English as a Lingua Franca in Fieldwork:

Exploring language learner success during fieldwork in Cambodia

Jennifer Morgan

## Abstract

This paper explores how a group of Japanese university students perceived and exploited opportunities for using English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) with other non-native speakers (NNSs) during a short fieldwork trip in Cambodia. Learners experienced firsthand how plurilingual speakers draw on various linguistic and intercultural skills to achieve mutual intelligibility in Lingua Franca contexts. During intercultural activities with Cambodian university students, learners negotiated meaningful English communication, despite frequent communication breakdowns, through completing tasks, sharing presentations and friendship-making. Learner data describe how participants' confidence and willingness to communicate in English increased and future learning goals were consolidated. As a result of successful ELF episodes, students' perspectives on ideal language models shift from native speaker norms to include near-peer NNS role models.

本論文は、日本の大学に通う学生グループが、カンボジアでのフィールドワーク旅行において、非英語母語話者との共通語としての英語使用機会をどのように認識、活用したのか調査した結果をまとめたものである。このフィールドワーク旅行で学生たちは、共通語としての英語のやりとりにおいて、複数言語話者がいかにして言語また異文化間スキルを用いて相互理解に到ることができるのかを実体験した。カンボジア大学生との異文化間活動中、日本の大学生たちは、プレゼンテーション、友達作りといったタスクを遂行しながら、度々行き詰まることはあったものの意義のある英語のやりとりを行なった。学生たちから収集されたデータを分析した結果、大学生参加者の英語でコミュニケーションすることに対する自信と意欲、そして、将来の学習目標が強化されたことが明らかとなった。共通語としての英語コミュニケーションを体験した成果の一つとして、日本の大学生グループの理想的な言語モデルが、英語母語話者を基準にしたものから自身の近い立場の非英語母語話者を含んだものに変化した点が挙げられる。

Keywords: *English as a Lingua Franca, language learning, fieldwork trips, Cambodia, non-native speakers, learner motivation, near-peer role models.*

## 1. Introduction

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) communication amongst non-native (NNS) and sometimes native speakers (NS) is currently the most common use of English world-wide (Seidlhofer, 2011), and as such learners of English as an additional language need to experience real-world situations where they can use “their English” to communicate with speakers of different first languages across cultures and in a range of contexts. As the vast majority of English users are NNS in an Asian context, there are interesting questions about how Japanese students shift their perspectives of ideal linguistic role models - the idealised NS standard or the competent bilingual/ multilingual NNS user of English. To what extent do L2 learners need to use NS levels of vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and pronunciation to be able to communicate effectively? What kinds of linguistic and intercultural skills do learners actually need to deal with communication breakdown and negotiate meaning in real life interactions? In so far as Japanese may also be used as a Lingua Franca among people from different countries in Asia, the mixing of English, Japanese and local languages in interactions with local people may challenge Japanese students to re-think what they had thought were ‘normal’ or acceptable modes of language use and communication (e.g. monolingual and plurilingual communication). Finally, how can language educators help their learners to recognise and take up opportunities for ELF use in diverse NNS contexts?

This study explores such questions about Lingua Franca contact situations by reporting on Japanese students’ opportunities for using ELF with other NNSs during a short fieldwork trip in Cambodia, and by analysing the positive effects of those language-using episodes on students’ “willingness to communicate” in English (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide & Shimizu, 2004). The paper first introduces current perspectives of ELF in language teaching, and relevant reports of overseas fieldwork contexts where learners have benefited from ELF communicative experiences. The paper then outlines the context of the study and explains how the author, a specialized English language educator, collaborated with a Japanese seminar professor during fieldwork preparation classes for university students heading to Cambodia to

visit and explore social businesses working towards sustainable development in local communities. The language educator prepared and led English language tasks for the pre-departure classes, which were designed to increase students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English (L2 WtC) as well as heighten their awareness of ELF opportunities.

