

Title

Developing Interactional Competence through Recursive Practice: A Mixed Methods Study
in a Japanese University Oral Communication Course

Introduction

In my Japanese university oral communication classes, students often struggle to maintain conversations in English. While they can respond to simple questions, they have difficulty sustaining interaction, asking follow-up questions, and managing communication breakdowns. As a result, conversations tend to be short and fragmented.

Developing students' interactional competence, particularly their ability to maintain and extend conversation, is therefore an important goal. One approach to support this development is task repetition, which provides learners with opportunities to practice and refine their language use. However, the effectiveness of different task types and repetition in promoting interactional competence remains an area of interest in classroom research.

At the start of the academic year, my action research focused on task repetition. After the mid-year presentation, Professor Sato recommended changing from closed tasks to open tasks to better match the naturally open conversations students were producing in class. When I encountered Professor Kindt's textbook (TIPS), which incorporates recursive conversations, it significantly influenced my approach. As a result, I redesigned my action research to use recursive practice with open conversations. The revised design was implemented in the fall semester, with the spring semester serving as a basis for comparison.

This study aims to investigate how recursive practice supports the development of students' interaction competence in a Japanese University oral communication course. In particular, it examines both immediate (within-lesson) and longitudinal (across the semester) effects of recursive practice, as well as the students' perceptions of their learning.

Literature Review

Interactional Competence

A key concept that has gained considerable attention in recent decades is Interaction Competence (IC). While traditional SLA research emphasized CC and internal knowledge, the "social turn" introduced by Firth and Wagner (1997) contributed to a paradigm shift from seeing language as a product of mental capacity to seeing it as co-constructed in interaction. Firth and Wagner emphasized that language is learned and used in social settings and

advocated for enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use in the field of SLA.

Definition of Interactional Competence

The term Interaction Competence (IC) was first coined by Kramsch (1986), who emphasized the “construction of a shared internal context” (p. 367), challenging the idea that communication is merely the product of individual language knowledge (i.e., grammar and vocabulary). In contrast, Hall (1993) reframed interactional competence as a social and discursive process. IC is developed through repeated participation in everyday interactions, especially in an educational context.

He and Young (1998) reinforce the idea that interactional practices are co-constructed with each participant contributing “linguistic and pragmatic resources to the practice” (p. 5). They propose five interactional features that participants bring to different practices. These practices, which include turn-taking, repair, and sequencing, are jointly produced and learned through repeated participation. In their study of the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI), they found that the assessment is accomplished through these interactional practices. Young (2011) further expands that IC is not merely “the ability of a single individual to employ those resources,” but how “those resources are employed mutually and reciprocally by all participants” (p. 428). Drawing on the definition provided by Hall (1993), He and Young (1998), and Young (2011), I define IC as the ability to co-construct meaning, that is, achieve and maintain intersubjectivity, in discourse through interaction with other participants, specifically focusing on the resources learners use, such as turn-taking, repair, and sequencing.

Components of Interactional Competence

According to Young (2008), IC encompasses the ability to use a range of interactional resources to participate effectively in spoken interaction. These resources work together to support both co-construction and negotiation for meaning.

Table 1

Seven resources of Interaction Competence

Categories	Resources of IC
Identity (1) resources	<i>Participation framework</i> : the identities of all participants an interaction, present or not, official or unofficial, ratified or unrated, and their footing or identities in the interaction.

Linguistic resources	(2)	<i>Register</i> : the features of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar that typify a practice.
	(3)	<i>Modes of meaning</i> : the ways in which participants construct interpersonal, experiential, and textual meanings in a practice.
Interactional resources	(4)	<i>Speech acts</i> : the selection of acts in a practice and their sequential organization.
	(5)	<i>Turn-taking</i> : how participants select the next speaker and how participants know when to end one turn and when to begin the next.
	(6)	<i>Repair</i> : the ways in which participants respond to interactional trouble in a given practice.
	(7)	<i>Boundaries</i> : the opening and closing acts of a practice that serve to distinguish a given practice from adjacent talk.

Note. Adapted from Young (2008, p.71), as cited in Young (2011, pp. 429-430).

Communication Strategies

Communication Strategies (CSs) are a key component of second language acquisition because they enable learners to maintain communication despite gaps in linguistic ability. In Michael Canale and Merrill Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence identifies strategic competence as one of the four components. Tarone (1980) defines CSs as "mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" and argues that they should be taught alongside grammar and vocabulary. Canale (1983) further regards communication to be the "exchange and negotiation of information between at least two individuals through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols".

In pedagogical contexts, the concept of conversation strategies has been developed by practitioners such as David Kehe and Peggy Dustin Kehe, who present strategies designed to help learners sustain and develop interaction. However, the definition of CSs varies across the literature, and the terms *communication strategies* and *conversation strategies* are sometimes used interchangeably.

For my study, I define communication strategies as "useful verbal strategies for language learners to overcome gaps in their second language (L2) knowledge to maintain or extend communication". However, the term *conversation strategies* was used to provide greater clarity to learners in the classroom materials. Table 2 presents the set of conversation

strategies taught in this action research study. Among these, the terms *rejoinder* and *elaboration* are used as formal labels for these strategies, although the terms *reaction* and *adding extra information* were used in the classroom materials for clarity.

It should also be noted that some overlap exists between certain strategies. For example, shadowing and confirmation questions may appear similar when a learner repeats a partner's utterance in question form; however, they differ in their interactional function and are therefore treated as distinct categories. A detailed description is provided in Table 2.

Table 2

List of Conversation Strategies

Conversation Strategies	Definition	Source
(1) Rejoinder	Brief responses that show interest and encourage continuation of the conversation	(Kehe & Kehe, 2022, p. 1)
(2) Shadowing	Immediate, often partial repetition of a speaker's utterance by a listener, usually with a falling intonation, while attending to meaning and ongoing interaction.	(Murphey, 2001a)
(3) Follow-up Questions	Questions that build on a previous utterance to sustain or continue the conversation often showing interest.	(Kehe & Kehe, 2022, p. 5)
(4) Confirmation Questions	When a speaker that their understanding of a previous utterance is correct, often by repeating or reformulating part of a prior turn, usually with rising intonation and expecting a yes/no response.	(Hartono & Ihsan, 2017)
(5) Elaboration	When a speaker adds additional information to expand or develop their previous utterance, without being explicitly asked for that information.	(Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 461)

Note. Definitions are adapted from the source. *Rejoinder* and *Elaboration* were referred to as *reaction* and *adding extra information* in classroom instructions and surveys, respectively.

Previous studies

According to Sato and Crane (2023), EFL learners can develop their IC through active participation in discursive practice, which is “recurring episodes of social interaction in context, episodes that are of social and cultural significance to a community of speakers” (Young, 2011, p. 427, as cited in Sato & Crane, 2023, p. 14). Through discursive practices, learners treat IC as complementary to and in some ways a reorientation of communicative competence toward social participation. Sato and Crane conclude IC can (and should) be developed pedagogically through explicit work on communication strategies, transcription, and self-analysis of recorded talk, and integrated, content-based cycles. They also note important issues: how best to assess IC and the precise role IC plays in SLA remain empirical questions.

Recursive Practice

Recursive practice refers to a pedagogical approach in which learners revisit the same or similar communicative tasks with greater knowledge or skill each time. Based on the concepts of the Zone Proximal Development (ZPD), introduced by Vygotsky (1978), where learners can perform beyond their independent ability with the support of others, recursive practice links socially mediated interaction with repeated task performance. A similar cyclical perspective can be found in the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) developed by Chamot (1999), which outlines a recursive process consisting of five phases: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and expansion (pp. 7-8). Through this process, learners “reflect on and regulate their own learning” (p. 8) and “develop their repertoire of effective learning strategies” (p. 9). This recursive model supports the concept of recursive practice, as learners engage in repeated task performance while refining their strategic and communicative abilities over time. Murphey (2001b) notes these “tools of recursion” also involve “listening, speaking, writing, and reading looped into activities repeatedly” (p. 132). He argues that recursive practice is not just repetition for memorization, but repetition to “develop learners’ reflection literacy” (p. 132).

In this study, I define recursive practice as a process in which repeated, socially supported task performance enables learners to refine their language use and gradually internalize their linguistic and interactional resources over time.

Recursive Conversations (RCs)

Recursive conversations are instances of recursion specifically applied to speaking tasks. In other words, learners engage in a conversation and then later revisit a very similar conversation (often with a different partner on the same topic), each time bringing more

knowledge and skill. As Kindt (2004) defines, recursion is “the return to a similar experience – but with a wider knowledge”, and Murphey (2001b) concluded RCs allowed students to “reveal, construct, restructure, and scaffold understanding recursively”. Recursive conversations have begun to receive empirical attention in recent years, with studies exploring their effects on learners’ fluency, complexity, and perceptions of interaction (Kindt & Bowyer, 2018). In practice, this might look like doing a five-minute conversation on a topic, reflecting on it (or receiving feedback), and then doing another five-minute conversation on the same theme – now able to use new words, correct previous mistakes, or try different expressions.

Recursion and Vocabulary Development

Empirical work on vocabulary learning underscores the importance of revisiting vocabulary. Nation (2001) and Schmitt (2008) emphasize that encountering a word multiple times in context is necessary for retention. Indeed, Incidental Learning research shows that single exposures yield minimal vocabulary gains, whereas each additional encounter boosts learning. Bowyer (2018) reported that students overwhelmingly believed they learned vocabulary, phrases, and skills from peers through RCs and improved self-efficacy using more vocabulary.

