

Running head: CULTURAL INTERFER. AND TEACHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CASE STUDY ON CULTURAL INTERFERENCE ON LANGUAGE LEARNING AND
TEACHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ADAPTATION

by

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WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE,
HAVE APPROVED THIS DISSERTATION

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September 2019

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Abstract

Cultural interference acknowledgement can be difficult to acknowledge. Student acknowledgment of cultural interference has been researched extensively, but teacher acknowledgement has not. The purpose of this multicase study is to examine teacher acknowledgement of cultural interference, to assess if they are aware of it, and to assist educators in becoming aware of it.

The case study involved questionnaires and interviews with American educators based in the United States, Japan, and other countries. The data gathering method used in questionnaires and interviews were 5 open-ended questions. The participant had to answer them in short paragraph answers of detailed responses. The total number of questionnaires received and used for the research was 11. The questionnaires were received from the United States. The participants were currently employed in a college or university in the U.S. The total number of interviews conducted was 10. Half of the interviews were from educators in an American university located in Japan, and the other half of the interviews were from a Japanese public university.

Analysis of the research was done through thematic analysis. Codes were established from the data and analyzed.

A demographics supplement was given, in addition to conducting the questionnaires and interviews, to assess more information about the participant's age, teaching experience, experience teaching abroad, and education level. This information was deemed important in conducting the research.

Significant findings were gained from the research. The number of years teaching abroad was an important factor whether educators can understand cultural factors having an impact on

2nd language fluency. Education level didn't necessarily allow a better understanding of cultural interference, and teaching experience may not necessarily play an important role in acknowledgment of cultural interference.

Dedication

I would like to extend my appreciation to the following individuals who made the journey possible. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my wife, Mika, for allowing the time for me to complete my dissertation. I spent the free time I had available to complete this dissertation, and it would not have been possible without your help. I also would like to extend my appreciation to my two sons, Hiroto and Kento. There were times I had to be away from you two because I had to concentrate on this dissertation, and those times I could not be there for you. When this dissertation is completed, I will spend as much time to be there for the both of you. This dissertation and the completion of my doctorate degree is for the benefit of my entire family.

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Chapter 1

The Problem

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to investigate whether cultural interference (interference based on cultural aspects) occurs while teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), or English as Other Language (ESOL) teach to the students, and whether teachers understand culture's influence on a language. The study took place in locations in Japan, Thailand, and the United States and was limited to educators in college- and university-level institutions. In Chapter 1, the researcher defines the key terms, reviews the use of culture in language learning, and explains the gaps in this research related to ESL, EFL, or ESOL. The researcher also provides the rationale for this problem, its significance, and research questions outlining this study, the framework, and implications based on this study.

Background of the Study

EFL, ESL, or ESOL teachers come from many countries around the world. It is not limited to Western countries. Some teachers teach English, but do not have the knowledge of the culture where they teach or the Western culture while teaching English (Pennycook, 2017). Culture plays an important role in language (Daoust, 2017). Choudhury (2014) stated that culture finds its expression in language, and this shows how important culture is to language. This makes sense, as some language points (syntax, idiomatic expressions, and other points) can only be related to specific cultures. For example, American usage of profane language is much higher than in other parts of the world (Hughes, 2006). In Japan, for example, the number of profane words used by Japanese people is less than the amount of words in American English (Bergen, 2018). Language is also a part of culture (Daoust, 2017). Jiang (2000) stated that language simultaneously reflects culture and is influenced and shaped by it. Idiomatic expression is a good

example of how language reflects culture and is shaped by it. The American cultural usage of family members, mother, son, and so forth, is often laced with profane words (Filmer, 2012), but in other cultures such as Japanese culture, the usage of family members in profane words is quite limited because of possibly a higher respect of these members in a person's life (Defrank & Kahlbaugh, 2018).

These cultural concepts, as well as many other concepts, can assist to address the concept of cultural interference. Culture plays an important part in our lives and language allows us to be a part of that culture. Chapelle (as cited in Allard, Bourdeau, & Mizoguchi, 2011) and Kramsch (as cited in Allard et al., 2011) researched culture being expressed, embodied, and symbolized in linguistic interactions through which meaning is associated with culture. This is an important point to understand because based on this assumption, if one does not understand the culture, it would be difficult to have meaningful interactions with those in the culture because the speaker does not understand the culture or cultural beliefs of that specific culture. The writer of this dissertation asserts cultural interference plays an important role in learning a language because understanding the culture helps to improve the accuracy and appropriateness of the language being used.

Rationale

In this section, the rationale for completing this research is discussed. This rationale is based on the writer's many years of experience in language teaching. The first section discusses the evidence of the problem at the student level. Then, the next section discusses the evidence of the problem at the teacher's level.

Evidence of the problem at the student level. Interference in language learning has been studied thoroughly for several decades. The trend in the causes of interference, based on

previous literature, immediately points to first language (L1). There have been many articles on interference imbedded in other topics of language acquisition, foreign accents, and even other topics (Scovel, 1968). Less than 10 years later, another article was published by a researcher on how to learn a second language (L2), noting the possibilities of interference occurring in learning the second language (Ervin-Tripp, 1974). L1 interference had been the mainstay for the cause of interference in L2 learning for many years after these two articles were published. L1 interference can be the root cause of interference for many decades (Bhela, 1999; Fewell, 2010; Galasso, 2002).

Cultural interference research started later, based on published research. In Kang's (1992) article on cultural interference in L2 learning, the researcher started to go beyond the context of L1 causing interference, but rather culture. It is important to understand the versions of culture to go beyond the concept of L1 interference in L2 learning. In current terminology, culture can be broken down in to C (big culture) and c (little culture). The big C encompasses culture in the forms of art, geography, history, education, festivals, and customs; whereas the little c encompasses culture in the forms of norms, beliefs, and sociocultural variables such as age, sex, and social position (Dehbozorgi, Amalsaleh, & Kafipour, 2014). Both the little c and the big C can cause interference in L2 because each form of culture influences the language. Not understanding the sociocultural variables can lead to misunderstanding of what is being said. Not understanding the customs can also lead to usage of improper language in appropriate settings. L1 interference would be placed in the big C since the classroom is the location for teaching students how to communicate with each other. The little c contains more cultural aspects one would see within how people interact with others. Cultural interference propagates within this

category of the little c in culture and is the most difficult to ascertain because it is difficult to incorporate all the little c values in a concrete fashion.

Evidence of the problem at the teacher's level. While research has mainly focused on the student, in the past, there has been little research on how to assess the professors teaching the students. In a Peterson and Coltrane (2003) article, they began to focus interference on how interference might affect teachers who taught an L2. Later, there was research from Saito, Trofimovich, Isaacs, and Webb (2017), who looked at the roles of L2 raters (those who rate and grade the fluency of L2 speakers). These raters were L2 teachers. In addition, in a recent Wong (2018) article, there was a focus on teachers and their perception of the English accent. What is important to understand is, based on the year these articles were published, this concept of culture interference and the teacher's aspect has been rather recent. Previous studies concentrated on the student's aspect, and not the teacher's aspect. This is discussed further in the following sections.

Problem Statement

According to current research, it is known whether professors and teachers are aware of the aspects of the little c of cultural interference in language learning. The research has been exclusively on L1 interference, which is a big C in regard to culture (Blum & Levenston, 1978; Derakshan & Karimi, 2015; Ravetta & Brunn, 1995; Zhang, 2009). In addition, little c research has been completed (Kang, 1992; Kumagai, 1994; Neagu, 1999; Peterson & Coltrane, 2003; Sangpanasthada, 2006; Wei, 2009).

Even among the little c and big C research on interference, there has been little or few studies on the teacher perspective of culture. Some research focuses on teacher perspective (Choudhury, 2014; Goode, Sockalingam, Brown, & Jones, 2003; Saito et al., 2017), but the

amount compared to the amount of research on little c and big C is rather limited. Knowing the little c is important in understanding how the impact of culture affects language learning and knowing the influence of the teacher with respect to culture is where there is a gap in the research of interference.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative multicase study is to understand the concept of cultural interference regarding teacher understanding and how knowledge of its composition can benefit ESL, EFL, or ESOL teachers. Understanding the complexities of culture may help improve the teaching of English. It will help educators realize whether they understand its influence, and the importance of culture in their teaching instruction. Educators may adjust their instructional style to implement culture in language learning. It may even help educators to augment their own teaching styles in relation to the culture where they are teaching the language. It is important to understand how the culture of the country where English is taught may or may not interfere with the student's ability to learn or become fluent in the target language. There has not been much research in the educator's aspect of cultural interference, and this study may add to the significance of this type of interference. Finally, this study assists in university teaching practices among Japanese-based and American-based educators who are American, which benefits the students to who are being taught, whether they are learning in Japan or the United States.

Research Questions

As mentioned earlier, there has not been enough research in the aspect of the educator teaching that may or may not cause cultural interference for the student. Although there have been several studies on student's learning and interference because of L1 or cultural interference, there has not been many studies on the teacher's aspect. The objective of the study is to explore

the teacher aspect of cultural interference. The research questions, which are the focus in this study, are:

R1. How do cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

R2. How do cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

Rationale for Methodology

In order to investigate the research questions and understand the problem, the best approach to use is a qualitative methodology. Cultural interference is an abstract phenomenon and using a qualitative research design does not manipulate the phenomenon, but rather evaluates it based on naturally occurring activities and processes (Dasgupta, 2015). Case study as a method of completing qualitative research is also used in determining the phenomenon because of several reasons. Dasgupta (2015) researched the usefulness of case study research when the phenomena are broad and complex. The existing research is insufficient to determine this phenomenon; thus, an in-depth investigation is needed. In addition, the phenomenon cannot be studied outside the context in which it occurs.

Rationale for Design

Qualitative multicase study was used for this study because of its importance in understanding this phenomenon. According to Yin (2014), the usual individual case, while broad, is of public interest and the issues are nationally important. The topic of culture is of public interest, especially because those within a culture may or may not understand other cultures. They may or may not be able to merge or format their own teaching based on the

student's culture. This dissertation's research makes the research nationally important because it helps others within a culture to understand and adapt to other cultures, wherever they may teach.

Qualitative case study design is also an acceptable method over another method, such as phenomenological design, based on what was researched. Phenomenological studies examine human experiences, known as lived experiences, provided by the people researched (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). In addition, phenomenology is the study of experience together with its meanings (Sohn, Thomas, Greenberg, & Pollio, 2017). This type of research involves experience and meaning. Case study design may be considered similar, but different from phenomenological studies. Case studies are in-depth examinations of people or groups of people (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). In a case study, the subjects are people or groups of people. Phenomenological studies focus on the human experiences. Case study method is also valid in this research because the researcher is interested in the meaning of the experiences to the subjects, rather than in generalizing results to other groups of people (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

Using interviews to collect data for the qualitative multicase study is important for the nature of the study. The interviews allowed the participants to express their views in an open-ended, natural way. Interviews were given to the participants living in Japan because the researcher also lives in Japan and has easy access to them. Interviews permit probing to obtain more complete data, provide a means of checking and gaining effectiveness, and build a rapport with the interviewees (Isaac & Michael, 1997). The research required access to more thorough and complete data from their open-ended answers because the concept of cultural interference is abstract and difficult to comprehend fully. The concept of the open-ended questions in the interview was embedded in the questionnaire, which is discussed next.

Questionnaires were also used to gather data for this research. Questionnaires were administered to the participants in the United States because the researcher has limited access to them because of distance and time differences. Using the concept of questionnaires is vital for establishing trends or differences based on the answers given. Questionnaires pose standardized, formally structured questions to individuals (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016). The questions were an open-ended interview style. While the interview-style questions provided the in-depth analysis, the questions in the questionnaire were the same as the interview questions to help to establish thematic ratings as in the interviews, which helped to standardize the large amounts of data gathered.

Definitions

To understand many key terms used throughout this study, it is important to point out the following definitions, which were provided from the researcher.

English for Academic Purposes

LLS: Language Learning Strategies

SILL: Sheltered Initiation Language Learning—Learning an L2 when confronted with a series of carefully arranged grammatical benchmarks.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

In this section, the first topic discussed will be the assumptions expected in the research. The second section will be regarding limitations. The final topic of this section will include delimitations.

Assumptions. The first aspect, assumption, is a self-assumed truth the researcher may have of the research and research design. The assumptions for this study are based on the following:

1. It was assumed that the private American university, other universities in Japan, and the American university in the United States would provide data sources reliable to study the concept of cultural interference because the university in Japan follows American standards but is not located in the United States. The other universities in Japan would also provide reliable data sources and serve as an important base.
2. It was assumed the participants of the interviews and questionnaires would answer the questions and conduct the interview session or complete the questionnaire in an honest, trustworthy manner.

