Wiki and Digital Video Use in Strategic Interaction-based Experiential EFL Learning

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ABSTRACT:
This paper details the use of a free and access-controlled wiki as the learning management system for a four-week teaching module designed to improve the oral communication skills of Japanese university EFL students. Students engaged in repeated experiential learning cycles of planning, doing, observing, and evaluating their performance of a role in a strategic interaction scenario. Each performance was digitally video recorded and uploaded to the wiki. Students then used the wiki to evaluate their video performance, transcribe and self-correct their utterances, and reflect on changes in subsequent performances. The instructor used the wiki's video and text to give students online feedback and focus post-performance group debriefing sessions. Comparisons of performance transcripts revealed syntactic, pragmatic, lexical and fluency improvement from learning cycle 1 to learning cycle 2, and observations, surveys, and interviews provide evidence for the students' ease of use of the wiki and video cameras, enjoyment of the instructional activities, and improved independence and confidence. The results suggest that a wiki, digital video, and strategic interaction-based experiential learning cycles can be effectively integrated to mediate Japanese university EFL students' oral communication development. Technical and pedagogical recommendations are elucidated. Teaching materials can be downloaded from http://langcom.u-shizuoka-ken.ac.jp/si.

KEYWORDS
Wiki, Digital Video, Strategic Interaction, Sociocultural, Experiential learning

INTRODUCTION
Strategic Interaction (hereafter, SI) was proposed by Di Pietro in 1987 as an approach to second language instruction that is organized around scenarios based on real life events that require students to use their second language "purposefully and artfully in dealing with others" (p. vii) to achieve a fixed goal. The scenario, a key component in SI, is exemplified in the following instructions to two students (who do not know each others' roles):

Scenario Title: Surprise! Surprise! (Di Pietro, 1987, p. 50)
Role A: You are preparing for a final exam, which will be given tomorrow. It is evening and your friend calls you to invite you over for a while. What will you do? Should you keep studying? Do you need a break? You know that this friend loves to talk and may keep you there for hours.
Role B: It is close to the end of the college semester and today is the birthday of your friend (A). You and your other friends have organized a surprise birthday party for A. You know that A may be studying for finals, but it is your job to call him or her up and extend an invitation to come over to your place, where the party will be. Of course, you cannot reveal the real purpose for your invitation.

For Di Pietro, "a scenario is a strategic interplay of roles functioning to fulfill personal agendas within a shared context" (1987, p. 41). A scenario requires a language learner to listen intently to what another student says, and to share information while pursuing individual goals. Di Pietro urged teachers to create and use scenarios based on daily occurrences but to move students beyond "routinized performances" (p. 80) by creating dramatic tension through participants' interlocked conflicting goals (such as a restaurant customer having dietary restrictions and a waiter needing to recommend a chef's special dish). Di Pietro argued that "without the element of dramatic tension, a scenario is not likely to be successful, no matter how relevant its theme might be to learners' functional needs" (p. 3).

Di Pietro (1987) expected language learners to "rise to the challenge of human interaction, with all its uncertainties and ambiguities" (p. 3) and designed a supportive learning network with multiple roles for the instructor (teacher, coach, consultant, observer, evaluator) and numerous opportunities for help and guidance as students (also functioning as role players, advice seekers and givers, performers and evaluators) work together on language and strategy development. SI is a meaningful and collaborative approach to language teaching and learning; Di Pietro placed students in "situations where the motivation to think is translated into the challenge to reach goals through verbal exchanges with others" (p. 10). He wanted the classroom to function as both a "proving ground where challenges are faced and overcome" (p. 10) and a "refuge for the learner" (p. 12) with the assistance from the teacher and other learners. For Di Pietro, debriefing involved more than a teacher correcting students' errors; students were expected to collaboratively find ways to improve their own and others' performances.


1. Pre-class Preparation: Teacher selects or creates appropriate scenarios and prepares the necessary role cards.
2. Phase 1 (Rehearsal): Students form groups and prepare agendas to fulfill the roles assigned to them. Teacher acts as adviser and guide to student groups as needed.
3. Phase 2 (Performance): Students perform their roles with support of their respective groups while teacher and remainder of class look on.
4. Phase 3 (Debriefing): Teacher leads the entire class in a discussion of the students' performance.

Our goal in this research was to document the efficacy, or otherwise, of an SI teaching module design that makes use of web 2.0 technologies to provide socioinstitutional affordances (Thorne, 2006) for language development. From a sociocultural perspective, the mediational means provided to learners while using language and collaboratively communicating can have transformative effects on the learning and developmental processes (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Di Pietro's proposal of the SI approach was supported by second language acquisition theorists from perspectives such as cognitivism (Chamot & O'Malley, 1993; Stevick, 1993), in-
teractionism (Doughty, 1993), and particularly a sociocultural perspective (Lantolf, 1993; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Verity, 1993) and it has been used in ESL (Bosco, 1993), EFL (Al-Khanji, 1987; Khanji, 1993; Salah 1984), ESP (Rutledge, 1993), ESL writing (Arena, 1993), teacher training (Crandall, 1993; Jackson, 1993) and Persian classrooms (Mir-Djalali, 1993); however, very few uses of the approach have been well documented. Mir-Djalali (1993) introduced scenarios and strategic interactions to ten students in an intermediate university-level Persian class with "satisfactory results" (p. 173): they learned cultural Persian information, "proper Persian expressions and verb phrases", and "improved their functional language skills through interactions" (p. 174). The students' evaluations of the four-session sequence were "overwhelmingly positive" (p. 173). In another study, Khanji (1993) compared 40 Jordanian EFL students' communication strategies developed through either SI scenarios or interview tasks. Transcription and analysis of oral examination data revealed that the SI group were exposed to more input than the interview group and the SI group used more achievement strategies (e.g., circumlocution and retrieval) in oral communication while the interview group used more reduction strategies (e.g., repetition, language switching and appeals for assistance). Khanji suggested that SI "push[es students] to their limits of their emerging interactive ability" (p. 435). In addition, Negueruela (2003) used concept-based language instruction with instructor- and student-generated scenarios. One student reported that:

the most beneficial activities [in Negueruela's class] were when we improvised in class with a partner. We always wanted to do our best because it was recorded, so it forced us to use all Spanish, and it allowed us to think on our feet, and to really learn how to have an actual conversation. Yes, we messed up a lot, and we had to think about what we were going to say, leaving large pauses in the conversations, but it gave us practice for the future, when we actually are using Spanish. Also, I thought they were fun, the scenarios were interesting, and I thoroughly enjoyed having those conversations with my peers (p. 256).

**Strategic Interaction and the Japanese Context**

Oda's (1993) discussion of issues facing effective University-level English instruction in Japan was particularly relevant to our project. He outlined Japanese students' lack of exposure to spoken English, low student motivation, large class sizes and lack of time in the classroom (often only one 90-minute session per week). He suggested SI as a potential solution for Japanese EFL students since SI requires real life communication. It "put[s a student] into a situation in which s/he is under the pressure of using English to get something done" (p. 537) and it allows low-proficiency students to receive security and support from the teacher and peers in various SI phases. Moreover, large classes can be divided into small groups to participate actively in rehearsal, performance and evaluation stages of instruction. Unfortunately, use of SI in the Japanese EFL context has only been described in pilot studies (Long, 2000) or in projects with other empirical foci (Muranoi, 2000). Miura (2008) offers useful alterations to classroom SI use to help Japanese students manage conflict resolution. Learning outcomes with SI have not yet been fully documented in the literature for this context.

**Strategic Interaction and Technological Mediation**

This project integrates SI phases with practices based on experiential learning theory, sociocultural theories of development, and the mediated practice of technology. Di Pietro and Dewey hold similar views regarding learning as "intelligently directed development of the possibilities inherent in ordinary experience" (Dewey, 1938, p. 69) and argue that learning cannot happen by one person acting alone. Di Pietro and Dewey also shared creative and humanistic perspectives on education. For them, interpersonal communication, human contact and idea making and transfer are central to meaningful learning. Di Pietro and Lewin
(1951) both stress reflection and discussion of experiences since concrete, personal experience provides "meaning to abstract concepts while at the same time providing for a concrete, publicly shared reference point for testing the implications and validity of ideas created during the learning process" (Kolb 1984, p. 21). Dewey's and Lewin's work was foundational to Kolb's cyclical model of doing, observing, thinking, and planning. Dewey, Lewin, Kolb, and Di Pietro all required goal-oriented action, reflection, and feedback in effective teaching and learning. Argyris and Schon (1996) argued that "single loop" learning merely allows a student to "satisfice" (Simon, 1990) the current situation and does not change the student's fundamental knowledge or abilities. A common element of the experiential learning theories of Dewey, Lewin, Kolb, and Argyris and Schon is the "double loop" learning process in which errors made during the first loop of experience, observing, reflecting are corrected and then subsequently re-tested in a second experience or cycle.

From a sociocultural perspective, the building into a teaching-learning cycle of more social interaction and reflection allows learners to gain greater control over the target language as they shift from other-regulation towards increased self-regulation and control (see de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994). The key point from a sociocultural point of view is that internalized semiotic tools are utilized for the mediation of activity, and these tools are formed and internalized in and through interaction with the social world (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). As Aljaafreh and Lantolf contend: "learning evolves through stages of decreasing reliance on the other person towards increasing reliance on the self" (1994, p. 479). It is within different forms of social interaction that shifts in mediation, which are equitable with learning, will take place. This is where they can be investigated using the microgenetic analysis method (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