Building on data from learner surveys, reflective reports and field notes, the paper continues by developing an analysis of students' general attitudes to English, their uptake of ELF opportunities, and the effects of such interactions on their L2 WtC. The analysis highlights how the students exploit diverse opportunities to use Lingua Franca English with local university students and local people. It also reveals how their view of English as a *Foreign Language* (EFL) widens to include an ELF perspective. Of particular interest here is how the fieldwork appears to provide students with "rich, situated learning opportunities" (Jones, 2013, p.61) for using not only *English* as a Lingua Franca, but also *Japanese* as a Lingua Franca (JLF). The students experience plurilingualism first-hand and see how plurilingual speakers communicate by using different common languages to achieve various goals drawing on varying levels of language proficiency and a range of cultural experiences, for the purposes of communication and to participate in intercultural interaction (Bernaus, Andrade, Kervran, Murkowska & Trujillo Sáez, 2007). Furthermore, the experience of being in the 'native speaker' role is clearly significant for a number of participants: it both stimulated their immediate communicative agency, and influenced their future English learning goals.

## 2. Context

The author has taught Japanese *International Communication* major students for more than five years, a significant number of whom could be (self-) described as having low motivation or confidence for English learning. There are various reasons for such demotivation and lack of L2 confidence amongst Japanese EFL students, and not least of these may be the remote NS norms and standards that are still upheld in the national language testing systems, coupled with a sense of the irrelevance of

English in the lives of many learners. On realising that many of her students participate in short fieldwork projects in countries where locals often use English alongside mother tongue languages, the language educator wanted to collaborate with Japanese professors who teach these fieldwork courses. Together, colleagues could prepare the students that they ‘share’ to make best use of opportunities to use English as a Lingua Franca during real-world fieldwork in destinations such as Cambodia, which would hopefully impact positively on learner motivation and confidence with English.

### **2.1 Language use in Cambodia**

Alongside Cambodia’s official language, Khmer, Cambodian French retains significance in Cambodian education and diplomacy. However, Chinese and English are now seen as important international languages, and English particularly has a “special status” in Cambodian education and business spheres with many Cambodians now seeing it as a necessity for success in the world of international commerce and politics. So, knowing that opportunities for ELF would surely exist in the two major cities in Cambodia (Phnom Penh and Siem Reap), the author clarified her research aims and rationale: *to explore opportunities for using English as a Lingua Franca during fieldwork in Cambodia in order to help learners optimize such opportunities now and in the future.*

### **2.2 English as a Lingua Franca in language learning**

In current approaches to English teaching-learning, there is a significant trend globally towards English as a Lingua Franca models for learners rather than the traditionally-held and surely unattainable NS standards (Harris, 2012; Jenkins, 2009; Kirkpatrick, 2011). With NNS of English now far out-numbering NS, it is more likely that our students will be using their English to communicate with other non-native speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, arguably, for Japan’s language teaching-learning contexts, an ELF perspective which targets a multilingual/plurilingual model (Kirkpatrick, 2011), and teaches NNS norms and communication skills for negotiating intercultural contexts will be more relevant and

motivating for our learners (Handford and Cunningham as cited in Kosaka, 2014). Language learning and practice needs to foster “flexibility and interpersonal skills” and “all aspects of intercultural awareness” (Handford as cited in Kosaka, 2014), and not just NS cultural and pragmatic norms. Classroom approaches which embody ELF models (Harris 2012, Jenkins, 2012), and extra-curricular experiences such as overseas fieldwork (Decker, 2010; Marlowe, 2012), study tours (Jones, 2013) and task-based language teaching projects (Fukada, 2011) which expose learners to ELF practices/contexts first-hand can go a long way towards changing students’ perspectives of English use as a foreign, unreachable thing to a view where English communication is something familiar, relevant and achievable.

During overseas fieldwork and international exchange programs, students can have the opportunity to use ELF to communicate with other plurilingual users; they use ELF (and other common languages) to interact with NNS and sometimes NS peers, using the common language(s) to achieve specific project goals, establish friendships and increase intercultural understanding (Decker, 2010; Jones, 2013; Marlowe, 2012). Here young volunteers and fieldworkers perceive a need for using English or ELF as a tool for international communication rather than as the objective of improving L2 proficiency (Yashima et al., 2004). This interpersonal/ intercultural goal accounts for some students’ L2 WtC. If language educators can foster L2 WtC through intercultural exchanges and authentic language practice both inside and outside the classroom, perhaps learner motivation along with intercultural competence will improve (Marlowe, 2012). In the current study, evidence of increased L2 WtC during ELF interactions was exemplified in Nanami’s comment:

“We met many people and I felt frustrated so many times because I wanted to be able to speak more... for the first time I felt a hunger to learn more English grow inside of me.” (Nanami, reflection, January 10, 2014)