Limitations. The next aspect, limitation, is possible weaknesses of the study that could not be ignored because they could affect the results of the study. Here are the possible limitations to the study:

1. Only collecting data from a private American university in Japan may not be a total representation of the American educators teaching English. Many universities may have different demographics that may include American teachers and only focusing on one university may not give an adequate sample for an entire group or population. Collecting data from a Japanese university in Japan helped to defray this limitation.
2. The researcher previously worked at one of the institutions more than five years ago. Although the researcher previously worked at this institution, the current teachers who were interviewees have never worked with the researcher, so there should not be any bias or favoritism in the interview process.
3. Only collecting data from one American university in the United States may not be a total representation of American educators teaching English. As in the first limitation,

universities may have different demographics and focusing on one university may not give an adequate sample for an entire group or population.

Delimitations. The final aspect, delimitations, are procedures created to facilitate the research. The following delimitations will follow:

1. The study was limited to non-Japanese professors of English in a university in Japan, rather than all professors of English. Interviewing Japanese professors of English in Japan was not necessary because of the focus on different cultures and different languages. It may be possible to give questionnaires to Japanese professors who have lived abroad to help with the data.
2. To delimit only focusing on one university's data, more data will be acquired by gaining access to more than one American university in the United States.
3. The interview and questionnaire questions were the same open-ended questions to facilitate in data interpretation and analysis. The questions in the questionnaire helped to provide a written base, while the interview questions helped to provide the more detailed verbal content.

Summary and Organization of the Remainder of the Study

With ESL, EFL, or ESOL being taught in many countries all over the world, it is important to understand the cultural aspect of language, which may cause language interference. Within the concept of culture, there is an idea of the big C, which includes culture in the forms of art, geography, history, education, festivals, and customs. There is also the little c, which incorporates norms, beliefs, and sociocultural variables such as age, sex, and social position (Dehbozorgi et al., 2014). Within the research of cultural interference, the focus has been mainly

on the students and the different forms of interference. There have not been many studies on the aspect of the teacher.

The problem statement of the proposed study is whether professors and teachers are aware of the aspects of the little c of cultural interference in language learning. As discussed in this chapter, understanding cultural aspects causing interference is the key for educators to implement, modify, or arrange their curricula or teaching practices to help eliminate this type of interference. While the research on the aspect of educators teaching English (Choudhury, 2014; Goode et al., 2003; Saito et al., 2017) has been done, more research is needed. This needed research is the reason for the study to commence. This qualitative multicase study fills in the research urgently needed in cultural interference.

The remainder of this dissertation is organized into four chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the literature in cultural interference. It is organized in the categories of L1 interference, interference from where the L2 is learned, interference from culture, sociocultural competence, cultural aspects, culture embedded in language, country culture interference, classroom culture, learner background, and developmental and psychological factors. Within each of the categories, they can be arranged according to big C (L1 interference, culture embedded in language, classroom culture) and little c (where the L2 is learned, interference from culture, sociocultural competence, cultural aspects, country interference, learner background, and developmental and psychological factors). Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study, with reference to research design and approach, sample size, procedures for gaining access, methods for establishing researcher-researched relationship, measures for ethical protection, data collection techniques, procedures and roles with signifying the credibility, and limitations to the research methods. Chapter 4 presents findings and the results of the data gathered throughout the procedures used in the study.

Chapter 5 presents the summary and discussion of the results of the study. It also includes any recommendations based on the findings and gives a conclusion of the entire study. At the end of the completed dissertation, any appendices that provide more pertinent information for this dissertation are included.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following literature review is based on the concepts of culture being represented in this dissertation. Culture (2018) has varied meanings. For the purposes of this dissertation, culture is based on the Merriam-Webster online dictionary definition, in four subcategories:

(a) The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; *also*: the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time; (b) The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization; (c) The set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular field, activity, or societal characteristic; (d) The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. (Def. 1)

Language is part of subcategory a, based on the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time. This is important because language and culture are the two points of contention in this dissertation. The dissertation is to focus on the student's L1 as a cause of L2 interference and the student's cultural aspects as a cause for L2 interference. Based on the literature review, it can be conceived there is much research on the topic of L1 interference and very little on cultural interference. The literature review is based on the dissertation writer's own published literature reviews (Bacala, 2017, 2018). The literature review is organized from L1 interference, interference where the L2 is learned, and cultural interference broken up into several subcategories.

L1 Interference

The literature review is based on the dissertation writer's own published literature review (Bacala, 2017). The researcher's previous literature reviews, which include Galasso, Fewell, Ravetta, Bhela, and Zhang (as cited in Bacala, 2017), represent the viewpoint that L1 is the cause for interference from gaining fluency in an L2.

In a research paper by Galasso (2002), he tried to find out how much a student's L1 prepared a structure of how to learn a language that could interfere in learning an L2. Galasso used subjects whose L1 was Spanish and their L2 was English for his research and talked about an important concept known as Universal Grammar. The concept of Universal Grammar is very important because, according to Galasso (2002), Universal Grammar constrains the specific formulation of the entire range of all possible grammatical constructions for human language. He maintained that although Universal Grammar is so universal, anyone learning an L2 can do so without interference. A person's L1 would cause interference because how he or she learns his or her L1 serves as a basis for learning an L2. This is an important point because in linguistics, language is universal. By understanding the basic paradigm used in all languages (grammar, nouns, verbs, adjective, adverbs, etc.), human beings should be able to learn any language. The problem with this point, though, is that when a person learns an L1, he or she develops a learning strategy that may not be applicable in learning an L2. If the learning strategies do not match, this can cause interference.

Galasso (2002) started the study with the intention to test an ESL method known as SILL, which is the creation of Zev Bar-Lev. The concept of SILL was that L2 students seem to work best in learning a foreign language (L2) when confronted with a series of carefully arranged (or generically modified) grammatical benchmarks. In the research study, Galasso (2002) conducted

a six-month observational trial study that was conducted in a classroom setting with the sole aid of daily diary notation. Based on the methodology Galasso used, the study was considered to use a qualitative research methodology. As for the research subjects, 20 students were chosen and the students either did not have any English language ability or they had very little English ability. The students chosen were all from elementary school to high school aged. Research regarding SILL was conducted to find out if a student's L1 learning style or method of learning interfered with the learning of L2.

After doing the research, Galasso (2002) concluded that the concept of a person's L1 learning style or parameters did cause some difficulty for L2 learners. These difficulties, or interference, are from the parameters of how a person learned his or her L1. Since learning an L1 is very difficult, special constructs are made by the student. Unfortunately, in some cases, the constructs cannot be used again in learning an L2.

L1 interference was also discussed in terms of strategies in helping to learn an L2. In a paper by Fewell (2010), the concept of language learning strategy was discussed. Strategies learned and used allow the ability to manipulate directly and manage workable language components for improved language learning efficiency (Fewell, 2010). Because of this, the strategies a person uses to learn an L2 can help him or her to achieve a level of fluency. These strategies are developed from the initial strategies used in learning his or her L1. The six strategies that can be used are as follows:

- Memory (Remembering Effectively);
- Cognitive (Using Mental Processes);
- Compensation (Compensating for Missing Knowledge);
- Metacognitive (Organizing and Evaluating);

- Affective (Managing Emotions); and
- Social (Learning with Others; Fewell, 2010, p. 163).

What is very interesting to note is that these strategies are somewhat based on the concept of Learning style and Multiple Intelligences, which was formulated by Howard Gardner of Harvard University. The concept of multiple intelligences is based on nine distinct learning styles:

- Linguistic Intelligence—They use words effectively. These learners have highly developed auditory skills and often think in words.
- Logical-Mathematical Intelligence—They learn by reasoning and calculating. They think conceptually, abstractly and are able to see and explore patterns and relationships.
- Visual-Spatial Intelligence—They think in terms of physical space, as do architects and sailors.
- Musical Intelligence—They show sensitivity to rhythm and sound.
- Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence—They use the body effectively, like a dancer or a surgeon.
- Intrapersonal Intelligence—They have an understanding of one's own interests, goals.
- Interpersonal Intelligence—They understand through interacting with others.
- Naturalistic Intelligence—They demonstrate expertise in the recognition and classification of numerous species—the flora and fauna—of the environment. (Lane, 2000, p. 3)

Fewell (2010) wanted to find out which LLS benefitted a language learner and which LLS was detrimental to students. The method that Fewell used in determining which LLSs were

more useful was by using the SILL. Fewell (2010) used the SILL to evaluate a variety of data to determine patterns of LLS use among two groups of learners with the administration of a Japanese translated version of the SILL questionnaire, a computerized English proficiency test, and a brief background questionnaire. He chose a sample group of first-year Japanese college students enrolled in an English course at a university in Okinawa, Japan. All students completed six years of mandatory English education, and the test subjects consisted of 29 students who were English majors and 27 who were Business majors. Of the 56 students, 35 were female and 21 were male. Upon completing the tests, the top 25% and the bottom 25% were interviewed twice, and the data were analyzed.

The results of the research pointed out to noticeable similarities of patterns in the utilization of LLS shared by the high proficiency learners (those in the top 25%), and the low proficiency learners (those in the bottom 25%). Because of the patterns, the usage of a suitable LLS is an influential variable related to success or failure in learning an L2 (Fewell, 2010). It can be deduced that LLS is indirectly related to how the person learned his or her L1 because he or she is using the same strategies in L1 and L2. This helps to validate the previous research article reviewed.

Observations in L1 interference in learning an L2 were also documented. In the paper by Marcia Kent Ravetta and Michael Brunn (as cited in Bacala, 2017), the researchers focused on an observation of a native Spanish speaking student in a classroom. The student was learning English by being in a regular curriculum classroom of regular English speakers and students who could speak Spanish. The researchers observed at how the student interacted with the non-Spanish speaking students and the native Spanish speaking students who could speak English. The researchers wanted to observe the student's interactions with both sets of students and to

find out which techniques the student used to communicate and be understood. One of the techniques that they wanted to observe was the technique of code switching.

The method the researchers used was the direct observation of one student. The student was a 7-year-old girl in a mainstreamed first and second split classroom at Ivan K. Pravda Elementary School located in a large metropolitan city in the Southwest (Ravetta & Brunn, 1995). In the classroom there were 27 students: 20 boys and seven girls, 12 first graders and 15 second graders. The teacher was a Euro-American woman who had a master's degree in ESL and 10 years of experience as an elementary school teacher (Ravetta & Brunn, 1995). Ravetta and Brunn (1995) observed the student for approximately 25 hours in the classroom, library, and school playground. The researchers (Ravetta & Brunn, 1995) were participant observers, and the researchers sometimes interacted with the teacher and other students. They documented what they observed in field notes and summarized their findings each week. Later, they videotaped part of their observations (Ravetta & Brunn, 1995). Ravetta and Brunn (1995) used a qualitative research methodology, because they were using only one research subject for their research, and their data were based on field notes and observations.

The results of the Ravetta and Brunn's (1995) research concluded that the acquisition of the student's L2, English, was a process that had many different parts in which socialization had a major role. The concept of code switching was highly implemented to transfer knowledge and background information learned in the student's new experiences. The concept of code switching from Spanish to English somehow reflected the ease in which the student was able to understand English. The research was done and could show nonnative English-speaking students could adapt well in an English-speaking class, but it depended on if the teacher teaching the class had a pedagogy that would benefit the native and nonnative English-speaking students. There might be

several variables that could alter the results of this study, since everything is only based on one subject. The results could only be related to the one subject, and not a group of people.

There were also studies on how L1 directly contributed to interference in learning an L2. The case study, done by Bhela (1999), directly researched how native language interference affected learning of an L2. In Bhela's case study, she focused on answering several questions:

- Are there differences and/or similarities between syntactic structures of L1 and L2 in a written task in each of the cases?
 - What are the instances where the syntactic structure of L1 is used in L2, causing an error?
 - What are the instances where the absence of a syntactic structure in L1 creates a difficulty for the learner in L2?
- What is the effect of each of the noted areas of difficulty on interpretation of meaning by a native speaker of English?
- What is the learner's knowledge of the syntactic structure of L1, which causes difficulty in L2?
- What is the learner's knowledge of the syntactic structure of L2? (Bhela, 1999)

Bhela (1999) reflected on previous research on this concept of native language interference and cited research done by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen; Ellis, Carroll, Albert, and Obler; Larson-Freeman and Long; Beebe, Beardsmore, Selinker, Blum-Kulka, and Levenston; Faerch and Kasper; and Bialystock, Dordick, and Dechert. Bhela (1999) focused on all of these case studies to find L1 interference on L2 regarding syntactic structures on writing in L2 learners. Bhela (1999) tried to find more information of the concept in the research.

Bacala (2017) stated Bhela designed the research and stated that the study was not an experimental intervention. In the research, Bhela (1999) had four participants in the study: a Spanish speaking 21-year-old female, a Vietnamese-speaking 39-year-old female, a Cambodian-speaking 50-year-old female, and an Italian-speaking 65-year-old male. All participants in the study were monolingual. The researcher had the subjects write a story about two sets of pictures that were shown. There was no time limit, but the subjects had to write the story in a logical sequence in relation to the pictures that were shown to them. Then, the subjects were asked to write the same story, but in their own native language. After they had finished, they were to write the story in English, for a second time. The task was done in an open environment, and the subjects could interact with each other, if they wished (Bhela, 1999). After the subjects finished their writing task, they were interviewed separately and were videotaped. In the interview, they were asked to discuss their usage of specific L1 and L2 grammatical structures when they found an error. Then, they were able to correct their errors they made in the text that was written in the L2. Bhela (1999) then consulted with native language experts to analyze the subject's English texts and interpret for semantic and syntactic acceptability. Their goal was to ascertain if the L2 text had to be syntactically correct in meaning to be understood at an L2 proficiency.

