Part 2: Inquiry into language learners

Collaborative shadowing activities: Why collaboration?

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About Etsuko

I received a Master of Education in TESOL from the State University of New York, University at Buffalo, in 2001. I currently teach English classes and seminars on language learning and teaching at a Japanese university. My research interests include portfolio assessment, cooperative learning, learner strategies and beliefs, and learner autonomy.

2001年にニューヨーク州立大学・バッファロー大学で教育学修士（TESOL専攻）を取得しました。現在は日本の大学で英語の授業と言語学習・教授関連のゼミを担当しています。関心のある研究テーマはポートフォリオ評価、協力的学習、学習者ストラテジーやビリーフ、そして学習者自律性です。

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ABSTRACT

Input, output, and interaction are all essential in language learning, the process of which involves cognitive and meta-cognitive development and social and affective factors. Moreover, actual language use requires not only linguistic knowledge but supra-linguistic knowledge including communication strategies and world knowledge. To engage learners in such complex language learning and use, collaborative activities are useful; they can provide authentic situations of meaningful communication and situations which accommodate the purposes of language use and learning, such as communication with others, self-discovery and self-development in a social community. The collaborative shadowing activity presented in this paper can be used as a tool to create a collaborative learning atmosphere. This easily done activity can increase input, output, and interaction opportunities, help learners to retain knowledge by repetition, so that they can realize meaningful communication in English, and to enhance learner confidence in oral communication abilities. This paper will explore the benefits of collaborative shadowing activities by discussing various processes and factors in language learning and use and by emphasizing the importance of collaboration, which is closely related to the promotion of learner autonomy.

言語学習においては、インプット・アウトプット・インタラクションの全てが重要であり、その学習プロセスには、認知・メタ認知能力の発達や社会的・情意的要因が深く関係する。実際の言語使用には、言語知識に加え、コミュニケーション・ストラテジーや世界知識などの超言語知識も必要である。そのような複雑な言語学習・使用を実現するには、より現実に即したコミュニケーションの場を提供する協働活動が有益だと言える。協働活動は、他者とのコミュニケーション、社会の中での自己発見、自己成長といった言語使用・学習の目的に合致した場の提供にもつながる。ここで紹介する協働型シャドイング活動は、協働学習の雰囲気作りのための一手段として活用したい。手軽に実施できるこの活動は、インプット・アウトプット・インタラクションの機会増加につながり、繰り返しによる知識の定着を図り、英語を使用した有意義なコミュニケーションを実現し、学習者のコミュニケーション能力に対する自信へもつながるというメリットが指摘される。本稿では、言語学習・言語使用を構成する様々なプロセスや要因を議論し、また、学習者自律促進と深く関連する協働活動の重要性を強調したうえで、協働型シャドイング活動の効果を探求する。

In a presentation titled "Ventriloquation: the Intermental-Intramental Dance in Language Classrooms" at the "Autonomy in Language Learning: Maintaining Control" Conference in Hong Kong in June 2004, Murphey introduced shadowing as one of the tools of "ventriloquation for the purposes of enhancing intramentalization." He suggested that when a person has internalized what he or she had processed intermentally, in other words, between his or her mind and someone else's mind, the learning itself becomes part of the learner's—intramentally. Murphey stated that shadowing and summarizing, along with some other tools such as action logs and newsletters, can promote ventriloquation (speaking in mind—speaking intramentally) and eventually allow students more "agency" in their learning (Murphey, 2004, June; Murphey, 2004, p.22).

That was the first time for me to learn of conversational shadowing techniques. I was so impressed by what I saw that I could not help trying out the techniques in my language classrooms as soon as I got back to Japan. I started to take time for such collaborative shadowing activities in my English classes.

This paper will discuss effects of collaborative shadowing activities by uncovering the theories underlying these activities and by referring to student reactions in my classrooms. The purpose of the paper is to investigate the importance of collaboration in language learning and to share one simple pair activity that can be used as a first small step for creating a collaborative learning environment.

I will first discuss various aspects of language learning, and then the importance of collaborative learning activities in language classrooms. The collaborative shadowing activity is, in fact, just one simple, sample collaborative learning activity of many kinds. But such simple

activities can become meaningful and useful as a social activity in language learning and as a small step towards a collaborative learning environment.

HOW DO WE LEARN LANGUAGE?

Why is collaboration so important? I would like to take into consideration how we learn language to think about the importance of collaboration in language learning.

