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Social Cognition of Temporality and Environment: Lingua Franca English Construction

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Objectives: When English is used as a lingua franca for business interactions in Asian countries, the inherent and complex interplay that occurs in communications may fail to be captured when observed and analyzed through a conventional structuralist approach, one restricted by the binary view that language and culture are mutually exclusive. Thus, we employ a neo-constructivist approach which involves paying attention to the participant's cognition of temporality and environmental communicative resources.
Methods: This article analyses data from spontaneous interactions between students and local tourism professionals in an intercultural destination marketing project where the description illustrates the process of situated Lingua Franca English (LFE) discourse under construction. Our analysis suggests ways to develop LFE competence among Japanese speakers operating in international business.
Results: Our data demonstrate that, on the jobsite, various types of LFE are constructed in relation to the participants' social cognition of temporality and to the semiotic resources available in this situation.
Conclusions: We conclude that socially constructing situation-specific LFE requires participants to distribute their attention to team members by gradually forming consensus on a certain style of communication. Furthermore, our findings imply that cognition and active employment of various semiotic resources made their view of LFE communication shift from passive risk-avoiding English users to owners of LFE.

Key Words: Neo-Constructivism, Lingua Franca English, Business Discourse, Project-based Learning, Socio Cognitive Apparoch

Introduction

English has become a de-facto business language in Asia. Asian countries are investing heavily in English language education

and training (Muslimin, 2017). It is particularly challenging for Japanese business practitioners whose language belongs to a different language family (Elms, 2008) and for those whose countries were not forced in the past, by colonialist superpowers, to adopt English as an official language. In fact, Japanese learners' apprehensions around communicating in English and their reluctance to communicate have been frequently reported by applied linguists (Lucas, 1984; Watanabe, 2013). Furthermore, researchers argue that English language measured by standard English tests does not correlate with international business performance (Ngah, Radzuan, Fauzi, & Zainal, 2011). While the initial emphasis in global business competence was associated with a high command of English, the focus gradually

shifted from linguistic competence to (inter) cultural competence. Studies on global business competence for Asian business professionals conclude that English language competence is important, but that English alone is not enough. The studies undertaken by Du-Babcock and Babcock (2006) argue that language competence and cultural competence are two indispensable competencies in the performance of global business. In addition, Yao's study (2019), undertaken to identify global business competence among mainland Chinese business professionals, reports the same line of findings.

This expansion of the body of research around English used as Lingua Franca English (LFE) provided new insight into the global business competence argument. LFE is inherently intercultural and is used widely in intercultural environments (Lopriore & Grazzi, 2016). Recognizing the complex interaction between language and culture, recent research on LFE calls for a shift in paradigm. This argument suggests that we need to step away from binary thinking regarding language and culture. The current study investigates Japanese users of LFE in an international destination marketing project in Romania. We attempt to follow the processes of LFE discourse construction, and to look into the participants' social cognition of various situated factors, such as available semiotic resources. In this study, we set the following research questions.

RQ1: How is local LFE constructed in a project?
RQ2: How does participant temporality affect the construction of LFE?
RQ3: How are participant cognition and LFE related?

Theoretical Framework

Discourse of LFE
Canagarajah (2018) argues that, in linguistic research, "there are still many facets and traditions to structuralism"; psychological traditions embedded in applied linguistic research isolate language and culture as objects of research and reductionism resulting in the perception that language and culture exist as separate factors. However, in previous research (Canagarajah, 2013), Canagarajah had already begun to use the term LFE, as we do in this article. We also use LFE to observe the interaction of language and culture in our research site where such interplay can be viewed as discourse involving negotiated and agreed ways to talk, behave, make decisions, and develop relationships. While research on LFE is relatively new, a remarkable number of books and articles have been published. However, most studies use the term "English as a lingua franca (ELF)"; but Gee (1994) elucidates that it is often taken for granted that

discourse is a way to use language based on shared cultural assumptions. To this end, in this article, we do not allow ourselves to be confined by the structuralist notion of 'culture-as-given', in which culture can be broken into different categories which remain stable over time (Handford, in press). We, like Gee and Canagarajah, use the term LFE to demonstrate its temporal and situated nature used as but one of our non-native speakers' common language(s) in this study.