The results of Bhela's (1999) case study noted that there was interference of L1 on L2 and the effects directly correspond to syntactic structure of the L1. Many of the subjects used their L1 structures in their writing to make the appropriate responses in their L2 writing texts. Although the reasoning was not deduced in the case study, it is possible that the interference was a learned phenomenon. If they learned some English at a younger age, the methodology of learning languages at that time was through the concept of Grammar-Translation method of language instruction. In the Grammar-Translation method of instruction, students would see the

new language and translate it to their own native language. Using this method, there would be many cases where the translation to the native language would not match the original text or language. By translating the translated text back into the text in the original language, it would look even more different from the original text. Regarding Bhela's (1999) case study, even though the researcher noted that it was not an experimental intervention, the case study would have been more valid and reliable if there were more subjects in the study. Also, Bhela's case study was backed up by results from previous studies by other researchers, so it is valid.

L1 interference was presented at a convention for professionals in the field of language teaching. At a convention for the Chinese Language Teachers Association of Greater New York, Sheri Zhang, a professor at the University of Ottawa, presented a research article about a learners' mother tongue in Chinese language acquisition. Zhang chose to investigate Chinese language learners who have an English or Japanese language and cultural background, and to witness if the learner's L1 is an important factor in how to develop teaching material for a mixed group of students. The study that the researcher studied helped to benefit Chinese teachers who teach Mandarin Chinese in the classroom. In her research, Zhang (2009) focused primarily on two aspects of L1-L2 relationship: positive transfer of knowledge from L1 in the process of learning L2, and negative transfer, or interference.

The method Zhang (2009) used was to collect data in a longitudinal study in Japan and North America between 2003 and 2008. The data were from the works and informal interviews with Japanese and non-Asian students. The researcher examined L2 learner errors and presented information at the convention to show how some of the errors the students made had been related to their L1.

From the results of the study, Zhang (2009) agreed with Second Language Acquisition literature and other researchers that L1 is an important factor in L2 acquisition, either as being constructive or interfering with language and culture of the target language. For example, the Japanese kana (Japanese-created written language) for the days of the week is very similar to the Chinese characters for the elements such as gold, wood, water, fire, and earth. Japanese speakers can learn Chinese more quickly because Japanese writing (Kanji) has its roots in Chinese characters.

In other research, there is a notion of influence from other tongues to L2 acquisition (Liu, 2011). The concept Liu (2011) described has relevance to cultural and L1 interference because the mother tongue, or L1, did influence the Chinese student's writing. As Liu (2011) conducted the research, the researcher found the Chinese students had made errors in verbs and sentence structure, but the meaning of what was being written down on the paper was usually correct. This applies to the concept of Chinese being more vital in meaning rather than structure (Liu, 2011). Liu (2011) conducted research on the negative transfer of Chinese to the writings of Chinese college students based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis. Based on Liu's (2011) research and on the quantitative analysis, the misspelling of words and grammar points such as the incorrect usage of verbs topped the percentages. Spelling errors were contributed by the differences in writing styles of Chinese and English. Chinese words are formed by strokes, and English words are formed by letters (Liu, 2011). So, L1 has an impact on L2 learning. Grammar points such as incorrect usage of verbs is another example of negative transfer of Chinese to English. Although Chinese sentence structure follows English sentence structure of Subject-Verb-Object (if needed), verb structure is complex in English compared to Chinese. In addition to verb structure, clauses and complex sentences are different in English compared to Chinese

(Liu, 2011). Liu (2011) stated that Chinese sentence structure is often not as complex with many clauses as English sentence structure may be formed. Liu's (2011) research can be a source to understand the L1's ability to cause interference, and why certain languages may encounter higher possibilities of interference as a result of not having Latin roots.

Interference From Where L2 Is Learned

This section of interference caused by where the L2 was learned has come from the researcher's previous published article (Bacala, 2018). Experiences in teaching in his home country, the United States, and in another country, Japan, have helped him to understand cultural interference as a cause of L2 learning difficulties. In an article by Kumagai (1994), she stated a reason for failure of Japanese people's English learning ability is little interaction with native English speakers in the largely homogenous country of Japan. This information is an example of a way to answer the question of where you learn an L2 causes cultural interference. In a homogenous country such as Japan, the concept of Japanese culture resonates strongly. Learning an L2, such as English, would be difficult because the culture and society in Japan is mainly Japanese, with only some English influence. Kumagai (1994) went on to discuss how a person's L1 sociocultural aspects can lead to interference in L2 learning because of the L2's sociocultural aspects. This is important to note because if the L2's sociocultural aspects are widely different from a person's L1 sociocultural aspects, it only makes sense interference will occur, restricting a learner of fully maximizing his or her learning efficiency. The sociocultural aspects in the United States, on the other hand, are mostly bicultural whereas the linguistic aspects are rather monolingual, with English being the base language in all aspects of society.

In an article by Wei (2009), the discussion focused on negative culture transfer occurring when the learner doesn't understand the cultural differences with the culture of L1 and L2.

Negative culture transfer can be defined as interference. Wei pointed out how culture is embedded in us and it is very difficult to remove because how we learn culture is, in a sense, characterized by ethnocentrism. Wei also cited, from Summer, a definition of ethnocentrism, which is the technical name for the view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything and all other are scaled and rated with reference to it. Our own culture is ethnocentrically transmitted to us; therefore, it is very difficult to accept other cultures (Chakraborty, 2017). Based on the definition of ethnocentrism, we base the new culture on our own, and that could cause interference. This has relevance in language because language has a strong relationship with culture. This will be explored further in this article.

Litiem and Mebrouki (2012) completed a case study on the effect of cultural interference on the EFL learners' speaking skill. In their case study, Litiem and Mebrouki wanted to explore the possibility of cultural interference on a foreign language learner's speaking skill. Their subjects were Arab learners of English. They came up with several interesting points regarding language learning. They noted production problems occurred when the learner formulated an idea in Arabic and uttered it in English (Litiem & Mebrouki, 2012). These production problems are a clear example of cultural interference. Arabic cultural cues interfered with the production of English. Litiem and Mebrouki (2012) went further in their research by incorporating religion, which can be associated with culture, in their research. They noted their subjects were Muslim, which means Arab culture and Islam are inseparable (Litiem & Mebrouki, 2012). Since they are inseparable, the Arab students also were influenced by Muslim religion, which is a cultural significance. The research is valid because it connects culture, Muslim religion, with context to language learning.

Interference From Culture

The next set of reviews comes from the researcher's published literature reviews on interference from culture (Bacala, 2017). The next group in the literature review also comes from researchers and authors who stand by the assumption that cultural interference is the cause for difficulties in learning an L2. Cultural interference is not as widely researched as L1 interference, and it should be noted that some the reviews are not necessarily researched, formally.

Sociocultural competence. Sociocultural competence in ESL education is an important aspect and it is important in citing several research articles and works of other authors. Language and culture are closely tied to one another and have a profound influence on both verbal and nonverbal communication. Research points out four components of sociocultural competence that Celce-Marica, Dorneyi, and Thurred (1995) created: social contextual factors, stylistic appropriateness factors, cultural factors, and nonverbal-communicative factors. The cultural characteristics are important because they put into context what was spoken by students. There are examples of components in such forms of nonverbal communication, such as body language, eye contact, and use of personal space, which are an integral part of the American culture, the norms of which are implicitly understood and are often not discussed. What is important to note is that in other cultures, the meaning of the nonverbal communication has a different meaning.

Cultural aspects. Cultural aspects in language teaching were also reviewed. In the article by Peterson and Coltrane (2003), they discussed culture in L2 teaching. In their article, they quoted Goode et al. (2003) that culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group, and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations. This

definition is important because it includes language as a part of culture. So, cultural factors can inhibit fluency in learning an L2. Goode et al. (2003) in the article even quote from Krasner (1999) that linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of language to be competent in that language. In this case, Krasner is correct in that assumption, because the use of language is important in different situations. Formal and informal usage of a language is important depending on cultural situations. This article highlights the importance of culture in learning an L2.

Culture embedded in language. Even in media that is not considered to be completely research oriented, the topic of cultural interference was mentioned (Editorial, 2008). In an editorial in the Toronto Star, an anonymous writer commented on an article in the newspaper about bilingualism. The interesting point in the editorial is that the anonymous writer quoted from Stephen Krashen, the person considered to be the most well-known linguist in the world, and language acquisition. The writer quoted from Krashen that L2 hinges on “meaningful interaction in the target language” (Editorial, 2008, p. AA04). The part about the meaningful interaction is an important point, because in language learning, if there is not any meaningful interaction, a learner would have a difficult time understanding and using the L2. It is important to note this opinion comes from a writer’s response to an editorial in a newspaper, but it is important to understand the common person’s beliefs about this topic. Based on previous research from above, the student’s L1 plays a significant role in achieving fluency in L2. This is an important point to discuss in trying to find out how L1 interferes with L2.

Some papers regarding cultural interference were discussed and presented in formal presentations (Shukla, 2011). In the abstract section of a paper presented at Symbiosis Pune, June 12 by Shukla (2011), the writer discussed that language is embedded in culture. This

message had already been shown in several previous research articles presented. Shukla (2011) went on to discuss how there are differences in how world view is seen between a Westerner and an Indian. These differences are based on subtle things such as how things are perceived. Shukla (2011) also discussed how associative contexts of certain words have a different meaning in the context being used in the writer's country, India. Also, certain words that have context in English do not have context in India because the meanings or situations are not practiced or used in the country.

It is interesting how Shukla (2011) tried to eliminate cultural interference in learning an L2. This creates a gap because most research does not try to eliminate culture from language. Shukla proposed to develop textbooks that try to eliminate cultural points of view. This could be difficult, because just as the previous researchers have commented in the previous articles reviewed, language is embedded in culture. Shukla then tried to show a teaching methodology that would try to eliminate the force of culture within the study of the English language. That is a daunting task and would be a gap.

In an article by Choudhury (2014), the researcher commented on how culture can influence L2 learning in several categories. In one of the categories, listening, some students may not understand the material because of a lack of necessary cultural background knowledge of the language they have learned. In another category, vocabulary, the researcher commented language learning implies not only knowledge of its grammar rules, and the denotative meanings of words, but it also involves the culture phenomena, the way of life, habits and customs, history, and everything contained in culture (Choudhury, 2014). Regarding speaking, L2 learners should try to learn the practical use of the language they are learning and try to use the materials that may come from the daily life to use proper sentences in the proper context. Choudhury (2014) went

on to discuss cultural influences on reading. Cultural differences exist in the background information, words, sentences, and text structures, and in a set of sentences within paragraphs, they have specific meanings based on culture. This is a gap because it is linking cultural beliefs to language, which has not been normally studied.

Country culture interference. Fortunately, some formal studies were done to research the view of cultural interference. In the study conducted by Kang (1992), the researcher wanted to look at the effects of background information that is culture specific and how students inferred their background knowledge in the L2 comprehension of the text that they were reading. In the study, Kang asked 10 Korean adult L2 readers to think out loud while they were reading a short story about another culture and then answer specific after-reading questions. Kang used a qualitative analysis of the verbal reports of the students and their answers to get data to find out what inferences the subjects used to understand the L2 text.

The results of Kang's (1992) study pointed out that the student's background knowledge and inferences from their knowledge did affect the understanding of the text that was read. Also, any culture-specific schemata on interpreting the text could be lessened if the subjects tried to use other strategies instead of the strategies related to their own culture. That is an important point to note because, for example, American or Western-style schemata would not necessarily fit with Asian or Eastern-style schemata.

How people use expressions, verbal and nonverbal, can also be country specific. Brown and Gullberg (2008) studied the domain of manner of motion in monolingual Japanese and English speakers and Japanese speakers with intermediate knowledge of English. Their case study was interesting because they had four research groups: monolingual Japanese speakers living in Japan, native Japanese speakers with intermediate knowledge of English living in

Japan, native Japanese speakers with intermediate knowledge of English living in the United States, and monolingual English speakers living in the United States. Their sample categories were intriguing because they also tested for cultural influence. Country influence can affect and interfere with language learning. The results of their study concluded the Japanese-English speakers had more expressions of manner and could encode manner expressions more often than monolingual Japanese speakers (Brown & Gullberg, 2008). This is partly based on the understanding of Japanese and Western cultures. As this research was rather old, the concept should be reresearched, which will help fill the gap.