Research Issues and Research Questions

The students in this course are generally friendly and cooperative; however, they have low English proficiency, particularly in speaking and listening. When encountering communication breakdowns, they tend to revert to their first language (L1), which limits their ability to sustain interaction in English. As a result, they experience difficulty maintaining conversations and resolving misunderstandings.

To address these issues, my 2025 AR investigates the effects of recursive practice on the development of interactional competence among Japanese university students in an oral communication course. Specifically, the study examines whether repeated conversational tasks enhance learners’ use of communication strategies, including negotiation strategies, and other interactional features.

Research Questions

- (1) How do students use and perceive communication strategies in developing interactional competence across the semester?
- (2) What are the effects of immediate recursive practice within a lesson on students’ interactional competence?

- (3) What are the effects of longitudinal recursive practice across the semester on students' interactional competence?

Method

This method section is divided into five sub-sections, including (1) teaching context, (2) participants, (3) data collection, (4) procedure, and (5) data analysis. The teaching context briefly introduces general course information, teaching methods, and the changes made to conduct this research. The participants section provides the information, such as their characteristics and English level. All names mentioned are pseudonyms, used with permission, except for the researcher's name. It is followed by an explanation of data collection and analysis. All written reports, including questionnaires and interviews, were completed by students in Japanese. These reports were then translated into English by the researcher, with the translations indicated in italics.

Teaching Context

This year of research took place at Sugiyama Jogakuen University in Nagoya, Aichi prefecture, Japan. The participants were first-year students in the School of Information and Social Design undertaking a compulsory English Oral Communication Course in the spring (April 2025 to July 2025) and fall (September 2025 to January 2026) semesters. The classes were scheduled once a week for 90 minutes in a 15-week semester. The students are required to take the English oral communication course, and have low motivation to study English.

Participants

All English classes were reshuffled during the summer break, so students had different classmates and potentially a different teacher in the fall semester than they did in the spring semester. As a result, I had different focus classes and focus students in both semesters. In the spring semester, there were eight students in the focus class and four students: Yuka, Haru, Sana, and Nao. In the fall semester, there were 10 students in the focus class and three focus students: Manami (higher), Yuzuki (mid), and Saki (lower). Manami was the most proactive student in the class and demonstrated the most confidence using English. Yuzuki was talkative but often made grammatical mistakes and used short phrases. Saki was shy in nature and spoke short sentences; she lacked the confidence to communicate in English and demonstrate her speaking ability.

Data Collection

Data were collected in three ways to answer the three research questions in AR: (1) audio and video recording, (2) surveys, and (3) reflective interviews. (see Figure 1, page 12). Student consent was received to publish the data in this research project.

Audio and Video recording

In the spring semester, students' task performances were audio-recorded. These were closed information-gap tasks and typically lasted more than 10 minutes. Speaking Tasks were video-recorded. These were open in nature, and students were tasked to talk about a random topic for three minutes in pairs. In the fall semester, students practiced RCs. The final conversation in each lesson was audio-recorded.

Surveys

In the spring semester, post-lesson exit slips were administered. In the fall semester, post-lesson exit slips and a post-term questionnaire (n=7) were administered using Google Forms (Appendix 3A). The student accessed the Google Form on their smartphone using a QR code and completed the survey at the end of the lesson. The surveys were conducted in Japanese to obtain in-depth insights into students' perspectives. These data were then translated into English by the researcher, with the translation indicated in italics.

Post-term Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed based on elements of CSs use and key components of IC identified in the literature. The items were adapted to reflect the recursive conversation practice of the course and simplified to ensure understanding for first-year Japanese university students. The questionnaire was organized into three sections. Part A focused on students' use of communication strategies, which represent interactional resources. Part B examined students' perceptions of recursive practice within a lesson, capturing processes such as noticing and fluency development. Part C explored perceived development over the semester across key dimensions of interactional competence, including turn-taking, sequencing, repair, topic management, negotiation of meaning, and co-construction of interaction. Table 3 presents the mapping of questionnaire items to their corresponding IC component.

Table 3

Mapping of questionnaire items to IC Components

Item	IC Components
Ask questions	Turn-taking/Sequencing
Connect ideas	Topic management

Keep talking	Topic management
Change topic	Topic management
Help partner	Co-construction of interaction
Ask to repeat	Repair
Clarify meaning	Negotiation of meaning

Reflective Interviews

In addition to the post-term questionnaire in the fall semester, interviews were administered to four students, including the three focus students, directly after the post-term questionnaire. The students were guided into another room in pairs and conducted interviews for about 15 minutes per pair. The interviews were designed based on the questions in the questionnaire to explore key themes in more depth. Due to university policy, interviews had to be conducted within class time, which is why they are referred to as “reflective interviews”. All interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in Japanese to obtain in-depth insights into students’ perspectives. These data were subsequently transcribed and translated into English by the researcher, and all excerpts are presented in English.

Procedure

The study was conducted over one academic year and used two semester cycles. The spring semester implemented close-information gap tasks with longitudinal and intermediate task repetition. Following the mid-year presentation and review, the procedure was revised, and the fall semester was implemented with open conversations using recursive practice. There are 15 lessons in the fall semester, and the first 11 lessons were focused on open conversations, the last four lessons were based on presentation mandated by the university and therefore not a focus of this AR project. Table 4 presents an overview of the fall semester timeline.

Table 4

Fall semester calendar

Week	Topic	Strategies Focus	Data Collection
1	Welcome Back	Giving reactions, 5W 1H	
2	Talking about yourself	Confirmation questions	Audio Recording
3	Clothes	Asking follow-up questions (past tense)	
4	University Festival Day (No lesson for the focus class during this week)		

5	Small Talk	Shadowing, Adding extra information	Audio Recording
6	Food	Review (Reaction, Shadowing, Follow-up, Confirmation, Extra information)	Audio Recording
7	Recent Meal	Asking follow-up questions (past tense)	Audio Recording
8	Sports	Asking “do, did” questions	
9	Free Time Activities	Writing out conversation	Audio Recording
10	Future Dreams	Shadowing	Audio Recording
11	Future Dreams	Advising, commenting, Connecting to yourself	Audio Recording
12	Review		Post-term questionnaire Interview
13	Presentation Preparation		
14	Presentation Preparation		
15	Presentation		
16	Last Day: Special Activity		

Note. There were no lessons for the focus class during week 4 due to the university festival day. Presentation lessons were mandated by the university. As they were not part of the intervention, they were excluded from the AR project.

Each lesson followed a consistent recursive practice lesson format (see Table 5) designed to encourage recursive practice. The format was used only during the fall semester. No specific time allocations are indicated in Table 5, as the duration of each stage varied depending on the lesson. However, an example lesson plan, including time allocations and a more detailed description, can be found in Appendix 1A.

Before engaging in RCs, students were first exposed to a model conversation (unscripted) to help build their confidence and speaking skills. Therefore, each lesson included a listening and reading component based on a model conversation, either recorded by the researcher or drawn from the recorded conversations in TIPS Books 1 and 2. (Kindt, 2019a, 2019b) . Different controlled practice activities were prepared depending on the lesson topic.

Table 5

Recursive Practice Lesson Format

Stage	Description
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Small Talk	Students do small talk in pairs, change pairs and repeat
Vocabulary building	Before the students listen to the model conversation, they review the word bank for the target vocabulary
Listening and Reading comprehension	Student listen to the model conversation and answer comprehension questions about the conversation. Students can also read the conversation.
Controlled Practice	There were various activities prepared to help bridge the gap between the model conversation and students doing the RCs. Activities such as board races, writing practice. Teacher made specific worksheets to focus on the target of the lesson (conversation strategies, past tense...etc)
Conversation Cards	Students design their conversation cards to help with RCs.
Recurisve Conversations	Students took part in three rounds of RCs lasting five minute each. The last round was audio-recorded.

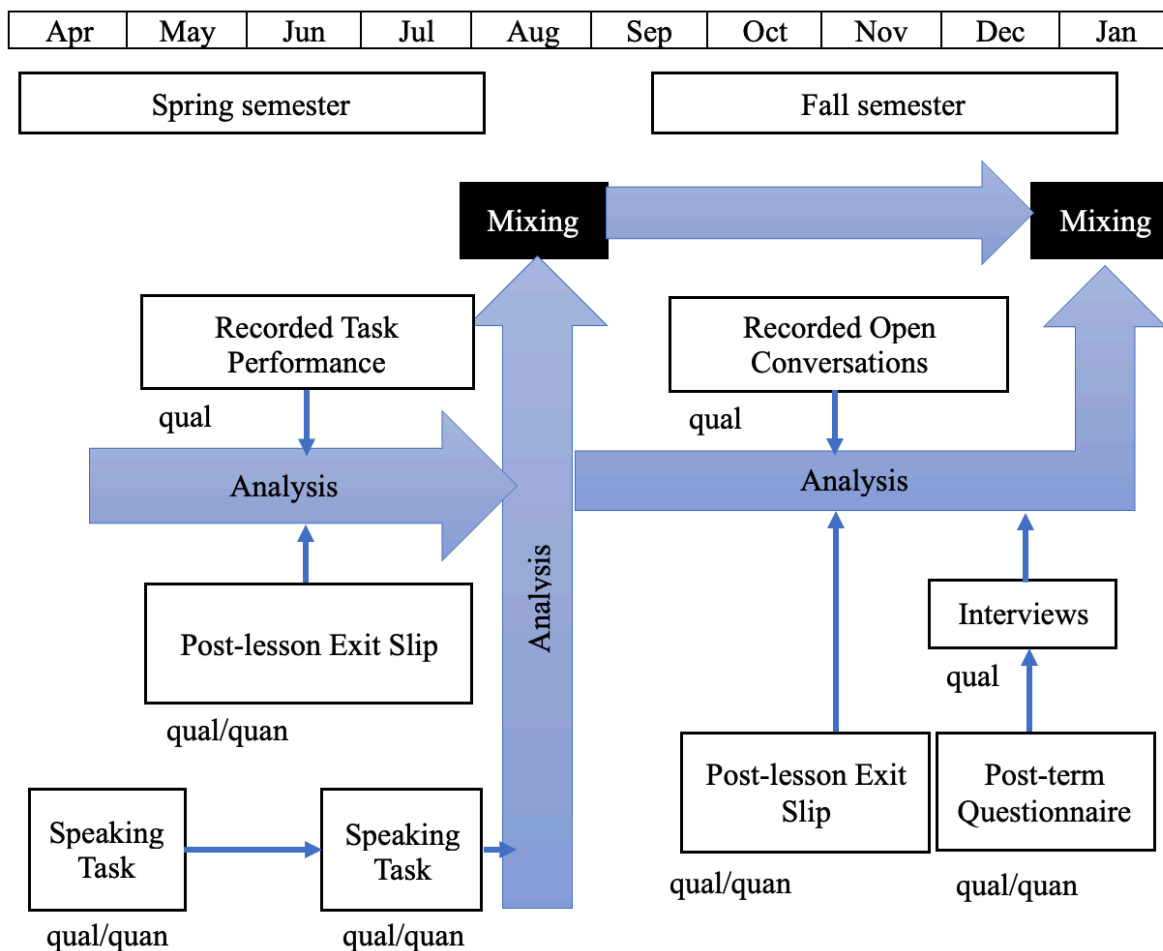
Several recursive elements were incorporated into the lesson design. One such element involved using the repeated use of target vocabulary throughout multiple stages of the lesson to increase students' exposure and opportunities for use. The central recursive component, however, is the three-round recursive conversations with different partners. This recursive sequence allowed students to revisit and refine their language use at different attempts.