Language acquisition or language learning consists of complex processes.[1] First, input plays an important role in language acquisition. As Krashen (1985) suggested, extensive amounts of input at the $i+1$ level—at the level slightly higher than the learner's current level and therefore comprehensible for the learner—is definitely useful and beneficial for the learner. However, language learners who only receive input without themselves producing language will achieve limited learning.

Learners also need output (Swain, 1994) and interaction (Long, 1983). Output allows learners to pay attention to some of their linguistic problems, test their linguistic knowledge, and reflect over their use of the target language and thereby restructure their knowledge in mind (Swain, 1995). On the other hand, interaction helps to modify difficult input to the level that learners can understand, and such comprehensible input promotes language acquisition (Long, 1983; also cited in Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Learners will be able to receive feedback on their output through interaction. Input, output, and interaction are all important in language learning.

Through collaboration or by working together with peers, learners will be able to have more opportunities to receive input, produce output, and enjoy and learn from interactions. In a teacher-centered classroom, there are very few such interactions. The teacher talks and students listen most of the time. The teacher may tell students to read passages aloud or ask questions of individual students; however, students usually do not receive much feedback on what they say. A few interactions between a teacher and an individual student may occur, but the number is much smaller than it is in collaborative learning classrooms, where interactions take place between all students at the same time. (See "simultaneous interaction" in the section "More about collaboration.") Collaborative learning activities allow students to participate more actively and interact much more with each other, creating an environment where they receive comprehensible input, produce output, and learn from each other.

MORE ABOUT HOW WE LEARN LANGUAGE

Language learning consists of complex processes. Not only are various kinds of tools such as input, output, and interactions, needed in language learning, but also development of various kinds of competence has to be taken into consideration, such as cognitive and meta-cognitive development. Social and affective factors also play important roles.

Cummins (1979) described two levels of language proficiency: basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). BICS means language communication competence required to understand rather concrete, low abstract-level messages as such found in daily conversations, while CALP means language competence required to engage in higher level cognitive activities that need abstract thinking. Thus Cummins made a distinction between two types of language competence by focusing on the level of learner cognitive activity.

It is true that language learning is determined by cognitive activity and development. Second language learners will not be able to express cognitively higher thoughts and ideas in their second language than those they have in their first language. Children who have not learned

to describe certain events elaborately or to explain cause and effect of certain phenomena in their first language will not be able to do so in their second language. Learners who have not developed critical thinking skills in their first language will find it difficult to express critical thoughts in their second language.

At the same time, language learning is influenced by social and affective factors, too. We use language as a communication tool in our society. We express ourselves in order to be understood by others; we find out what is happening in the world; we try to understand what other people think; and we explore our own thoughts to learn more about ourselves—who we are and how we belong to the society (See below "Why do we learn language?"). Considering these purposes of language use, we can say that language learning and use has much to do with social and affective factors. In addition, several researchers have claimed that learners use social and affective language learning strategies (Cohen, 1998; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1999). Krashen's affective filter hypothesis[2] also comes from the assumption that language learning is greatly influenced by affective factors.

In addition, language learning is closely related to meta-cognitive development. Research has indicated that learners of higher meta-cognitive abilities are more likely to be successful language learners (e.g., Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999). These learners monitor and evaluate their learning processes and make proper choices in learning materials and strategies. They plan their learning processes. Such abilities help learners to develop their language competence more effectively.

Thus, second language learners will be able to use their target language more successfully if they develop their language abilities not only cognitively, but also meta-cognitively, socially, and affectively.

Collaboration is useful in promoting cognitive and meta-cognitive development and involving social and affective factors in language learning. Shimo (2005a) indicated that students appreciated collaborative learning activities in their writing classes because they were able to learn new expressions, topic variations, and new ways of developing and organizing essay content (cognitive development). The study also showed that collaborative learning activities provided more feedback for learners and allowed them to reflect more on their learning processes, assess their progress, and therefore (re-)set their learning goals (meta-cognitive development). Many students in the study also reported that they enjoyed collaborative work and were encouraged to work hard and responsibly because of the roles they had to fulfill and because of positive peer pressure they received (social and affective factors).

Moreover, Murphey and Jacobs (2000) discussed the importance of collaboration in developing learner autonomy. They claimed that being autonomous means "having the ability to metacgonitively and critically make decisions as to the means one uses to learn and develop" (Murphey & Jacobs, 2000, p.228). In other words, learner autonomy itself is a meta-cognitive ability.