Firth's research (2009) on LFE between speakers at the jobsite demonstrates that ELF is dynamic and situated. His data illustrate that speakers rationally and continuously negotiate and construct their own English. The English these non-native speakers use is a certain type of lexico-grammatical variation, situated at a specific jobsite, which employs strategies that compensate for the speakers limited command of the English language. In subsequent research, Firth (2009) provides an example of situationally constructed LFE. Data from recorded interactions show the use of the word 'this night' which is not standard English. From the traditional (applied) linguistic perspective, the speakers' deviation from native speakers' grammatical norms could be interpreted as a failure in communications. However, in this situation, the other interlocutor instantly understands what the other means. If we apply Standard English criteria, 'this night' is erroneously used and needs to be corrected to 'tonight'. However, this 'error' does not result in any communications breakdown. Firth argues that the primary purpose of lingua franca business interaction is to get the job done; and that in this case, their job to convey the first speaker's intention of 'calling the hotel tonight' is successfully conveyed. In this international business discourse, using the phrase 'this night' is considered to be an acceptable option. This view of LFE as a situated social practice emancipates non-native English speakers from the traditional English paradigm which treats native speakers as ideal speakers and non-native speakers as deficient (Firth & Wagner, 1998).

Sunaoshi's study (2005) examines Japanese and American workers' interactions in a factory in the United States. In contrast to Firth's data, here LFE is being used between non-native and native speakers where the participants are high school graduate workers rather than managers with distinguished educational records. Sunaoshi's data show that the Japanese workers' exhaustive use of available semiotic resources compensates for their limited English competence. The Japanese workers' active intercultural practices are counter-stereotypical behaviors to the 'taciturn and receptive Japanese'. Sunaoshi's interpretations reveal that the Japanese workers' technical superiority in their specific duties is the key factor to mediation and construction in their LFE discourse. Their American counterparts concentrated

on finding out the meaning the Japanese were trying to create on the construction site. These findings are contrary to the prevailing essentialist view of Japanese "unique" cultural characteristics. Sunaoshi concludes that the behaviors of the Japanese workers were a result of certain contextual factors. The study demonstrates that LFE users' cognition of semiotic resources at hand led to a successful business interaction. The Japanese manual workers were not overly confined by the norms of conventional English education in Japan, because their intention to get the job done enabled them to recognize and utilize the immediate semiotic resources in the worksite environment.

Both studies provide a description of LFE in a specific situation. Business interaction data between European and Middle Eastern non-native English speakers on the phone, and interaction in a factory between American native English speakers and Japanese technicians illustrated a variety of LFE discourse. The actors' fluency, vocabulary, and grammar are dissimilar in each data set. The diversity of LFE observed in each study demonstrates that LFE is situated and different.

Extended Unit of Analysis: Temporality and Social Cognition

Discourse analysis has been adopted across the social sciences, yet its epistemology is not exhaustive. Earlier, we noted that LFE is a discursively constructed product. In analyzing business discourse, discursive approaches often present limitations. The embedded structuralist foundation in some discourse analysis methods isolates languages from temporal and environmental factors.

Canagarajah (2018) argues that one possible way to solve this issue can be the expansion of units of analysis to the dimension of temporality. When working in an organization, people are influenced by limitations of time as an important business resource. Because of accelerated time compression in this globalized and digitalized world, there has been a growing interest in how organizational phenomena relates to time in management and organizational studies (Brunelle, 2017; Fabbri, 2016). LFE in real life situations cannot therefore be explained as just being constructed "out-there", detached from the interlocutors' cognition of time; for example, the feeling of urgency and the pressure of deadlines influence the ways people talk. It is not enough to say that LFE discourse is socially constructed as it does not allow for an explanation of how the LFE process in various settings could result in benefits or disadvantages for different parties.

