English as a Lingua Franca:
A vehicle for promoting Intercultural Communication Competence

Corazon T. KATO[1]

Abstract: This report draws on the classroom practices in teaching world Englishes (WE) or global Englishes (GE) in a university course. Acquiring knowledge of WE or GE can lead to exploring English as a lingua franca (ELF). Awareness of ELF can empower the affective dimensions and linguistic competencies of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) speakers as shown in the verbal and written narratives shared in the classroom. In addition, exploring narratives can lead learners to re-examine their views on their own language and culture as well as that of others. Further, understanding ELF can assist EFL learners in re-evaluating their perspectives on the uses of English, deepen intercultural understanding, and promote intercultural communication and communicative competence. On the English language teaching (ELT) side, ELF awareness can lead to the transformation of teaching practices (Mezirow, 1990). This report highlights the relevance of ELF awareness in EFL learning and teaching with a focus on intercultural communication competence.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca (ELF), narratives, intercultural communication,
intercultural communication competence.

Ⅰ. Introduction:

In the past few decades, the rise of English as the world's lingua franca (Galloway & Rose, 2015) has influenced the English education programs in EFL countries including Japan. With the continued spread of English, brought by globalization, a paradigm-shift in educational systems has taken place and affected most of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, the internationalization of higher education in response to globalization has impacted many people's lives as education schemes influence every society. In response to globalization, people have to make the choices of holding on to their principles and traditional beliefs while being confronted with the prospect of compromising with the modern values that are invading their culture.

All these conflicting values can modify and shape an individual's thinking and actions to compete in the global society to fit into the highly competitive world brought by globalization. Therefore, there is a need for greater understanding of cultural diversity and prepare for the intercultural communication encounters. This article focuses on EFL learners' views on ELF and examines its relevance in developing intercultural communication competence. At the same time, it mentions its influence on ELT practices.

English as a lingua franca (ELF)

In Japan, English as a lingua franca is thriving due to the spread of English brought on by globalization. ELF is defined as "any use of English among speakers

of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often as the only option"（Seidlhofer, 2011, p.7）, and "refers to English when it is used as a contact language across linguacultures"（Jenkins, 2006, p.159）. ELF should not be mistaken for a variety of English. It is "a variable way of using English: English that functions as a lingua franca"（Seidlhofer, 2011, p.77）.

Noticeably, ELF is creeping slowly into the hiring policies of many Japanese universities. The efforts to internationalize Japan have forced the educational systems to lure western nationals to find jobs and potential foreign students to study, thus the increase in contacts of locals with foreign nationals. In promoting internationalization in education, Non-Native English Speaker（NNES）teachers are also increasing, and this paves the way for more intercultural communication. In addition, the increasing number of Japanese descendant immigrants mostly from Southeast and East Asia are contributing to the increasing number of ELF users.

Although classroom research reports that Japanese EFL learners consistently show an inclination to learn English as a native language（ENL）（Kato, 2016）, ELF is flourishing as a vehicle for achieving success in intercultural communication（Mauranen, 2012）. This is mainly observed in the bigger cities where there are dense populations of foreign nationals. ELF has proven to facilitate understanding among its users from different cultures and different first languages, as it plays an extensive role in intercultural communication, thus elevating its status as the "global lingua franca"（Seidlhofer, 2011, p.2）.

English itself keeps changing as the ownership of the English language shifts to its users — the NNES. ELF users' different needs to use the English language purposefully in life have resulted in their non-conformity to the norms of ENL, and this has continuously reshaped the English language（Wang, 2013）. Having said that, the functions of the English language have increased beyond its realm as its users — mostly NNES — adapt it according to their diverse cultural needs. As the English language is being 'adapted' and not 'adopted'（Widdowson, 2003）, the functions and uses vary for each culture, and with its adaptions come changes and inevitable conflicts brought by language and cultural differences.

What helps ELF users to communicate successfully? According to Meierkord（2000, p.11）, "ELF is a form of intercultural communication characterized by cooperation rather than a misunderstanding." This is highly evident in multicultural countries where the languages and sub-cultures are distinct and robust. It is observed that during interaction, when people from different cultural backgrounds are aware of the cultural backgrounds of the others, they try to negotiate for meaning to "jointly construct new communicative practices and norms"（Kaur, 2016, p.137）. Thus, the ability of ELF users to negotiate and co-construct English（Jenkins, 2015）and the dynamic nature of ELF to accommodate to its speakers' cultures and communication styles are the causes of the success in intercultural communication. Promoting ELF awareness in the classroom can widen EFL learners' cross-cultural understanding, which can result in successful intercultural communication while speakers develop a better intercultural communicative competence.