In ELF contexts, volunteers experience “the profound realization that imperfect English could still be used for effective and meaningful communication” (Decker, 2010, p.18) and “the joy of using language to communicate with people of different

nationalities and backgrounds” (Marlowe, p.13). Similarly, the participants in this study found that even with “(my) poor English vocabulary, (they could) make many mistakes...often (using) gestures and body language” (field note, Yuko, December 2013) and successfully negotiate meaning with local students by using adaption, accommodation and flexibility in their communicative interactions. Within such negotiated ELF-using episodes, learners find more accessible role models, expand their “imagined communities” and develop their “English-using selves” (Yashima, 2009). As Seidlhofer (2009) said “the key issue is mutual intelligibility” (Seidlhofer, 2009 cited in Kirkpatrick, 2011).

Focusing now on Cambodia as a fieldwork destination and context for intercultural student exchanges with ELF opportunities, the author conducted research to explore how her students could use ELF during their fieldwork activities and interactions with other NNS such as local service people, staff at social businesses, and particularly with local university peers.

### **2.3 The Cambodia Fieldwork Course**

In 2013, one Japanese professor invited the author to accompany her and a group of *International Communications* major students to a new fieldwork destination, Cambodia. Cambodia was chosen for fieldwork as an emerging Asian economy with which Japan has links through trade agreements, government aid and development programmes, private companies, social businesses and NGO/NPO activities. This fieldwork’s global issues focus was that of “the role of social businesses and NGOs in dealing with issues of poverty and sustainable development”. Students visited several social businesses and NGOs, and participated in two university exchange events. At the first event, both the visiting students and host students (all Japanese language majors) gave presentations in Japanese at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in an event hosted by the Cambodia Japan Cooperation Centre (CJCC). The second university exchange was with Pannasastra University’s English major students participating in a “City Clean-Up Campaign” by picking up rubbish on streets in Siem Reap. As visitors to the World Heritage Site, Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, the professor wanted her students to engage in activities with local people, and

to think about the issues of ‘responsible tourism’ and ‘ethical consumerism’.

## **2.4 Pre-departure**

The Cambodia fieldwork-seminar course was a semester-long course comprising 15 classes covering preparation via group research and peer presentations, the seven-day fieldwork trip focusing on social businesses, and follow-up reflections and individual fieldwork reports. The language educator informally collaborated with the seminar professor (and fieldwork leader) to define learner outcomes which comprised: research and presentations to learn about Cambodia and specific social businesses working towards sustainable development; presentations in Japanese for university exchange events; awareness of ELF opportunities in Cambodia; and practice of communication English.

Language activities in the preparation classes aimed to prime students pre-departure for real-life English communication with local people, especially Cambodian students as near-peer role models. Task-based English activities included ice-breaker and mingle-type activities, content-focused fun quizzes based on the peer research presentations about Cambodia, and finally awareness-raising interview-discussions about perceptions of ELF and language use in Cambodia. These activities were aimed at increasing learners’ L2 WtC, and fostering a community of practice to ensure that the cultural exchange activities with two Cambodian university groups would be supportive, lively and productive. Gradually, the author introduced factual information about ELF and English use in Cambodia; she stressed that the key goal in Lingua Franca communication is conveying meaning and ideas with local people, and not getting stuck on making the “perfect” English sentence.

## **3. Research method**

The author carried out qualitative research with the 20 participants of the fieldwork-seminar course over one semester, and specifically during the seven-day fieldwork trip to Cambodia in the winter of 2013. There was a fairly even mixture of 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> year students, six males and fourteen females, who possessed a range of

L2 proficiency levels and L2-learning motivation levels from several fairly confident and motivated Study Abroad returnees to students who had very little interest in English study beyond their major's requirements.

All 20 students voluntarily answered the short pre-trip survey, and 18 completed the post-trip survey; both surveys were in English and Japanese (Appendix A, B). During the fieldwork trip the author kept a 'participant observation' journal, wrote field notes and regular reflections with particular interest in instances of Lingua Franca communication in action, as well as student interactions during the intercultural exchange activities with two universities. The author gathered additional data from translations of students' reflections and fieldwork reports to develop more informed learner perspectives on ELF in the context of fieldwork. All participants gave consent to the use of their input for the purposes of this research; pseudonyms are used here to protect students' privacy.