Another area that could expand our unit of analysis could be social actors' cognition of environmental factors, particularly semiotic resources specific to each business situation. This could be related to environmental factors such as proximity or

working remotely. Moreover, some applied linguists have paid particular attention to language learners' social cognition of environmental factors in language learning (Atkinson, 2011). The disciplinary boundaries between language and other environmental semiotic resources needs to be overcome. Therefore, in tracing the process of LFE discourse construction, consideration of the participants' cognition of exhaustive semiotic resources needs to be incorporated. Bargiela-Chiappini (2013) calls for an expansion of units of analysis which illuminate how business practitioners continually seek communicative moderators that can enable them to communicate better in the workplace. They distribute attention to and recognize available semiotic resources in the environment and within the context. Meaning making activities on the jobsite involve embodied mediators. These are not limited to gesturing, posturing, but also include environmental semiotic resources coupled with physical tools that capture the attention of social actors (Muntanyola-Saura & Garcia, 2018). Thus, we could argue that the construction of LFE is mediated between individual interlocutors' pragmatic awareness of local semiotic resources.

Communication in LFE is understood as distributed cognitive mechanisms among different individuals in relation to temporality and environmental resources. Hence, the adoption of multi-dimensional analysis by setting expanded units of analysis will benefit researchers in their understanding of LFE discourse. The expansion of units of analysis is highly likely to lead researchers to gain an extended view of social constructionism with careful attention to time, environment and cognition, which will in turn enable them to analyze discourses beyond the level of existing research.

Methods

The present study adopted an ethnographic method in which we aim to describe the participants' meaning-making practices in a destination marketing project where LFE is used. We were organizers of the project where we collected data. As insiders we observed the participants sharing their sense of time and space; and, at the same time, we were outsiders; our description of participants' communicative practices occurring in natural settings helping us to analyze LFE created in this specific situation. As outsiders or organizers, we were able to have a macro perspective of the project, such as the entire commercial and educational aims of the project, scheduling delays, and relationships between the university student participants and the local political and commercial sector leaders, residents, high school students and tourism organization employees. We were also outsiders, as we did not belong to any team as participants.

We employ an extended notion of social constructivism and neo-constructivism in this study as our analytical principle. Adopting multi-dimensional analysis along with expanded units of analysis, the present investigation reaches beyond the level of discourse purely viewed from a social constructivist perspective (Canagarajah, 2018). Our analysis reflects temporality and participants' cognition in the environment. We pay attention to broader semiotic resources beyond the words, and this contributes to the creation of meaning on the research site. Thus, the participants' social cognition of temporality and various semiotic materials are treated as part of the data that illustrate workplace LFE discourse, and our analysis of a possible synergy with LFE (Canagarajah, 2018). We assume that LFE discourse disciplines participants to sense and react to semiotic cues in the environment (Ferreirinha & Raitz, 2010).

Research Site

Transilvania Creative Camp – Creative Destinations and Heritage Interpretation Summer School (TCC was a project initiated and developed by Transilvania University of Brașov, Romania and Meisei University. The project was carried out from August 29 to September 5, 2016. TCC received its financial support from the town of Târgu Lăpuș Local Council, and its logistic support from Petru Rareș High School of Târgu Lăpuș. The Alternative School for Creative Thinking at Bucharest joined the project as co-organizers (Nechita, Candrea, Csiszér, & Tanaka, 2018; Nechita & Tanaka, 2017). The first edition of the project was set out in various locations in Brașov county in 2014 (Nechita, Sandru, Candrea, & Taranu, 2014).

In the 6-day program, the participants actively experienced daily life in the villages in Lăpuș Land. The participants attempted to transpose their touristic experience into promotional ideas. With the presence of Japanese in the group of participants, the main focus of the project was to identify creative ways to promote Lăpuș Land to the Asian tourism market. Five intercultural teams consisting of participants from various cultural backgrounds were formed. They were asked to document their observations of the surrounding area by means of video, photographs, and texts. We provided participant groups with basic filmmaking and editing skills in order to ensure a base level of quality in the final product delivery.