Cultural images may also affect learning an L2. In the study by Taylor (2017), he researched the effects of cultural images in L2 speech performance. In the study, he studied 22 Japanese undergraduate university students on their ability to describe the cultural images shown to them. The cultural images come from the student's native background, Japan, from American or Western culture, and images of animals. In the images, certain behaviors such as eating in groups, eating in the home, and so forth, were shown. It was interesting to point out the Japanese cultural images, labeled C1, impaired the L2 speech performance of the Japanese students compared to the American or Western images, labeled C2; and the animal images, labeled C3 (Taylor, 2017). This can have the pretense that the cultural images need to match the proper language and because the C1 images may not necessarily match the L2 concepts, this could cause interference. This is an interesting subpoint in addressing cultural interference. As culture and language are considered inseparable, it might be important to use the correct cultural images related to the language context being used.

In the research by Mishina-Mori, Nagai, and Yujobo (2018), they studied if there is an indication of cross-linguistic influence in expressions among school-age Japanese and English

bilingual learners, and, if the expressions are ambiguous, do they predict it to be transferable to both languages. This research on expressions could be related to the previous research by Brown and Gullberg (2008). In their research, Mishina-Mori et al. (2018) completed case studies of seven bilingual children who were exposed to Japanese and English prior to the age of 3. In their studies, Mishina-Mori et al. concluded there were incidents of cross-linguistic influence in using certain expressions in bilingual school-age children. Japanese is considered an ambiguous language structure and the use of expressions make it less ambiguous. English, on the other hand, is an unambiguous language, so the use of expressions may not be necessary unless the context may be important or relevant. They also concluded learning two languages at the same time causes interference because of the two languages trying to influence the learning of the child (Mishina-Mori et al., 2018).

Classroom culture. Some books also document classroom cultural interference. In the chapter of the book edited by Kirsten Malmkjær and John Williams, Allwright (1995) discussed a common experience in which students are inhibited to ask questions in the classroom. In some cultures, this inhibition is stronger than others. An example of a culture in which inhibition in the classroom is especially strong is in the Japanese school system. Allwright (1995) pointed out an important detail that most other linguists often do not discuss or research.

What is interesting to note in the chapter by Allwright (1995) is that the author talks about how certain methodologies that were introduced during that time increased the concept of why contextual factors are so important in L2 acquisition. Communicative Language Teaching was formulated to teach that language is to help formulate social contexts in different situations. Communicative Language Teaching is the methodology that is currently used throughout the world, and countries such as Japan and Korea are using this methodology to help increase

language learning for their students. The Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program and English Program in Korea work to provide Communicative Language Teaching to the students while teaching culture, which is the main point.

Classroom culture is usually dictated by the one teaching the class, and the article by Saito et al. (2017) showed their research in studying how teachers rate their students. In rating students, teachers have a direct influence on how a student understands and uses a language. This can cause interference issues if the student does not agree or follow the teaching or advice of the teacher. For this research, Saito et al. tested on comprehensibility of pronunciation and lexical aspects of comprehensibility. For the comprehensibility of pronunciation, they collected speech samples of 40 native French speakers' descriptions of an eight-frame cartoon narrative they previously used in their group's older research articles (Saito et al., 2017). Using the samples, Saito et al. gathered five expert raters and five novice raters to evaluate the samples and give appropriate evaluations of the student speech samples. All raters were students at the same university and the university was in a bilingual area in Montreal, Canada (Saito et al., 2017). As for the lexical aspects of comprehensibility, the same methods were used as the pronunciation experiment above, but with a new set of expert and novice raters. After their evaluations were completed, the research team concluded with these remarks. In general, comprehensibility scores given by expert graders were more lenient than novice graders when evaluating student speeches (Saito et al., 2017). Saito et al. cited other researchers' articles in stating expert graders are more lenient based on their own experience and familiarity of different forms of L2 learners. Regarding lexical influences, Saito et al. (2017) noticed some differences. Novice raters tended to judge lexical influences of comprehensibility primarily regarding lexical diversity, whereas expert raters tended to judge based on how many different words used and whether they used

them in a contextually appropriate manner (Saito et al., 2017). This makes sense, as expert graders are looking for more detailed, comprehensive output rather than just using form in speech. The team also concluded expert raters make a greater effort to understand what L2 speakers intend to convey, lexically speaking, even if some of the spoken words are contextually or conceptually inappropriate (Saito et al., 2017). The novice graders just look at surface-level characteristics, or just the base level of language production (Saito et al., 2017). There has not been much research on how teachers rate their students and if this can cause cultural difficulties for the students, so this is considered a gap.

A teacher's training before teaching in the classroom and inappropriate textbooks are also examples of classroom culture interfering with student learners. In Alaraj's (2016) article, the researcher wanted to find out the problems and difficulties students had with learning EFL. Alaraj sampled students in their first year at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. There were 300 students in the sample, split into 12 sections, with 25 male students in each section. Alaraj (2016) interviewed each student to get the required data, asking questions to discover the problems the Saudi students had learning English. The questions asked were based on the following premise: whether students are convinced and have an actual desire to learn English, problems and difficulties that may make them to fail to acquire EFL, and the first problem and later problems faced by them to learn English (Alaraj, 2016). As for the results of the study, Alaraj (2016) concluded most students studied really do want to study English. In addition, for the point regarding problems and difficulties, most students commented on insufficient exposure to the language, teachers' lack of seriousness or training, lack of environmental motivation, and inappropriate textbooks as the cause of the problems and difficulties (Alaraj, 2016). English educators who are Japanese may not have enough training,

especially if they were not taught in the United States, or other Western countries. Several of these points relate to classroom interference. Sufficient exposure to the language must be accomplished in the classroom. Without it, the language will not be exposed and used thoroughly. The teacher's lack of seriousness or training is a crucial point. Teaching can be considered a serious profession. Teachers have the responsibility to teach curricula or other matters in the classroom. Without the proper training, teachers cannot be effective in teaching the required skills. Having inappropriate textbooks also is a classroom matter, and teachers have the responsibility of choosing the appropriate textbooks. Of course, the teacher may be impeded because of the school's curricula or other matters, but the teacher must try to create supplements to make up for the difficulties, and they may not have the resources to complete their supplements. Here is another matter where classroom culture really affects L2 learners and may cause interference.

Graders or teachers have preferences that may cause interference for students if they do not attend to the preferences. In the study by Wong (2018), she studied a group of nonnative EFL teachers in Hong Kong to see whether native English norm is their preference for teaching and learning. It has been known in many places around the world, when English, especially conversational English, is being taught to nonnative English speakers, there is a strong tendency or favoritism for standard English. There still is a debate as to what is standard English, but for the most part, standard English would be British or American English. Wong (2018) wanted to find out if nonnative preservice EFL teachers had a preference for which English norm they should use in the classroom and see if they could really sense when the preferred or nonpreferred English used in sound recordings or written work matched their perceived preference. Wong's research questions included whether preservice EFL teachers preferred native English to be the

model of teaching and learning, which countries' English accents they preferred, and if they could truly identify the preferred accent in the study (Wong, 2018). She included three instruments in her design of the research: a listening task, a survey questionnaire, and a focus group interview (Wong, 2018). In her study, she had 21 third-year students from a teacher training institute in Hong Kong, and they were used for her study (Wong, 2018). She had them fill out a questionnaire, listen to a set of video clips with different varieties of performers having different accents, and then form a focus group interview to discuss the information (Wong, 2018). The results of her research are listed next. As to whether preservice EFL teachers preferred native English to be the model, they preferred the native English accent. There were many reasons for this, for example, native English leads to effective communication, or career enhancement (Wong, 2018). As to which English accent was the preference, many preferred the British, UK accent. Wong (2018) went on to comment that the test subjects all preferred the UK accent since Hong Kong was, at one point in time, an English colony, so there was an obvious preference here. The interesting thing to point out is in Wong's research of the third question, if the subjects could identify the preferred accent, the test subjects really could not identify the preferred accent in the listening tasks. Regarding the effects of students, pushing a preferred accent could cause interference issues (Wong, 2018). Students may have their own preferred accent, which might be the one that is commonly used locally. If teachers push students to speak the teacher's preferred accent quality, this could cause stress for the student, which will make it difficult for them to learn English affectively. This is where classroom culture has a negative affect for the students and could cause interference. There is not much literature on the negative effects from classroom culture, as this article mentioned, and this would be a gap in the research (Wong, 2018).

The concept of inhibition to ask questions is also highlighted in an article by Al Farabi (2015). In the article, Al Farabi stated classroom activities were a social process and change into a kind of sociocultural interaction that mediates knowledge construction that advances student framework for making sense of language experience parallel with the cultural system in which the learner and learning are located. Al Farabi (2015) pointed out the same point discussed regarding not asking questions of teachers by basing this on social hierarchy to achieve social harmony. Al Farabi also contended the classroom culture of not asking questions of the teacher in class is in place to keep within the classroom culture.

In an article by Alotaibi (2015), the researcher created a study to answer questions related to English-only classrooms, a curriculum choice used in many English-language schools throughout the world. The questions were regarding student perceptions about advantages and disadvantages of English-only instructions in the classroom, using Arabic in learning English, and preferences for the teacher's use of Arabic in the English-only classroom (Alotaibi, 2015). The usage of monolingualism or bilingualism in the classroom may enhance or reduce L2 interference, so this was the basis of this review. In one of the research questions Alotaibi (2015) wanted students to answer how they use Arabic in learning English, and what are their opinions about using Arabic in English-only classrooms, around half the participants in the research often preferred to use English-Arabic language resources. This is important to note because even within an English-only classroom, having resources in the students' L1 can be important to prevent interference. What is interesting to note in this research is although students prefer having L1 resources available in L2 instruction, it is preferred for teachers to teach only and focus using the student's target language.

Learner Background

Language instruction in learning an L1 also may or may not affect learning an L2. In the article by Tong, Lara-Alecio, Irby, Mathes, and Kwok (2008), they examined the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs and structured English immersion programs to find out the effectiveness of oral English learning. Their case study had a sample size of 800 native Spanish-speaking English Language Learners in southeastern Texas. The students all attended schools within an urban school district in Texas, and all schools participating had a TBE and structured English immersion program included. The students were also learning their native language (Spanish) while learning the target language, English, in the classroom. The students were classified into groups, TBE-E were transitional bilingual education students with enhanced learning separately in English and Spanish; TBE-T were students with typical resources that were not separated; structured English immersion-English students were similar to TBE-E students where they were separate but English was the main language of instruction; and structured English immersion-Typical were not separated, and the main language was English since it was an English immersion program. They used the Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery-Revised as their measure to assess the students on their English proficiency. The researchers were trying to ascertain if learning an L2 while learning their L1 would cause any problems. In their results, they concluded that all groups did have positive English development, which could be assumed L1 and L2 could not possibly interfere with each other's development (Tong et al., 2008).

In a similar research study by Martohardjono, Phillips, Madsen, and Schwartz (2017), they wanted to research whether heritage speakers (speakers who are naturalistically exposed to their main language since birth) differ in the way they process English compared to their first

naturally exposed language. They wanted to see if being bilingual in English altered their L1 processing skills in any certain way. The subjects for their study were 38 Spanish-English bilingual adults from New York City, U.S.A. They categorized the subjects into two groups: true heritage speakers (U.S. born, second immigrant generation adults) or late bilinguals (Latin American born, first immigrant generation adults; Martohardjono et al., 2017). They had to listen to and view something, and had to answer comprehension questions about the sentences they heard or the visual cue they saw. The subjects were hooked up to electroencephalograms and their answers and responses were recorded. After they completed their research, they concluded that both groups, true heritage speakers and late bilinguals, exhibited the same results. This helped to prove L1 and L2 don't necessarily interfere with each other, or whether L2 affected L1 or vice versa.

An article by Crowther, Trofimovich, Saito, and Isaacs (2014) discussed learner background influencing L2 comprehensibility. It is interesting to note that they initially discussed the differences between comprehensibility and accent. Two of the researchers distinguished comprehensibility based on word stress type frequency, and grammar accuracy (Crowther et al., 2014), while the other researchers focused on word stress and rhythm-constituted accent. Overall, they gathered comprehensibility as linguistic dimensions, with accent resulting from pronunciation and fluency factors. In their study, they gathered Chinese-, Hindi-Urdu-, and Farsi-speaking international students studying at a university in Canada, and they wanted to see if their L1 learning background influenced L2 comprehensibility (Crowther et al., 2014). In their research, the results showed higher rates of comprehensibility in Farsi and Hindi-Urdu speakers than Chinese speakers (Crowther et al., 2014). It is interesting to note Chinese is a tonal language that might affect syllable and stress structure. This might cause the

problems with comprehensibility, which is another example showing a speaker's cultural origin and language can affect L2 fluency and learning, which contradicts the previous research in L1 and L2 interfering with each other.

Learner background would also be influenced by their L1, which may affect learning L2. In the research by Lucas and Yiakoumetti (2017), they researched points of grammar and how they were learned, and researched whether those with some experience in the L2, those many input experiences in L2, and those with no previous input in L2 affected their usage of grammar points such as articles or plural suffixes. Their research also tried to pinpoint the learners' use of L1 in learning L2. Using L1 in L2 learning has been debated for a very long time and some researchers believe using L1 is beneficial, while others say it is not (Lucas & Yiakoumetti, 2017). In the current teaching methodologies used in English-language schools, there is a mentality of English-only in the classrooms, and what is surprising is it goes against this concept L1 usage being beneficial to L2 learning.

