Developing multi-word expression knowledge and use: A fluency workshop

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REFLECTIONS AND
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NEW PERSPECTIVES
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Speaking fluency

- Common language learning goal

- Linked with use of multi-word expressions (Boers et al., 2006; Kuiper, 2004; McGuire & Larson-Hall, 2018; Tavakoli & Uchihara, 2020; Wood, 2009)

Multi-word expressions

- Common type of formulaic language (Siyanova-Chanturia & Martinez, 2015)

- Frequent, familiar word sequences

- Provide quick and predictable chunks of language to express meaning

- Use frees up working memory to construct more complex messages with less effort (Dörnyei, 2009; Ellis, 2001)

Examples: *I think I will, would you like to*

Why teach multi-word expressions?

- Use has been linked to increased fluency (Boers et al., 2006; Kuiper, 2004; McGuire & Larson-Hall, 2018; Tavakoli & Uchihara, 2020; Wood, 2009)

  - Often composed of highly frequent words

  - Can appear semantically incomplete (Liu, 2012)

  >> non-salient

  >> important to help L2 learners to notice & learn

Research question

To what extent can classroom intervention develop learners' knowledge, use and fluency with common multi-word expressions such as 'I think I will' and 'would you like to'?

- *Four-word MWEs* (keep them comparable, reduce overlapping)

- *Came from 3 classroom dialogue models*

- *Made of high frequency words (97%)*

- *Frequency checked against spoken sub-corpus of Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)* (Davies 2013)

Café - e.g. <u>What are you going</u> to get?

Directions - e.g. <u>You should see the</u> Museum on the right.

Hotel - e.g. <u>It is an extra</u> $15 each

30 multi-word expressions

- *How do you spell*
- *Thank you very much*
- *could you repeat that*
- *How many are in*
- *How will you be*
- *That will be fine*
- *It is an extra*
- *Would you like to*
- *the details are in*
- *let me think about*

- *What would you like*
- *Can you tell me*
- *You should see the*
- *is on the right*
- *have a good day*
- *we have about an*
- *have on the menu*
- *but so does the*
- *what are you going*
- *I think I will*

- *I will have the*
- *are you going to*
- *to get a drink*
- *I usually only have*
- *How do I get*
- *When you get to*
- *turn left at the*
- *until you get to*
- *right hand side of*
- *until I get to*

Experimental condition
Fluency workshop activities to notice and practise using MWEs

(Thomson, 2018; Wood, 2009)

1. Listen to model dialogue & answer gist questions
2. MWE instruction
3. Shadowing
4. Dicto-gloss (Lindstromberg, Eyckmans, & Connebeer, 2016)

5. Mingle jig-saw
6. Role-play train
7. Decreasing time role-play
8. Record role-play
9. Reflection on recording
10. Related situation free role-play

P: Right, Jon. We have about an hour for lunch. The next meeting is at two thirty.

J: That's good. I usually only have time for a quick lunch, often at my desk!

P: Let's see what they have on the menu. What would you like Jon?

J: Mmm the salmon looks good, but so does the omelet. What are you going to get?

P: I think I'll have the chicken. P: Right, Jon. We have about an hour for lunch. The next meeting is at two thirty.

J: That's good. I usually only have time for a quick lunch, often at my desk!

P: Let's see what they have on the menu. What would you like Jon?

J: Mmm the salmon looks good, but so does the omelet. What are you going to get?

P: I think I'll have the chicken.

J: OK, I'll have the salmon.

P: Shall we get a salad to share?

J: Great idea, and are you going to get a drink?

P: Mm, I think I'll get a coffee, how about you?

J: Coffee, yeah me too.

P: OK, let's order!

J: OK, I'll have the salmon.

P: Shall we get a salad to share?

J: Great idea, and are you going to get a drink?

P: Mm, I think I'll get a coffee, how about you?

J: Coffee, yeah me too.

P: OK, let's order!

1. Listen to model dialogue & answer gist questions

What are the people talking about?

What are they looking at?

2. MWE instruction

What would you like Jon?　ジョン、何を注文しますか。
Question about choice （選択しについての質問）

Mmm the salmon looks good, but so does the omelet.
サケが美味しそうですけど、オムレツもおいしそうですね
comparison（比較的語、似ているところを伝える）

What are you going to get?
Question about a decision （決定についての質問）

3. Shadowing

Listen to the audio on your headset (4 times)
Try to say the words just after the speaker
Improve your pronunciation and rhythm
 （発音と律動を真似する）

4. Dicto-gloss

1. Listen to the audio   (no writing, just listen)
2. Listen and take notes (words that will help you re-write later)
3. Listen and take notes
4. Listen and take notes
5. Work with your group to re-write the text

5. Mingle jigsaw

Write down your phrase
Memorise your phrase
Share your phrase
Listen to another phrase
Go back to your desk and write it down
Repeat until you have all 10 phrases
Don't walk around with your paper!