Data Analysis

A mixed-methods research (MMR) approach was employed to analyse the collected data. MMR is “the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the research process” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 163). Multiple data sources, including audio and video recordings, transcription of recordings, surveys, and interviews, were utilized to strengthen the validity of the research. The researcher used a method-triangulation of the data to check out “the consistency of findings generated by different data-collection methods” (Griffiee, 2018, p. 129).

Figure 1

Research Design Map for 2024-2025



- (1) Arrows show the flow of time.
- (2) Recorded task performances took place between April and July.
- (3) Recorded open conversations took place between September and December.
- (4) Post-lesson exit slips were administered in both semesters.
- (5) Speaking tasks were administered at the beginning and end of the spring semester.
- (6) Post-term questionnaire was administered in the fall semester.
- (7) Interviews were conducted at the end of the fall semester.

Transcriptions

The audio recordings were transcribed by the researcher using a simplified transcription system developed for this study (see

Appendix 4B). This approach was designed to balance analytical focus and readability, allowing key interactional features to be clearly represented without detailed CA conventions (e.g., intonation or pauses).

Speaking discourse analysis. The transcriptions were analyzed for both qualitative and quantitative data. In particular, recorded conversations were analyzed for the following factors: (1) time, (2) word count, (3) speaking rate, (4) number of turns, (5) turn rate, (6) number of communication strategies used by each participant, and (7) co-construction.

Results

Spring semester

During the spring semester, descriptive analysis showed that follow-up questions, rejoinders, and continuers were the most frequently used interactional features in both the April and July speaking tasks. Comparisons between the two recordings indicated small increases in several features over time. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test identified a statistically significant increase in self-repair between April and July, suggesting that students demonstrated greater ability to notice and correct their own language during interaction. Other features did not show statistically significant changes, although confirmation checks and code-switching showed relatively large effect sizes, indicating potential areas of development.

Qualitative analysis of repeated classroom tasks revealed variation among learners in how task repetition influenced interaction. Some students increased their use of negotiation strategies such as repetition or clarification moves, while others showed decreases or little change. These patterns suggest that the effects of repetition were not uniform and may depend on individual learner factors and interactional dynamics. Student survey responses also indicated that many learners perceived benefits from repeating tasks, particularly for improving fluency and question formation, although some reported difficulty generating new language during repeated tasks.

Fall semester

The fall semester implemented the revised recursive practice lesson format described in Methods, using open conversation tasks designed to elicit extended conversation and negotiation strategies. The results reported below are drawn from the analysed subset of recorded classroom conversations, survey results, and reflective interviews.

This subsection reports students' views of recursive practice and communication strategies, drawing on the post-term questionnaire (n=7) from the focus class and reflective interview data (n=3) from the three focus students. I first present the descriptive results from

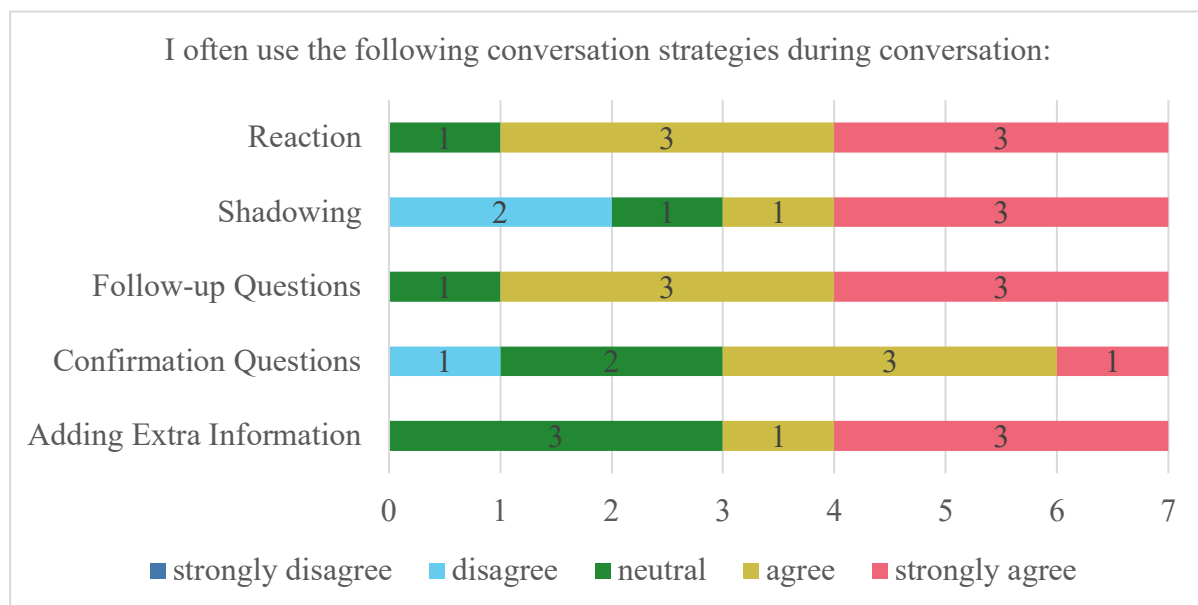
the questionnaire, then summarize interview themes that illustrate how students noticed language, applied strategies, and experienced changes in confidence.

Communication Strategies

In the first part of the post-term questionnaire, the students were asked about the conversation strategies (i.e., communication strategies taught in this course): (Reaction, Shadowing, Follow-up questions, Confirmation questions, Adding Extra Information) learned in the semester. Figure 2 below presents students' self-reported frequency of using several conversation strategies during classroom interactions.

Figure 2

Part A – Question 1-5: Use of Conversation Strategies



Overall, responses indicate moderate to high report use of these conversation strategies. Reaction and follow-up questions showed similar patterns, with six students indicating strongly agree or agree. Shadowing showed more varied responses, with two students disagreeing that they frequently used this strategy. Confirmation questions were generally reported as being used moderately. Adding extra information showed a split pattern, with three students reporting neutral use, and three strongly agreeing that they frequently added additional information to their responses. Overall, the results suggest that while students reported using a range of conversation strategies, the frequency of use varied depending on the specific strategy. Comments from the open question and reflective interview are shown in Table 6 and Table 7, respectively.

Table 6

Part A – Question 6: Did you find conversation strategies useful to maintain conversation in English? Please explain your answer. (open question)

Student	Questionnaire comments
Manami (Higher)	<i>I hadn't thought shadowing was that important for English conversation, but I learned that I should make good use of it whenever necessary.</i>
Yuzuki (Middle)	<i>I started to consciously use the basic forms for keeping a conversation going, such as giving reactions and asking follow-up questions. It feels like practical training where I think about how to keep the conversation going while reacting and asking questions, and I believe this is deeply connected to learning how to have conversations in English going forward. By being mindful of conversation strategies over and over, I felt it was helpful to learn and internalize the basic structure of how conversations work.</i>
Saki (Lower)	<i>I was able to ask questions more quickly than when I first tried it, so it was very helpful.</i>

Note. The students' comments above are translated from Japanese by the author. Italic indicates that it is translated.

Manami's comments. In the questionnaire, Manami wrote that through this course, she recognized the importance of shadowing. Out of all the conversation strategies we learned, she noted that shadowing had the biggest impact on her ability to continue a conversation. In the interview, she commented that she is able to use shadowing now in conversation, even though she didn't think it was part of daily conversations.

Yuzuki's comments. Yuzuki had many positive comments about the learning of conversation strategies and how it helped her internalize the structure of conversations. She felt that asking questions and giving reactions were the most useful. In the interview, she commented that adding extra information was also important and, "I think follow-up questions are the most useful" strategy for her.

Saki's comments. Saki pointed out that follow-up questions had the biggest impact on her from all the CSs. In the interview, she commented that she can now use "when," "where," and "who" questions more often, not because "I couldn't do it before, but I just didn't say it".

Table 7

Reflective Interview: Students were asked to explain in greater depth their use of conversation strategies.