We required students to go through Di Pietro's rehearsal/preparation, performance and debriefing two times with the same scenario to create a more experiential and interactive learning process in our language classroom. See Figure 1 for our SI-based experiential learning model.
Our instruction was facilitated by the use of digital video cameras and a wiki. Di Pietro (1987, p. 84-85) suggested the use of audio or video recorders in conjunction with SI for the debriefing phase, later study, subsequent assignments, evidence of learning over a semester, models of interaction for other classes, and for capturing nonverbal aspects of interactions. Doughty and Varela (1998) provide an example of videotaping students' presentations for subsequent peer feedback. A wiki, which, according to Godwin-Jones (2003), is an online system of intensely collaborative web pages that can be easily created and edited, was also used by the teacher and students in this project. Thorne and Payne (2005) outline the functionality of the wiki that makes it a useful tool for the specific pedagogical aims of our design: “Within the context of group projects, wikis enable students to adopt a `revise and roll-back’ approach to the collaborative production of text and thus obviate the need to meticulously merge individual contributions in order to avoid deleting one another’s work” (p. 384). Wikis have been used by groups of language learners to collectively develop knowledge of content and target language accuracy (Kessler, 2009) and also to research and write collaboratively (Arnold, Ducate & Kost, 2009; Lee & Bonk, 2009). Our purpose in this research was to use the functionality of the wiki and develop a shared digital notebook. Students and the teacher could use the wiki to store and view (from the classroom, office or home) digital video of the performances, transcribe them (helping students "objectify language and prepare a corpus for the debriefing segment" (Di Pietro 1987, p. 19)), and correct their utterances. Swain and Lapkin (2008) describe self transcription as a process that "take[s] speaking out of its rapid, real-time, meaning-making context and provide[s] students with opportunities to notice their own [language] use" (p.119) and found that French immersion students developed a "heightened awareness of" (p. 122) and learned lexical items through the transcription of their L2 role plays.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This project was guided by two main questions:

1. What learning outcomes result from the instructional design?
2. How do the participants experience the instructional design?

Question 1 was investigated through the analysis of role play videos and the microgenetic analysis of transcriptions, student reflections, surveys (6-point Likert scale items from "1 - strongly disagree" to "6 - strongly agree"), and interview data. Question 2 was investigated using observations and fieldnotes, pre and post surveys, post instruction interviews, student reflections, and students' notes (e.g., preparation sheets and language logs).

METHOD
Participants and Instruction
The thirteen voluntary participants (11 females and 2 males) in this extracurricular project were undergraduates at a public university in a large Japanese city. They were selected from a pool of 30 volunteers based on their shared weekly availability. They were between 18 and 22 years old (M = 20.3), were taking one or two weekly university English classes, studied English for 1 or 2 hours weekly outside class using a wide variety of media and technologies, and scored between 455 and 850 (M = 606.2) on a TOEIC IP test given the week before the learning activities. In general, they reported positive attitudes towards using English and technology and a lack of confidence in speaking English. The students demonstrated a very positive attitude during the workshop. The instructor (also the primary researcher) teaches English classes and research seminars at the university and has ten years of experience teaching ESL and EFL, including numerous and varied experiences using technology in the language classroom.

The teacher and students met for 90 minutes once a week for four consecutive weeks. In the week prior to the first meeting, the students took a TOEIC IP test and completed a survey regarding language and technology abilities and preferences. The activities of the meetings were as follows:

Meeting 1:
- Students were given an overview of the workshop and the stages of strategic interaction instruction and they introduced themselves to the group.
- Students were divided into groups and learned how to use the digital video cameras. Each group set a camera on a tripod and recorded a self introduction. Then, they watched their video on a PC using QuickTime.
- Students were introduced to the private wiki (all were given a shared login and password), and were taught how to create, edit, and search for pages. Each group then uploaded their introductory video to a group-created wiki page and wrote a short introductory message to the other groups.
- Students were then placed into three- or four-person groups based on the roles of the strategic interaction (i.e., ‘professor’ and ‘student’ groups; see section below for scenario details). Each group prepared strategies and linguistic material for their role. The teacher reviewed key concepts, vocabulary, and grammar in small groups and the students’ role sheets included helpful words and pragmatic information. Students anticipated how the other role might respond to their requests or advice, and quickly rehearsed sentences from their preparations.
- Students were instructed not to speak with students in the other role about the workshop. They were told that the groups had conflicting roles, and that this conflict was important to their language development.

Meeting 2:
- Students quickly rehearsed sentences from their preparations.
Mixed groups of `students' and `professors' were created, and instructions were given about acting (students could not look at their notes, but could ask for help from a student behind the camera) and recording (each role play was recorded on a separate memory stick). The groups created `offices' (chairs, a professor's desk, a computer) as a role play space.

Pairs of `student' and `professor' actors recorded their interactions while another `student' and `professor' operated the camera, referred to preparatory notes, and offered assistance if requested.

When all the students had finished, each pair watched their interaction in QuickTime on a PC, graded their own performance using an evaluation rubric, then uploaded their video and transcribed their interaction on a pair-created wiki page. Transcription work began in class and continued as homework.

Meeting 3:
• Before Meeting 3, the teacher reviewed the transcripts and added an additional section to each pair's wiki page: a copy of the transcript with errors underlined. These copies were also printed out and distributed to each student at the beginning of Meeting 3. Each student was first encouraged to self-correct their underlined errors. After 5 minutes, explicit corrections were handed out and questions were answered. A copy of the transcript with errors explicitly corrected were later added to each pair's page.
• The students were debriefed as a class; wiki-based videos and transcripts were projected onto a large screen, and examples of strong and weak interactions were shown and discussed. All students (not just the actors) were invited to suggest corrections to the mistakes the teacher drew attention to.
• Students sat in their group of `professors' and `students' again and prepared for re-acting the same role play. The groups and the teacher discussed role and language improvements. Students quickly rehearsed sentences from their preparations.
• New pairs of `professors' and `students' were formed, and these pairs worked together to record the second role play.
• When all the students had finished, each pair watched their interaction in QuickTime on a PC, graded their own performance using the same evaluation rubric, then uploaded and transcribed their interaction on a pair-created wiki page. Transcription work began in class and continued as homework.
• Students were asked to complete a language log (three to five mistakes they made during the first role play and how to correct these mistakes) and a written comparison of role play 1 and role play 2 for homework.