Murphey and Jacobs (2000) suggested that collaboration and autonomy go well together "because collaboration offers a powerful means of promoting autonomy among L2 learners" (p.236). Learners first join social activities and work on tasks collaboratively, that is, "socialization." Learners then monitor and assess their learning processes through such activities, which is the stage of "dawning metacognition." They go through the stage of "initiation choice" in the collaborative environment and reach the stage of "expanding autonomy." In short, collaboration can be the start of developing metacognitive abilities and taking more responsibility for one's own learning. Similarly, Leni Dam (1995) defined learner autonomy as "capacity and willingness to act independently and in co-operation with others, as a socially responsible person (p.1)." Taking part in social activities or communication activities with others can be the first step toward greater autonomy.

HOW DO WE USE LANGUAGE?

Let us look at knowledge and skills that influence learners' language use. Language learning and language use are not easy to separate. Language learners learn the language to use the language, and they use the language to learn the language. When we take a look at how language is used, we may be able to find some indications about how language can be learned more effectively.

First, linguistic knowledge, such as grammar and vocabulary power, has much to do as the basis of language use. For example, learners should learn that the past tense of "go" is "went" in order to be able to talk about what they did in the past. Learners should enlarge their vocabulary in order to deal with extensive input and to be able to produce sentences as output more smoothly. If a learner knows a few words which mean "wonderful," such as "lovely," "admirable," "splendid," "cool," "marvelous," "excellent," "magnificent," "fabulous," and knows where to use them, the learner will be able to express slight nuance or describe a certain situation in a more accurate or detailed way to others. If a learner knows what the word "nonproliferation" means, he or she does not have to stop and think when he or she comes across the word while reading a newspaper article.

Linguistic skills are also important in language use. Learners, for example, should learn listening skills such as listening for main ideas or noticing changes in intonation. They should learn skimming and scanning skills and use appropriate reading strategies for the purpose of reading activities. Moreover, "supra-linguistic" knowledge and skills are important in language use. For instance, communication strategies, world knowledge, and social identity are influential factors.

Communication strategies help learners participate in or maintain conversations or other kinds of communication (Rubin, 1987; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). When learners come across unknown words or phrases, for example, in conversations, they may try to guess the meaning from the context or from the speaker's facial expressions.

World knowledge influences L2 productive and receptive use, too. Most language learners probably know from their experiences that they can speak more when they are familiar with the topic and that they cannot speak well if the opposite holds true. Schema theory in reading activities is also a good example. When learners have their proper schema activated, their reading comprehension level increases. The knowledge about the context learners hold has an influence on their L2 use.

In addition, students' social identity can have an effect on L2 proficiency level. Schumann (cited in Ellis, 1997) point out that learners' language proficiency achievement is related to how they consider themselves related to the target language culture group. I do not argue in detail here about how exactly social identity influences L2 performance, but self-identity, self-esteem, and self-confidence should be related to their learning performance, as learners' psychological states affect learning processes and outcome.

Thus, language use, as well as language learning, is very complex, influenced not only by linguistic but also supra-linguistic factors. Taking into consideration the complex processes and aspects involved with language learning and use, we can say that language-use practice in authentic or meaningful situations, in contexts more true to the reality, would be important. In order to provide such a learning environment, interactions with others in a community should be key. Collaborative learning activities can then create such a learning community where students can work together to learn together.

WHY DO WE LEARN LANGUAGE?

I would like to consider *why* we learn language before going further into the discussion about collaboration.

Many English language learners in Japan may say that they learn the language because they have to. They may say that they need to learn it in order to pass entrance exams for high schools or universities. Why do we teachers teach language? Do we teach in order for learners to get high scores on exams? Is that the ultimate goal in language teaching? Such instrumental motivation is not necessarily ineffective because it does motivate learners, but quite often, learners stop learning the language when they have achieved a short-term goal with what they know. Language learning requires long-term effort and time, and learners have to continue learning the language. When learners know why they learn language, they can keep on studying it. So, then why do we learn language? The answer is related to the question of *why* we *use* language, and *for what purposes* we *use* language.

As mentioned above, we use language for the following purposes: a) to express ourselves to make ourselves understood by others; b) to find out what is happening in the world; c) to understand more of what other people think; and d) to explore our own thoughts and to learn more about ourselves and develop our identity—who we are and how we belong to the society.

If we use language for these purposes, don't we also learn language then for these purposes? Some people may learn an ancient language to find out what happened in the past, and to understand more about what people thought. Even in that case, their purpose can be considered variations of purposes b) and c) above. It can be said that they are learning the language in order to "communicate" with people in the past. For language learners, communication with others and self-discovery and/or self-development through it should be the main objective of language learning, and this will keep learners engaged in language learning for a long time.