6. Role-play train

You are at a cafe with a friend
Talk about what you would like to order
Try and use the phrases we have learnt
Speak only in English
Keep the conversation going for 2 minutes

Can use model transcript
Encouraged to look up when speaking

1. We have about an
2. I usually only have
3. have on the menu
4. What would you like
5. but so does the
6. What are you going
7. I think I will
8. I will have the
9. Are you going to
10. to get a drink

8. Record role-play

録音（R) Record ⏺

My name is ………. I am person number one
My name is ………. I am person number two

Change roles　役割交換（一つの録音で続けてね）

両方の面接が終わったら…停止　Stop ⏹

Export the file > Save to desktop > upload to Moodle forum
Technically challenging for several, time-consuming

Audacity®

9. Reflection on recording

Listen to your recording, rate your conversation
録音した会話を聞きながら自分を評価してください。

Long pauses >>>>>>>>Flowing conversation
長い休憩　　　　　　　　　　　　流れている会話

Difficult to hear >>>>>>>Clear pronunciation
聞きにくい　　　　　　　　　　発音はっきり言っている

Word by word>>>>>>>>>>Phrase by phrase
言葉ごと休憩　　　　　　　　　フレーズごと休憩

良くできたこと：
改善したこと：

10. Related situation free role-play

Talk about what you want to
buy:
1) At a clothing store
2) At a convenience store

Control condition (*n* = 51)
Provides baseline to compare learning from intervention
No deliberate exposure to MWEs

Linked skills EFL classes (engineering themes)

Activities: speed reading, listening cloze, reading email, writing email, describing design from email to a partner

Participants (*N* = 116)

- 2nd & 3rd year Japanese University Students (Engineering majors)
- Had to complete two English courses as part of degree
- Experimental condition = Communication English classes
- Control condition = General English classes
- Informed consent
- Majority reported a TOEIC score between 255-600 (A2-B1 CEFR)

Method: Measure uptake of 30 multi-word expressions

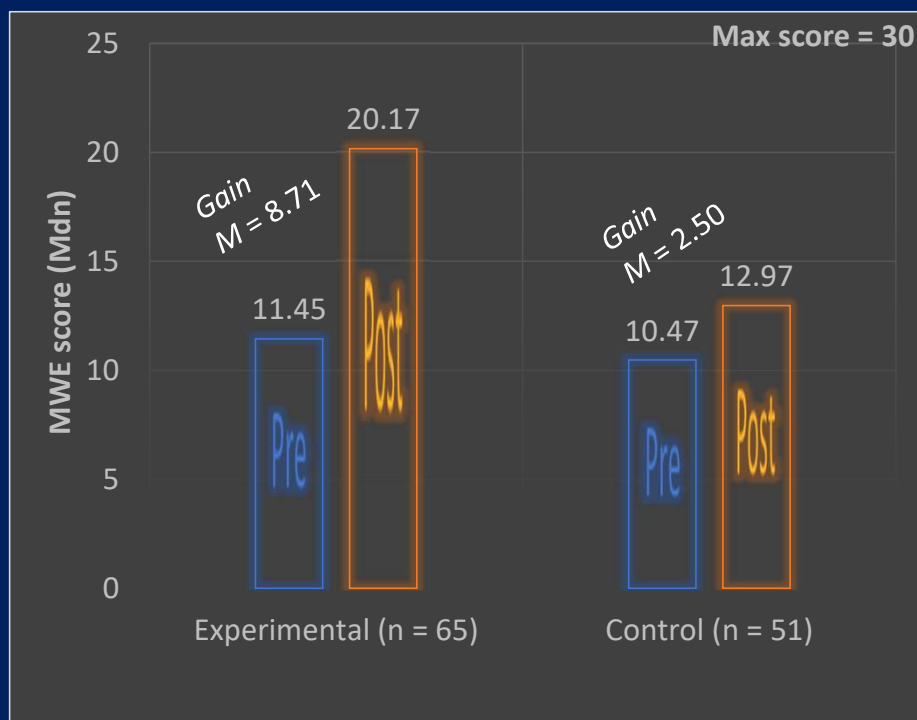Before and after six week intervention

1) Knowledge of MWEs (cued recall test)

2) Ability to use multi-word expressions (dialogic task)

3) Overall fluency (dialogic task)

Use of MWEs in conversation
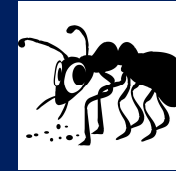
Dialogic task (pre- & post-intervention)
To measure use of multi-word expressions and fluency changes

Less participants than cued recall test ($N = 46$)
- ✓ Same partner for pre- and post-intervention dialogue
- ✓ Played same role in pre- and post-roleplay
- ✓ Recording was audible

Counting use of MWEs
Used AntConc concordance word search (Anthony, 2014)