Understanding Intercultural Communication（IC）, Intercultural Communication Competence（ICC）, and Intercultural Communicative Competence

The subject of communication is so broad that if the cultural aspects are added, it becomes even more complicated. There is a need to differentiate the subjects in this section as their meanings can overlap.

Croucher（2017）defines intercultural communication（IC）as communication between individuals from a different culture; it comprises two essential complex concepts: communication and language

（Martin & Nakayama, 2014）. Communication is the language itself that is embedded in every culture, either verbal or nonverbal, and according to Martin & Nakayama （2018）, language is the principal element of intercultural communication.

According to Hall （1976, 1984, cited in Gudykunst, 2003, p.83）, an important dimension of communication is context—high and low context. In high context communication, the "meanings are internalized, and there are large emphases on non-verbal codes" （Lustig & Koester, 1999, cited in Gudykunst, 2003, p.83）. People from high-context cultures have shared values and place a high importance on these, and this identifies them. This is evident in the cultural backgrounds of "Japanese, Chinese, South Korean, Taiwanese, Native American, African American, Mexican-American and Latino" （Elliott, Scott, Jense, & McDonough, 1982; Gudykunst & Kim, 1992; Hall 1976, 1984; Lustig & Koester, 1999, cited in Gudykunst, 2003, p.83） as well as those of Greek, Turkish, and Arabian origin （Jandt, 2016）. In contrast, in low-context concepts, "the message provides most information in the explicit code itself" （Hall, 1976, cited in Gudykunst, 2003, p.83）. Simply, the verbal messages are highly detailed and convoluted. This is true in the cultures of "Germany, Switzerland, the United States, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Canada" （Gudykunst & Kim, 1992; Hall, 1976, 1984, cited in Gudykunst, 2003, p.83）.

Based on the definition above, conflicts cannot be avoided when these cultures meet. The misunderstandings between the different regions can be expected as each cultural group carries different philosophical views of cultural notions regarding the meaning of "intercultural." The cultural elements such as "religion, ethnicity, politics, gender, history, race, subgroups, geography, nationality, socioeconomic status, customs, habits, and community…[can] shape how…societies define intercultural" （Croucher, 2017, p. 7）. On that account, so as to reduce misunderstandings caused by the complexity of

intercultural communication, the acquisition of intercultural competence is necessary.

Several experts in the field of intercultural communication have defined intercultural communication competence （ICC）. According to Spitzberg （2000, cited in Jandt, 2016, p.53）, ICC is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures." Chen and Starosta （1998, cited in Del Villar, 2017, p.248） describe ICC as "an effective and appropriate interaction between people who belong to particular environments…the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors to elicit a desired response in a specific environment." Samovar et al. （2017, p.384） defines it as "the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different culture." Del Villar （2017） reported that the definitions created by experts have overlapping components and concluded that the one framed by Deardorff （2008）, covers most elements mentioned by other experts—"the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes" （cited in Del Villar, p.253）.

It is necessary to define intercultural communicative competence in this report as it is a "prominent part of ELT" （Baker, 2015, p.3）; from the ELT point of view, it is the goal of successful intercultural communication. Intercultural communicative competence "covers a range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to interacting with those from other cultures, the ability to compare between cultures and awareness of relative nature of cultural norms and the ability to mediate between different cultures" （Baker, 2016, p.79）.

Developing Intercultural Communication Competence （ICC）

To develop ICC, Martin & Nakayama （2018） explained that motivation, knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and

skills should be present. Deardorff (2008, cited in Del Villar, 2017) suggested that the following inter-cultural communication components are necessary.

> 1. understanding of others' worldviews; 2. cultural self-awareness and capacity for self-assessment; 3. adaptability; 4. skills to listen and observe; 5. general openness toward inter-cultural learning and to people from other cultures; 6. ability to adapt to varying inter-cultural communication and learning styles; 7. flexibility; 8. skills to analyze, interpret, and relate; 9. tolerating and engaging ambiguity; and 10. deep knowledge and understanding of culture (one's own and others). (p.257)

How do individuals develop ICC? Since we cannot stop globalization as it continuously spreads to all areas of culture and language, the skills mentioned above should be sought by an individual if he or she wants to function successfully in an inter-cultural setting. Likewise, schools, communities, and occupational settings should provide training for intercultural awareness and intercultural skills development. Samovar et al. (2017, p.375) stated that "the organization and its personnel are ac-countable for engaging in competent intercultural practices." Therefore, training should also provide an in-depth cultural understanding of specific cultural values. For example, regardless of the context, cultural competence and effective communication skills should be considered a necessity for university study abroad programs, so students and personnel will be prepared for the cross-cultural experience.