What can teachers do to meet such objectives? How can communication with others be promoted in language classrooms? Again, collaborative learning activities can help to create such an environment where learners have more interactions with each other.

WHY COLLABORATION?

Very few people would disagree that collaboration is important in human societies. One day, I met a couple from Australia who looked very close and very fond of each other as if they were newly weds even after being married for a few years. Young as I was, I was simply surprised by how nice they were to each other. I was bold enough to ask why. They told me that the key for a good relationship is the 3C's: communication, consideration, and cooperation. Cooperation, or collaboration, is one important element for human relationships. Research to date has also supported the importance of cooperation not only in language learning but in general education fields (Liang, Mohan, & Early, 1998; Murphey & Jacobs, 2000).

Jacobs, Power, and Loh (2002) described principles of collaborative learning activities, such as "positive interdependence," "individual accountability," "simultaneous interaction," and "equal participation" (see also Johnson & Johnson, 1998). In collaborative learning activities, group members depend on each other in positive ways. All group members share the same goal and work together for it. If one of them does not do his or her work, all group members will fail. In the end, all group members can enjoy the accomplishment of the work. Each individual member of the group takes a certain role and responsibility. Since all learners are engaged with the work, many interactions occur at the same time. Such simultaneous interaction allows everybody to take part in learning activities, leading them to equal participation. These principles also explain that collaboration enables learners to have more interactions with others, take more initiatives in learning tasks, and take responsibility for their learning processes.

Murphey also explained the effect of "near peer role models" (e.g., Dornyei & Murphey, 2003)—"peers who are close to the learners' social, professional and/or age level, and whom the learners may respect and admire" (Dornyei & Murphey, 2003, p.128). Students can find successful language learners and users among their classmates who they can make ideal and yet realistic models for themselves. Collaborative learning activities can provide opportunities to find such models and to learn from them.

The collaborative shadowing activity is one simple social activity that allows learners to communicate with others and learn from each other. This activity itself may not promote choice initiation or autonomy expansion as much as other more complex cooperative learning activities where learners are encouraged to make choices through group discussions, for example. However, this simply done activity is very useful as a first step in building a collaborative learning environment. The next section will explain collaborative shadowing activities.

WHAT IS A COLLABORATIVE SHADOWING ACTIVITY?

Shadowing techniques – repeating speech input immediately after hearing it – can be used in at least two different situations: while listening to spoken words on tapes and CD's, or in movies, and while communicating with someone in person. I called the former type "individual shadowing" and the latter "collaborative shadowing" in the sense that learners do the task individually in the former, and collaboratively with a partner in the latter (Shimo, 2005b). In individual shadowing, learners often utter exact words or sentences almost simultaneously with the spoken text or immediately after a group of words or sentences (sometimes called "overlapping"). In collaborative shadowing, learners can repeat words selectively and use their own words to express what the interlocutor or the speaker said in the form of dialogues. For example, when the speaker says "I went shopping with my mom yesterday," the listener says "you went shopping with your mom yesterday" by transforming in some way what is heard. If the listener is shadowing the speaker selectively, he or she might say "... shopping yesterday, O.K." (See Murphey, 1995; Shimo, 2005b). Selective shadowing naturally occurs in daily conversations and is a very useful skill for L2 learners.

I tried to implement several kinds of shadowing techniques in collaborative shadowing activities in my classrooms. For example, lecture shadowing, reading shadowing, and conversational shadowing (Murphey, 1995) were integrated in collaborative shadowing activities. According to Murphey (1995), in lecture shadowing, listeners shadow what they hear in their mind, for example, when they are listening to someone's lecture. In reading shadowing, one reads aloud a passage to his or her partner and the partner shadows. In conversational shadowing, one shadows his or her partner in conversations.

Furthermore, Murphey (2001) explained that shadowing can be done completely, selectively, and/or interactively. In complete shadowing, listeners shadow every word the speaker says. In selective shadowing, listeners select some words and phrases to shadow. In interactive shadowing, listeners shadow selectively and also ask questions or make comments to what the speaker says. These ideas were also integrated in the collaborative shadowing activities that I used in my teaching.

In my class, students would use short essays of about 150 English words they had written about a certain topic in collaborative shadowing activities. Students followed the following procedures with occasional variations:

1) Students formed pairs and one (Student A) read his or her essay aloud in a pair, while the other (Student B) shadowed in his or her mind, taking notes.