Developmental and psychological factors. This review on cultural interference was mentioned in a weblog that was posted on the Internet. In a blog written by a person who uses the name multilingualmania, the author gave an interesting point of view. The author stated that language interference is a myth (Multilingualmania, 2010). The author stated that language error is a developmental issue, not a linguistic issue (Multilingualmania, 2010). This point of view would support the argument that L1 is not the reason for the interference in learning L2. In addition, the developmental issue is related to culture because how a student is raised is based on his or her culture. Of course, since this review is from a weblog, there is no validity, but I wanted to include this in the literature reviews because of the issue of interference can also be a mental or psychological development issue.

Another article related to developmental factors is from Pfenninger and Singleton (2016). In the research, Pfenninger and Singleton conducted a longitudinal study in Switzerland from 2008 to 2015. The researchers wanted to see the interaction of the learning of English with German and French, which were already being learned. They were checking for the impact of onset variables on the amount of cross-linguistic influence on the type of transfer material, transfer effects in language knowledge and acquisition where transfer has previously been claimed not to occur or be relatively rare, and the source of cross-linguistic influences such as social factors (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016). Their sample used in their research was a set of 200 Swiss secondary school students, and they took part in a longitudinal study from 2008 to 2015. Of the 200 students, 89 were male and 111 were female. They were all the same age; had the same L1, which was Swiss or Standard German; were also learning French; were all in the same socioeconomic status, schools, classes, and teachers; and were all from the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The participants were separated into two groups: Early classroom learners, which were instructed according to the new model of teaching endorsed by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education, and late classroom learners, which were instructed according to an older system. The early classroom learner system consisted on learning standard German from first grade onward, English from third grade onward, and French from fifth grade onward. The late classroom learner system involved no English exposure at primary level, standard German from first grade, and French from fifth grade onward. After their research was completed, the results were as follows (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016). In finding influence of age of onset on cross-linguistic influence at the beginning and at the end of secondary school, the researchers' results showed L1 and the additional foreign language did give great influence on the later starters' written and oral production compared to early starters,

regarding lexico-semantics in the short run (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016). Regarding lexical creations and calques being indicative of higher target language proficiency, their research showed a direct correlation; early starters have a higher degree of mastery and know more words in the target language (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016). This can be considered a normal, regular response of learning a language at an earlier age, which helps to increase proficiency later. Yet, this also has a negative effect on the learner. As the researchers mentioned, higher lexical proficiency is also a significant predictor of the amount of L1 and foreign language transfer. Regarding the concept of age of onset in gaining proficiency, the researchers found there was some evidence in the beginning of secondary school, but as the students progressed to the end of secondary school, the evidence was much less (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016). Based on this research, developmental factors do influence language learning.

Psychological factors also lead to interference and the psychological factors are often culturally oriented. In a Rassaei (2015) article, the researcher investigated whether recasts-presenting information in a different style, or metalinguistic corrective feedback can benefit students with foreign language anxiety. Rassaei created the study to assess if learners with low and high foreign language anxiety benefit from recasts and metalinguistic corrective feedback and which type of recast or feedback was more effective (Rassaei, 2015). The results of the study concluded the high anxiety learners can benefit from recasts while the low anxiety learners are able to benefit from both recasts and multilinguistic corrective feedback (Rassaei, 2015). Anxiety is a psychological phenomenon, so this form of interference is a personal, cultural phenomenon.

Summary

Based on the literature review, it can be seen there is much research on L1 interference. L1 interference has been known for many years and it can easily be researched because of the

concrete means of analysis. Understanding the components of language, grammar, words, writing, phonemes, sentence structure, etc., help to provide a clear-cut evidence of interference. In addition, dialects within a person's L1 can cause interference, as the previous research mentioned in the literature review prove. Yet, when it comes to cultural interference, it is not so clear cut. Interference from where the L2 is learned can be based on sociocultural aspects. Yet, sociocultural aspects depend on the individual, so to obtain a quantitative result may be difficult.

In addition, to remove culture from language learning would be difficult because language comes from culture. This was explored in the articles by Wei (2009) and Litiem and Mebrouki (2012). Wei's (2009) research into negative culture transfer proved this point. Culture transfer can also come from the language depicted in the culture. Culture alone could have a role in interference based on the reviews of interference from culture. Being competent in an individual's sociocultural competence helps deflect or can cause interference. Cultural factors such as thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners or interacting, and roles (Goode et al., 2003) are the basis of culture and not knowing them can cause interference. Culture is also embedded in language and this has importance in meaningful interaction in the target language (Editorial, 2008). This concept of culture embedded in language is repeated in a formal presentation (Shukla, 2011). Culture also influences L2 learning because it affects all aspects of language.

The culture of a country also can cause interference. A student's country background knowledge influences student's reading comprehensibility. Learning strategies used in one country is based on its cultural beliefs, and to try to use them in another country may not be valid because of the differences in cultural ways of learning. Cultural images may also interfere in language learning. A specific cultural image paired with a specific cultural language point must

be the same. If the student sees an image from his or her own culture, it may cause interference in relating it to the L2 concept or idea.

Classroom culture also plays a role in interference. As Allwright (1995) stated, inhibition to ask questions in an environment where teachers always want students to ask questions can be cited as a way of interference. Teachers can play a role in interference issues also. A teacher's preferred English accent choice could cause interference if the students do not agree with the preferred accent choice. It might not sound natural, based on the student's cultural background. Classroom environment, textbooks, or teacher motivation or training may also account for the interference. Not establishing a classroom environment where the L2 is consistently being taught and used could provide interference issues since the student may not see the benefit in learning the language. Also, if the teacher does not provide the proper motivation, the students may also not be motivated to learn the language. Additionally, if the teacher is not properly trained, the effects on the students could cause interference. In addition, the usage of an English-only classroom can serve to interfere in language learning. Giving the students the inability to use their L1 in an L2 classroom could cause interference in learning some key concepts. Also, the teachers who teach the students can have influence on a student's L2 learning ability. As seen in the research, a grader's ability to comprehensibly understand the student's speech can be beneficial or detrimental to the student learning the language.

The learners own cultural and individual background may or may not cause interference. As in the first two studies in this section, L1 and L2 do not exhibit any interference with each other. In later research, there seems to be some sort of interference. Some languages' backgrounds can cause interference in points such as speaking. Using the correct word stress type frequency and grammar accuracy help to improve comprehensibility, but when students do

not use the correct stress and grammatical accuracy, it can cause problems for the listener, thus adding to interference. Learner background also influences learning of L2 because how the L1 was taught might be different from how the L2 is taught. This is mentioned in the article by Lucas and Yiakoumetti (2017). The learner's background of learning L1 affects learning L2, so it may be important to incorporate L1 into L2 by allowing students to use their L1 in learning L2. This goes against the notion of the English-only classroom.

The last factor in cultural interference involves developmental and psychological factors. The age of onset of learning another language can have effects on the learning of an L2. If learning more than one language while learning the target language is being attempted, based on the age of onset and the length of time required to learn the language, can have ill-fated results. Research from Pfenninger and Singleton (2016) was created to test the impact certain variables have on language learning, the transfer of language knowledge into the different languages, and cross-linguistic influences based on social characteristics between the students. Pfenninger and Singleton's research showed the earlier the age of onset regarding language learning, the better the result would be. It also proved the earlier a student learns the language, the more proficient he or she becomes at an earlier age to master the language. Yet, the research by Pfenninger and Singleton (2016) also showed the earlier the proficiency, the earlier it would be to transfer that proficiency into another language they would study. This transfer would cause interference. Language development and psychological issues such as anxiety can help to accent interference in language learning. Developmental and psychological factors, while obvious, need to be discussed because they can also cause interference for students learning another language.

Chapter 3

Methodology

In Chapter 3, the researcher goes into detail about the research design and approach, participants used in the study, data collection techniques, data analysis and results, and concludes with final thoughts. The research conducted is a qualitative, exploratory, multicase study to assess if teachers and professors of English as an ESL, EFL, or ESOL understand if they are teaching culture while teaching language. This method of teaching culture with language could or could not cause interference in L2 learners. There were several gaps in the literature regarding teacher education issues: L1 learning style issues, classroom culture issues, and country issues (Brown & Gullberg, 2008; Choudhury, 2014; Saito et al., 2017; Shukla, 2011; Wong, 2018) and the research design was created to address these gaps. The researcher conducted interviews with English for Academic Purposes instructors and regular university professors at a private American university, following an American curriculum, in Tokyo Japan. The researcher chose this test location as a basis to check the theory of cultural interference because it is an American university with an American curriculum in a foreign country, Japan. Also, research was conducted in a Japanese university to gain more data regarding American educators in a Japan. These data also helped to devise a base in the research. The researcher then received access to a participant in Thailand to assist further in gaining relevant data. According to the Japanese government Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, the government plans to implement English-conducted lessons in order to develop an educational environment where Japanese people can acquire the necessary English skills and also international students can feel at ease to study (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, 2016). The concern is whether the Japanese students will be able to excel based on cultural

points of English based on Western countries, as the trend is most likely English based on a Japanese perspective. The American university in Japan format helped to see if this concern can be lessened. American universities in the United States were also used in the research gathering phase. The American university participants would be completing questionnaires with the same questions as those being interviewed in Japan to help with coding and triangulation.

Questionnaires were given to this group based on the proximity from the researcher. There were some limitations to the study, but information in this chapter will show the study is still considered valid and reliable based on the researcher's target questions.

Statement of the Problem

According to what is currently done in the field (Allwright, 1995; Brown & Gullberg, 200; Hackett-Jones, 2016; Krasner, 1999; Lim, 2010), research is needed on whether professors and teachers are aware of the aspects of the little c of cultural interference in language learning. With the aspects of the big C of cultural interference being widely researched because of the ease of getting quantifiable data, the little c has been largely ignored because of its abstract nature. Getting data relevant to L1 interference in L2 learning is widespread because of the ease of gaining justifiable data to show L1 interference. In addition, with much focus on the role of the student in cultural interference, this is where the gap occurs.

Upon noticing this gap, it is apparent future research in cultural interference is warranted with relationship to teachers or educators understanding or rectifying this type of interference. There has not been much research on cultural interference from the aspect of the teacher teaching students, so this research increases this breadth of knowledge. Through understanding this phenomenon, it is expected ESL, EFL, ESOL educators will gain insight on to this phenomenon and mitigate interference in L2 learners.

Research Questions

This study provides more insight into this phenomenon by studying the following research questions. The research questions, which are the focus in this study, are:

R1: How do culture and cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

R2: How do culture and cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

The purpose of this qualitative multicase study is to seek a better understanding of educator perceptions on cultural interference and how perception affects their teaching practices or curricula. The questions chosen are qualitative questions on which the researcher will be focusing. These questions are qualitative rather than quantitative because of the research design. The research design, a case study, requires research questions that have substance and form (Yin, 2014). The research questions were investigated using the instruments described below. There were three major instruments used for the study.

The first major instrument was a questionnaire. The questionnaire included a consent form and the questionnaire the subjects had to fill out. The questions were open-ended questions and the subjects answered the questions in the spaces provided to them. Since they were open-ended questions, it was expected the subjects would write their answers in short paragraph format. The subjects could fill out the questionnaire on their own time and submit their finished questionnaires in a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The researcher was not necessarily needed to be present while the questionnaire was being filled out.

The second major instrument was an interview. The interview also included a consent form, which the subjects filled out and then the researcher asked the test subject questions. The

researcher used an audio recorder to record the interview. This was important for the researcher to listen to the interview again to obtain the needed data acquired from the interview. The researcher was present while the interview was being completed and the researcher spent around 50 minutes per subject. The length of time changed based on how the subject answers the questions.

The third major instrument was field notes. Field notes are important in completing a qualitative case study research because these notes are a way of checking and confirming any trends or similarities in the test instruments. The notes also act as a way of assisting the researcher in getting the needed research data, coding the data, and compiling and comparing data and coding. The field notes were free in a sense that they were not necessarily orderly or coherent. Creating order and making notes coherent was done in later areas such as a case study summary section, or other formal section in the dissertation.

Research Design and Approach

The research design used in this research was qualitative multicase study research. A qualitative research design is valid in the case of researching cultural interference based on studies by Dasgupta (2015) and Yin (2014). Dasgupta (2015) stated qualitative designs are naturalistic because they do not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon and its participants for purposes of evaluation and the studies are based on naturally occurring activities and processes. This dissertation's researcher did not intend to manipulate the phenomenon of cultural interference but rather evaluate the concept of cultural interference among those who teach English as a second or other language to nonnative English speakers. He also expected to show natural activities and processes that form cultural interference.