The Internationalization of Higher Education in Japan and English Medium Instruction (EMI)

In this report, the internationalization of higher education will be covered, as it is one of the factors that affect intercultural communication. In 2014, The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) launched the Top Universities and Top Global Universities (TGU) Projects. The purpose of these projects was "to support universities that are making an all-out effort to open their doors to the rest of the world through collaboration with overseas universities" (MEXT 2016, p.13). MEXT also launched the Inter-University Exchange Project "to support collaborative programs with universities in strategically important countries and regions while assuring the quality of higher education" (p.13).

Knight (2003, p.2) defines the internationalization of higher education as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education." Similarly, Maringe & Foskett (2010, cited in Jenkins, 2014, p.10) associate internationali-zation with the "integration of a cultural dimension into one or more areas of university life, be this teaching, research or service functions." Rose & McKinley (2017) reported that the internationali-zation of universities could be viewed positively and negatively. On the positive side, it improves the "university's reputation, research quality, teaching quality and graduate employability" (Delgado-Marquez et al., 2013, cited in Rose & McKinley, 2017, p.3). On the negative side, it is an economic strategy to increase enrolment and tuition. As Coleman (2012, cited in Jenkins, 2014, p.207) points out, its aim is "*to attract fee-paying* international students, gifted teachers and researchers, and the most talented postgraduates to enhance the university's reputation" (italics added). On the one hand, Inuzaka (2017, p.214) perceives internationalization as a form of "multiculturalism," while Hashimoto (2000, cited in Inuzaka, 2017) sees internationalization as "Japanese-ness," a way of promoting Japanese culture and identity.

It is obvious that the internationalization of higher education in Japan has resulted in the thrust of employing English-Medium Instruction (EMI), as universities have focused more on globalized

education. According to Briggs and Smith (2017), for the EMI courses, the content and instructions are in English in countries where English is not the first or the majority language, such as in an EFL settings like Japan. Although it can be argued that many private and national Japanese universities have achieved a high status in using EMI prior to the globalization project, some universities that are labeled international are not fully ready. At a JALT presentation, Heigham (2017) reported that a group of international students were quite disgruntled that their expectations were not met by the universities in which they chose to enroll. Likewise, the push for the greater internationalization of universities has further elevated the status of English as the standards for university entrance and employability for many Japanese students and graduates. As a consequence, internationalization puts additional strain on Japanese students as they have to pass English proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, or EIKEN.

In a different scenario, the globalization of English has resulted in the shift of educational policies in the Philippines to preserve the country's minor languages. Because English has been established as the medium of instruction in the country for a long time, the implementation of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) is seen as a strategy to reverse the negative effect of English use: It is stunting the growth of local languages, as most educated Filipinos, especially in urban areas, use English as the primary language in their homes. Although MTB-MLE was first negated due to the reduction in the use of Tagalog and English — the country's official languages — in educational instruction, current results show that MTB-MLE can be used to nurture the many dialects of the country while protecting its minority languages (Cruz & Mahboob, in press). Also, schools reported that the benefits are shown in the development of the language, cognitive, academic, and socio-cultural development of children (DepEd, 2016).

Who then benefits from the internationalization of universities? Rose & McKinley (2017) pointed out that English-speaking countries are at an advantage. This supports Jenkins' (2015) assumption that when internationalization is mentioned, English is often connected to it. As widely observed, the universities labeled as international are also the ones with the resources to utilize EMI. As mentioned earlier, they employ more foreign nationals and foreign students. However, the internationalization can promote intercultural communication competence among local students who study along with international students without them leaving the country. Quoting the author's student, "Courses offered to international students are attractive for me. It gives me an opportunity to study along with foreigners in the course" (Student # 8). In this case, the student sees the benefits of internationalization for her and motivates her to study competitively.

The need for Intercultural Communication Competence

The increasing migration of the workforce and the promotions of global schools are contributing to the diversity of the Japanese society. Firstly, according to the Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau, 900,000 registered foreign residents were living in Japan in 1990, and recently there are about 2.38 million as of mid-2016, an increase of 6.7% just from the previous year. Secondly, the Japan Student Service Association (JASSO) also reported that there were 239,287 international students registered as of May 2016, with an increase of 30,908 (14.8%) than the previous year. Thirdly, according to the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), 2.59 million international travelers have entered Japan as of October 2017, an increase of 21.5% year to year. Moreover, as the 2020 Olympics are fast approaching, there were 28 million international guests who visited Japan in 2016, exceeding the 20 million target, and

with that, prompted the government to raise the revised target to 40 million for the year 2020 and 60 million for the year 2030. MEXT also reported that 208,000 international students were studying in Japanese universities in 2015, and 55,000 Japanese students went abroad to study in 2013. MEXT also aims to double the numbers of international students and Japanese students studying abroad by 2020 through TOBIDATE! Young Ambassador Program (MEXT, 2016, p.13). With these data presented on the influx of different nationals coming to Japan carrying with them their diverse cultures and languages, it is significant that Japanese schools should prepare the students to be globally minded to face intercultural encounters.