2) Student B made an oral summary of Student A's essay. Student B made use of his notes. While listening to Student B's summary, Student A shadowed Student B.
3) Students repeated procedures 1) and 2) with a new partner.
4) Students formed new pairs again. Before starting to share each other's essay for the third round, students made a list of main points of their essays.
5) Students shared each other's story without looking at their essay but only by looking at their list of main points. Students shadowed each other while listening to the other person's story.

Every time students changed their partners, they said hello and briefly introduced themselves to each other. Before they left for a new partner, they said thanks to each other. Students were also encouraged to ask a couple of questions about the content of their partner's essay. They were also told to share what their previous partner said from the second round. In shadowing, students were recommended to repeat meaningful or important words or the last few words of a sentence so that learners would focus more on meaning without repeating words mechanically, and so that they would not repeat each other's mistakes and errors [see "mention shadowing" (Murphey, 1998)].

WHY COLLABORATIVE SHADOWING?

I have been using collaborative shadowing activities in many of my classes at university. For example, in the fall semester of 2005, I implemented them in two kinds of classes: an English grammar class for freshmen with 30 students and a small seminar class about second language learning and teaching with only eight sophomores. In both classes, students would use their short essays in the activities. In the grammar class, students would often write a passage in which they are prompted to use the grammatical feature or expressions focused in the class, and in the seminar class, students would write about a topic related to the seminar content, i.e., about language learning and teaching.

In the following sections, I will discuss the benefits of collaborative shadowing activities while referring to my students' reactions. The student reactions in the regular English class of 30 students were collected through a questionnaire survey (see MAYA website for Appendices A & B) with Likert-scale type questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) concerning perceived task enjoyment, task difficulty, and task effectiveness. Students were also asked to write reasons for their responses. Student reactions in the seminar class of eight students were collected through written reflections about the activities. The responses were all written in Japanese. The quotes in this paper all came from these data, free responses in the questionnaire done in the regular English class [i.e., responses to Wh-questions of Question 1)-(1), (2), and (3), and Question 1)-(5)] and written reflections collected in the seminar class. They were translated by the author. Analysis of the student responses to the Likert-scale questions will not be included in this paper as it is not the purpose of this paper (cf. Shimo, 2005b).

EASILY DONE

First, collaborative shadowing is an easy technique used in pair work, and pair work is the first step or the basics for collaborative learning activities. The collaborative shadowing activity can be used as a warm-up activity at the beginning of a class, a refreshment activity in the middle, or as a major classroom activity to start or facilitate group discussion. Most of my students were not familiar with collaborative shadowing, but once they experienced the technique, they became interested and eager to use it more. It is pair work that can be easily applied in language classrooms.

SIMULTANEOUS INTERACTION—INPUT AND OUTPUT

As pointed out earlier, collaborative activities realize simultaneous interaction. In collaborative shadowing activities, all students are engaged in the activity either as a listener or speaker. In such situations, students have more opportunities to receive feedback and learn from one another.

Many of my students said that they found new vocabulary or expressions in their partner's essays or stories. One of the students actually described "*conversational shadowing*" as "*just at my [learning] level*" and another said that "*this is an opportunity to learn words and knowledge that I hadn't known so far.*" Collaborative shadowing with learners of similar learning backgrounds seemed to provide them with comprehensible input ("*i* + 1", Krashen, 1985), from which they could learn.

Furthermore, learners' output produced in collaborative shadowing activities involves all three functions of output indicated by Swain (1994): a) the 'noticing/ triggering' function, b) the hypothesis-testing function, and c) the metalinguistic function. Shadowing activities seem to have helped my students to better pay attention to some of their linguistic problems, test their knowledge of how the target language should work, and reflect on their use of the target language and thereby restructure their linguistic knowledge (Swain, 1994). The following quotes from my students indicate how output played its role in their language learning:

- I can find my grammar mistakes by speaking; this helps me practice pronunciation; I have become able to keep in mind that I will have to share my passage with my partner in speaking while writing the passage.
- I can confirm whether the message was communicated no problem.
- I can think over my passage by shadowing my partner's summary of my passage; it's also fun.

Students often noticed their mistakes in plural "s," third person singular present "s," and past tense forms while reading their passage aloud to their partners. Some students occasionally noticed the wrong sentence structures and made corrections such as subject and verb agreement and omission of a subject or a verb.