Student	Selected comments from Interview
Manami (Higher)	<i>Now I am able to use it, my impression is that I didn't think it was something used so routinely in daily practice.</i>
Yuzuki (Middle)	<i>Also, adding extra information and asking follow-up questions. I think follow-up questions are the most useful. To keep the conversation going, if you listen, get an answer, react, and repeat that process, I feel the conversation can be maintained.</i>
Saki (Lower)	<i>I became able to respond to what was said using questions like "when" "where" and "who". It's not that I couldn't do it before, but I just didn't say it. At first, it didn't come to mind.</i>

Note. The students' comments above are translated from Japanese by the author. Italic indicates that it is translated.

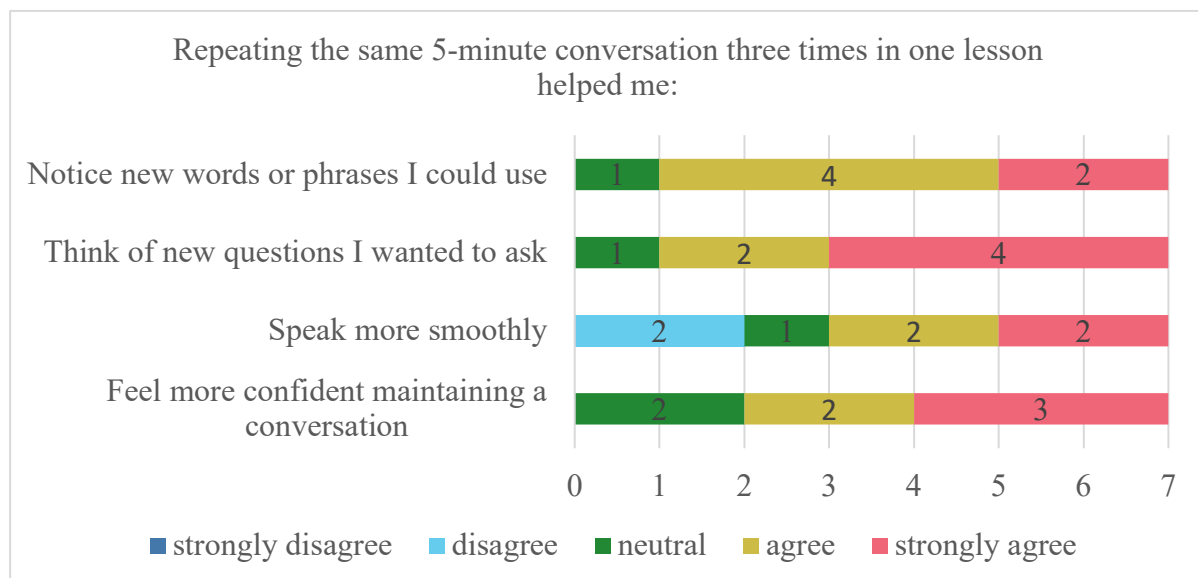
The three focus students reported positive perceptions of the conversation strategies taught in the course, though they highlighted different strategies as most beneficial.

Immediate recursive practice

In the second part of the questionnaire, the students were asked about immediate recursive practice (i.e., repeating the same 5-minute conversation three times in one lesson). Figure 3 presents students' self-reported impact of repeating the same 5-minute conversation three times in a single lesson on aspects of their speaking and confidence.

Figure 3

Part B – Question 1-4: Immediate Recursive Practice:



Most students reported positive effects from immediate recursive practice. Six of the seven students agreed or strongly agreed that repetition helped them notice new words or phrases they could use. Similarly, six students agreed or strongly agreed that repeating conversations

helped them think of new questions to ask their partners. Responses regarding fluency were more varied: four students agreed or strongly agreed that the repeated conversations helped them speak more smoothly, while two students disagreed with this statement. Students also reported increased confidence in maintaining conversations, with five respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that recursive practice helped them feel more confident continuing a conversation. Overall, the results suggest that students perceived recursive practice as particularly helpful for noticing language and generating new questions, while perceived improvements in fluency were somewhat more mixed. Comments from the open question shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Part B – Question 5: Did repeating the conversation affect your conversation skills? If so, please give an example. (open question)

Student	Questionnaire comments
Manami (Higher)	<i>I feel like I'm now able to say question sentences at a more natural, conversational speed than before.</i>
Yuzuki (Middle)	<i>I started thinking about what kind of questions to ask next in order to keep the conversation going.</i>
Saki (Lower)	<i>Conversations started to last longer, and I became able to react well.</i>

Note. The students' comments above are translated from Japanese by the author. Italic indicates that it is translated.

Manami's reflection. In the questionnaire, Manami reported that she can now produce question sentences at a more natural conversational speed. In the interview, she added that teacher scaffolding (eliciting her intended meaning and supplying English words) helped her retrieve forgotten vocabulary: notably recommend, which she has since started using in conversation.

Excerpt 1

Reflective Interview: Talking to Manami about what she thought was useful

Teacher: Did you ever have a moment when you realized, "Oh, I learned this," or felt glad that you learned it? Were there moments when you thought, "This is helpful" or "This is useful"?

Manami: Helpful... hmm. This might be a little different, maybe slightly off topic.

You know how the teacher asks what I wanted to say or what I meant? That really helps. It's also helpful that the teacher turns words I don't know yet into English.

Teacher: Then after hearing that, were you able to start using those words, or not really use them at all?

Manami: I realized that I had forgotten some things. They were words I had learned by high school, but I had forgotten them or couldn't remember them, so I got to learn them again. Then I think, "Oh right, that's it," and I can use them the following week. Especially "recommend." I didn't remember it at all before, but now I use it a lot. I even used it today. I often use it when talking about things like food or anime.

Yuzuki's reflection. In the questionnaire, Yuzuki reported that she started thinking about what kind of questions to ask next to continue the conversation. In the interview, she resonated with what Manami had said that teacher scaffolding was helpful for her. She reported that she wasn't able to memorize what to say but some basic grammar became natural to her.

Excerpt 2

Reflective Interview: Talking to Yuzuki about what she thought was useful

Teacher: During class, have there been moments when you thought, "I'm glad I learned this"?

Yuzuki: During class, when I don't know a word, the teacher says something like "please ask if there's anything," so I can learn words I didn't know and use them in conversation. I've been able to use them for speaking. I appreciated that the teacher, Russell, had a stance of "you can ask anytime."

Teacher: Did you memorize things like what to ask or what to say?

Yuzuki: I haven't really memorized them.

Teacher: Have you naturally become able to use anything?

Yuzuki: kind of basic grammar like "What do you want to?"

Teacher: We use that a lot.

Yuzuki: For things I use often, I can kind of understand the sentence and form questions. Yes, interrogative sentences, and also reactions—I've started to understand those too. "That's good," "That's nice."

Saki's reflection. In the questionnaire, Saki reported that conversations now last longer and that she can react more effectively. In the interview, she said that learning follow-up questions was especially useful, and she can now generate a wider range of WH-questions (e.g. "who", "when"), reflecting her earlier comments.

Excerpt 3

Reflective Interview: Talking to Saki about what she thought was useful

Teacher: During the lesson, have there been moments when you thought, "I'm glad I learned this," or "I'm glad I thought of this"?

Saki: I often got stuck when asking questions, so learning how to ask follow-up questions was helpful.

Teacher: For example, when you hear a question like this and think, "Oh, I can use this," or "I've become able to use this." For instance, the word "recommend"—maybe you learned it before, but after

hearing it from the teacher in this class, you became able to use it. Are there examples like that?

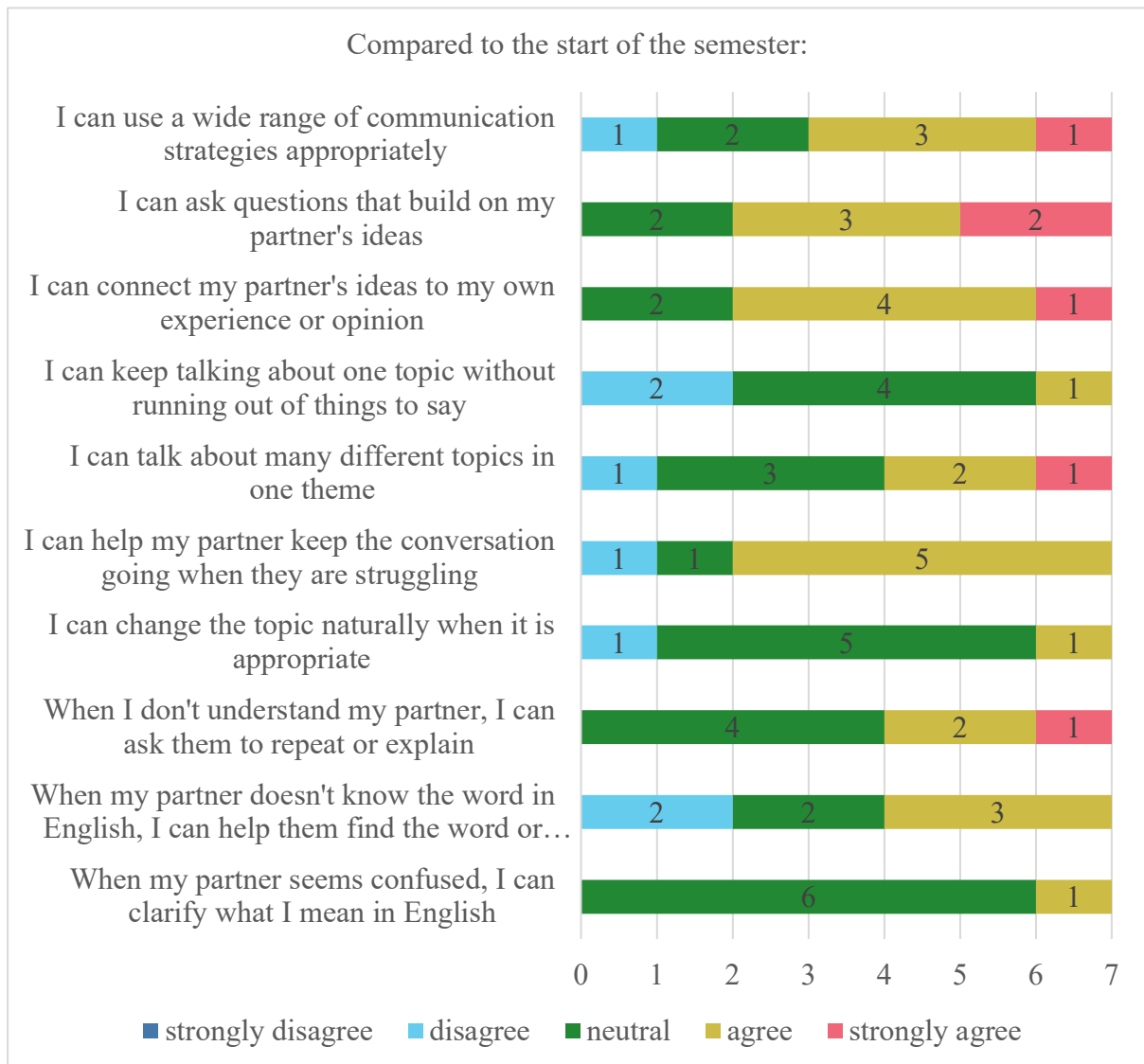
Saki: When we talked about places to visit today, I used to only be able to think of questions like "What do you want to eat?" But after seeing things like "who" and "when," I became able to think of various questions.