Given that no society can stand alone, Japan has opened its doors to other cultures, as presented by the statistics mentioned, and conflicts are inevitable. According to Barna (1994), there are six stumbling blocks in achieving intercultural communication: assumption of similarities, language differences, nonverbal misinterpretations, perceptions and stereotypes, tendency to evaluate, and high anxiety. All these factors are interrelated and can create conflicts.

Many testimonies can be cited as to why schools should promote intercultural communication competence. A university professor confessed that when traveling on an educational trip abroad, university students lacked the abilities and attitude to respond to ordinary intercultural situations. For example, when 'being greeted by hotel staff' students would hesitate to respond; also when there is a need 'to ask for assistance' students would instead resort to asking for the assistance of the teacher accompanying them, rather than take the initiative to act upon the situation on their own. These behaviors describe a lack of intercultural competencies. Although, English is learned at school for six years, and the rise of English has continued for the past decades in the Japanese education system, resulting

in its integration into society, yet, there is still an absence of its use as a tool for interaction in communication. Seargeant (2009, p.77) has an explanation for this, which states the use of English in Japanese society merely is "ornamental" as one can see on billboards, clothing, books, cinemas, signs, food menus, and popular culture.

Undoubtedly, internationalization is vital in educational policy of Japanese higher education to stabilize Japan's global competitiveness. Therefore, it is highly significant that schools provide more assistance for students to develop their intercultural understanding and communication competence. Japanese students can improve their intercultural communication skills in meeting the challenges of the diversifying society of their settings by increasing their exposure to cross-cultural experience. Even though English is required in the freshman year as mandated by MEXT, it should be nurtured in the following year levels to provide students more opportunities to develop their communicative abilities. Moreover, intercultural communication should be promoted while developing communicative competencies.

Ⅱ．The study: Background and Methods

The course Language and History was taught in one of the Top Global Universities designated by MEXT in a metropolitan district of Tokyo. The course focused on the subject of World Englishes/Global Englishes is an independent course offered to the second, third and fourth-year students. Throughout the course, the textbook ― World Englishes, 2nd edition (2009), Global Englishes, 3rd edition (2015) by Jennifer Jenkins are used as the primary textbooks. The recommended TOEIC scores for students who enroll in the course should be 600 and above as the course materials require a substantial amount of reading and high comprehension. Depending on the instructor, the class teaching and learning structures are by lectures, discussions, research, and presentations. In all cases, the course was joined by

international students. For example, in 2014, two Germans had joined the course; in 2015, a Korean and a Chinese; and in 2016 a Bruneian and an Irish were enrolled in the course. The presence of other nationalities has made the classroom setting an ideal ELF situation. The class sizes of this course vary between 18 and 26 students.

1. Research Questions:

Related to the students:

1. Do students develop more awareness of their own intercultural communication competencies as they engage in the course?
2. Does the knowledge of English as a lingua franca (ELF) influence the students' views of English?

Related to the teacher:

1. How do the notions of ELF influence your teaching pedagogy?
2. How relevant is Intercultural Communicative Competence to your teaching practices in this course?

2. Methods:

The process of triangulation is applied to obtain enough data for the study. Triangulation is the use of different methods — interviews, questionnaires, observations, field notes, etc. — to gather data (Nunan and Bailey, 2009). In this study the following methods are utilized:

1. Observations-Group discussion based on Cooperative Learning (CL) and Contact Hypothesis (CH) framework
2. Narrative Inquiry (Written and Verbal)
3. Survey (Questionnaire)

Cooperative Learning and Contact Hypothesis as framework in this study

Cooperative Learning is a classroom method where students work cooperatively in small groups to accomplish the task. According to Richards (2001,

p.195), "they work in a cooperative situation to seek outcomes to benefit themselves and all other group members." The following are the principles of CL (Jacobs and Farrell, 2012):

1. Positive Interdependence (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubee, 2002); 2. Individual Accountability (Slavin, 1995); 3. Equal Opportunity (Jacobs and Goh, 2007); 4. The Maximum Peer Interactions; 5. Heterogeneous Grouping (Jacobs, Power, & Loh, 2002); 6. Teaching Cooperative Skills; 7. Group Autonomy; 8. Cooperation as a value. (pp.81-84)

To define, "contact hypothesis is the notion that better communication between groups is facilitated simply by putting people together in the same place and allowing them to interact" (Martin & Nakayama, 2018, p. 149). There are eight conditions necessary for successful intergroup communication in a diversifying society identified by experts (Swarzwald & Amir, 1996; Stephan & Stephan, 1996, cited in Martin & Nakagawa, 2018).