### **3.1 Pre- and post-surveys**

Students answered the surveys using Japanese or English, or both, and could choose to write their name or remain anonymous. In the pre-trip survey (Appendix A) all 20 participants wrote their names. Questions were aimed at revealing learner perceptions about the opportunities for English use in Cambodia, actual incidents of ELF use, their perceived confidence with English, and whether English study/practice was among the goals/ reasons for joining this fieldwork trip. Q1a, Q3a, Q4a asked for Likert scale responses while Q2a and Q5a allowed for more detailed information.

The post-survey (Appendix B) was conducted two weeks after the fieldwork group had returned to Japan when classes resumed after the winter break. While the pre- and post-survey questions were not exactly identical there was some congruence which allowed for comparing before and after-type changes in learner perceptions of ELF and their confidence with English.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 The opportunity or need for English use in Cambodia fieldwork

The first question in the pre-survey (Q1a Do you think you will speak, or will have to speak any English in Cambodia?) and the post-survey (Q1b. Did you speak any English (use ELF) while you were in Cambodia?) aimed to elicit student perceptions of opportunities for speaking English in Cambodia. Did they perceive that English would be necessary and would they have the agency to use English to communicate?

Table 1 The opportunity or need for English use

	Pre-survey (Q1a)	Post-survey (Q1b)
Quite a lot of English.	30%	56%
Some English	50%	27%
Only a little English	20%	17%
No English at all	0%	0%
Total	n = 20 (100.00%)	n = 18 (100%)

While it appears that *all* students initially perceived that they *would* (have to) use English whilst in Cambodia and nearly three-quarters thought they would (have to) use “some or only a little English”, only one-third of the class thought they would use “a lot of English”. In contrast, post-trip answers showed a definite shift. Now, half reported that they did actually use “a lot of English” during the trip, and nearly half of the respondents used “some” or “a little” English. It is unclear exactly what students perceive as “a lot”- is it a lot compared to what they had *imagined* they would use, or a lot compared to what they are able to use in Japan? No matter what, it is significant that students *did* take advantage of chances to use English to communicate with other NNS whilst in Cambodia. Some respondents including Chinatsu and Kouta commented:

“I communicated a lot in English even though I rarely use it in Japan. Even for people who are not native speakers, it is still pretty easy to communicate or listen and catch the meaning. When it’s hard to understand (each other) we can use gesture and simple English.” (Chinatsu, Post-survey, Q1b, January

10, 2014)

“Only RUPP students could speak Japanese, after this we had to use English. Even when we tried simple Khmer greetings, market sellers used English (or Japanese) phrases even though they never studied.” (Kouta, Post-survey, Q1b, January 10, 2014)

Chinatsu found that ELF is useful in Cambodia, and that a focus on the main meaning is more important than needing NS-level English. Kouta found that both ELF and JLF were used in some shops and tourist places where any common language is used for specific purposes to achieve certain (transactional) goals; Japanese students used Khmer to make an initial friendly connection but then interlocutors instinctively switched to common languages. With NNS, participants discovered that they could focus on intelligibility and intercultural understanding rather than grammatical accuracy (see also Ke & Suzuki, 2011).

#### 4.2 ELF opportunities with various interlocutors

Based on the results of Q2a (Right now, who do you imagine you will have the chance to speak English with?) and Q2b (Who did you speak English with during the fieldwork trip?) it was found that all students perceived they would (have to) speak some English with *a range of people* during their trip, and probably for transactional, tourism-related purposes. A closer look at participants’ comments reveals that nearly three-quarters of participants mentioned hotel staff, and already one quarter expected to use English with local students.

Table 2 ELF opportunities with various interlocutors

Interlocutors mentioned by students	Pre-survey (Q2a)	Post-survey (Q2b)
Hotel staff	70%	94%
At the airport (immigration); on the plane	35%	88%
With local university students	25%	70%
With local people (Cambodians) - e.g. taking taxi or tuktuk/ shop people/ sellers	15%	70%
Other foreigners/ tourists	10%	55%

Staff at social businesses	10%	28%
Restaurant staff	5%	67%
Tour guide	5%	0%
The police (if lost)	5%	n/a
<i>Local children</i>	<i>n/a</i>	22%
<i>Local people walking past</i>	<i>n/a</i>	44%
Total	<i>n</i> = 20 (100.00%)	<i>n</i> = 18 (100%)

The data from post-survey Q2b clarifies that in fact students interacted with a wider range of people, and used *a whole lot more English* than they had imagined they would before the trip. Additionally, in their post-survey responses, some students mention two extra groups with whom they used English: “local children” and “local people walking past”.