Longitudinal recursive practice

In the third part of the questionnaire, the students were asked about longitudinal recursive practice. Figure 4 below presents students' self-reported impact of practicing English conversations using the decided theme, and speaking with different partners over the 11 weeks.

Figure 4

Part C – Question 1-10: Longitudinal Recursive Practice:



Overall, the responses suggest moderate perceived development in several areas of interactional competence. Most students reported improvements in their ability to ask questions that build on their partner’s ideas and to connect their partner’s ideas to their own experiences, with the majority selecting “agree” or “strongly agree.” Students also reported increased ability to help maintain conversations when their partner was struggling, with five respondents agreeing with this statement. Several items, however, showed more neutral responses. For example, most students selected neutral when asked whether they could keep talking about one topic without running out of things to say or change topics naturally during conversation. Similarly, many students reported neutral responses regarding their ability to clarify meaning when their partner was confused. These patterns suggest that while students perceived improvements in certain conversational abilities, particularly in supporting partners and building on ideas, confidence in managing longer or more complex conversational sequences remained less certain for some participants. Comments from the open question shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Part C – Question 11: How do you feel about your English conversation ability now, compared to the start of the semester? Please give an example. (open question)

Student	Questionnaire comments
Manami (Higher)	<i>I’ve gotten better at holding conversations than before, and I’ve gained just a little confidence, but when the other person doesn’t understand a word I used, I feel that I lack the ability to explain it.</i>
Yuzuki (Middle)	<i>Compared to the beginning of the semester, my ability to maintain conversations has improved. As I continued speaking with my partner, I gradually became more mindful of how to ask questions and how to sustain longer conversations in English. However, because there are still many words I don’t understand, I find it difficult to have everyday conversations in English.</i>
Saki (Lower)	<i>I’ve become able to ask follow-up questions more quickly, and I can now respond in the moment as well.</i>

Note. The students' comments above are translated from Japanese by the author. Italic indicates that it is translated.

Manami’s reflection. In the questionnaire, Manami reported that she gained a little more confidence in holding conversations, but she feels that she still lacks the ability to explain something to her partner in English when they don’t understand something she said.

Excerpt 4

Reflective Interview: Talking to Manami about her thoughts on her development

- Teacher: When your partner doesn't understand what you said, you feel that you cannot explain it well?
- Manami: For example, a noun like this. Today, for instance, I said "ryōkaku" (了覚), right? And the teacher asked, "What is ryōkaku?". Then I'd think, "How would I explain that in English?". When I have to explain it in a different way, I feel like my vocabulary isn't enough, and it's a bit difficult. That's something I'm still lacking.
- Teacher: You also said you've become a little more confident. What kind of confidence? Specifically, what part do you feel confident now? For example, speaking...or?
- Manami: In conversation, of course it would be best if I could speak properly, but I still get stuck quite often. However, the number of times I get stuck has decreased, and like I wrote earlier, the pace has become more like a real conversation. Instead of the conversation stopping, it's more like answering a question and then asking another question. I feel like I've become able to do that more than before, and that gave me some confidence.

In the Interview, Manami felt that while she still gets stuck in conversation often, she believes her speed has become more like a real conversation: "Instead of the conversation stopping, it's more like answer a question and then asking another question". She also mentioned that she still struggles to explain herself using English when her partner doesn't understand what she is saying.

Manami's development. In Excerpt 5, Manami demonstrates the ability to ask confirmation questions to continue the conversation in lines 16, 26, and 28. She also asks a question to change the topic in line 32. In line 14, Manami didn't understand what Yuzuki uttered in line 13 "face fan" and was able to ask a confirmation question "ah face ah visual?" to continue the conversation.

Excerpt 5

Manami's audio recording (Week 2)

- [0:12-1:35]
- 01 Yuzuki: my favorite: artist
- 02 Manami: oh
- 03 Yuzuki: is perfume.
- 04 Manami: oh perfume.^{SH} I know^{RJ} I know I know.
- 05 Yuzuki: I know? And (1.0) あの{ano, um} idol.
- 06 Manami: idol^{SH} un.
- 07 Yuzuki: idol is Journeys and Stray kids.
- 08 Manami: OH me too^{RJ} Stray kids?^{SH}
- 09 Yuzuki: Stray kids.
- 10 Manami: I like Stray kids.^{EL}
- 11 Yuzuki: Stray kids.
- 12 Manami: who?^{FQ}
- 13 Yuzuki: is is face fan.
- 14 Manami: face?^{CQ}

15 Yuzuki: face fan
 16 Manami: ah ah visual?^{CQ}
 17 Yuzuki: yeah.
 18 Manami: oh you like visual. Who- who who visual do you like?^{FQ}
 19 Yuzuki: Felix.
 20 Manami: oh me too.^{RJ}
 21 Yuzuki: me TOO
 22 Manami: me too.
 23 Yuzuki: silent cry
 24 Manami: OH
 25 Yuzuki: is very good.
 26 Manami: oh favorite song?^{CQ} my favorite song^{EL} (.) my favorite song
 is (2.0) never ending story.
 27 Yuzuki: OH
 28 Manami: you know?^{CQ}
 29 Yuzuki: no
 30 Manami: I want you (1.5) listen this song.
 31 Yuzuki: yeah yeah (0.5) after listen listen.
 32 Manami: oh thank you. Oh (1.0) do you like: (1.0) anime?^{FQ}

Later in the semester in week 7, Excerpt 6 shows Manami using more follow-up questions in line 03, 11, 17, and 21 to elicit more information from her partner. On several occasions, she was able to ask using past tense. Again she demonstrated the ability to repair misunderstandings by correcting her partner in line 13 and 21.

Excerpt 6

Manami's audio recording (Week 7)

[3:10-4:57]

01 Manami: what did you enjoy eating recently?
 02 Kotomi: I enjoyed eating Japanese food.
 03 Manami: Japanese food^{SH}. oh what (.) food did you (.) eat?^{FQ}
 04 Kotomi: I eat (.) miso katsu in Yabaton.
 05 Manami: oh that's good.^{RJ} I want- I want to eat miso katsu.^{EL}
 06 Kotomi: un
 07 Manami: I like miso katsu.
 08 Kotomi: which sauce katsu or miso katsu? which do you like?
 09 Manami: um I like miso katsu.
 10 Kotomi: oh me too.
 11 Manami: what- what ah was it your first time there?^{FQ}
 12 Kotomi: no I something go there. °something°
 13 Manami: sometimes?^{CQ}
 14 Kotomi: sometimes go there.
 15 Manami: sometimes?
 16 Kotomi: 時々{tokidoki, sometimes}、たまに{tamani, occasionally}
 17 Manami: uh uh uh. eh (0.5) did you go with a friend?^{FQ}
 18 Kotomi: no I went with my family.
 19 Manami: oh family.^{SH}
 20 Kotomi: car.
 21 Manami: by car.^{SH} ah:(5.0) do you recommend it?^{FQ}
 22 Kotomi: yes
 23 Manami: yes
 24 Kotomi: I recommend it.

- 25 Manami: um: (2.0) do you know other miso katsu restaurant?
 26 Kotomi: Okura.
 27 Manami: Okura? I don't know sorry I don't know.

Towards the end of the semester in week 11, Excerpt 7 shows Manami asking follow-up questions using “why”, “who”, “what”, and “do” in lines 03, 05, 11, and 13 respectively. Manami has demonstrated the ability to co-construct with her partner. In line 9, she demonstrates ability to extend her partner’s utterance by adding “person” and in line 14, Hina gives the word “license” which Manami was searching for. In addition, In line 21, Manami utters “good luck” as a comment to wish her partner well on her test.