1. Group members should be of equal status, both within and outside the contact situation; 2. Strong normative and institutional support for the contact should be provided; 3. Contacts between groups should be voluntary; 4. The contact should extend beyond the immediate situation and occur in a variety of contexts with a variety of individuals from all groups; 5. Programs should maximize cooperation within groups and minimize competition; 6. Programs should equalize numbers of group members; 7. Group members should have similar beliefs and values; 8. Programs should promote an individuation of group members. (pp.149-153)

The principles of cooperative learning have been proven effective in group activities for a long time. In the course, CL is advantageous for the group discussion process to accomplish the language task

as the topics in the textbook require sufficient deliberations. Since the topics should be discussed in chapters, working individually will not help meet the objective of the course. Therefore, there's a need to work in groups. Moreover, being connected to other humans is a concern of intercultural communication; hence, dialogues are necessary. Also, through dialogues, the affective element of working together could develop into an intercultural relationship.

Looking at the micro level, cooperative learning and contact hypothesis have commonalities. In particular, both value cooperation skills, individualization, recognize that groups are heterogeneous, and members are equal in status. Thus, in this situation, it suits to apply the principles of CL in group dynamics to accomplish the tasks, and CH to evaluate the intercultural aspects of group activities.

The role of narratives in promoting ELF awareness.

What are narratives? They are personal stories that are valued as necessary in the learning process. In this context, they are authentic experiences of one's values and beliefs. By listening to other's stories, "we create and reshape ourselves" (Bruner, 1986, 1990, cited in MacVee & Boyd, 2016, p.4). With stories, we can learn to understand our peers regardless of the diverse background of language and culture. For a teacher, stories are ways of presenting oneself to the students to reveal one's identity. Since culture is so complex to share in the classroom, most of the times they are flimsy representations of food, festivals, and traditions. Thus, utilizing personal narratives can further deepen the intercultural awareness of students even when they come from the same background and culture (intracultural), and more so if they are from diverse multicultural traditions (intercultural).

What is Narrative Inquiry? According to Barkhuizen (2014, p.3) narrative inquiry "brings storytelling and

research together by using stories as research data" — *analysis of narratives* — or "by using storytelling as a tool for data analysis or presentation of findings" — *narrative analysis*. Both processes were used in examining the students' narratives. In addition, "*autobiographical*" research (Brockmeier & Carbaugh, 2001, Fivush & Haden, 2003, cited in Barkhuizen, 2014, p.4) — the telling of one's story and "personal experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, cited in Barkhuizen, 2014, p.4) — were shared by the participants in the course to help understand how experiences and identities are organized when one represents him or herself.

The following are narratives by the participants used in the course:
A. Teacher's personal experiences and factual information used as examples of the topics presented in the textbook

    1. *Colonization:* Spain & America; 2. *Learning English*: ESL, English Immersion, Audio-Lingual Method; 3. *Multilingualism*: Hiligaynon in Negros & Panay islands; 4. *Code-switching*: Hiligaynon-English-Tagalog or Hiligaynon-Tagalog- English; 5. *Pidgin & Creole*: Chavacano in Zamboanga; 6. *Attitudes towards English*: Native English vs. Non-Native English; Filipino English, ESL, EFL, and ELF
B. The students' personal experiences in response to the class materials

    1. *International experiences*: living with a family abroad; study-abroad; homestay overseas; 2. *National experiences*: at school and outside of school

Ⅲ．Results and Discussions

Group Observations:
Intracultural Groups- Although group members expressed their ideas in L2 (second language) most of the time, they switched to L1 (first language) when they encountered some difficulties. Hence, there is less anxiety in the groups as a language

barrier is absent, resulting in a relaxed atmosphere. Intercultural Groups- This was the focus of group observations. It was noticeable that the presence of an international student prompted the members to sustain the interaction using the common language they had ― English ― thus ELF played more of a role in the interactions. In most instances, the local members' *attitudes* and *motivations* to communicate intentionally influenced their ways of interacting and extracting information from each other. For instance, there was an absence of code-switching, therefore improving confidence in speaking and developing communicative skills. Similarly, the foreign students (being the minority) showed their intercultural skills by *accommodating* to the members. They were conscious of their communication styles, choice of words, and use of words to be clearly understood, which resulted in smooth interactions. In the long run, the international students became significant members of the groups because their experiences were viewed as 'unique' by the members. The use of ELF was evident to bring success in the communication process in this course of event and has brought on an experience of intercultural communicative competence among the learners.