“Some school kids calling out to us in English, they were laughing when we tried to say in Khmer... I was surprised the twelve year old girl and her friend were so confident to speak English with us.” (Maki, Post-survey, Q2b, January 10, 2014)

**Japanese as a Lingua Franca and taking the native speaker role.** In the fieldtrip’s final evening reflections, five students mentioned how they effectively used English to ask questions to the staff at one social business (Cambodians and one Englishman) when the Cambodian guide-interpretor was not available. Because the students were fully engaged with the issues related to the social business they were visiting, they experienced heightened L2 WtC and the agency to use ELF to find out information on their own, and to connect warmly with the staff-hosts once the students’ basic Khmer had dried up. At the same social business, the author observed a younger Cambodian shop assistant using a number of Japanese phrases to joke with two students buying souvenirs. This sent the Japanese students into fits of surprised laughter which then turned into a lively interchange switching between Khmer, Japanese and English during which the students successfully completed their purchases and obtained information about the products made by former street children (field notes, *Friends International Romdeng Restaurant*, 19 December 2013).

Here, participants experienced plurilingualism in action where everyone calls on whatever linguistic and pragmatic resources they have in order to achieve their communicative goals.

The author further observed that, as time went on, the more the Japanese students had successful ELF interactions (peppered with Khmer or Japanese from both sides) with local people and with the local university groups, the more they wanted to interact which led to increased L2 WtC. From comments arising during reflections, some students expressed surprise and delight that local sellers in the market and some shops could often speak a little Japanese (field notes, 23 December 2013). Clearly, when plurilingual users interact, it is not just *English* as a Lingua Franca that speakers turn to, but it could be *Japanese* or any other *common* languages, and so, Lingua Franca conditions catalyse multiple Lingua Franca use.

“At the intercultural event the RUPP students could speak smooth Japanese because they were Japanese majors. It was funny and strange to see our teacher, a New Zealander, also speak Japanese with the Cambodian students, and not English.” (Fumiko, Post-survey, Q2b, January 10, 2014).

The author, a L1 speaker of English, had quickly realized that she was in the minority as an elementary-level user of Japanese, and she intuitively switched to communicating in her basic level Japanese, doing a simple self-introduction in Japanese just as everyone else had, and continued chatting with the Cambodian student hosts in Japanese as her own students were doing.

Significantly, at this event, Japanese students were in the native speaker role with their Cambodian counterparts. From participant data, this seemed to be a powerful experience for the Japanese students - for once they were the confident speakers, the linguistic models; they were proactive in the Q and A sessions, and showed leadership in the discussions which followed the presentations. It was great to observe them being flexible, empathetic and accommodating for the users of L2 Japanese.

“When talking to the RUPP students in Japanese I thought about how it was the same as if I was speaking English to a native speaker. I noticed that when I’m ever conversing with an English native speaker, I was (only) able to converse because the other person naturally understood where the conversation was going and helped me out. But when we were discussing with the RUPP students, now we are native speaker... so, we tried to speak slower and simple Japanese... or we switched to using English when they couldn’t understand. I want to be able to skilfully switch between two languages and be able to understand what the person I am talking to is saying, and help us each to understand the other.” (Naoki, reflection, January 10, 2014)

### 4.3 Confidence with English and changing identities

The questions 3a and 3b (Right now, how confident do you feel speaking English?) elicited changes in students’ confidence with English after the fieldwork experience where they had been communicating in English and using ELF in varying amounts every day. The post-trip results show a slight positive shift in confidence (Table 3). The four students who said they now felt “confident speaking English” had all had Study Abroad experience a year or more prior to the fieldtrip. Slightly fewer students now felt “not at all confident”.

Table 3 Confidence with English

	Pre-survey (Q3a)	Post-survey (Q3b)
Very confident	0%	0%
Confident	5%	22%
A little confident	35%	33%
Not at all confident	60%	44%
Total	<i>n</i> = 20 (100.00%)	<i>n</i> = 18 (100.00%)

From this small sample it is not possible to make any wild claims of the positive effects of ELF experiences on students’ L2 confidence but certainly when delving deeper into the students’ final night reflections and their fieldwork reports it does appear that many did feel more confident about using English/ELF, felt a heightened WtC in English, and expressed strengthened identities as users of English. As a result of frequent authentic English communicative episodes with their plurilingual peers,

participants' confidence with English grew, along with their sense of ownership of English (Widdowson, 1994). Concurrently, Japanese students' identities developed into rightful *users* of English and no longer just *learners* of English (Norton, 1997).