The project had dual purposes, promotional and pedagogical. The first purpose was to create a series of recommendations for the promotion of tourist attractions in Lăpuș Land (Țara Lăpușului) with the aim of attracting tourists from an emerging international market (Japan and other Asian countries). The second purpose was to provide participants with real-life opportunities to work in a multicultural context and develop their competence to work in global teams.

Our reason for choosing this project as a research site is that it endorses Project-based learning (PBL) which enables researchers to collect real-life business discourse data. According to Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson, and Planken (2013, p. 274) "business discourse is a web of negotiated textualizations, constructed by social actors as they go about their daily activities in pursuit of organizational and personal goals". In PBL, the participants are assigned pre-determined goals by working on a given project. The recent body of research on human resource development proposes that PBL is effective for participant acquisition of skills and knowledge (Wankel & DeFillippi, 2005). This knowledge and these skills are then used to create solutions in real-life situations while at the same time developing rapport and trust as a team. PBL promotes Communities of Practice (CoP), where people acquire skills or knowledge to deal with situational needs (Tanaka & Ogane, 2011). Mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire are elements that define CoPs (Firth & Wenger, 1998). Shared repertoire encapsulates language, environment and temporality. It is also an appropriate site from which to observe participant involvement as it emerges from organizational members' temporality throughout the duration of the course (Ballard & Seibold, 2004). This pedagogical aspect of PBL helps us to make analyses in terms of solutions as well as problematic issues in LFE discourse.

Participants

Forty people participated in the project. They were 23 students, two employees of the local tourist promotion center, 14 university lecturers and professionals from Romanian advertising agencies, and a Dutch photographer. The 23 students who participated in the project had various cultural backgrounds. They were Japanese, Vietnamese, Romanian, Italian, and Albanian university students, with three students from the local Petru Rareș High School and two students from a German high school. Our focus was on one team, shown in Table 1, that included an instructor and a tourism agent. The information relevant to interpreting the data was added in Table 1.

The participants were fully informed about the project and the intention to publicize the experience through numerous media for promotional and research purposes. In order to protect their privacy, the photographs in this article are downgraded, and we use pseudonyms.

Data

A total of 6 hours and 40 minutes of video data were recorded. The participants' interactions in the team were recorded by our research assistants. We believe our presence did not affect the

Table 1. Participants

Name	Nationality	Background Information	PBL experience
Ana	Romania	Local high school student	Not informed
Anita	Romania	Romanian university student	Not informed
Silvia	Romania	Photo instructor	Not informed
Niki	Romania	Employee of Local Tourism Center	Not informed
Mia	Japan	Japanese university student, 4th grader	4
Yuma	Japan	Japanese university student, 3rd grader	1
Suzu	Japan	Japanese university student, 2nd grader	2

Note. PBL, project-based learning.

situated use of LFE. In addition, we interviewed the participants. Most of the interview data were collected while showing the video data and asking them to recall the video recorded instances. Interviews were mostly about their cognition of semiotic resources.

Results

To illustrate our argument for situated construction of LFE discourse, we provide our analyses of the data recorded in TCC. The excerpts included in our discussion are examples of recurrent phenomena. The data demonstrate participants mediating and forming mutually accepted LFE in specific situations. In order to illustrate the process of the participants' construction of LFE, the data analyses are exhibited in a chronological order.

English as a Stand–Alone Resource for Project Communication
Yuma and two other participants were sipping coffee on the first day of the project while local participants provided sandwiches and coffee to international participants. Yuma, in Figure 1, recognized that his would-be colleagues/participants from Italy were standing behind them. Yuma acted as if he did not see his Italian peers. Yuma was one of the participants with poor English competence.

Although he has learnt English for the past 8 years, at the beginning of the project, Yuma declared several times that he couldn't speak English. He seemed to believe that he was not sufficiently qualified in terms of grammar and lexical knowledge. Japanese English education is grammar-oriented and teacher-centered (Nakane, 2007). In the classroom, only correct English is acceptable. For Yuma, producing English without errors was not possible. The English education norm in Japan made him think that English was the only single semiotic resource available to communicate internationally. He also said in his interview, "wakaranai koto darake de chotto fuan desita (I was rather nervous because everything seems not determined)".