Meeting 4:
• Before Meeting 4, the teacher reviewed the transcripts and added an additional section to each pair's wiki page: a copy of the transcript with errors underlined. These copies were also printed out and distributed to each student at the beginning of Meeting 4. Each student was first encouraged to self-correct their underlined errors. After 5 minutes, explicit corrections were handed out and questions were answered. A copy of the transcript with errors explicitly corrected was later added to each pair's page.
• The students were debriefed as a class; wiki-based videos and transcripts were projected onto a large screen, and examples of strong and weak interactions were shown and discussed. All of the students (not just the actors) were invited to suggest corrections to the mistakes the teacher drew attention to.
• Students then participated in a fluency-building activity; `professors' sat in `offices' around the room, and the `students' moved around the room interacting with each `professor' in turn. The students used the same scenario as in Loops 1 and 2. The instructor participated as a professor that all the students had to interact with. The fluency-building activity was added to the SI sequence for two reasons: (1) requests
from several participants (prior to the project implementation) wanting to "speak more English" and (2) our hope that the SI sequence of preparation, performance, evaluation and correction in Loops 1 and 2 would provide students with the requisite control over target language forms. The fluency activity provided further opportunity for automatization and increased self-reliance through repeated, yet still varied, use with different interlocutors (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994).

- Students completed a survey regarding language and technology abilities and preferences and their opinions of the activities.

After the meetings concluded, four 30-minute follow-up interviews using open-ended questions were conducted.

**Scenario**

The EFL students used the following roles:

Role A (student): You have a paper due in Professor Smith's class tomorrow. Your paper is nearly finished, but you are not satisfied with its quality. You know your paper will be much better if you have more time (at least a few days) to continue writing it. Discuss this situation with Professor Smith.

Role B (professor): You are very busy preparing for an overseas conference presentation later this week. You have not finished your presentation yet. A student in one of your courses has made an appointment to talk with you during your office hours. There is a paper due tomorrow in the students' class. You know that this student enjoys your class and likes English, but seems to be struggling with the level of English in the class. The student's writing quality, so far, has not been very good. Give the student good advice. Be fair to all of your students. Leave yourself enough time to finish your presentation.

Participants were given additional information about their identity, schedule, role play location, goals and potentially useful vocabulary and grammar.

**Technologies**

Each meeting was held in the university's Self Access Language Learning Center — http://langcom.u.shizuoka-ken.ac.jp/sall. In addition to various media for self study, this room has 32 PCs connected to the Internet, headphones for privacy, and circles of desks for convenient small-group interaction. Stereo headphone splitters were purchased so that pairs and small groups could simultaneously listen to video content on one PC. A digital projector was borrowed from the university's Student Affairs office to show wiki-based video from one PC on the room's whiteboard for the debriefing sessions.

Four Sony Webbie HD MHS-CM1 digital video cameras were purchased for this project. These cameras were selected for their ease of use, light (640x480/30p) and wiki-compatible (MPEG4 AVC/H.264) video format, and price. The students used eight 4GB Memory Stick PRO Duo cards to record their videos, and connected Elecom MR-K001SV card readers to the classroom PCs to view the videos using Apple QuickTime.

The instructor created a free and access-controlled wiki site for the project (www.pbworks.com). A PBworks wiki was selected for several reasons: price, ease of creating and editing pages, opportunity to embed video on pages, no storage limit for video (videos are hosted externally by http://fliqz.com), possibility for students and the instructor to edit and view pages from the classroom, office, or home, and opportunity for students to view each others’ performance, transcription, and error corrections (see Figure 2).
Figure 2
Wiki site with uploaded video and transcriptions

RESULTS

Question 1. What learning outcomes result from the instructional design?

To answer this question, we provide a microgenetic analysis of short transcripts that show changes between performances in role plays 1 and 2. The comparison is important as it shows the efficacy of the debriefing stage to scaffold subsequent performance. These examples are contextualized by the learners’ own reflections of the process. Participants’ names have been replaced by codes (S1-S7 for those in the ‘student’ group and P1-P6 for those in the ‘professor’ group).

Syntax

A few students spoke with more syntactic accuracy during the second role play. One participant consistently omitted future tense markers in role play 1 but used ‘will’ suitably in role play 2.

P6 1: I tell you good good way to improve your English. I check your assignment. I return you the assignment. I help you.
P6 2: I will tell you all student in the class. I will correct the mistake.

Other students made word order improvements in their second performance:
P4 1: I have to your score like lower.
P4 2: I have to lower your score.

**Pragmatics**
Although some students improved syntactically, improvement was seen most consistently in the area of pragmatics. All of the students used more polite forms in their requests and greetings during the second role play (although syntactic and semantic issues remained or appeared), for example:

S2 1: I wanna improve it more
S2 2: I'd like to improve it.