Narratives:
A student sample narrative ― "When I was in high school, two Indian girls stayed [at] my home…for a week. They used English, but at first I could not understand what they said, because the English is different from standard English. The English has developed from India, related to the native culture. So, I believe that the native English speakers cannot control the changing of standard English." (Student #14)

The story implied that the student encountered a new English variety influenced by its culture and compared it to the English she identified as a standard. EFL learners in Japan recognized the English varieties from the Inner Circle countries ― Britain, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand as

ideal English models. Also, it can be inferred that the first exposure to a new variety of English is often difficult due to comprehensibility. The student's experience, when told in class, had triggered other students to recall similar experiences. It has also prompted other students to assess their intercultural communication competence skills. This situation is also highly significant in English language teaching as it can carry the class in a discussion that interacts with the class materials and participants.

Students' views of narratives:
The following are representative samples of student's perception of narratives.
"…I learn the characteristics and changes in English." (Student # 2)
"I can perceive what to do concretely…to do research or go abroad [to experience English]." (Student # 5)
"[It] gives me a chance to speak [English] many times." (Student # 9)
"I have never been to a foreign country where English is spoken, and my family does not have any special experiences…what other students and Mrs. Kato talked are precious." (Student # 7)

All of the students showed positive responses about using narratives in this course. They found narratives useful in understanding the topics at hand. The personal experiences of participants are actual validations of the facts presented in the text. For example, through narratives, participants discovered that people have different perceptions of ELF. Some are supportive of it, while others are critical about it (Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2016). Through narratives, a person's view can be confirmed as his or her stories can reveal the different windows of his or her life. For instance, the class was able to scrutinize and confirm that the teacher's beliefs are leaning toward ELF support through her biographical experiences. In like manner, each student weighed his or her own views of English by reflecting on one's narrative and others.

Survey Results:

1. Students' preferences of English varieties

Before taking the course, the English varieties such as Australian, British, and American were preferred by the students, but after taking the course, they mentioned that knowing other Englishes is beneficial. At least one student strongly agreed that Singaporean English is fascinating, and surprisingly, at least two students cited Pidgin English as interesting. It can be said that the course brought intercultural awareness to the students' English language learning with the changes in their countries of preference. This result also validates the previous findings in the same course that students had a change of view in their English preferences after taking the course (Kato, 2016).

2. ELF's benefits: Is ELF beneficial/not beneficial for you?

Most students admitted that ELF was beneficial to them (67%). They mentioned that ELF is necessary to communicate globally. At least 22% of students maintained that ELF was not beneficial and could lead to "conflict [in] the global English in the future" (Student # 10), and 11% could not decide. It can be interpreted that the students recognized the global function of ELF in communication. For example, one student mentioned, "I want to be a flight attendant, and with the globalization, ELF gives us much [sic] advantages" (Student # 7). Flight attendants meet passengers from different countries of origin as they travel to and from different destinations, so if they are aware of ELF and they practice it, they can communicate with them successfully.

3. Reflecting on one's use of English: Are you an EFL or ELF user?

Half (50%) of the respondents identified themselves as EFL users, and 40% as ELF users, while 10% could not decide.

According to EFL users:

"I think I am an EFL user. For me, English is not part of my life." (Student # 2)

"I am an EFL user. I always use Japanese. English is a foreign language to me." (Student # 5)

According to ELF users:

"Yes, depending to [sic] whom I am talking with. If I am talking with non-native speakers, I become an ELF user, because I myself is not a native speaker of English." (Student # 8)

"Yes, because... English is the only language that I can use to communicate with foreign people." (Student # 9)

The students' responses can be viewed that the classroom experience has aroused students to think critically to re-evaluate their views of English according to the purpose of its uses in their life. All students learned from their group members' narrative of biographical experience and reflected on his or her own experience as well. It can be concluded that being aware of the function of language in one's life can lead a person to understand his or her language identity better.

4. Intelligibility of Asian speakers

The results of the survey reveal that Japanese and Filipino Englishes (31%) are more intelligible to the students in this class; followed by Indian and Chinese Englishes (15%), and the least intelligible to them is the Singaporean English (8%). It is probable to deduce that the length of exposure to the speaker of a particular language variety can influence the intelligibility. Once a person gets used to the interlocutor's accent, pronunciation, and English communication style, he or she will eventually understand the interlocutor's language variety.