One student in particular, Chihoko, evaluated herself as “not confident at all with English” pre-survey and post-survey, but in her final night reflections and in Q5b, Chihoko described at some length her use of English and the “good experience” she had had:

“I could use English positively during the ‘clean-up’ activity”. (This time students couldn't speak Japanese so we had to use English, gestures and smiles. Their English was really smooth, maybe I couldn't understand half of English they were saying... but they were very kindly and they tried to find easy words. Finally, we could say many things and get to know (each other) deeply. I felt refreshed because both of us used language (English) which is not mother tongue and we could understand each other.” (Field note, December 22, 2013)

Chihoko was very engaged in the fieldwork objectives and the issues the social businesses were dealing with. Her drive to communicate with Cambodian peers and NGO staff increased her WtC and meant she successfully negotiated interactions using ELF despite her low L2 confidence.

#### **4.4 Students' perceptions of the Cambodian fieldwork**

Responding to Q4a (Was English study a reason for joining the Cambodia fieldwork trip?) and Q4b (In the future, do you think that English study or English practice will be a reason for joining other fieldwork trips in foreign countries), some students felt English study/practice or ELF was “no reason” for joining the fieldwork trip, but more than half the group cited English as “a small reason”. In contrast, post-trip and with some successful ELF experiences behind them, a clear shift was recognized among students with a majority now saying that English practice *would* be an item for consideration when choosing future fieldwork trips. Now, more than

half the respondents said that English would be “a reason” or “a very big reason”, and fewer students now said “English would not be a reason” in their decisions (Table 4). Perhaps now, these learners recognize valuable opportunities for English use in NNS countries and contexts.

Table 4 English study/practice is a reason for choosing this fieldwork

	Pre-survey (Q4a)	Post-survey (Q4b)
A very big reason	0%	33%
A reason	15%	22%
A small reason	60%	33%
No reason at all	25%	11%
Total	<i>n</i> = 20 (100.00%)	<i>n</i> = 18 (100.00%)

#### 4.5 Reasons for joining Cambodia fieldwork trip

This final pre-trip question Q5a (What are your main goals or reasons (give 2 or more) for joining the Cambodia fieldwork trip?) aimed to draw out learner reasons for choosing the Cambodia seminar course and fieldwork trip, and revealed a range of reasons. More than half the students had some *prior knowledge or experience* of the destination country, Cambodia:

“When I was elementary school student, our volunteer club gave books to a Cambodian school.” (Yuka, Pre-survey, Q5a, November 22, 2013).

About two thirds of the class expressed *interest in foreigners or a foreign culture*, with Minami now turning her orientation away from Europe towards Asia as a potentially rich site for cultural commonality, intercultural learning, and near-peer language role models.

“I was previously interested only in European countries because I like that culture or history, but now I’m interested in learning about Asian neighbor countries... closer cultures. I felt closeness to the girls at *Kamonohashi*. ” (Minami, Pre-survey, Q5a, November 22, 2013).

#### 4.6 Perceived language gaps and future learning goals

The post-survey question, Q5b (Now, what English language skills do you wish you had so that you could communicate better with local students and local people?) was of great interest to the author as she hoped that through reflection about language gaps participants might identify and develop future language learning goals. When recalling communication breakdowns caused by language gaps, participants identified various English skills they wished for in order to connect more deeply with Cambodian peers and local people. Some talked about gaps in Listening skills, difficulty with Cambodian accents, the high level of English proficiency shown by the Cambodian students, and a need for more vocabulary to be able to both hear and understand what was being said, and to then be able to respond in detail: “I have always thought about *speaking* English (production) but I should have studied more *listening* in class (in Japan). I really enjoyed communicating with local people but sometimes I couldn’t hear (understand) their English very well.” (Anonymous). Although some participants felt stuck with limited vocabulary wishing they could express themselves more clearly and with interesting details, they had now understood that the main goal was to “just say your ideas.” Moreover, despite communication difficulties, most students realized that non-standard grammar and accents did not seem to stop them from understanding one another- they just needed to be flexible, accommodating and adaptable: “If we listen carefully, or repeat again, we can usually catch meaning.”