S5 1: I want you to critique my assignment. I want you to check my grammar. I need you to check it and I wanna rewrite it.
S5 2: I'd like you to check my paper.

S6 1: I want you to extend the deadline.
S6 2: Would you mind extending the deadline?

S3 1: I (pause) want you to I my my homework is extension?
S3 2: I would like you to extend my homework.

Survey and interview comments added evidence of the students' attention to pragmatics during the second role play:
* I understand polite/casual expression. That was my first time carefully speaking politeness. (S5)
* I tend to say "I want to do..." or "I wanna do..." but now I know I have to use appropriate words case by case. (S6)
* I should use English case by case (the position or situation). (P4)

**Vocabulary and Expressions**
Many students used more appropriate words or phrases during the second role play, for example:

P1 1: What's your problem, actually?
P1 2: How's your paper assignment coming along?

S2 1: After that i wanna improve improve it and write it again.
S2 2: After that can I ... can I rewrite it?

P6 1: Please pass me.
P6 2: Please hand in the assignment.

**Fluency**
Most of the interactions in the second role play contained fewer pauses, less repetition, and less self-correction, for example:

S2 1: Could you (pause) give me a (pause) could you spare me a few minutes?
S2 2: Could you spare me a few minutes?

S4 1: So, could you give me an extension? (pause) extension? (pause) extension?
S4 2: Could you give me an extension?

S6 1: I did your assignment (pause) paper assignment. And I finished al (pause) I finished (pause) almost I finished.
S6 2: I was almost finished my paper.

**Role Play**

Many of the 'professors' made improvements (requiring more complex language) to their identity portrayal and goal-directed actions during the second role play. P4 better communicated her busy schedule, P2 became more impartial and P6 became more faithful to his role as a busy professor.

student: Could you help me polish my paper?
P4 1: Of course, I'd love to! (She then acted out checking and correcting the student's paper.)
P4 2: I see. It's too late. Because your deadline is tomorrow. If you ask me more earlier, I can help you.

student: Could you extend deadline?
P2 1: Yeah, of course.
P2 2: I'm sorry, I can't, because I'd like all of the student to submit it the same day in the class. Because it is I think it is fair.

P6 1: If you are free after school today after school I have a little time so I can check your assignment and return and correct mistake and return you. Do you are you free after school?
P6 2: I'm so sorry. I'm teacher so I must treat the student equally so I can't extend the deadline for you. And I will go New York so I'm very busy so I can't extend so I can't the deadline. So If you are if you want to know the way to improve your writing ... ? If you know the way want to know the way so I will tell tell you all student in the class next class.

**Recurring and New Errors in Role Play 2**

Although most students’ syntax or pragmatics improved during the second role play, some explicitly corrected errors were repeated in the second role play. For example, P3 was unable to accurately produce a target form that had been explicitly corrected (missing the main verb “to be”) and S5 was still unable to produce an appropriate pragmatic turn at talk, though an appropriate turn had been suggested (an inappropriate register was still used; “I would like you to...” or “Would you mind...” would be more appropriate ways of signaling a polite request):

P3 1: I will not here.
P3 2: I will not here.

S5 1: I want you to critique my assignment.
S5 2: I want to see you again after school.

Also, all students made new syntactic and lexical errors during the second role play, for example (with the nature of errors in parentheses):

P4: If you ask me more earlier ... (conditional)
P2: If you will submit it after the deadline, I will (pause) the grade (pause) worse. (conditional, vocabulary)
S5: I didn't print out it. Now I can print out it. (phrasal verb word order)
P1: If I extended the deadline for you only it's unfair. But I could send extending the deadline but I will down your grade 1. (conditional, vocabulary)
P5: Are you bringing your homework now? (direct Japanese translation - she meant to say "Do you have your homework?")
P3: One more. (clarification request - she meant to say "Could you say that again?")

**Question 2. How do the participants experience the instructional design?**

This section contains observations, student notes, comments and transcriptions from the instructional methods and technologies in chronological order.

**Performance**

The conflicting interlocking roles created the need for meaningful communication to reach individual goals.

S4 and P4 (role play 1):
S: Yes!! Uh (pause) I need ah (pause) more time to to refine my paper. So, could you give me an extension? Extension? Extension?
P: Well, I will be fair to everyone. So, I can't but if you need more time take a few days but I have to (pause) I have to your score (pause) like lower.
S: Oh (pause) Uh (pause)
P: I’m sure you’re good student so (pause)
S: Ah (pause) well (pause) ah, could you help me take a (pause) polishing polishing my paper?

S3 and P3 (role play 2)
S: Thank you. I would like you to extend my homework.
P: It's very difficult (pause) ah (pause) why?
S: I I will finish my homework but I can’t do my best so I want to I want do my best.
P: Oh but if I permit your your (pause) your (pause) your assignment other student is (pause) not not not fair not fair so I permit only your extend the assignment. Sorry.
S: Oh I see (pause) I I understand your your idea so ok I will submit my homework tomorrow but I want to rewrite my homework after I submit my homework.
P: Sorry. One more.
S: I want to rewrite my homework after I submit my homework tomorrow. For example
P: Sorry
S: On Thursday I submit my homework again.
P: Ah (pause) But I have to go to New York.
S: Oh!