It was apparent that the exposure of EFL learners to the varieties of Asian Englishes has resulted in an intercultural awareness of one's own language and culture as they cited their experiences. The activities and experiences from listening to and watching YouTube clippings of different English varieties confronted the students that there are varieties of Englishes other than what they know, and they vary

even within the margins of where the speakers come from and move.

The weakness of this small-scale class survey is that not all the students returned the survey questionnaire due to an unprecedented situation in the class schedule. However, it is worth reporting that the results validate the findings in the previous year (Kato, 2016).

Ⅳ. Conclusion:

The WE/GE course implication for EFL learning: The course brought the knowledge of World Englishes/Global Englishes, leading to ELF awareness, and assisted EFL learners in re-assessing their own views of English and its functions in their lives. The awareness of new English varieties has led students to open their minds and develop an understanding of how the new varieties of English are functioning in every culture that adapts them, leading EFL learners to re-examine their own views of English language learning. Ultimately, awareness of ELF has assisted EFL learners in investigating their own intercultural skills and finding significant values from their own languages and cultures. The class also agreed that continuously making contact with other cultures can foster the development of ICC. The course also brings to light the notion that language communicative competence is not enough to be successful in communication, especially in an intercultural society, but having ICC is necessary. All the more, intercultural communicative competence can result in successful communication in a diversified environment.

The WE/GE course implication for English language teaching: Being ELF-aware, an ELF supporter can have opportunities to transform his or her pedagogical practices. Mezirow (1990. p. 5) mentioned that awareness of ELF could lead to critical reflection, a change in attitudes, application of ELF-aware pedagogies, and could transform one's practices.

Teaching the course once brings an awareness of ELF to one's belief in teaching; and teaching it thrice can be more than convincing to not believe it. The notions of ELF have led the teacher to facilitate ELF awareness in the classroom by incorporating ELF practices. For example, recognizing and promoting English varieties other than ENL varieties to empower EFL learners English communication skills, and integrating intercultural topics to stimulate intercultural communication competencies.

To sum up the course, WE/GE has exposed students to the different varieties of English and brought awareness of ELF in the class. The classroom experience has augmented the understanding of ELF and the values of intercultural communication competencies. Likewise, it added to the teacher's repertoire of ELT practices.

Appendix: Survey Questions

1. Before taking up the course, did you have any preferences in which varieties of English to adapt? If yes, which variety/varieties? Why? 2. After the course were there any changes in your preferences? 3. Do you think you are an EFL or ELF User? Yes/No. Why? 4. Do you think ELF is beneficial/not beneficial for you? Why? 5. How intelligible are the following Asian English varieties to you?

Table.1 Intelligibility of Asian Englishes

I can understand	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Indian English (video/experience)				
Filipino English (video/experience)				
Singaporean English (video/experience)				
Chinese English (video/experience)				
Japanese English				

Ⅴ．References:

Baker, W.（2015）. *Culture and identity through English as a lingua franca rethinking concepts and goals in intercultural communication.* Germany: Walter De Gruyter, Inc.

Baker, W.（2016）. Culture and language in intercultural communication. English as a lingua franca and language teaching*:* Points of convergence and conflict. In Holmes, P., & Dervin, F.（Eds.）*The cultural and intercultural dimensions of English as a lingua franca*（pp.70-89）. Bristol, Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.

Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A.（2014）. *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research.* NY: Routledge.

Barna, L. M.（1994）. Stumbling blocks in intercultural communication. Retrieved from http: //pharmacy304.pbworks. com/f/Barna, + L.M.+（1994）.pdf

Briggs, J. G., & Smith, S.A.（2017）. English medium instruction and idiomaticity in English as a lingua franca. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching* Research, 5/3: 27-44. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/34739212/Briggs_ J. G. _and_Smith_S. A. _2017. English_Medium_ Instruction_and_Idiomaticity_in_English_as_a_ Lingua_Franca. _Iranian_Journal_of_Language_ Teaching_Research_5_3_27-44

Croucher, S. M.（2017）.（Eds.）*Global perspectives on intercultural communication.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Cruz, P., & Mahboob, A.（in press）. Mother-tongue based multilingual education in the Philippines: Perceptions, problems and possibilities. In J. Choi & S. Ollerhead（Eds.）*Plurilingualism in teaching and learning: Complexities across context*s. New York: Routledge. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/35217331/Mother-tongue_based_multilingual_education_in_the_ Philippines_Perceptions_problems_and_ possibilities

Del Villar, C.（2017）. Intercultural communication competence. In Croucher, S. M. *Global perspectives on intercultural communication*（pp. 237-269）. New York, NY: Routledge.