Figure 1. A situation of no eye contact.

The programme schedule had already been distributed, but there were few details. It could be interpreted that the discrepancy of this situated ambiguous temporality between Yuma's homeland norm of fixed and determined temporality increased his anxiety. He was not able to distribute his attention to environmental semiotic resources other than his own English language.

Meanwhile, Mia started to talk with some students. Mia had participated in PBL programs three times in the past and knew that she could negotiate and mediate English language with other non-Japanese participants employing semiotic resources at hand other than English language, such as tone of voice, and facial expression. Her cognition of the environmental semiotic resources allowed her to work on actively searching and negotiating the type of English communication they might employ in this project.

Negotiating for a Shared LFE
On day 2, the participants were making choices for their photographic collections. The participants had taken hundreds of photographs during the data collection period. The invited photograph specialist, Silvia, suggested two approaches for selecting the most effective photographs for their promotional displays

(Excerpt 1).

This was one of the earliest instances of participants working together and sharing their ideas. In this data, while the instructor, Silvia, talked most of the time, the participants' utterances were minimal. The interaction began with an informal lecture by Silvia on the topic of photography and photo-editing. It was apparent that Silvia was knowledgeable about the topic and that others were learning from her. This power relation initially meant that the interaction was dominated by Silvia. At the same time, there were no verbal or non-verbal exchanges among the six participants in the interaction, namely, Mia, Ana, Niki, Yuma, Anita, and Suzu. It is interpreted that the shared temporality among the participants was such that it was just the first day of the program, and that they had no feelings of agency. As they felt that there was much time ahead to establish a way to communicate, the participants were searching and negotiating an appropriate level of LFE. Mia who had experience of PBL initiated talk (30) and action, and Ana (31), Anita (43) and Niki (45) followed. Their short but active interaction was gradually forming the LFE discourse of the team.
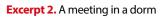
Shared Temporality

On day 4, the participants were discussing how they could make their photograph collection more unique and how they could convey the feeling of the natural, relaxing atmosphere of Lăpuş Land. Their task was to show two ideas, both industry and culture, in their product. However, to date they had only been working on agriculture and manufacturing. Ana expressed her concern that they were not addressing the cultural aspect of the task, and that they should reassess their current dual focus on 'agriculture and manufacturing' as this only represented the 'industry' facet (1) (Excerpt 2; Figure 2).

By now, the participants had come to know each others' English competence. As the due date approached, while the team's tasks became clearer through shared temporality, a feeling of urgency was also growing. Again, the discourse is characterized by the succession of short utterances which may fit their English competence. The transcript illustrates a dialogue-like conversation. It is interpreted that the two participants formed a turn-taking consensus; Ana's unfinished speeches are regularly confirmed by Mia (2, 4, 6, 8, 12). As the Figure 2 shows, the discussion involved other participants. Their utterances were short and worked to complete or supplement their action or gaze. It should be noted that the quiet participants including Anita, Yuma, and Suzu (not in the Figure) expressed their situated engagement in the issue by their posture and gaze.

Excerpt 1. Searching for a shared LFE

27. Silvia: So how we want to start. Start with three or just (.) one each (0.5) the best one.
    (1.5: *Team members gaze each other searching for the team agreement*)
28. Silvia: You want to show three or one. It's up to you. If you already have the best one we …d.. do it together. So which way you want?
29. (Anita sees Mia and raises her hand)
30. Mia: One. (.)
31. Ana: one. (in a low voice)
32. Silvia: Okay, so we will do one..and we'll do it together right?
33. (everybody smiles)
34. Silvia: So… ↑
35. Mia: (Showing her photograph on her smartphone). This one. Just one.
36. Silvia: (Seeing the photograph carefully) Nice. Did your colleague see it?
37. Mia: (Nodding) Yeah.
38. Silvia: (To everybody) So you decided it's good. Okay. (To Mia) It's an original yeah?
39. Mia: Nods
40. Silvia: Who's next?
41. Ana: (shows her photograph)
42. Silvia: It's all right. (smiles)
43. Anita: (looking at Silvia while handing her smart phone with a photograph)
44. Silvia: Hum hum.(sees Andrea S's photograph and smiles)
45. Niki: (shows her photograph) …