Multicase study research was appropriate for this dissertation based on the conditions Dasgupta (2015) showed regarding the usefulness of case study research:

- When a phenomenon is broad and complex;
- Where the existing body of knowledge is insufficient to permit the posing of casual questions;
- When a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed; or
- When a phenomenon cannot be studied outside the context in which it occurs.

Case studies can be significant based on Yin's (2014) assumptions that exemplary case studies are those where the individual case is unusual and of public interest, and the issues are nationally important. This case study was unusual because the general concept of culture is the topic of interference in language learning. In most research, interference was based on other concrete factors such as L1, or grammatical points in the L1. Cultural interference is a broad and complex topic, as there are many forms of cultural interference that were mentioned in the literature review. While there are some parts of cultural interference, for example L1 interference, regularly being investigated in interference research, others such as classroom interference, learner background interference, or even the country's cultural aspects interfering with language learning have not been adequately researched.

The reasoning for creating a multiple case study was the appropriateness to the topic. Yin (2014) stated the rationales are critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal cases. It is important to understand each of the rationales before continuing further. A critical case involves theoretical propositions, unusual cases involve those deviating from the theoretical norms; common cases capture circumstances and conditions of everyday situations that might provide social processes related to theory; revelatory cases observe and analyze inaccessible phenomena;

and longitudinal cases study a single case at two or more different points in time (Yin, 2014). The research was an unusual case because the concept of culture was being studied, and since culture is an abstract topic, it may be difficult and unusual to study.

Another reason for choosing a multicase study method rather than another method such as a survey-based method was the information collected. A survey-based method captures perceptions and attitudes about events whereas a case study collects direct evidence (Yin, 2014). What was interesting in my research was it used both survey-based and case-study methods combined in the instrumentation. The researcher intentionally did this based on the gap regarding teacher education, L1 learning styles, classroom culture, and country issues.

The case-study research design was a better choice over other research designs. A phenomenological study, for example, is based on the phenomenological research method. Phenomenological design studies events, situations, experiences, or concepts, and raises awareness and increases insight on the phenomena (Astalin, 2013). While this format could have been chosen, the dissertation researcher intended to provide definitive explanations of cultural interference. In the ethnographical research design, this approach is related to human societies studies and has reference to geographical, religious, tribal, and lifestyle references (Astalin, 2013). While this research design could have been chosen, the problem is the length of time required to complete an ethnographic research study. Grounded theory was not chosen because of the format and intention of this research method. Grounded theory can be used to identify causal and intervening factors, and context of a particular issue (Creswell, 2018). Grounded theory research design uses a constant comparative analysis (Astalin, 2013), and this would lead to increased data analysis. Upon an initial data compilation, repeated data gathering is required with the same sets of subjects to narrow or widen a theme or concept. This research design

requires much time because the theory is grounded in the data, which may change the researcher's initial hypothesis. Based on the other research methods, the case study method was the best format for this dissertation.

Participants

In this section, there are several topics that will be discussed. The first topic is the criteria for choosing participants. The second topic is determination of sample size, which shows the reasoning behind choosing the number of participants. The following topic is the procedures for gaining access to the participants. The next topic is the methods for establishing a research-researched relationship. The last topic discusses the measures for ethical protection.

Criteria. In assessing cultural interference, it is important to focus on the teachers who teach the students. Previous research had not focused primarily on teachers, except for some research included in Chapter 2 of this dissertation (Saito et al., 2017; Wong, 2018). The participants were the teachers who instructed students. For the purposes of this dissertation, the researcher had requested permission and approval to interview professors at an American university in Tokyo, Japan, and a public university in Yokohama, Japan. The American university was unique because in the academic program, students can enroll and obtain an Associate's degree as their final degree, or they may finish two years at the Tokyo campus, then finish two more years at the main campus, in Wisconsin, U.S.A, and receive a bachelor's degree. The Tokyo campus also has a preacademic program called English for Academic Purposes, and this is for nonnative English speakers who need to study academic English to be able to manage and excel in the academic program. The Japanese university is a standardized public university with a focus on global education. The researcher also requested permission and approval to give questionnaires to educators at several American universities in the United States. Each public

university has an undergraduate and graduate program. The universities have an intensive English program for international students who need to acquire the skills necessary to attend a university in the United States.

Determining sample size. Sample size is important in qualitative multicase studies because it helps to establish validity and reliability. While doing qualitative multicase study research, it is important extrapolate codes or concepts from the data received. As mentioned in van Rijnsoever (2017), data collection and analysis should continue until the point at which no new codes or concepts emerge. Based on this, the number of samples acquired must be to the point where no new information comes from the data. This concept is important because this is where saturation occurs (van Rijnsoever, 2017). Saturation size may differ based on what is being researched. The number of research participants had been set to 15 because the researcher expected to generate five codes or possibly less. For this research, the number of those being interviewed was initially set at five while the number of participants being interviewed by questionnaires was set at 10. The researcher decided to set the number of those being researched via interviews based on the time needed to code and arrange the data the researcher expected to receive. The researcher decided to double the amount of data samples via questionnaires to balance out the accepted responses since the questionnaires would be done externally, without the supervision of the researcher. The amount of those completing the questionnaire had also been decided based on the amount of data expected. Later, the amounts for the interview and questionnaire were increased after noticing possible data saturation issues. The issues included possibly gaining more codes to seeing trends or needing to gain more codes in general.

Procedures for gaining access. In order to gain access, the researcher gained access needed to gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from William Howard Taft

University. Once the IRB request for approval was confirmed, the researcher began research. To gain access in the test sites, the researcher delivered Informed Consent letters to the site and requested to use their faculty or staff's help in gaining access to the site. In order to gain access to the samples for research, the researcher had to do the following. Since the researcher had previously worked at the institutions, he contacted those he was familiar with at the institution and requested a preliminary inquiry to the number of teachers in their ESL or English program, number of full-time and part-time staff, and the number of native-English and nonnative English-speaking teachers. The researcher understood knowing the teacher demographics would be vital in research regarding cultural interference. Later, the researcher focused on those who met the guidelines for this research: American citizens teaching English in Japan or the United States. Knowing this information was important for establishing logical themes for this research, thus gaining access to appropriate subjects for the research. The themes were an understanding of American educators in non-English speaking countries and American educators in the United States. Yin (2014) proposed establishing tests to help assess the logic behind the study: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. In comparing results, it was important to know if the teacher was a native American English-speaking teacher who has lived in an English-speaking country when compared to an American English-speaking teacher who did not live in the United States. In addition, American English-speaking educators teaching in a nonnative English-speaking cultural environment were an important variable to analyze because the researcher would see if there was any relevance in understanding cultural interference. These were the reasons the procedures for gaining access to this site were so important.

Methods for establishing researcher-researched relationship. A researcher-researched relationship is important because it has been established this relationship has been cited as

important and of considerable concern (Råheim et al., 2016). The researcher had already established a relationship with some members of each of the sites being assessed for research site locations, so this helped in establishing an effective researcher-researched relationship. When traveling to or communicating with each test site, the researcher reiterated and reminded all the test subjects the samples collected through the interviews and/or questionnaires would be kept confidential. Doing this helped ease the test subjects' concerns for any repercussions they may receive from their employer for participating in this research.

Measures for ethical protection. To ensure the participants of the research are protected physically and mentally, and to allay any later repercussions from filling out questionnaires, interviews, or interactions, the researcher took the web course from the National Institute of Health Office of Extramural Research's training course for Protecting Human Research Participants (APPENDIX A) and was certified on September 11, 2018. Based on lessons learned while taking this certification, IRB guidelines about keeping data secret, the researcher kept all data collected confidential to ensure those who participated in the study were ethically protected. Each of the subjects was given an informed consent form (APPENDIX B) which he or she had to sign in order to collect his or her data. The informed consent form included the following: The background information of the study, procedures used, confidentiality of their data, information showing that they could withdraw from the study at any time, if there would be any compensation for participating, and contacts and questions if the subjects have any questions or wanted to contact the researcher (APPENDIX C). Signing the informed consent form was verification the subject was willing to complete the questionnaire or take part in the interviews or focus group, and this also protected the participant regarding ethical issues. The consent form

was first reviewed by the dissertation advisor, then William Howard Taft University's IRB, and once approved, the research began.

The research did not risk the participants' safety in participating in the research or other issues that may occur. There was no compensation for their involvement with the study, and they signed the informed consent form verifying their participation in the research was on their own free will, without any coercion or intimidation to do so. Since all information that could be used to identify them was separated from the data they completed, the information was secure and did not have any identification connecting them to their answers. In addition, during the interview process, those participants subjected to the interview were reminded that their responses would be strictly confidential, and there was not any traceable information to them. The researcher also reminded them they could cease to continue with the interview at any time without any punishment.

Data Collection

Since the researcher conducted a qualitative exploratory case study, the means to carry this out was in the form of interviews. The researcher was implicit in trying to get a diverse collection of subjects for this research based on the concept of cultural interference. The use of teachers living in Japan and teaching at an American university was implicit because most of the professors at this university are Westerners (American, English, Australian). The use of nonnative English teachers in the American university in Japan was implicit because some of them were not from a Western country, and some were Japanese born and raised. The data gathered from teachers in the United States and those working in Japanese universities were implicit because they could help gather baseline data for the study. The teachers from the United States and other Western countries were being used because they were the baseline of the

research, as they were Westerners teaching in a non-Western country and did not fit the variables being researched.

Data collection procedures. First, the researcher sent initial letters to each of the target institutions requesting the use of their educators for the research. Once permission was received, the researcher completed two processes. For the process involving interviews, the researcher arranged and travelled to the requested institutions and arranged an area for the interview to occur. The area was off campus, or within an area of campus that was devoid of any influence or distractions for the participant. An audio recorder was prepared, and the researcher and participant engaged in a 50-minute interview. First, the informed consent form was given to the participant to fill out. Once completed and the participant agreed to completing the interview, the interview began. The interview questions (APPENDIX C) were given to the participants and their answers were audio-recorded for extrapolation and coding. It is important to note that van Rijnsoever (2017) stated the coding process in qualitative research is laborious and time consuming, and this statement validates the reason for a 50-minute interview with five open-ended questions. In addition, it was expected the codes and their meanings received would allow for saturation (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017) and this was the reason for the number of participants in the study. For the process involving questionnaires, the researcher sent a letter to a contact at the target institution, requesting the availability of their educators for the study. Once approval from the institution was granted and received, the researcher sent a postal package to contact the institution with the questionnaires, informed consent forms, and self-addressed stamped envelopes for the completed questionnaires and informed consent forms. The contact the researcher had at the university distributed the questionnaires to the relevant possible participants, and they filled out the informed consent form and questionnaire. After filling

everything out, they mailed it to the researcher. It is important to note the number of questionnaires that were sent to the institution was more than the number of interviewees at the first institution discussed to mitigate the problems of possible lost mail, or unreliable responses written in the questionnaires since the researcher would not have direct observation of the participant completing the questionnaire.

Instrumentation—Questionnaires

As for the first data gathering tool, the administration of questionnaires (APPENDIX C) was used with open-ended questions, and the researcher chose this format based on the following information. According to McGuirk and O’Neill (2016), using questionnaires that pose standardized, formally structured questions to a group of individuals can be represented as a sample of a broader population. By having the same questionnaire being passed along via interviews to many different people within the group, it would be easier to establish any trends, themes, or differences based on the answers given. The researcher also liked the use of open-ended questionnaires because qualitative, thematic data can be accumulated from them. Questionnaires usually involve a collection of quantitative and qualitative data (McGuirk & O’Neill, 2016), so this was rather advantageous. For the purposes of this dissertation, the data obtained could be used as qualitative data, but could be used again for a quantitative study, based on some questions involving a yes or no answer; if the researcher would like to use them. Questionnaires have been used consistently for conducting research, so this was an excellent tool for this dissertation.

Instrumentation—Interviews

Interviews were also another data-gathering tool the researcher chose to use, which had open-ended questions embedded in them. The questions were the same format as the questions

used in the questionnaire (APPENDIX C). Interviews could have several advantages over questionnaires. Isaac and Michael (1997) stated interviews provide greater depth, permit probing to obtain data that are more complete, help to build rapport, and provide a means of checking and assuring the effectiveness of communication. By having the open-ended questions, the researcher hoped to be able to gather more data that could be used quantitatively, with the yes and no answer, and qualitatively, with the open-ended questions, for the present study and for data in future studies. The researcher planned to use all the data-gathering sites because of the valuable data that could be obtained at these sites. The sites with the native English-speaking teachers in a culturally nonnative English-speaking environment acted as a good sample in assessing cultural interference, which was the main reason the researcher chose these test site locations.

Instrumentation—Field Notes

Field notes were required for this research based on this qualitative case-study research. With the amount of data expected coming from questionnaires and interviews, field notes helped to create a database, which was important for this case study. The field notes were obtained from taking notes from the interviews and reading and analyzing the questionnaire responses. A database was created from the notes obtained in the field notes. A case-study database is a separate and orderly compilation of all the data from a case study (Yin, 2014). The field notes were used to collect information for the database. The field notes were not polished, as they were used to collect any data observed or recorded throughout the research. The field notes included coding and other information to help the researcher extrapolate information.