**Reflection and Evaluation**

Although many students did not seem to enjoy watching their role plays (many laughed nervously; "I felt not so good to watch our role play - I ashamed" - P2), they thought that "using the video camera is a good way to practice English" (S1). Students were able to notice problems in their performance: "I learned my weak point from the videos" (P6). Three of the four interviewees reported watching other students' videos for, among other aspects, body language and vocabulary on the wiki at home. Many students found the process of "seeing what we say without thinking (pause) it have a lot of mistakes" (P2) to be uniquely educational:

I had never seen my speaking English until the workshop. So I didn’t have chances to correct what I said in English. In the workshop I was able to check my speaking English and I was able to know what expressions I used in con-
version were wrong. I think using technology and checking speaking English for ourselves is a very good way to improve speaking English. (P5)

Students did not seem to have difficulty using the rubric to evaluate their performances. Most students evaluated aspects of their first performance as either "poor" or "good," even before their language was transcribed and corrected. Most students rated the grammar, vocabulary and fluency of their second role play slightly higher than their first; however, only one or two students rated these aspects as being "excellent."

Transcript correction

Students seemed very interested in self-correcting highlighted problems in their transcriptions: "we corrected the sentences - first we should think about what mistakes were made" (P4) and many seemed to know what the correct forms were: "Japanese school study has more stress on writing or reading and speaking is not stressed so we can correct by seeing [errors] but when we talk it is difficult to fix it and we can't remember the words" (P2). This process also seemed to focus the students on linguistic elements: "I think about English well and improve my English speaking skills!" (P3). Students also seemed very appreciative of the teacher explicitly correcting their English mistakes: "if [the teacher] didn't correct the mistakes, maybe I'll make the same mistakes [again]" (P4).

Group debriefing

Students seemed nervous about having their performances displayed for the group: "This was a very good experience for me (pause) it was good to prepare for the next [role play], but I was so nervous to see my video" (P2). Actors were not asked to correct their own mistakes; the entire group was invited to suggest ways to improve language and performance problems, and all students freely offered ideas about others' performances as well as their own. Students used other students' videos to "[find] many [good] expressions" (S4). P2 was able to use the videos to help her prepare for the strategy variation in the second round of role plays: "I was very happy to see other students' video. It was all different and because the question of the student is all different and the next conversation will be different too ... it was a very good experience for me." Students also seemed to examine their own language habits during the group debriefing because others "make similar mistakes in the class often. By watching them, I realized 'oh I use that phrase too' and it is not good" (P2).

Comparison of role play 1 and role play 2

The students' comparisons of their performances revealed four main themes:

(1) Communicative improvement:
- I could say what I wanted to say in 2nd role play. I couldn't say it in 1st role play (P6).
- I was able to do what I would like to try to do. I [thought] what I wanted to convey deeply before I talk and I talked more politely (S3).
- I negotiated with her about the paper [deadline]. Negotiation is one of my goal (P4).

(2) Better adoption of roles and focus on goals:
- [In the first role play] I didn't think about my work [and in the second role play] I try to make the students understand that I'm very busy (P6).
- I understood about professor so I think I was able to play "professor" thinking professor's situation (P3).

(3) Pragmatic improvement:
- I used polite words/expressions in second role play (S2).
- [In the first role play] I communicated with my student much too casual as a professor [and in the second role play] I tried to use more appropriate words (P4).
- [In the first role play] I couldn't speak politely [but for the second role play] I memorized polite phrases (S4).
(4) Variance in fluency change: Some students were able to "speak more and longer [in the second role play] than the first time" (P5); however, others "cared too much for which words to use and it made me difficult to discuss" (S6), "What I say next? What is polit- est expression?" (S5).

General Feedback
Students seemed to understand and appreciate the activities used in the instructional sequence: "We did a role play again and again. Through role play 1 and role play 2 and flu- ency activity, I could improve my English. I learned polite words and expressions" (S2). Another student commented on the role play scenarios and feedback steps: "This workshop makes us to think how to communicate in English. And professor check my conversation. So think about English well and improve my English speaking skill!" (P3). One student drew his own model of the instructional sequence on his survey and wrote "I think it was very good for me" (P1).

Four students commented that the activities "need more time" (S2). The instructor also felt very pressured to keep the students moving quickly through all of the activities in just four meetings.

The students reported on the post-workshop survey (6-point Likert scale items from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree) that, on average, the workshop was enjoy- able(5.54), their English communication skills improved because of the workshop activities (5.08), the video camera and wiki were easy to use (4.85), they would like to participate in a similar workshop (the same activities with a different topic and roles) (5.38), and that they would like to use the activities in their regular university English classes (5.15) by stating that "[this] is better than the Japanese style [of language classes]" (P4). Additionally, comparisons of identical pre- and post-workshop survey questions showed slight improve- ment of students' opinion of their technology skills, oral communication evaluation abilities, speaking independence and confidence ("on second day ... we embarrassed to talk English a little, but last day we can talk in English with more confidence" (S4), and enjoyment about working with others to learn English.