Excerpt 2. A meeting in a dorm

1. Ana: And this is …this is the (.) kind of main thing here because you also use the fence,] …….wall, horses, caws.] ……………………….[Those general things]
2. Mia:　[Hum]　　　[Yeah, yeah.. I know what you mean]　　　[yeah]
3. Ana: But also the problem we have is …agriculture…..and the other one…manufacture. We have another important subject
4. Mia: Hum.
5. Ana: I think that ….here…is….a double idea ….but I don't think so
6. Mia:　　　　　　　　　　　　[yeah]
7. Ana: we can just choose the …
8. Mia: Hum
9. Ana: We are also supposed to choose something working with native culture…
10. Mia: m…
11. Ana: Because it not enough to think about these because nobody thinks this thing is culture…So I think we should think about both
12. Mia: Two …two things, right?
13. Ana: Yes…because it's not enough

Figure 2. A dorm meeting.

Photographs and SNS as Mediators

The team members were selecting their best shots on the riverbank on day 6. Yuma was looking at his photographs on his Facebook page with some Japanese language texts. They are selecting photographs for their prospective photograph book edited out of all the collections of participants' photographs (Excerpt 3).

Photographs and SNS (social networking service) as mediators helped them to communicate and reach their objectives on site. In the formative process of LFE discourse, Yuma seemed to have learned to utilize alternative semiotic resources other than the English language. At this stage, Yuma was able to distribute his attention to semiotic resources around him and utilized them to compensate for his English language. Yuma started to use his own LFE in forming discourse. With gestures and facial expressions, his simple English enabled him and his partner to get the job done. Compared with excerpt 1 and 2, Yuma took turns frequently in the interaction; following the discourse pattern observed in excerpt 2, each of his turns consist only of a single word (54, 63) or of non-verbal cues (52, 59, 66). However, it is clear that he is part of the interaction. Knowing that his English was weak, he initiated action deviating from his homeland norm that English must be correct and complete.

The following excerpt was recorded later the same day. Yuma sent his best shots and movies to Mia first through SNS and then shared his work with the rest of the members (Excerpt 4; Figure 3).

Yuma became more active and initiated communication by maximizing his use of SNS and photographs. The interaction demonstrates that Yuma became an active member of the team. At this stage Yuma always uttered a word or two, producing verbal rather than non-verbal turns. Yuma, in excerpt 4, demonstrated that he had gained ELF discourse on this team. The team's exchange of short utterances combined with supplementary semiotic resources and photographs on SNS sites indicate their achievement of equilibrium in terms of their LFE discourse.

Our data demonstrate that on the jobsite, various types of LFE is constructed in relation to the participants' social cognition of temporality and available semiotic resources in the situation. Revisiting our research questions, our findings for each question are stated as follows:

1. LFE is constantly constructed and deconstructed in the project. The participants initially search for and negotiate their own LFE, and their mutual engagement lead to their achieving a type of LFE.
2. By sharing temporality, the participants initiate actions

Excerpt 3. A photograph talk

51. Ana: (turning to Yuma) Yours.
52. Yuma: (showing his smart phone screen to Ana, Anita, and Mia)
53. Ana: Okay. This is for album? It was taken in the album?
54. Yuma: Album…
55. Mia: Yuma took this for album
56. Ana: But I don't understand this.
57. Mia: Because it's written in Japanese.
58. Ana: Okay, show us.
59. Yuma: (Shows it).
60. Mia: (Smiles) Hum[
61. Ana: (Smiles)]Um.
62. Anita:] This is nice.
63. Yuma: Nice
64. Ana: Hahaha
65. Mia: Hahaha Hum
66. Yuma: (Smiles and shows more illustration)
67. Ana: Nice
68. Anita: You have good ones