Instrumentation specifics. As for the interviews, the researcher conducted individual interviews with the participants with a maximum interview time of 50 minutes per person. The time limit was important because the teachers would most likely have a busy schedule and the

researcher did not want to intrude in their teaching or preparation time. Interview questions were given to participants with time for them to answer accordingly. The questions were open-ended in order to assess any possible trends based on similar responses or uniqueness in the subject's answers. The researcher chose this instrumentation because it had several strengths, as Yin (2014) noted. Interviews are targeted and focus directly on case-study topics, and provide explanations as well as personal views (Yin, 2014). The researcher chose this format because this type of survey created from the interviews followed the sampling procedures and the instruments used in usual interviews, and the researcher compared the survey in relation to the interview evidence given in the answers to the follow-up questions. This was the reason this research instrumentation, interviews, had open-ended questions. The open-ended question's role in the questionnaires could be analyzed in relation to the interview responses (Yin, 2014). To get a more in-depth answer, follow-up questions were given, depending on the answer received in the interview question. The interviews were recorded on audiotape to record their spoken answers they had while answering the questions. The interview group had an important task because it would be able to give more qualitative answers as compared to the responses from the questionnaire group. The open-ended questions in the interviews and questionnaires were used instead of Likert-scale questions because the open-ended format helped to avoid bias. A Likert-type scale is vulnerable to variance to biasing responses (Isaac & Michael, 1997).

Procedures and process for data collection. Data collection was in the form of interview questions within a questionnaire or qualitative-format questions embedded in the interviews. The most important element of data collection was the consent to participate. The researcher gave each participant an informed consent form and then he or she could participate by filling out the questionnaire, completing the interview, or participating in the focus group.

The researcher passed out paper copies of the questionnaires to the people in charge of their academic departments, colleges, and they handed them to the teachers, who filled them out and mailed them to me, if they wanted to participate. For the interviews, the researcher scheduled a visit to the institution and conducted interviews there based on the teacher's comfort level or conducted the interview in another area based on the participant's preference and on the availabilities of the teachers. During the interviews, the researcher recorded them on an audio recorder to record not only what they said, but also to record any verbal responses or expressions heard while answering the questions. In recording their verbal responses, it satisfied the component of direct observation, another source of evidence in data gathering. According to Yin (2014), direct observation covers actions in real time, and can cover the case's context. Subtle nonverbal movements in a test subject's actions may help to understand what they are trying to say or trying to conceal, so this can help to find the validity and reliability of their responses. These nonverbal movements were recorded in the researcher's field notes. All the procedures listed here were used only if approval was granted by the IRB of William Howard Taft University. There were no exceptions.

The role of the researcher. The researcher was employed full time as an English for Academic Purposes professor for almost two years at the American university in Japan and was employed at one of the American universities in the United States while he was an undergraduate student. Although the researcher was employed or enrolled at the locations, the dates of employment or enrollment were several years or more before 2018, so there should not be any major effects on answers from the questions or discussions in the interview or questionnaire, as participants were not a supervisor, person of charge, or student in the sites tested.

The researcher conducted the research having the desirable skills and values needed to be a good researcher. The researcher prepared good questions. The ability to pose and ask good questions is a prerequisite for case study research (Yin, 2014). The open-ended interview questions must be in a form that results in rich dialogue with the evidence needed for the validity of this research (Yin, 2014).

In addition to preparing good questions, the researcher must be a good listener. In conducting interviews, being a good listener is to hear the exact words the interviewee used, capture the mood or affective components, understand the context from which the interviewee is perceiving the world, and infer the meaning the interviewee intended (Yin, 2014). Especially in the case of the open-ended interview questions, it was important to have all these qualities to capture the essence of what the interviewee was saying. This was also the reason the interviews were audiotaped.

Another role of the researcher is to always stay adaptive. As Yin (2014) stated, researchers must remember the purpose of the case study, but must be able to adapt procedures or plans if unanticipated events occur. It might be possible the test site location would not have an adequate amount of test participants for the study. It is possible the test site might not have enough educators from the United States, which may limit the scope of the study. It is possible the test site might have no native English-speaking educators present at the time of the study. It is even possible the test site no longer gives the researcher permission to do the study. All or any of these things could happen, so in the event it did, the researcher would have to prepare and request permission from other sites available.

Credibility. The reasoning behind using the interviews and questionnaires was to increase the validity and credibility of the research. Making the questions in both the interview

and questionnaire similar ensured validity and credibility in the research. The researcher wanted to find out if the answers in the written questionnaire format, standard interview format, and even the nonverbal responses correlated to similar attitudes and responses. While asking the questions in the interview format, the researcher was aware of how he asked the questions, being as neutral as possible in asking the questions, and being completely aware of how participants responded when answering the questions. Yin (2014) stated asking good questions is a prerequisite for case study research, so it was important for the researcher to ask good questions to ensure the proper case-study method. The goal of being neutral was to prevent a tainted, biased answer to participants' responses. Then the participants could answer in the most truthful, nonbiased manner. It was also important to ensure the questions all have relevance in order to answer the research questions, which would fill the gap in the published research regarding teacher involvement, learning style, classroom culture, and country issues in cultural interference for L2 learners.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for the study used thematic analysis, triangulation, and a case-study summary in order to investigate the following research questions:

R1. How do culture and cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

R2. How do culture and cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

Data analysis included a thematic analysis of the open-ended questionnaire and interviews. The researcher used triangulation to assist in finding similarities and differences in

both the questionnaires and interviews. Finally, this information was needed in creating a case-study summary.

Thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was of major importance in the data analysis process. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterned meanings or themes in qualitative data (Braun, Clarke, & Terry, 2014). Since there was much information generated from the open-ended questions, analyzing it thematically helped to make sense of the information the researcher received through the interviews and questionnaire. The researcher audio recorded the interviews and listened to them again, in addition to transcribing them through thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Next, the researcher hand coded the transcripts into different themes or categories. Once this was accomplished, the researcher created themes that helped answer the research questions, and the thematic analysis process showed similarities in data (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Once all this analysis was complete, it helped in identifying patterns across the research questions that were deduced in the case-study summary.

Triangulation. Triangulation was a significant factor in the data analysis process. Since the researcher used two research instruments in the research, questionnaires and interviews, triangulation played an important aspect because of the multiple sources of data. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, which is a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). Since the research involved two sources of data, interviews and questionnaires, there must be a way to interpret the sources, and through triangulation, the sources were interpreted and summarized accordingly. Using the triangulation method of

analyzing the two sources of data also tests validity, which was mentioned previously. The researcher had concerns with having only one set of data for review and interpretation, so having two sets of data with the data analysis method of triangulation being used helped to ensure test validity. With triangulation being used with the thematic analysis approach to data analysis, they could be used to create a case-study summary.

Case-study summary. A case-study summary was used to assist in answering the research questions. Yin (2014) confirmed a case-study summary provides the readers with a story about the data studied and corroborated during the case study. The researcher provided a comprehensive view of the teacher's view of culture interfering with language learning, which assisted teachers in how they plan their lessons or create future curricula. This information is important for future teachers and educators of ESL, EFL, and ESOL.

Ethical Considerations

While completing the study, potential issues and ethical concerns were looked upon and addressed throughout the entire research. The researcher obtained site authorization or personal authorization from those used for data collection. The researcher had undergone a dissertation research proposal with his committee and had obtained IRB approval to conduct the study, once the proposal was confirmed and authorized. The purpose of the proposal and IRB approval contains added protection against any ethical concerns.

Other ethics concerns that were addressed were maintaining privacy and confidentiality while maintaining participant health and emotional well-being. The researcher did complete a National Institute of Health course in Protecting Human Research Participants (APPENDIX A). This course helped the researcher in understanding and addressing the concerns of participants.

The participants were required to review and sign an informed consent form (APPENDIX B), which outlined the purpose of this study, participation requirements, how they could opt out of the study, and how the researcher would protect their information. If educators opted to take part in the research, they had to know beforehand the study was voluntary and no repercussions would be given if they did not complete the questionnaire or interview. The researcher also confirmed the subjects' private information would be protected from unauthorized access. The researcher has their records in a password-protected hard disk, only accessible to the researcher completing the research.

Limitations and Delimitations

Regarding the questionnaires, there may be a limitation of participants not giving complete answers to why they chose a certain answer based on the open-ended questions. There would also be a problem with the interview question responses. Did the interviewee give an adequate response to the open-ended question? Did participants give a closed-ended answer to an open-ended question? Would their open-ended responses to the questions match? The difficulty with this limitation was to assess whether this was a valid response, or if they were just giving a response just to give an answer to a question, without any real personal reason? The researcher needed to evaluate this, and this could be considered a limitation. A major concern was assessing a common trend or theme based on the answers to the open-ended questions. To lessen the possibility of error and to limit the limitation, the research had to devise a common topic or theme when evaluating all the interviews and questionnaires and link them to related themes. The participants may also be pressured to answer the questions if their supervisor assigned them to participate in the interviews and consenting to the interviews was not of their free will. The same situation may have developed in the study using questionnaires. This was the reason the

researcher included an informed consent form that the participants had to fill out before the interview even began. By signing the form, they consented to participate and answer any questions of their own free will. They also had the right to cancel or stop the interview at any time, and this was written in the informed consent form for the participant to sign.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented a comprehensive review of the methodology that was used in this study. The problem statement was based on little research on the concept of the little c in culture causing interference in L2 learners. The study had two major research questions as listed in the Research Questions portion of this chapter. The researcher answered these research questions by implementing the data collection and data analysis process outlined in this chapter.

After the review of the literature, a qualitative research methodology was used because of the phenomenon. The phenomenon is not considered to be easily quantifiable, and the research engines used were open-ended questions; therefore, a qualitative approach was necessary to conduct this research. Since this research was qualitative in nature, the use of the case-study method in researching this phenomenon was necessary. Case-study method is valid in researching phenomenon that is nonquantifiable and abstract in nature.

In order to protect the participants of the study, the researcher took a course offered by the National Institutes of Health titled, Protecting Human Research Participants (APPENDIX A). The course was offered online and completed before the research was started. The researcher received approval from researcher's dissertation committee and the university's IRB.

The researcher noted some limitations to the study. The participants may not have fully answered the questions, whether they come from the questionnaires or the interviews. The ability to discern whether the participants gave an honest answer without any influences would make it

difficult to find truthfulness or validity. Also, within the topic grouping process, the researcher may have had difficulty in deciding which data could fit which theme or category. The researcher had to think clearly and ensure reliable and valid themes or categories. To ensure truthfulness, the researcher also required participants to fill out an informed consent form that would help the participants realize the study should be done of their own free will, and by signing the consent form, they were verifying this is so.

In Chapter 4, the results of the data collection and data analysis are presented. Within Chapter 4, the researcher provides a detailed narrative summary of the case study he presented. The data are organized by research question and use the thematic analysis approach described in Chapter 3. The results of this analysis provide a basis for discussion in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

Data Analyses and Results

Interference has been an increasingly important deterrent in L2 education. Cultural interference is one of many forms of interference in L2 education. Cultural interference can take the forms including social interference, curricular interference, school interference, and many others. Most of the current research is based on the perspective of the student. The current qualitative multicase study was necessary in order to disseminate the perspective of the educator. It was important to gain the perspective of culture and language from an educator's standpoint in order to ascertain whether they can acknowledge culture and its importance in language learning, while assisting in teaching students in order to gain fluency in the target language. Therefore, the study was conducted to address the following problem: According to current research, it is not known whether professors and teachers are aware of the aspects of the little c of cultural interference in language learning. This research has been exclusively on L1 interference, which is a big C in regard to culture (Blum & Levenston, 1978; Derakshan & Karimi, 2015; Ravetta & Brunn, 1995; Zhang, 2009). In addition, little c research has been completed (Kang, 1992; Kumagai, 1994; Neagu, 1999; Peterson & Coltrane, 2003; Sangpanasthada, 2006; Wei, 2009).

Even among the little c and big C research on interference, there has been few studies on the teacher perspective of culture. Some research focused on teacher perspective (Choudhury, 2014; Goode et al., 2003; Saito et al., 2017), but the amount compared to the amount of research on little c and big C is rather limited. Knowing the little c is important in understanding how the impact of culture affects language learning and knowing the influence of the teacher with respect to culture is where there is a gap in the research on interference. The purpose of this qualitative multicase study was to understand the concept of cultural interference regarding teacher

understanding and how knowledge of its composition can benefit teachers of ESL, EFL, or ESOL. The research study explored educators in the United States and in Japan.

To address the problem and purpose, the case study was designed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. How do cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

RQ2. How do cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

Thematic analysis was employed as the theoretical foundation of the study and guided the research methodology, design, and data collection tools, and data analysis procedures.