DISCUSSION
Our first research question addressed the mediation through SI-based experiential EFL learning. Survey and interview data provided some evidence of the student's developing confidence and their creativity and critical thinking in the SI phases. These data thus validate Brown's (1993), Danesi's (1993) and Mayer's (1993) support of SI. The results show that some students were able to gain control over aspects of their syntactic accuracy (simi- lar to the results of Bosco, 1993); however, the most consistent improvement was seen in the furthering of students' pragmatic knowledge and communicative abilities. Even though S4 had studied English polite requests, it was difficult for her to use her knowledge gained in class. She and other students were able to use more polite language in the second per- formance loop ("That was my first time carefully speaking politeness" (S5)) and better un- derstood the "use [of] appropriate words case by case" (S6). Larsen-Freeman (in Badallamenti & Henner-Stanchina, 2007) discusses learning and teaching of syntax, semantics and pragmatics and notes that "in fact, it is sometimes not the form, but the meaning or appropriate use of a grammatical structure that represents the greatest long-term learning challenge for students" (p. xii). Our students seemed to lack certain English pragmatic knowledge and communicative ability, and the use of carefully chosen scenarios and exper-ientially-grounded SI phases seemed to be helpful to them and may be useful for other students to "sharpen their control" (Di Pietro, 1987) of not only syntax but pragmatic use and relevant vocabulary.
Evidence of learning could be seen not only in the shifts between transcripts of the two role plays, but also in the comments students made about the overall instructional design. Di Pietro's intention for SI to put students in "situations where the motivation to think is translated into the challenge to reach goals through verbal exchanges with others" (1987, p. 10) is mirrored in P3's comment: "This workshop makes us to think how to communicate in English. And professor check my conversation. So I think about English well and improve my English speaking skill!" She had to think about how to communicate and the instructional phases and learning support system provided scaffolded support that allowed her to reach her goal. Although all of the students were able to interact in the scenario and reach a conclusion in the first role play, student comments provide evidence that some participants "satisficed" (Simon, 1990) the situation in the first role play but were able to better communicate in the second role play: "I could say what I wanted to say in 2nd role play. I couldn't say it in 1st role play" (P6) and "I was able to do what I would like to try to do. I [thought] what I wanted to convey deeply before I talk and I talked more politely" (S3). Many language students may be able to communicate well enough to reach a conclusion the first time through the scenario. While this may be a meaningful learning activity because of its interpersonal communication, idea transfer, concrete experience (Dewey, 1938) and practice of communicative strategies (Ellis, 1984), the result of one interaction may not be the one the student or instructor actually wants. The integration of Dewey, Lewin, Kolb, and Argyris and Schon's feedback phase and a second loop helped change students' fundamental knowledge of and abilities in their second language. From a sociocultural perspective, this was achieved by the mediation offered to the learners through the transcript they created, which effectively became a tool for further reflection on language choice in the given situation.

Our second research question investigated the students' and the instructor's experiences and their reflections on the instructional method and technologies. Our discussion is organized by the phases of instruction:

1. Rehearsal: Students were able to understand their roles and used vocabulary and expressions from both the instructor-prepared role sheets and their own preparation sheets in the performance phase.

2. Performance: The interlocking conflicting scenarios seemed to require authentic communication as evidenced by S3 and P3's interchanges regarding an extension request, an explanation of that being unfair to other students, then a request for on-the-spot feedback and the professor having to decline because of her busy schedule. Although some students thought the role was difficult, Di Pietro wanted students to "rise to the challenge of human interaction, with all its uncertainties and ambiguities" (1987, p. 3) of real life tasks, and the subsequent feedback and second role play helped students reach their goals in a difficult situation.

3. Debriefing: As in Swain and Lapkin's (2008) study, the students in our project were able to notice and improve their English by watching, transcribing, self-correcting, and discussing their performances. Mayer's (1993) discussion of SI and critical thought seems to have been extended by the students' experience in this instruction. Students were able to work collaboratively in the group feedback phase to prepare for their subsequent role play, and many of the students appreciated and incorporated self-corrections and instructor feedback in their next interaction. The debriefing allowed the teacher to offer further language- and role-related instruction. In this regard we see the mediational affordances of the technology as key in this important provision.

4. Second loop: "Through group cohesion, planning, and feedback, students [are] allowed to develop the self-confidence that might in other, more-traditional classroom activities be lacking" (Brown, 1993, p. 513-4). In our study, students focused on pragmatics (sometimes sacrificing fluency) and gained confidence. The crucial dramatic tension of SI was somewhat maintained by using new partners who had "acted very differently" (P4) to reach goals in the shared context. Students did not have to
"satisfice" in the second loop; they were able to better use the foreign language to reach their individual goals.

5. Third (fluency) loop: A continued extension of the scenario requiring all students in the class to interact in turns allowed for developed communication, goal-reaching, pragmatic practice and fluency. The students enjoyed the SI-based instruction overall (5.54 out of 6 - supporting Oda's (1993) suggestion of SI use in Japanese EFL classrooms), and interviewees particularly enjoyed this phase which could be a useful addition to SI approaches in language education.