Excerpt 4. A SNS (social networking service) talk

(Everybody is accessing the same SNS)
82. Yuma: (after sending a message to Mia online) Here
83. Ana: Ha?
84. Yuma: My favourite picture and movie (showing his smart phone screen)
85. Mia: (Looking at her smart phone screen) oh. Messeegi (Japanese intonation)
86. Ana: On your face book?
87. Yuma: Yeah
88. Ana: You can....you could also put them….er…that's okay.
89. Yuma: Okay?
90. Mia: And I'll send the photographs for you.
91. Ana: (To Mia) Okay. Eeeverything….! (to Yuma) So you are here (seeing the screen) and you accounts..
92. Yuma: Ah Huh
93. Ana: Your account …dadadada (scrolling down)
94. Yuma: (seeing in Ana's screen) Yeah.

which develops their negotiation for achieving mutually acceptable LFE in order to get the job done.

3. Participants' cognition of available semiotic resources to supplement their linguistic limitation can help them to

Figure 3. A SNS (social networking service) meeting.

take part in the collective construction of local LFE discourse.

By distributing their attention, participants' cognition of alternative semiotic resources other than English language enabled them to actively communicate. Our findings demonstrate the multiplicity of LFE. Mutually acceptable LFE is constructed and reconstructed as a response to participants shared temporality and social cognition of various semiotic resources.

Discussion

Our analysis of the participants' distributed attention suggests a new direction in LFE research to take account of socio-cognitive factors. The data analysis implies that socially constructing situation-specific LFE in a project discourse requires participants to distribute their attention to team members by gradually forming consensus on a certain style of communication. They pay attention to expanded dimensions of team dynamics. The participant's attention shows interesting similarity to A dancer's narrative on a spatial error on stage in Muntanyola-Saura's study (2014). "…I had to look around, I did something that I thought I was going to next, I realized that I was probably two counts early, and then, I caught up again with them, in probably two seconds…" (p. 32). Like the dancer, the project participants extend and distribute attention to socio-environmental factors around them to use the most adequate form of LFE communication.

Implication

These findings will be of interest to business English educators, trainers, and instructors. To help business practitioners to actively participate in LFE discourse, raising their awareness of constructing locally appropriate LFE would be necessary in addition to teaching them job-specific terminology, negotiation

strategies or presentation techniques. This would be particularly important for those who do not have confidence in their linguistic competences. The way to look at LFE as a socially constructed practice rather than as a set of language systems may encourage people to develop identities as lingua franca users rather than as language learners.

Limitation and Future Research Direction

This study presents our qualitative analysis of a specific local site. The transferability of our research results needs to be judged by the readers referring to their own site. Yet, our findings imply that the permeation of this view of LFE may resolve the issue of the global talent shortage in Japan (and perhaps in some other East Asian countries where saving face prevents learners from taking risks for fear of making "mistakes"). Awareness raising of LFE may emancipate non-native English speakers from the conventional notion of non-native speakers as deficient speakers. Jenkins (2018) criticizes that universities in many parts of the world including Japan assume the LFE of international higher education as the 'standard' English. This approach to English disadvantages both non-native and native English university students in working globally in their career. Thus, to shift our paradigm, we require a new way of looking at LFE.

The question raised by this study is whether or not inclusion of temporality and semiotic resources in a unit of analysis contributes to progress in intercultural competence research. A number of researchers examining intercultural business competency echo that linguistic ability and cultural knowledge are two important components. Expanded units of analysis in investigating intercultural business competency may provide insights to establish a greater degree of validity to identify detailed constructs of intercultural business competency.

Conclusion

This study demonstrated that expansion of units of analyses can capture the nature of LFE construction on a local job site. Our investigation of LFE on the project site illustrates the complex process in the formation of LFE. The participants monitor, negotiate, and construct to establish locally situated LFE for their project work. The site of LFE construction was influenced by the environment and available semiotic resources. Temporality was gradually shared by the participants in the process of the project work. The Japanese learners were initially affected by the norms of their Japanese English education in which silence would have been encouraged in order to avoid making mistakes. Cognition and active employment of various semiotic

resources made their view of LFE communication shift from passive risk-avoiding English users to owners of LFE. We also argue that the participants' cognition of semiotic resources other than English language helped non-native speakers to actively participate in English interaction.

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