Use of all four words was rare, counted partial use to reveal developing skill
1 point scored for each word used in target sequence (searched first for 4-, then 3-, then 2-word combinations)

is on the right = 4 points

is on the = 3 points

is on = 2 points

<u>on</u> your <u>right</u> = 2 points

I think I will = 4 points

I think I = 3 points
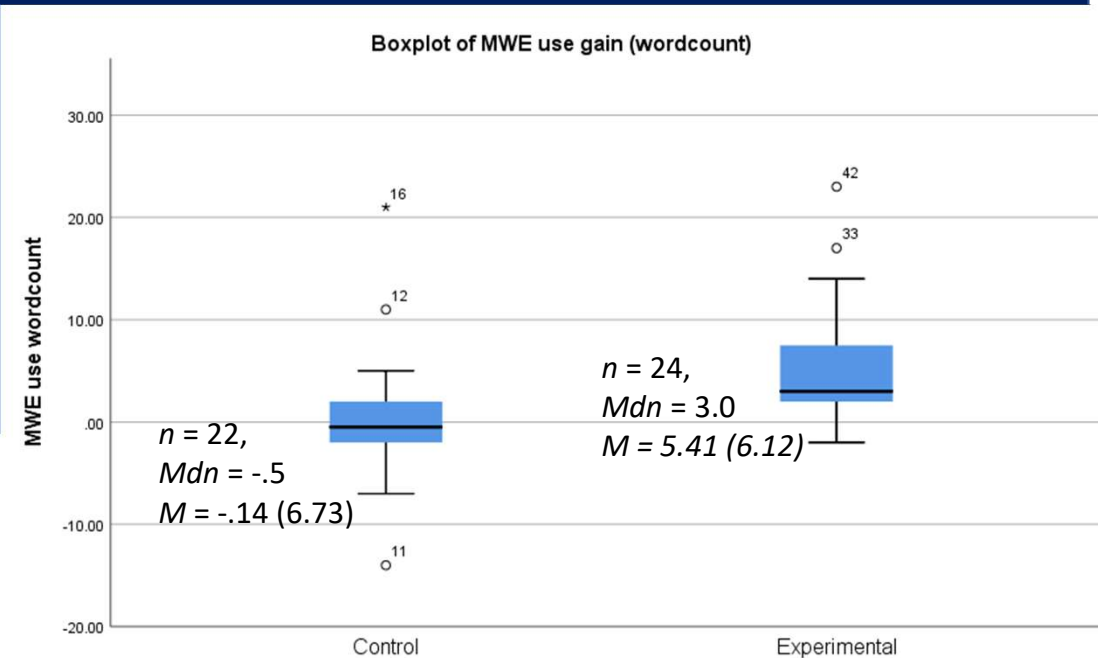
I think = 2 points

I will / I'll = 2 points

<u>I</u> <u>think</u> that one = 2 points

Use of MWEs (in dialogue)
Diversity within participants > non-normal distribution
Difference in use of multi-word expressions (gain) was significant
between groups with large effect
$U = 429.5, z = 3.66, p < .001, r = 0.54$

Boxplot of MWE use gain (wordcount)

MWE use wordcount

$n = 22,$
$Mdn = -.5$
$M = -.14 (6.73)$

$n = 24,$
$Mdn = 3.0$
$M = 5.41 (6.12)$

Control

Experimental

Speech rate *sum of syllables spoken divided by seconds (speaking time including pauses) x 60* (Tavakoli, 2016; Towell et al., 1996)

Speech rate gain from pre- to post-
Exp: M = 7.65 (*16.4*)* t(23) = -2.28, p = .03, 95% CI [-14.58, -.72], d = .35
Con: M = 3.76 (*16.25*) t(21) = -1.1, p = .29, 95% CI [-10.97, 3.44], d = .19

No significant differences in fluency change between groups
t(44) = -.81, p = .42
d = .24, 95% CI [-.34, .82]

Positive correlations between fluency measures and use of MWEs

between *mean length of runs* and use of MWEs (moderate strength)
$r_s(46) = .51$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.26, .70]

between *speech rate* and use of MWEs (weak-moderate)
$r_s(46) = .39$, $p = .008$, 95% CI [.11, .61]

between *phonation time ratio* and use of MWEs (weak)
$rs(46) = .32$, $p = .03$, 95% CI [.03, .56]

between *articulation rate* and use of MWEs (weak)
$r_s(46) = .24$, $p = .11$, 95% CI [-.05, .50]

Research question

To what extent can classroom intervention develop learners' knowledge, use and fluency with common multi-word expressions such as 'I think I will' and 'would you like to'?

- Good development of MWE knowledge (cued recall test)
- Good development of MWE use in conversation
- Incomplete development of fluency using MWEs

Limitations with using dialogue

No compulsion to use MWEs – possible that more ability was present than displayed (Coxhead, 2011)

Complex role-play instructions led to pausing

Social convention and conversation direction may have caused variance

Directions for further research

Replicate intervention with a read-aloud test to measure fluency with MWEs (onset time, articulation rate) e.g., Ellis et al., 2008

Replicate with higher proficiency learners or different L1's

Teaching implications

- Explicit noticing and practise with MWEs is beneficial
- Activity flows that encourage re-use of MWEs are beneficial
- Improved knowledge & use of MWEs can be expected
- Improved fluency with MWEs is unlikely within classroom time constraints

Thank you for listening
Any questions, comments, suggestions?

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