A number of participants expressed regret that they had not applied themselves more in past English classes, and then talked about goals for the coming year: “I should practise easy conversation more” and “I discovered that big vocabulary is more important than grammar so this year I need to study more vocabulary and communication ability so I can understand new friends better.” Finally, nearly all the participants specifically expressed huge respect for and surprise at just how well many of the Cambodian students could speak Japanese or English depending on their major, how much language study they do alone every day, and the Cambodians’ positive view of higher education and their ambitions after graduation: “I want to speak English like (Nary)... he was so fluent and relaxed speaker. He told (me) he studies a

lot and talks English with anyone he can.” Several Japanese participants still keep in touch with Cambodian students, communicating in English and/ or Japanese in their expanded online community.

Through recalling and reflecting, participants consolidated the positive ELF interactions and language-using episodes they had had with their Cambodian peers and with local people they had encountered each day, learned useful lessons from the communication breakdowns, and set future learning goals. Thus, it appears that the participants’ confidence, motivation, agency for language learning and L2 WtC were strengthened as a result of these different ELF interactions in Cambodia.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this study, the author explored how a group of language learners perceived and exploited opportunities for using English as a Lingua Franca during a short fieldwork trip in Cambodia. During the pre-departure classes and in collaboration with the Japanese fieldwork professor, the author led the participants through language activities and raised awareness about ELF in order to increase learners’ L2 WtC. Participants were surveyed before and after their trip to gather data about their expectations of opportunities for English use in Cambodia and their beliefs in their own language proficiency. Similar to other research about ELF and language learning opportunities during overseas fieldwork, data from this study’s surveys, learner reflections and reports reveal participants’ recognition and uptake of opportunities to use ELF with Cambodian university students and local people. Students realized that they did not necessarily need NS levels of grammar and vocabulary to communicate effectively; they called on other communicative and intercultural skills (gestures, adaption and accommodation) to negotiate meaning in real-time interactions. Furthermore, participants experienced directly how plurilingual speakers achieve their communicative goals by using whichever language and intercultural skill they need to bridge the linguistic gap. Japanese and Cambodian learners, as competent users of English (and Japanese) became near-peer role models for one another and

so expanded their imagined communities.

As a result of their uptake of ELF opportunities, participants' confidence in using English and their motivation for English study changed in positive ways. Furthermore, students gained a broader and deeper world view of issues facing developing countries, and made connections with these in their own lives. In exposing our learners to ELF models, ownership of English shifts to include all users- students, educators and other world citizens alike (Rajagopalan, 2004). Ultimately, ELF perspectives in language learning-teaching can improve and sustain learner motivation and confidence towards not just their own language learning and using, but also foster openness to language diversity and other world views throughout our students' lives.

*The author is grateful to Professors Mouri, Fukada and Kawamata (Meisei University) for useful discussions about learner engagement with English as a Lingua Franca, and Tammy Isobe (Tokai University) for translation work.*

## References

- Bernaus, M., Andrade, A. I., Kervran, M., Murkowska, A. and Trujillo Sáez, F. (Eds.) (2007). *Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education: A training kit*. Council of Europe Publishing, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex.
- Decker, W. (2010). Learning English through international volunteer work in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. In K. Bradford-Watts, E. M. Skier & M. Walsh (Eds.). *Pan-SIG 2010 Conference Proceedings*, 43-49. Kyoto: JALT.
- Fukada, Y. (2011). Generating Agentive TL Interaction in TBL projects. In A. Stewart & N. Sonda (Eds.), *JALT2011 Conference Proceedings*, 316- 327. Tokyo: JALT.
- Harris, J. (2012). World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca application in the classroom in Japan. *高等教育フォーラム (Forum of Higher Education Research)*, 2, 25-34.
- Jenkins, J. (2009). Explaining attitudes towards English as a lingua franca in the East Asian context. In K. Murata & J. Jenkins (Eds.), *Global English in Asian Contexts*, 40-58. Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jenkins, J. (2012). English as a Lingua Franca from the classroom to the classroom. *ELT Journal* 66(4), 486-494.
- Ke, I. and Suzuki, T. (2011). Teaching Global English with NNS-NNS Online Communication. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 8(2), 169-188.
- Jones, B. (2013). Designing significant language learning experiences. *The Journal of Teachers*

*Helping Teachers*, 45-66.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2011). English as an Asian lingua franca and the multilingual model of ELT.