REPETITION

In collaborative shadowing activities, students recycled the same information with slight modifications or changes repeatedly. They first spent time organizing ideas when they wrote up the passage as an assignment. They read aloud the passage to a few different partners, listened to their partner's oral summary each time, and shadowed the summary each time. In the third round, where they told the story without looking at the written passage, they were able to speak rather smoothly.

On the other hand, while listening to their partner's essays, students internalized what they had processed more effectively by repeating their partner's essay in their minds first and by making summaries with their own words afterwards (Murphey, 2004). When students did not understand the meaning, they would have to ask questions for clarification. They would otherwise not be able to make a summary or convey the message accurately.

By repeating words, students seem to have increased their comprehension level. They could tell their partner what they understood and what they did not. A number of positive comments about repetition of a partner's words were found:

- I think the sentences became easier to understand when I repeated them orally.

- I can understand my partner's passage better by me actually speaking it out.
- We can check whether we understood each other [by shadowing each other].

Repetition of each other's passage, with or without modification of expressions or sentence structures, helped them to check whether they understood the meaning of the passage or not and to retain information and knowledge more effectively.

MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION

I reported in Shimo (2005b) that students enjoyed collaborative shadowing activities because they found it fun and interesting to speak with classmates and learn about each other. Students were relatively very favorable about working together with their classmates. It is not easy for students to make friends with classmates if they simply remain in their seats, listening to the teacher talk. They can make friends if they do tasks collaboratively with classmates. Talking about oneself and knowing about others is the first step to making new friends.

In collaborative shadowing activities, students followed certain structures in communicating with others by using their written passage and shadowing techniques, but the dialogues they had were not created for them, but created by them. The language had its meaning for users to express themselves and to understand more about others. Thus, the language was used for the meaningful purposes, and students enjoyed talking with their classmates and learning more about them.

Comments that showed how positive students were about collaborative shadowing include the following:

- I can find out what my friend wrote in her journal and have more talks [with her].
- It is fun to have communication.

Collaborative shadowing activities also help to promote attitudes to listen to others more attentively. They also help to create a more comfortable and relaxing atmosphere in class, as learners share more and more of each other's opinions and thoughts.

CONFIDENCE IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

Students of the English language in Japan are often said to be lacking in oral communication competency. Interviews with five Japanese learners of English conducted for my previous study (Shimo, 2001) indicated that the learners had not received enough oral communication practice in English classrooms in Japan, and it seemed to have led to their lack of oral communication competence and lack of confidence, as well.

It is also often the case that learners of English in Japan are reluctant to speak in English with peers who share the same first language and with whom they always speak in Japanese. Teaching English in different contexts in Japan, I have experienced such situations where students became quiet and appeared uncomfortable in the silence. In such cases, oral communication became like a patience game where learners were very much frustrated, or students simply started to use Japanese otherwise. Similarly, after failing in his attempts to have students use English with their peers, Murphey (1995) reported several reasons that his students gave for their refusal. Among the reasons were 1) it was unnatural, 2) it was embarrassing, 3) using the mother language was faster and easier, and 4) some simply refused to speak in the target language.

In the collaborative shadowing activities that I used, students used their essays as the first step in oral communication. The written pieces were very helpful for the students. Students seemed to be more prepared to communicate with each other. Especially when they shared the

same essay content with a few classmates, they seemed to be more comfortable sharing it orally by using expressions from the essay or making new sentences on the spot, rather than simply reading the passage aloud.

Collaborative shadowing activities provided scaffolding for learners to interact with classmates smoothly. With small scaffoldings, learners seem to have gained confidence in speaking in English. Students also seemed to be more relaxed and eager to speak with each other in English, while they would usually remain rather inactive and look uncomfortable when they were simply told to discuss certain topics given in English.

ENGLISH-ONLY ENVIRONMENT

Shadowing itself allowed students to say words in English, and they seemed to be happy to be able to speak English in class. Several intriguing comments were found, which indicated that students enjoyed speaking in English or simply saying English words out loud:

- It is more fun to read aloud than read silently.
- I am glad that we have more opportunities to speak English.
- I can feel more strongly that I am learning the language when I speak it.