Excerpt 7

Manami’s audio recording (Week 11)

- [0:00-1:48]
 01 Manami: what do you want to do in the fu- in the next five years?
 02 Hina: oh in the next five years I want to work museum.
 03 Manami: oh museum^{SH} oh why do you want to work museum?^{FQ}
 04 Hina: eh I like Sengoku Busho so I work history museum.
 05 Manami: oh that's cool^{RJ} Sengoku Busho?^{SH} oh who (1.0) who do you like the most in Sengoku busho?^{FQ}=of Sengoku Busho.
 06 Hina: I like Takenaka Hanbei.
 07 Manami: oh sorry I don't know.
 08 Hina: he is maniac.
 09 Manami: maniac?^{SH} a maniac person?^{CQ}
 10 Hina: ha ha
 11 Manami: (2.0)what do you want to do in the next ten years?^{FQ}
 12 Hina: in the next ten years I want to buy car.
 13 Manami: car.^{SH} um um oh do you have drive: (1.5) do you have drive?^{FQ}
 14 Hina: licence?
 15 Manami: license.
 16 Hina: no I haven't.
 17 Manami: un un.
 18 Hina: but I graduate driving school.
 19 Manami: oh.
 20 Hina: so I go to writing test.
 21 Manami: oh I see.^{RJ} good luck.

Table 10

Manami’s speaking discourse analysis

Speaking Discourse Analysis	Week 2	Week 7	Week 11
Time	5:03	4:56	4:54
Words	282	242	256
Speaking rate (words/minute)	55.8	48.9	52.2
Turns	59	39	27
Turn rate (turns/minute)	11.6	7.9	5.6

Rejoinders	6	1	3
Shadowing	5	2	3
Follow-up Questions	5	6	5
Confirmation Checks	3	2	0
Elaboration	4	6	3

Note. The topics for the conversations were as follows: Talk About Yourself (Week 2), Recent Meal (Week 7), and Future Dreams (Week 11). Each conversation was conducted with a random partner and lasted approximately five minutes. The results presented are based on the focal student (Manami) only, and all measures were calculated using her production within each interaction.

Speaking performance was examined at three time points (Week 2, Week 7, Week 11) using speaking discourse analysis. The speaking rate decreased from 55.8 to 48.9 in Week 7, before increasing again to 52.2 in Week 11, suggesting some fluctuations in her fluency. In contrast, the turn rate showed a steady decrease from 11.6 to 7.9 and 5.6 across the three time points, indicating reduced interactional participation.

At a surface level, these patterns may suggest a decrease in IC. However, closer qualitative analysis reveals a different trend. In Week 2, the interaction was highly fragmented: both speakers produced short, one-phrase turns, there were frequent breakdowns and repetitions of the same words or phrases, and several misunderstandings. By Week 7, the conversation became more coherent, with longer sentences and more structured questioning, resulting in fewer breakdowns and a reduced need for frequent turns. By Week 11, the interaction became smoother, with both speakers waiting appropriately for their turns and co-constructing meaning more efficiently. Although fewer turns were observed, speakers were able to express ideas more clearly and with less hesitation.

The quality of CSs used also changed over time. In Week 2, Manami frequently use the same rejoined repeating “me too.” In contrast, in Weeks 7 and 11, she demonstrates a wider range of responses, such as “that’s cool” and “I see”, indicating greater flexibility in managing interaction. In addition, the quality of follow-up questions improved, with Manami using a broader range of question forms (e.g., who, what, when, where, why, and how) in Weeks 7 and 11. These changes suggest development in her ability to sustain and expand interaction through more varied and appropriate use of CSs.

Yuzuki’s reflection. In the questionnaire, Yuzuki reported that she gained a little more confidence in holding conversations, but she feels that she still lacks the ability to explain something to her partner in English when they don’t understand something she said.

Excerpt 8

Reflective Interview: Talking to Yuzuki about her thoughts on her development

Teacher: Has anything changed for you?

Yuzuki: Changed? At first, I couldn't speak English at all and didn't understand grammar, so a lot of things didn't get across. But recently, I've gradually started to understand grammar, and I feel like I can communicate better now.

In the Interview, Yuzuki felt that she gradually started to understand grammar and that she could communicate better at the end of the semester. This perception is supported by the Week 9 excerpt, in which she demonstrated more effective communication with her partner through more consistent use of CSs and longer utterances.

Excerpt 9

Yuzuki's audio recording (Week 9)

[0:08-1:36]

01 Yuzuki: what: (0.5) do you usually do in your free time?
02 Arisa: I usually playing video game.
03 Yuzuki: OH video game.^{SH} me too.^{RJ}
04 Arisa: me too?
05 Yuzuki: that's nice.^{RJ} what- what playing: video game do you like?^{FQ}
06 Arisa: uh I play pokemon.
07 Yuzuki: AH pokemon^{SH}
08 Arisa: and atsumori
09 Yuzuki: atsumori^{SH} yeah
10 Arisa: and so on
11 Yuzuki: eh do you (0.5) do: you: playing switch?^{FQ}
12 Arisa: AH yes yes yes.
13 Yuzuki: yeah how often (1) playing (0.5) video game?^{FQ}
14 Arisa: how often? Ah: we- um (2.) week a week two times (1) twice
15 Yuzuki: OH oh: that's nice^{RQ}
16 Arisa: and you?
17 Yuzuki: I- (0.5) I usually watching movie.

Table 11

Yuzuki's speaking discourse analysis

Speaking Discourse Analysis	Week 2	Week 9
Time	5:03	5:05
Words	197	172
Speaking rate (words/minute)	39.1	33.9
Turns	59	37
Turn rate (turns/minute)	11.6	7.3

Note. The topics for the conversations were as follows: Talk About Yourself (Week 2) and Free Time Activity (Week 9). Each conversation was conducted with a random partner and lasted approximately five minutes. The results presented are based on the focal student (Yuzuki) only, and all measures were calculated using her production within each interaction.

Speaking performance was examined at two time points (Week 2, Week 9) using speaking discourse analysis. Similar to Manami's analysis, Yuzuki's speaking rate showed a slight decrease by Week 9, while her turn rate decreased more significantly. Consistent with the qualitative analysis, these changes likely reflect increased smoothness in interaction, with less hesitation, longer utterances, and more effective use of CSs.

Saki's reflection. In the questionnaire, Saki reported that she can use follow-up quicker and give reactions. In the interview, she explained that she became able to give many kinds of reaction and not only "nice". The only change she mentioned was she became able to bring out more words.

Excerpt 10

Reflective Interview: Talking to Saki about her thoughts on her development

Teacher: Earlier you said you've become able to give reactions and ask follow-up questions. What kind of reactions can you give?

Saki: Before, I only knew things like "Nice." But after seeing different conversation examples, I learned that there are many kinds of reactions.

Teacher: During a conversation, there are two people, right? Sometimes you might need to help each other. There might be parts you don't understand. When you don't understand what the other person is saying, or when you can't explain something yourself. Have you seen any changes compared to before? It's okay if nothing has changed.

Saki: I've become able to bring out words.

Discussion

Research Question 1: How do students use and perceive communication strategies in developing interactional competence across the semester?

The findings indicate that students perceived CSs as useful tools for developing IC. The questionnaire responses showed moderate to high reported use of CSs taught in the course, especially rejoinders and follow-up questions. Interview data further showed that students did not see these strategies as isolated language items, but as practical resources for maintaining conversation. Yuzuki's comment that repeated use helped her internalize "the

basic structure of how conversations work” is especially important because it suggests that CSs were helping students understand conversation as an interactional process.

The questionnaire data showed that students differed in which strategies they found most useful. Manami came to recognize the value of shadowing, even though she had not initially deemed it as important. Saki emphasized follow-up questions, especially WH-questions, as a way of moving the conversation forward. Yuzuki highlighted rejoinders, follow-up questions, and elaboration as the most useful strategies. The variation suggests that students were not simply memorizing the form, but appropriating different strategies according to their own interactional needs and developing a sense of how the conversation works.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of immediate recursive practice within a lesson on students’ interactional competence?

The results suggest that immediate recursive practice had a positive effect on students’ noticing, question formation, and confidence within a single lesson. Most students reported that repeating the same five-minute conversation helped them notice new words or phrases and think of new questions to ask. These responses indicate that repetition created a space for learners to reflect on their first attempt and then improve their next one while the topic was still active in memory.

The interview data provide a clearer picture of how this worked. Manami described how the teacher’s scaffolding helped her recover forgotten vocabulary and use it again later. Her example of “recommend” is particularly revealing because it shows a move from scaffolding to active use through recursion. Yuzuki similarly explained that she did not memorize fixed expressions, but gradually became able to use basic grammar in conversations. She resonated with what Manami said that teacher scaffolding had the biggest impact on her within a single lesson.

Research Question 3: What are the effects of longitudinal recursive practice across the semester on students’ interactional competence?

The findings suggest that longitudinal recursive practice supports gradual development in students’ IC. In both Manami’s and Yuzuki’s speaking samples, later conversations were less fragmented and more coherent than earlier ones. This should not be interpreted simply as fewer turns or lower speaking rates. In Manami’s case, the early conversation contained many short utterances, repetitions, and breakdowns. By week 7 and Week 11, her talk showed more varied question forms, repairs, and more successful co-

construction. Similarly, Yuzuki's Week 9 interaction shows more stable exchange, better question formation, and more effective use of CSs than earlier in the semester.

The interview data also support the view that students were becoming more confident over time. Manami described her conversations as becoming more like "a real conversation" because they no longer stopped after one response. Yuzuki said that she gradually understood grammar better and could communicate more effectively by the end of the semester. Saki reported that she became able to bring out more words and produce a wider range of rejoinders.

At the same time, the findings also showed clear limits. Students still struggled with explaining meaning when their partner did not understand them, and several questionnaire items received more neutral responses. This indicates that while recursive practice supported the development of some interactive features, more complex repair and explanation skills remain difficult. Thus, longitudinal recursion appears to promote development, but not evenly across all dimensions of interactional competence.