The teaching methods were effectively supported by instructional media that afforded learners the mediational means to interact in a communicative situation, reflect, and learn from instructor and peer feedback. The video cameras allowed the students to reflect, notice gaps, and improve their language knowledge and abilities (as in Doughty & Varela, 1998 and Swain & Lapkin, 2008)—"I learned my weak point from the videos" (P6)—and although the students were nervous at first, this anxiety seemed to lessen during the second role play. Students used the cameras and the wiki with ease, confirming this also in their interviews. They were able to self-transcribe, correct their transcripts, and notice gaps and could thus improve their performance. They were also able to use the wiki at school or at home to learn from other students' texts and communication strategies.

**Limitations and Future Research**

The learning outcomes suggested by this data are limited to differences in performance between the two loops built into the pedagogical design. In future research we need to gauge learner development through the analysis of later performances to gain a clearer picture of shifts in learner control over target language features. Furthermore, conclusions about the instructional effectiveness of this project are limited in that only thirteen students (and only two males) participated in the SI loops (results might be different for a teacher working with a larger class) and that the participants chose to join the workshop (their motivation is perhaps not indicative of other students' opinions or experiences of the methods and technologies).

We are planning a series of studies to investigate the technologies and methods of SI and experiential EFL learning in depth. Questions that emerged as a result of this study include:

1. Can these methods and technologies be used effectively with large intact classes?
   How can roles and scenarios be extended to effectively maintain dramatic tension and continued language instruction?

2. Are student-created SI scenarios motivating and beneficial to EFL language goals?

3. How can reading and listening activities preview and writing activities follow a SI approach? Can SI be effectively integrated with core curriculum textbooks?

4. How do the methods and technologies influence language learning for various contexts and proficiencies (e.g., junior high school, high school, university, professional training)?

**Pedagogical Implications**

Language teachers considering the use of SI or experiential loops of learning should consider several issues that arose in our instructional implementation. Although students improved their performance of role play 1, role play 2 contained instances of students' not repairing corrected utterances, or making completely new syntactic and communication errors. This may simply reflect the uneven nature of language development, or may be due to time constraints, or indeed other factors. It may be, for example, beneficial to continue the loops of experiential SI-based instruction (time permitting) until both students and the
instructor are satisfied with performances. Time may be a constraining factor in using SI, technology or our extended model of instruction at all; students required four sessions to complete all of the tasks, and many commented that they wished they had had more time. SI's core phases (rehearsal, performance and debriefing) might be done in one or two 90-minute sessions (or perhaps less time if technology or transcriptions and self-correction is not incorporated), but this might increase the risk of students "satisficing" in their interactions and not becoming more aware of their communicative weaknesses. Teachers ascribing to more explicit models of grammar or language instruction may include more focused instruction before the SI phases begin or include "languageing" (Swain & Lapkin, 2008) or verbalization (Negueruela, 2003) activities in the debriefing phase.

Di Pietro describes the disconnect between teacher and student interests (1987 p.2-3). However, language instructors could consider teaching students to write effective role plays in order to increase student ownership of the already student-centered learning process of SI. Teachers might also consider altering the roles during the second SI loop in order to maintain a very high level of dramatic tension (especially with very proficient students, or for students who communicate exceptionally well during the first performance). Teachers might include short, frequent SI scenarios in the classwork to focus more on learner progress and less on a perfect and error free production of target forms. Particularly in a Japanese context, this could have a liberating effect on classroom instruction and help remove a stifling fear of making mistakes. Regularly preparing and performing strategic interactions may then help develop fluency and a general awareness of pragmatics across a range of situations. Time permitting, perhaps over a year-long class, or through an institution's entire language curriculum, students could be given experiences both of numerous and varied SI scenarios and experientially- and technology-assisted repetitions of a few scenarios designed to target particularly difficult or relevant functional language needs. Groups can effectively rehearse and perform scenarios, and video uploaded and stored on a private wiki will give teachers of large classes asynchronous opportunities to monitor and support individual students. Teachers with access to video cameras and a wiki might consider having students record performances in separate classrooms or use external microphones to reduce background noise and should not attempt to upload the digital videos towards the end of class because of upload time, especially those with slow Internet connections. Continued use of SI and the supporting technologies could be maintained throughout a course to lessen students' performance and technology anxiety, maximize the effectiveness of strategy instruction (Chamot & O'Malley, 1993) and provide the teacher and students a digital portfolio of spoken communication (Di Pietro, 1987, p. 84-85). Classrooms lacking the cameras, computers and online technologies described in this paper could still be a stage for experiential SI-based learning if teachers asked students with video-recording cell phones, for example, to record their interactions and transcribe the interaction on paper.

As Oda (1993) suggested, SI may be a useful teaching framework for Japanese EFL classes. SI tasks may increase students' practice of real life communication, increase their motivation, and give students numerous opportunities for self, peer, and teacher feedback and support. Miura's (2008) scaffolds for students uncomfortable with conflict should be carefully considered. It is our hope that the approach described in this paper and continued research on SI provides all language teachers with a solid framework to "re-create the conditions of social life and provide our students with the help and guidance they need to deal with them” (Di Pietro, 1987, p. vii).
REFERENCES


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The scenarios, preparation sheets, evaluation rubrics and technology guides can be downloaded from: http://langcom.u-shizuoka-ken.ac.jp/si

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