Moreover, one student claimed that shadowing was fun because she could enjoy "*the feeling of responding in English.*" Another said that shadowing was useful because "*it gives more time for us to be in touch with English by repeating our partner's passage.*"

It is clear that collaborative learning activities can promote simultaneous interactions, bringing about comprehensible input and providing chances to produce output. However, students in classrooms in Japan, where they share their first language, tend to switch to their first language very easily. It is easier and also probably more natural, as Murphey's students claimed (Murphey, 1995), because they have always done so both in and outside the classroom. Sometimes, it may be more effective to use Japanese even in English classrooms according to the situations and to the objectives of the activities. It is nevertheless important to provide an environment where students can use English as a communication tool.

In collaborative shadowing, students can easily move into an "English-only environment"—or if not, "nearly English-only environment" with a few Japanese words being used occasionally. When students are given scaffolding structures where using English is the rule, they find it less embarrassing and more natural to use the language. Thus, they can easily enjoy "*the feeling of responding in English*," the feeling of using the language on their own.

COLLABORATIVE ATMOSPHERE

There are many kinds of collaborative learning activities (see Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Jacobs, Power, & Loh, 2002, for example.) The collaborative shadowing activity presented in this paper is a simple pair work and usually requires neither deep discussion on certain issues nor decision-making processes. In that sense, this activity may not be very helpful in promoting learners' metacognitive ability and sense of responsibility for learning. However, as suggested earlier, collaboration is an important element in language learning, and socialization is the first step in the process of collaboration.

To talk about oneself and to know about others is an effective first step of collaboration. When learners learn more about each other, they can work together more effectively. Topics dealt with in the activities can range from personal interests and hobbies to opinions, ideas, and attitudes about social and world issues. Collaborative shadowing techniques can be used to

build a foundation for a collaborative learning environment, because they give learners chances to listen to others and learn more about one another.

CONCLUSION

We use language to express ourselves, find out new information and knowledge, try to understand others, and explore who we are. Second language learners can keep on learning language when they study language for such purposes as communication with others and self-discovery and/or self-development through it.

Communication takes place in social activities, and collaborative activities are useful in realizing social activities. Various kinds of collaborative learning activities in language classrooms should help to create a community where learners can have communication with each other, and where they can also go through the stages towards learner autonomy, namely "socialization," "dawning cognition," "initiating choice," and "expanding autonomy" (Murphey & Jacobs, 2000).

Collaborative shadowing activities may often remain as a simple activity for socialization, but they can help to build a foundation for a collaborative learning environment. While providing such a foundation, they can also be used for various other purposes: to increase interactions between classmates, to realize meaningful communication, to provide an English-speaking environment, and to enhance learner confidence in oral communication competence.

Collaboration is important in language learning. So is communication. When learners work together to realize mutual understanding by communicating with their partners, they think of them and show consideration to them. Communication, consideration, and collaboration: the 3 C's, the Australian couple's keys for their warm relationship. We can start small in creating a cooperative atmosphere by using collaborative shadowing techniques.

NOTES

1 In this paper, I have not distinguished the concepts of learning and acquisition, as Krashen did in the "acquisition-learning hypothesis." Krashen claimed that knowledge learners picked up naturally in being exposed to language input is different from knowledge they gain in the process of conscious study. He called the former process acquisition and the latter learning (e.g., Krashen, 1985).

2 Krashen explained in the "affective filter hypothesis" that some learners have difficulty learning language because they have negative affects such as unclear motives and negative emotions (e.g., nervousness, anxiousness, and anger) in or towards language learning (e.g., Krashen, 1985).

CRITICAL READER RESPONSE 1

MIKE GUEST

Leave it to academics to conjure up a complex term to describe a simple phenomenon, but "ventriloquation" is a term that probably demands more notice from the EFL/ESL community. After all, this "intramentalizing" process was precisely what I was doing on all those late night train rides home when I first began trying to learn Japanese -- internal dialogues summarizing and reviewing the second-language encounters I had had during the day (input) and picking out weak spots and points of error and confusion (noticing) so that tomorrow I could react or respond more appropriately in the language (output).

While the process may be described by academics in esoteric terms, the daily necessity of acquiring Japanese was real for me. Thankfully, Etsuko Shimo has done a very good job of connecting the academic threads to the concrete concerns of language acquisition. Of course, these days no one dares question the primacy of student-centered learning in EFL/ESL, nor would anyone deny the necessity of collaboration for any social or communicative purpose. The value for the reader is rather found in Shimo's shifting the pedagogical from the cognitive to the meta-cognitive, engaging the social and affective elements of learning and thus taking the idea of collaboration a step beyond merely doing "pair activities."