Conclusion

This study examined the effects of recursive practice and communication strategies on students' interactional competence in an oral communication course. The results suggest that communication strategies provided learners with the tools to maintain and extend interaction, while recursive practice created opportunities to notice, reuse, and refine those strategies through repeated exposure in conversation. Students reported increased confidence and awareness of how to sustain interaction, and discourse analysis showed that their conversations became less fragmented and more coherent over time. At the same time, development was gradual and uneven: while students became more capable of maintaining conversational flow through follow-up questions and rejoinders, they continued to experience difficulty with more complex skills such as explaining meaning and managing breakdowns in communication. Overall, this study suggests that IC is developed over time through recursive practice and repeated exposure to social interactions, as learners notice patterns, try them out, and gradually incorporate them into their own conversations.

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Appendix 1A

Sample Lesson Plan (Week 7 – Recent Meal)

Stage	Time (mins)	Description
Small Talk	5	Students engage in short small-talk conversations in pairs, then change partners and repeat.
Target Words, Listening	10	(Worksheet 7a) Students review target vocabulary and predict meaning. They then listen to the conversation twice and complete a dictation or note-taking task. Answers are checked with a partner.
Reading	10	(Worksheet 7b) Students read the conversation and answer comprehension questions. Answers are checked with a partner.
Short Production, Question Review	15	Students write the meaning of target vocabulary and produce example sentences. They also review some follow-up questions from the conversation.
Writing Practice	20	(Worksheet 7c) Students complete controlled practice activities focusing on the past tense and write a mini-conversation.
Conversation Cards	5	(Worksheet 7d) Students design their conversation cards to help with the open conversations, followed by teacher feedback.
First round	10	Students engage in a 5-minute conversation in pairs, followed by teacher feedback.
Second round	10	Students change partner repeat the conversation for 5 minutes, followed by feedback.
Third round	5	Students change partner and complete a final 5-minute conversation, which is recorded for analysis.

Appendix 2A
Sample Handouts (Week 7 – Recent Meal)

Lesson 7a - Recent Meal

Today's Goal: You will talk about recent meals using target vocabulary and the past tense.

Target Words: Look at these words. Do you know the meaning of these words?

recently
finish (it)

order
continue eating

set meal

recommend

Listening: Listen to the conversation. What is the main topic? What are they talking about?

Memo:

Reading comprehension: Read the conversation. Circle the answer. After, check with a partner.

Q1. What kind of food did Russell eat recently?

- Thai food.
- Korean food.
- Indian food.

line number: _____

Q2. What does Russell think of the food he ate?

- It was really nice.
- It was not spicy.
- It was expensive.

line number: _____

Q3. Where did Kate eat Indian food?

- She made it at home.

- At a restaurant in Sakae.
- Near Sugiyama University.

line number: _____

Q4. What did Kate enjoy cooking?

- Indian food.
- Korean food.
- Thai food.

line number: _____

Word Bank: Look at the target words. Do you understand the meaning from the conversation? Write the Japanese meaning, and check with a partner.

English	日本語
recently	
order	
set meal	
recommend	
finish (it)	
continue eating	

Short Production: Choose two words and make a sentence using each word.

1. _____
2. _____

Follow-up questions: Do you understand these questions? Talk with a partner.

Questions	Line number
What did you enjoy eating recently?	4
Where did you go?	6
Do you recommend it?	12
Do you like spicy food?	15
Did you finish it?	33
Have you had another meal that you enjoyed recently?	41

Lesson 7b - Recent Meal Conversation

1. **Russell:** Hello Kate.
2. **Kate:** Hi Russell, how are you doing today?
3. **Russell:** I'm good. How about you?
4. **Kate:** I'm doing really well, thanks! So, tell me, what did you enjoy eating recently?
5. **Russell:** Um, I had Korean food about two weeks ago.
6. **Kate:** Really? Where did you go?
7. **Russell:** I went to this restaurant near Nagoya station.
8. **Kate:** I see.
9. **Russell:** And um, I had this spicy Korean soup, it's called *Sundubu* in Japanese.
10. **Kate:** I see, I've never heard about it before. What's in it?
11. **Russell:** It's got, um, well, it's spicy, so it has *Gochujang* sauce. And then they put tofu, meat and vegetables inside.
12. **Kate:** Okay, was the restaurant good? Do you recommend it?
13. **Russell:** I liked it. I think it was really nice.
14. **Kate:** That's good.
15. **Russell:** Do you like spicy food?
16. **Kate:** I love spicy food.
17. **Russell:** Okay.
18. **Kate:** So, I think I should probably try it soon.
19. **Russell:** If you like spicy food, I highly recommend it.
20. **Kate:** Thanks for the recommendation.
21. **Russell:** Yes
22. **Kate:** I'll definitely try.
23. **Russell:** Have you had Korean food recently?
24. **Kate:** I haven't had Korean food, but I have had Indian food recently.
25. **Russell:** Oh, you had Indian food? What...
26. **Kate:** Yeah.
27. **Russell:** What did you eat?
28. **Kate:** I went to an Indian restaurant near Hoshigaoka,
29. **Russell:** Okay.
30. **Kate:** With my friend about three weeks ago. Ah, we both ordered butter chicken curry and naan, and mango lassi.
31. **Russell:** Oh, you guys had the same thing?
32. **Kate:** It was a set meal, so both of us order the same set meal.
33. **Russell:** Oh okay, nice. Did you finish it?
34. **Kate:** It was a lot of food.

35. **Russell:** Yeah.
36. **Kate:** But, yes I finished it.
37. **Russell:** I had, I think I know the restaurant you're talking about.
38. **Kate:** Yeah.
39. **Russell:** The naan bread is really big.
40. **Kate:** It was very big, but it was so good that I just continued eating.
41. **Russell:** Ah, nice. Um, have you had another meal that you enjoyed recently?
42. **Kate:** Well, I didn't go to a restaurant but recently I cooked Thai food.
43. **Russell:** Oh nice, that sounds cool. What did you make?
44. **Kate:** I made just Thai green curry and rice; it isn't very difficult.
45. **Russell:** Right.
46. **Kate:** Actually, I learned how to cook it in Thailand.
47. **Russell:** Oh.
48. **Kate:** So, I like making it at home sometimes.
49. **Russell:** Nice, um, so did you follow a recipe?
50. **Kate:** I followed a recipe, but I don't pay attention to the numbers.
51. **Russell:** Ah.
52. **Kate:** Only the order of what to put it.
53. **Russell:** Right, okay.
54. **Kate:** Do you like spicy food? Oh wait, you do like spicy food.
55. **Russell:** Yeah, not too spicy, I like some spice in my food.
56. **Kate:** Have you had Thai food before?
57. **Russell:** I had *Pad Thai*, and I've had Thai green curry. And, I didn't remember it being super spicy.
58. **Kate:** Thai green curry is one of the more spicy curries actually.
59. **Russell:** Ah.
60. **Kate:** So if you like that one, you should have no problem with other Thai curries.
61. **Russell:** Yeah, I've seen a few Thai restaurants around Nagoya, so maybe...
62. **Kate:** You should try sometime.
63. **Russell:** Yeah.

Lesson 7c - Past Tense practice

Step 1: Match the Questions with the Answers

Questions

1. What did you enjoy eating recently?
2. Where did you go?
3. What did you eat?
4. Was it your first time there?
5. Did you go with a friend?

Answers

- a. No, I went with my family.
 - b. I ate the Milano-style Doria.
 - c. I enjoyed eating Italian food.
 - d. No, I usually go there.
 - e. We went to Saizeriya.
-

Step 2: Answer the questions for yourself

Q: What did you enjoy eating recently? A: _____.

Q: Where did you go? A: _____.

Q: What did you eat? A: _____.

Q: Was it your first time there? A: _____.

Q: Did you go with a friend? A: _____.

Step 3: Make a conversation with your partner.

1. : **What did you enjoy eating recently?** _____

2. : _____

3. : _____

4. : _____

5. : _____

6. : _____

7. : _____

8. : _____

Lesson 7d - Recent Meal Card

Plan

1. Greetings (How are you?), **no** small talk.
2. Introduce the Topic
 - a) “What did you enjoy eating recently?”
3. Past tense questions
 - a) Where did you... What did you... When did you... Who did you...
 - b) Was it your first time?
 - c) Did you go...?
 - d) What other food did you eat recently?
 - e) Have you had Italian/Indian/Korean food before?
4. Follow-up questions
 - a) Do you recommend it?
 - b) Do you go there often?
 - c) Do you like spicy/sweet/bitter food?
 - d) Can you cook/make it?
5. How about you?
6. Finish

Recent meal

Appendix 3A

Post-term questionnaire (English Version)

Part A – Conversation Strategies

We learned the following conversation strategies: (Reaction, Shadowing, Follow-up questions, Confirmation questions, More Information)

I often use the following conversation strategies during conversation:

*5-point Likert Scale (1: Strongly disagree 5: Strongly agree)

1. Reaction.
2. Shadowing.
3. Follow-up questions.
4. Confirmation questions.
5. Adding extra information.
6. Did you find conversation strategies useful to maintain conversation in English?

Please explain your answer. (open question)

Part B – Perception of recursive practice in one lesson

In each lesson, we focused on one theme (e.g., lesson 9 - future dream). We listened to a model conversation and did various activities to prepare for speaking in English with a partner. Near the end, we did a 5-minute English conversation with a different partner three times.