*Language Teaching*, 44(2), 212-224.

Kosaka, K. (2014). Could the lingua franca approach to learning break Japan's English curse? The Japan Times. Retrieved from: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2014/08/17/issues/could-the-lingua-franca-approach-to-learning-break-japans-english-curse/#.VOFUHS5PgxI>

Marlowe, J. P. (2012). Habitat for language learning: International volunteer experience and motivation. *Global Issues in Language Education Newsletter*, 85, 10-11.

Norton, B. (1997). Language, Identity, and the Ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(3), 409-429.

Rajagopalan, K. (2004). *ELT Journal*, 58(2), 111-117.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: OUP.

Widdowson, H.G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 377-388.

Yashima, T., Zenuk-Nishide, L. & Shimizu, K. (2004). The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language Learning*, 54(1), 119-152.

Yashima, T. (2009). International posture and the ideal L2 self in the Japanese EFL context. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self*, Chp 7. Multilingual Matters.

## Appendix A: Pre-trip survey

### English as a lingua franca (ELF) during Cambodia Fieldwork

#### **Q1a. Do you think you will speak, or will have to speak any English in Cambodia?**

カンボジアで英語を話す機会があると思いますか。

1. No English at all    2. Only a little English    3. Some English    4. Quite a lot of English.  
まったくなかった。    少しあった。    ある程度あった。    非常にあった。

#### **Q2a. Right now, who do you imagine (think) you will have the chance to speak English with?** 誰と英語を話す機会があると思いますか。

#### **Q3a. Right now, how confident do you feel speaking English?**

今、あなたはどのくらい英語に自信がありますか。

1. Not at all confident    2. A little confident    3. Confident    4. Very confident.  
まったくない    少しある    ある    非常にある

#### **Q4a. Was English study a reason for joining the Cambodia fieldwork trip?**

英語学習を目的としてカンボジアフィールドワークに参加しましたか。

1. No reason at all    2. A small reason    3. A reason    4. A very big reason.  
まったくない    少しある    ある    非常にある

#### **Q5a. What are your main goals or reasons for joining the Cambodia fieldwork trip? (Japanese or English is OK).** カンボジアフィールドワークに参加しようとした目的、また

は理由を2つ以上述べてください。

### Appendix B: Post-trip survey

#### English as a lingua franca (ELF) during Cambodia Fieldwork

**Q1b. Did you speak any English while you were in Cambodia?** あなたはカンボジアに滞在中、英語を話す機会がありましたか。

1. No English at all    2. Only a little English    3. Some English    4. Quite a lot of English.  
まったくなかった。    少しあった。    ある程度あった。    非常にあった。

**Q2b. Who did you speak English with during the fieldwork trip?** フィールドワーク旅行中、あなたは誰と英語で話しましたか? Circle as many words below as you like, and write your own ideas:

該当するもの全てに丸をし、自由にコメントを書いて下さい:

Other foreigners/ other tourists/ hotel staff/ restaurant staff/ street sellers/ market/ shop sellers/  
他の外国人 / 他の旅行者 / ホテルスタッフ / レストランスタッフ / 通りの売り子 / 市場や店の店員 /

local people walking by/ local children/ university students/ other people: \_\_\_\_\_

通りすがりの地元民 / 地元の子供 / 大学生 / その他の人々: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q3b. Right now, how confident do you feel speaking English?**

(今、あなたはどのくらい英語に自信がありますか)

1. Not at all confident    2. A little confident    3. Confident    4. Very confident.  
まったくない    少しある    ある    非常にある

**Q4b. In the future, do you think that English study or English practice will be a reason for joining other fieldwork trips in foreign countries?** (あなたは、将来、英語の勉強または英語の練習を理由に海外で行なわれる別のフィールドワークに参加すると思えますか)

1. No reason at all    2. A small reason    3. A reason    4. A very big reason  
まったくない    少しある    ある    非常にある

**Q5b. Now, what English communication skills do you wish you had so that you could communicate better with local students and local people? (Japanese or English is OK).**

今、あなたは、地元学生や地元民とより良くコミュニケーションするためにどんな英語スキルがあれば良かったと考えますか? (コメントは日本語または英語のどちらでも OK)