Department of Education, Republic of the Philippines, Mother Tongue-based learning makes lessons more interactive and easier for students.（October 10, 2016）. Retrieved from http://deped.gov.ph/press-releases/mother-tongue-based-learning-makes-lessons-more-interactive-and-easier-students

Galloway, N., & Rose, H.（2015）. *Introducing global Englishes.* London and New York: Routledge.

Gudykunst, W. B. et al.（2005）. *Theorizing about intercultural communication.* California, USA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Heigham, J.（November, 2017）. International students in an EMI Program. Paper presented at the conference of Japan Association of Language Teaching, JALT 43rd Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Material Exhibition, Ibaraki, Japan

Holmes, P., & Dervin, F.（2016）.（Eds.）*The cultural and intercultural dimensions of English as a lingua franca.* Bristol, Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.

Inuzaka, A.（2017）. A dialectic between nationalism and multiculturalism, an analysis of international discourse in Japan. In Toyosaki, S. & Eguchi, S.（Eds.）*Intercultural communication in Japan, Theorizing homogenizing discourse*（pp. 207-223）. London and New York: Routledge.

Jacobs, G. M., & Farrell, T.（2012）. *Teachers sourcebook for extensive reading.* Charlotte, NC, USA: IAP-Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Jandt, F. E.（2016）. *An introduction to intercultural communication identities in a global community*（8th Ed）. Los Angeles, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Japan Ministry of Education Culture, Sports, Science and Technology（MEXT）. Retrieved from http: //www. mext. go. jp/en/policy/education/ index.htm

Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication. Retrieved from http://www.soumu.go.jp/english/index.html

Japan National Tourism Organization. Retrieved from https://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/

Japan Student Services Organization. Retrieved from http://www.jasso.go.jp/en/

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching world Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 157-181.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: attitude and identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2009). *World Englishes: A resource book for students* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a Lingua Franca in the international university: The politics of academic English language policy*. London: Routledge.

Jenkins, J. (2015). *Global Englishes: A resource book for students* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Kato, C. T. (2016). Elf awareness in the university world Englishes course. *The Center for English as a Lingua Franca Journal*. 2(2) pp.16-23.

Kaur J. (2016). Intercultural misunderstanding revisited: Cultural difference a (non) source of misunderstanding in elf communication. In Holmes, P., & Dervin, F. (Eds.) *The cultural and intercultural dimensions of English as a lingua franca* (pp. 134-155). Bristol, Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.

Knight, J. (2003). Updating the definition of internationalization. *International Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ihe/article/viewFile/7391/6588

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2014). *Experiencing intercultural communication: An introduction* (5th Ed). Columbus, OH: McGraw Hill.

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2018). *Intercultural communication in context* (7th Ed). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Mauranen, A. (2012). *Exploring ELF Academic English shaped by non-native speakers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

McCafferty, S., Jacobs, M., & Iddings, D. A. C. (2006). *Cooperative learning and second language teaching*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

McVee, M. B., & Boyd, F. B. (2016). *Exploring Diversity through multimodality, narrative and dialogue. A framework for teacher reflection*. New York and London: Routledge.

Meierkord, C. (2000). Interpreting successful lingua franca interaction. An analysis of non-native /non-native small talk conversations in English. Linguistik Online 5(1). Retrieved from https://bop.unibe.ch/linguistikonline/article/view/1013/1673

Mezirow, J. (1990). How critical reflection triggers transformative learning. In Jack Mezirow & Associates (Ed.), *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Nunan, D., & Bailey, C. M. (2009). *Exploring second language classroom research, a comprehensive guide*. Pasig City, Philippines: Cengage Learning Asia Pte. Ltd.

Overview of the Ministry of Education Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/index.htm

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching,* (3rd ed.). UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, H., & McKinley, J. (2017). Japan's English medium instruction initiatives and the globalization of higher education. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0125-1

Samovar, L. et al. (2017). *Communication between cultures*. Boston, USA: Cengage Learning.

Seargeant, P. (2009). *The idea of English in Japan: ideology and evolution of a global language*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Sifakis, N., & Bayyurt, Y. (2016). ELF-aware teacher

education and transformative learning. comments on Eva Illes. 5（1）: 147-153. DOI 10.1515/jelf-2016-0007

Toyosaki, S., & Eguchi, S.（2017）.（Eds.）*Intercultural communication in japan, Theorizing homogenizing, discourse.* London and New York: Routledge.

Wang, Y.（2013）. 'Non-conformity to ENL norms: A perspective from Chinese English users,' *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca* 2（2）: 255-282.

Widdowson, H. G.（2003）. *Defining issues in English language teaching.* Oxford, Oxford: University Press.