Repeating the same 5-minute conversation three times in one lesson helped me:

*5-point Likert Scale (1: Strongly disagree 5: Strongly agree)

1. Notice new words or phrases I could use.
2. Think of new questions I wanted to ask.
3. Speak more smoothly.
4. Feel more confident maintaining a conversation.
5. Did repeating the conversation affect your conversation skills? If so, please give an example. (open question)

Part C – Perception of recursive practice over the semester

Over the semester, we did a different theme each lesson. The theme for each week was: (1) Welcome Back. (2) Talking about yourself. (3) Clothes. (4) Small Talk. (5) Food. (6) Recent

Meal. (7) Sports. (8) Free-time Activities. (9) Future Dream. (10) Future Dream 2. In each lesson, we practiced English conversations using the decided theme, and we practiced speaking with different partners over 11 weeks. Has your English communication ability changed over the semester?

Compared to the start of the semester:

*5-point Likert Scale (1: Strongly disagree 5: Strongly agree)

1. I can use a wide range of communication strategies appropriately.
2. I can ask questions that build on my partner's ideas.
3. I can connect my partner's ideas to my own experience or opinion.
4. I can keep talking about one topic without running out of things to say.
5. I can talk about many different topics in one theme.
6. I can help my partner keep the conversation going when they are struggling.
7. I can change the topic naturally when it is appropriate.
8. When I don't understand my partner, I can ask them to repeat or explain.
9. When my partner doesn't know the word in English, I can help them find the word or explain it in English.
10. When my partner seems confused, I can clarify what I mean in English.
11. How do you feel about your English conversation ability now, compared to the start of the semester? Please give an example. (open question)

Appendix 3B

Post-term questionnaire (Japanese Version)

このフォームにご記入いただき、ありがとうございます。このアンケートには3つの部分があります。

学生番号「例：A25DCXXX」

パート A – 会話ストラテジー

私たちは以下の会話ストラテジーを学びました。（リアクション、シャドーイング、フォローアップ質問、確認質問、追加情報）

私は会話中によく次の会話ストラテジーを使います：（1: 全くそうは思わない～5: 強くそう思う）

1. リアクション
2. シャドーイング
3. 追加質問
4. 確認質問
5. 追加情報
6. 英語で会話を続けるための会話ストラテジーは役に立ちましたか？あなたの答えを説明してください。（自由記述）

パート B – 1回の授業における反復練習の認識

各授業では1つのテーマに集中しました（例：レッスン9 – 将来の夢）。モデル会話を聞き、英語でパートナーと話す準備のために様々な活動を行いました。終盤では、異なるパートナーと5分間の英会話を3回行いました。

1回の授業で同じ5分間の会話を3回繰り返すことは、次のように役立ちました：（1: 全くそうは思わない～5: 強くそう思う）

1. 使える新しい単語やフレーズに気づくこと
2. 新しく聞きたい質問を思いつくこと
3. よりスムーズに話すこと
4. 会話を維持する自信を高めること
5. 会話を繰り返したことで会話力に影響はありましたか？ある場合は例を挙げてください。（自由記述）

パート C – 学期を通じた反復練習の認識

学期を通して、各授業で異なるテーマを扱いました。各週のテーマは次の通りです。（1）おかえりなさい。（2）自己紹介。（3）服。（4）スモールトーク。（5）食べ物。（6）外食。（7）スポーツ。（8）自由時間の活動。（9）将来の夢。

（10）将来の夢2。各授業で決められたテーマを使って英会話を練習し、11週間にわたって異なるパートナーと話す練習を行いました。あなたの英語でのコミュニケーション能力は学期を通して変化しましたか？

学期初めと比べて：（1: 全くそうは思わない～5: 強くそう思う）

1. 幅広いコミュニケーションストラテジーを適切に使える
2. パートナーのアイデアに基づいて質問できる
3. パートナーのアイデアを自分の経験や意見に結びつけられる
4. 話題が尽きることなく1つのトピックについて話し続けられる
5. 1つのテーマの中で多くの異なる話題について話せる
6. パートナーが困っているときに会話を続ける手助けができる
7. 適切なときに自然に話題を変えられる
8. パートナーが言っていることが理解できないとき、繰り返しや説明を求められる
9. パートナーが英語の単語を知らないとき、単語を探すのを手伝ったり英語で説明したりできる
10. パートナーが混乱しているように見えるとき、自分の意味を英語で明確にできる
11. 学期初めと比べて、現在のあなたの英会話能力についてどう感じますか？例を挙げてください。（自由記述）

Appendix 4A

Interactional Features Code Book

Interactional Feature	Code	Description	Examples
Communication Strategies			
^a Rejoinder (Reaction)	RJ	Brief responses that show interest and encourage continuation of the conversation.	A: I went to amusement park. B: <i>Oh, that's nice.</i>
^a Follow-up Question	FQ	Questions that build on a previous utterance to sustain or continue the conversation often showing interest.	A: I have a dog. B: Oh nice! <i>What kind of dog?</i>
^b Shadowing	SH	Immediate, often partial repetition of another speaker's previous utterance, usually with a falling intonation	A: I'm going to Hokkaido. B: Oh, ^f ↓ <i>Hokkaido</i> . That's far!
^c Confirmation Question	CQ	When a speaker that their understanding of a previous utterance is correct, often by repeating or reformulating part of a prior turn, usually with rising intonation and expecting a yes/no response.	A: I have two dogs and one cat. B: <i>So, three</i> ^f ↑ <i>pets?</i> A: Yes!
^d Elaboration (Adding Extra Information)	EL	When a speaker adds additional information to expand or develop their previous utterance by the speaker or listener.	A: I also like listening to music. A: I listen to music everyday.
Negotiation for Meaning/Other Interactional Resources			
^e Clarification Request	CR	When a listener signals that they did not understand and asks the speaker to rephrase or explain	A: I went to my sister's graduation ceremony. B: <i>Sorry? Can you say that one more time?</i>
^f Code Switching	CS	The use of the learner's L1 to clarify or express meaning.	A: My dog is 元気 very happy. B: Ah, 元気ね!

Note. Descriptions and examples were adapted from: ^a (Kehe & Kehe, 2022) ^b (Murphey, 2001a) ^c (Hartono & Ihsan, 2017) ^d (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) ^e (Foster & Ohta, 2005)
^f denotes rising and falling intonation.

Appendix 4B

Transcription Conventions

CA Transcribing Conventions

(based on Gail Jefferson's 2004 system and Duane Kindt's 2024 system)

(1) General conventions

1. **Capital letters** are used for I, name (Yui), places (Japan), and so on.
2. **Japanese** is written and followed by **curly parentheses** with a romanization, then a comma, a space, and a translation, for example, 幸せ{shiawase::,happiness}. Transcription markings are on the romanized part.
3. [[transcriber comment]] **Double square brackets** are used to indicate **transcriber comments**.
4. [correction] Corrections are indicated in square brackets.

(2) Conventions related to the key vocal aspects

5. - A **hyphen** shows a sharp cut-off (e.g., sudden stop, restart, interruption).
6. = An **equals sign** indicates latching, two items together with no pause, even different speakers, with no pause and no overlap.
7. : A **colon** indicates stretching (lengthening) of the preceding sounds, multiple colons show length of stretch.
8. (what) Indicates speech that the transcriber is **not sure of**, but a good guess.
9. () Indicates speech that the transcriber **cannot hear clearly**; the space shows the approximate length.
10. ha ha Laughter, each "ha" indicates a single **laughter burst**.
11. TODAY **Capital** mark a section of speech noticeably louder than the speech surrounding it (e.g., toDAY, not Today).
12. ? . A **question mark** shows **rising intonation**; a **period** shows **falling intonation**.
13. ... An **ellipsis**, three dots, indicates a time gap (pause); more details are shown by using (.), (..), (...), or show tenths of seconds (0.3), (0.5), (1.2); (.) a micropause, is about 0.1, (..) about 0.5, (...) 1.0+ seconds.
14. °nice° **Degree marks** around words mark noticeably quieter talk.
15. ^{RJ} **Superscript** after speech indicates type of communication strategy used by the speaker.

Appendix 4C
Transcript Example

Manami's audio recording (Week 2)

[0:12-1:35]
01 Yuzuki: my favorite: artist
02 Manami: oh
03 Yuzuki: is perfume.
04 Manami: oh perfume.^{SH} I know^{RJ} I know I know.
05 Yuzuki: I know? And (1.0) あの{ano, um} idol.
06 Manami: idol^{SH} un.
07 Yuzuki: idol is Journeys and Stray kids.
08 Manami: OH me too^{RJ} Stray kids?^{SH}
09 Yuzuki: Stray kids.
10 Manami: I like Stray kids.^{EL}
11 Yuzuki: Stray kids.
12 Manami: who?^{FQ}
13 Yuzuki: is is face fan.
14 Manami: face?
15 Yuzuki: face fan
16 Manami: ah ah visual?^{CQ}
17 Yuzuki: yeah.
18 Manami: oh you like visual. Who- who who visual do you like?^{FQ}
19 Yuzuki: Felix.
20 Manami: oh me too.^{RJ}
21 Yuzuki: me TOO
22 Manami: me too.
23 Yuzuki: silent cry
24 Manami: OH
25 Yuzuki: is very good.
26 Manami: oh favorite song?^{CQ} my favorite song^{EL} (.) my favorite song
is (2.0) never ending story.
27 Yuzuki: OH
28 Manami: you know?^{CQ}
29 Yuzuki: no
30 Manami: I want you (1.5) listen this song.
31 Yuzuki: yeah yeah (0.5) after listen listen.
32 Manami: oh thank you. Oh (1.0) do you like: (1.0) anime?^{FQ}

RJ = Rejoinder

FQ = Follow-up Question

SH = Shadowing

CQ = Confirmation Question

EL = Elaboration