To the uninitiated it may seem that an emphasis on collaboration would not be needed in a so-called collectivist, group-oriented society like that of Japan. Yet, ironically, language education is one area in which a dearth of interaction has been widely noted and a type of individualistic distancing holds sway. In fact, interestingly (and paradoxically), Shimo argues that collaboration actually enhances learner autonomy-- that the two actually represent the same sides of a pedagogical coin. Now that's the kind of thinking-outside-the-box that I like!

Shimo's primary example of collaboration, shadowing, can seem to represent a mechanical process in which meaning is not central and a speaker's errors are fully parroted, but Shimo, via Murphey, provides interesting options. Shadowing selectively, for example by having one student summarize when using a shadow, or by having the "shadower" focus upon particular aspects of meaning, avoids the likelihood of mere parroting and engages the participants at a deeper cognitive level, the kind that allows for deeper internalization.

One can get a little carried away with the virtues of collaborative education. Reading this chapter sometimes gives me the impression that collaboration can also cure cancer and solve world poverty, but the practical focus Shimo places upon the classroom activity of shadowing is something any language teacher can readily utilize. We all want to introduce English content into our classes, but much of it has an artificial flavour where the students are in a constant state of pretending. Shadowing provides a real, meaningful place for English input, production, and reflection in the classroom, leading to the same type of "intramentalization" that helped me take a few giant step forwards in acquiring a second language.

CRITICAL READER RESPONSE 2

DENISE HAUGH

A change in attitude is what took place after reading this paper on Collaborative Shadowing Activities. Thanks Etsuko!

Originally, I believed shadowing to be another listen-and-repeat (L&R) exercise that might put students to sleep--what I call "mechanical response mode." This occurs when students

repeat verbatim with limited cognitive, emotional, or physical connection because they are uncertain as to the purpose of the activity or are not interested in doing it wholeheartedly. One reason why this happens is that the L&R exercises are not designed and used with the students' best interests in mind based on their background, experiences, knowledge, and motivation. I now have a better understanding as to the purpose and function of shadowing. It is not the teacher-centered L&R activity I had assumed it to be, but rather a meaningful learning tool to initiate the development of collaborative learning environments.

I enjoyed reading Etsuko's background discussion (in the first third of her chapter) of how language is learned. The studies and conclusions of Krashen, Murphey, and Cummins, among others, and her own work and reflections were organized in a clear and logical manner. Yet, I would have appreciated reading in her introduction a little on what shadowing is so that I might form my own opinions about how shadowing enhances collaboration socially and affectively and furthers cognitive development to make them more responsible learners.

On the other hand, Etsuko's three subsequent sections on "How do We Use Language?," Why do We Learn Language?," and "Why Collaboration?" created a comprehensible lead into her following section, "What is a Collaborative Shadowing Activity?" These three sections laid a foundation on which the benefits of shadowing could be easily understood and potential problems readily spotted. For example, although I agree on the positive effects of collaborative shadowing where students "receive comprehensible input, produce output, and learn from each other," I need to investigate for myself the effectiveness of collaborative shadowing in the following two scenarios.

1. How might collaborative shadowing overcome poor student motivation? Students who are non-English majors enrolled in a compulsory English oral communication class may not be the ideal learners with whom to explore shadowing. As I indicated earlier, correct motivation is essential for meaningful interaction. Could feelings of resistance and non-interest be over-ridden when pair members "depend on each other in positive ways" and each member "takes on a certain role and responsibility?" Furthermore, could shadowing "hip hop" songs and simple up-beat lines from popular Hollywood movies be a possible solution for satisfying the social and affective needs of such students?
2. How would primary or basic-level speakers or even higher-level students of English practice good communication skills with collaborative shadowing? When students write their own compositions for reading shadowing, some kind of monitoring system needs to be in place to ensure the writing and speaking of correct sentence patterns. I wanted to know more about how students could learn from and avoid repeating other's mistakes as they practiced, through the following three functions of output--the noticing/triggering function, the hypothesis testing function, and the metalinguistic function. I was also concerned about the further ingraining of incorrect speaking habits (i.e., katakana pronunciation). With so much concentrated effort on listening, I still feel that recorded words of native English speakers, choral reading, or a "one-on-one" with the teacher, would be optimal choices to complement collaborative shadowing.

Regardless of these concerns, I do share Etsuko's positive view of collaborative shadowing as an effective learning tool for simple and engaged student interaction to foster an "English-only" classroom or a "nearly English-only" classroom. Used with awareness and enthusiasm, this activity could become "meaningful and useful as a social activity in language learning and as a small step towards a collaborative learning environment" and "learner autonomy."