A qualitative multicase study was chosen as the research method and design. The strategy used to gain study participants was a purposive sampling strategy. The target population was university educators teaching university-level classes in non-English speaking countries such as Japan and in the United States, as well as English-speaking countries. From the sampling pool, a total of 35 participants were requested in Japan, non-English speaking countries, and in the United States. Of the 35 participants, 15 participants were interviewed in a one-on-one setting, while the other 20 participants were given a questionnaire to fill out. As for data collection methods, all participants were given an informed consent form, and once it was filled out completely and the participant gave authorization, the interviews or the questionnaires were given and completed. All participants were also asked to complete a demographics supplement paper to record useful data for help with the data analysis. Thematic data analysis included doing narrative data and interpreting data to identify themes within the data.

Chapter 4 provides the results of this study and answers the research questions. Descriptive data are given regarding the number of participants and some demographical information that could be gathered. This section also describes the difficulties in collecting the data. In addition, an explanation of thematic analysis details the steps used in examining the narrative data obtained from exploring the research questions, including the description of the coding process, the way codes were assigned, and frequency counts obtained from thematic coding. The data assist in ascertaining how cultural factors impact educators teaching in the United States and abroad.

Descriptive Data

This section shows the descriptive data concerning participant demographics, characteristics, and the data collected for each of the research questions. The target population for this study includes educators from colleges and universities located in the United States, Japan, and abroad. Sampling of participants was used to obtain subjects who would meet the characteristics needed to answer the questions.

Participants. The target population was college and university educators living in either the United States, Japan, and other places abroad. At the time of the case study, the desired sampling frame was 35 instructors. Of the 35 instructors, 15 were interviewed while 20 were asked to complete a questionnaire. A letter requesting participation in the study (APPENDIX A) was sent to those who could grant access to selected institutions or individuals. The participation request was sent out May 2019. There were two separate procedures for the questionnaire and interview. For the questionnaires, an envelope was sent to the people, who could grant access, which had a letter explaining the study and a packet containing a requested number of informed consent forms, questionnaires, and self-addressed stamped envelopes. For individuals, an e-mail

message was sent to them with an attachment of the letter explaining the study (APPENDIX A), an informed consent form (APPENDIX B), and questionnaires (APPENDIX C). The number of educators responding for participation in the questionnaire portion of the research was 11 of the requested 20, yielding a 55% response rate. The number of educators responding for participation in the interview portion of the study was 10 of the requested 15, yielding a 67% response rate. The combined total of research participants was 21.

Supplement to the interviews and questionnaires. After the data gathering was completed, the researcher decided more information about the demographics was important for this study, so either an e-mail message was sent, or the researcher contacted the individuals in person to ask them to fill out a demographics supplement paper (APPENDIX D). All participants were able to be contacted and completed the paper for the researcher. Participants were requested to supply the following information: gender, age range, teaching experience, experience in teaching abroad, and current education level. Table 1 provides the descriptive data for the completing the interviews and questionnaires.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

	Questionnaire *		Interview **		Total ***	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender						
Male	10	90.9	8	80.0	18	85.7
Female	1	9.1	2	20.0	3	14.3
Age Range						
18–29	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
30–49	8	72.7	9	90.0	17	81.0
50+	3	27.3	1	10.0	4	19.0
Teaching Experience						
< 10	0	0.0	5	50.0	5	23.8
11–20	7	63.6	4	40.0	11	52.4

(continued)

	Questionnaire *		Interview **		Total ***	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
21+	4	36.4	1	10.0	5	23.8
Teaching Experience Abroad						
No Experience	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
< 1–3	1	9.1	3	30.0	3	14.3
4+	11	90.9	7	70.0	18	85.7
Highest Education Level						
Bachelors	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Masters	10	90.9	7	70.0	17	81.0
Doctorate or Postgraduate	1	9.1	3	30.0	4	19.0

* $n = 11$

** $n = 10$

*** $N = 21$

Participants for the questionnaire. Questionnaire respondents were 90.9% male ($n = 10$) and 9.1% female ($n = 1$). Ages of participants were mostly 30 to 49 years old ($n = 8$, 72.7%). There were three participants who were 50 or more years old ($n = 3$, 27.3%). No participants were 18 to 29 years old. Of the questionnaire respondents, seven educators ($n = 7$, 63.6%) had 11 to 20 years total teaching experience, while four educators had more than 21 years ($n = 4$, 36.4%). All respondents had four or more years of teaching abroad ($n = 11$, 100.0%). In addition, 10 educators had at least a master's degree ($n = 10$, 90.9%), while one had a doctorate or postgraduate education ($n = 1$, 9.1%).

The questionnaire (APPENDIX C) consisted of five open-ended questions that addressed the qualitative research questions. The first question addressed the participants' awareness of the use of culture in the classroom. The second question involved the participants' willingness to include culture in their language teaching. The third question addressed their understanding of culture and language. The last question was a question directly related to the research questions, which is to check if the educators believed teaching culture with language decreases or increases a student's learning and fluency of a language.

Interview participants. Prospective interview participants were contacted via e-mail or in person. A certain set of interview participants were contacted by the dean or supervising member of their respective universities. After initially accepting the invitation, the researcher forwarded a letter informing them of the research study. Once the gatekeeper or the individual participants accepted, the researcher contacted them again to arrange an interview time. Of the initial number of prospective interview participants, 15, the number of participants who were accepted for interview was 10. Interviews were conducted in person, and they were recorded via audio recorder. The questions asked were the same questions given in the questionnaire (APPENDIX C). Researcher and participant went into a quiet room and conducted the interview. The informed consent form was first handed to the participant, who would read it and sign to give consent. Once consent was granted, interviews were started.

Interviews consisted of eight men (80.0%) and two women (20.0%). Most interview participants' ages ranged from 30 to 49 years of age ($n = 9$, 90.0%). Degree status ranged from master's degree ($n = 8$, 80.0%) to Doctorate degrees ($n = 2$, 20.0%). Five participants had less than 10 years' overall teaching experience (50.0%), while four participants had 11 to 20 years' teaching experience (40.0%). One participant had more than 20 years of experience ($n = 1$, 10.0%). As for teaching experience abroad, three participants had up to three years' overseas experience (30.0%), while seven participants had four or more years of overseas experience (70.0%).

The interview format was standardized for all interviews. First, arrangements for a quiet location was established. Then the informed consent paper was given to the participant. While the participant was reading the paper, the researcher prepared the audio recorder to use. Once the informed consent form was signed, the interview process commenced. Duration of interviews

ranged between 18 minutes 33 seconds to 46 minutes 31 seconds, with an average of 32 minutes. Ten interviews yielded 83 pages of transcribed data, with an average of eight pages per participant.

In summary, 21 participants responded to the request for participation in the research study, yielding a 60.0% return rate. Of the questionnaires passed out, 11 questionnaires were usable. The questionnaire included 10 males and one female. Many of the participants were between the ages of 30 and 49, and almost all them had at least a master's degree, with some participants having a doctorate degree. Most respondents had 11 to 20 years of teaching experience, and everyone has taught overseas for four or more years. As for those who were selected for interviews, 10 were selected and usable. The interview included eight males and two females. All participants were between the ages of 30 and 49, whereas half of the respondents had less than 10 years' teaching experience while the other half had 11 to 20 years of experience. The majority had four or more years' overseas teaching experience, and the majority had at least a master's degree. The following section explains the data analysis procedures used to answer the research questions, describes how data were managed and prepared prior to analysis, and the data analysis process used in identifying codes and themes.

Data Analysis Procedures

The research study was conducted using a thematic analysis to answer the two research questions proposed in this dissertation. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This section states the way the data were managed and prepared prior to analysis. How the data analysis was used to answer the research questions will also be detailed in this section.

Data management. The questionnaire and interview data were managed using Microsoft Office suite of products. Microsoft Excel was used in compiling the data from the codes discovered in the data. As for the questionnaires, the researcher retyped the participants' responses, word for word, on a document created in Microsoft Word. This was to ensure easier retrieval of the data. The interviews were recorded and kept in a microSD card, then downloaded to the researcher's work computer. They were then saved onto a protected hard disk for storage. Transcription of all interviews was done using the Otter.ai Internet Web site. Otter.ai is a free online Web site that transcribes meetings, interviews, lectures, and other recordings. It requires users to create a login ID, password, and is safe because it employs an HTTPS secure connection. All data were kept in secure sites either in the cloud or on a physical computer. There were also physical copies of the data kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office at his workplace. Informed consent forms were stored separately from all the data to ensure anonymity. In the researcher's field notes, a section labeled Coding was created and used as the coding manual for data analysis. Codes were created and amended, and these codes were used in analyzing the participant's information.

Preparation of data. Data for analysis were collected from the questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaire data were obtained from the completed questionnaires. Interview data were collected from the audio recordings for transcription. The following describes the preparation of data for each method used in the study.

Questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire were created from the prepared questionnaire (APPENDIX C) the researcher created. Respondents answered five questions in the form of short paragraph answers. Once the questionnaires were received, they were typed on to a Word document for easier data retrieval and to help with the coding process. There were two versions

of the data, an electronically stored Word document, and the physical document with the participant's handwritten or typed answer.

Interviews. The interviews were voice recorded using a handheld digital audio recorder. The questions for the interviews (APPENDIX C) were the same as those given in the questionnaires. Recordings were copied to the researcher's work computer, then uploaded to Otter.ai for transcription. The researcher has a secured login to the site, so the connection and uploading were done in a secure setting. Recordings were replayed with the researcher reading the transcriptions made by the Otter.ai Web site to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. All transcriptions were saved on to a secured hard disk in the researcher's work office and in a binder labeled Dissertation Q/I Transcripts.

Difficulties in collecting data. A slight problem with the collection of data through interviews was the speaking time of the respondents. On one occasion, a participant had given very short answers to the questions. Luckily, since the researcher was present, some answers the participant had given were later expanded, to help with gaining more useful data.

One of the biggest problems in collecting the data had to do with the questionnaires. The questionnaires were given mainly to participants in the United States. Since the researcher sent the gatekeepers of site locations hard copies of the informed consent forms, questionnaires, and self-addressed stamped envelopes, there could be problems with the package arriving at the site location as a result of misdirected mail or another malady. In addition, when the individual participants sent their completed responses to researcher, the same problem could happen.

The last problem would be the lag time with collecting the questionnaires and adequate responses. Using questionnaires in settings where the research does not have direct contact with the participant was troubling because the researcher was at the will of the participant. Would the

completed packet be delivered to the researcher on time? Would the participant mail a completed questionnaire? Would their responses be in short paragraph form or just simple one-word answers? This caused a bit of a headache for the researcher, but in the end the responses were adequate for the research.

Data analysis process. Thematic analysis was the qualitative data analysis approach used to complete this study. This analysis was used to find themes in the multicase study data collected from the questionnaire and interviews. Thematic analysis began when the first data had been collected. The themes were first created, then modified according to the data that were collected. The researcher followed the steps created by Braun and Clarke (2006) of familiarizing himself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and then producing the report. Searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes were a cyclical process because they would sometimes change based on the data received.

Coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes.

In creating initial codes, the researcher identified features of the data that appeared interesting to him (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and referred to the element of raw data that could be assessed. In creating the codes, the researcher had to decide if the themes he would like to create were data driven or theory driven. Braun and Clarke (2006) maintained in data-driven themes, they would be considered data dependent, but in theory-driven themes data were approached with specific questions in mind that could be coded. The researcher chose theory-driven themes, so coding was relevant to this format.

Coding was created by reading the information in both the questionnaires and interviews. Whenever similar words, phrases, or ideas occurred in the data, they were highlighted according

to the initial codes created. A special code was also written next to the location where it occurred. The data were read and reread to help in identifying codes. This continued cyclically until no more codes were conceived.

Once codes were established, searching for themes was the next part of the thematic process. The focus on themes was important, and the codes helped create the themes. Here, analysis of codes was combined to form an overarching theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Initial codes could be switched to main themes, or subthemes. All themes, whether main, sub, or those in neither category, were saved for use later.

The next part was reviewing themes. In some cases, the themes created in the initial theme creation stage were not valid themes. There was a possibility that the initial theme could be broken down into more separate themes. In either case, this stage involved reviewing the themes to distinguish more clearly themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This led to the crucial phase of defining and naming themes.

The next phase involved defining and naming themes. After creating, analyzing, and reviewing the themes, this was where they would become finalized. As Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended, this stage is where researchers should identify what is interesting about the themes and why.

Credibility. Credibility is an important meaning, especially in qualitative research. Because the questions in the questionnaire and interview were the same, they helped to ensure credibility. As Yin (2014) stated, asking good questions is a prerequisite for case study research so it will be important to ask good questions to ensure the proper case study method. Credibility was accomplished because of the following ideals.

Triangulation of data. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, which is a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources (Carter et al., 2014). To ensure triangulation, two forms of data collection were used: questionnaires and interviews. Using triangulation helped to show multiple perspectives of the data and helped to give an opportunity to analyze participant's comments during the data analysis. It also helped to ease data collection because the researcher could not visit places in the United States, because of his present location, Japan.

Rich and descriptive narratives. To ensure credibility, a complete, thorough description of the results was completed. To gain rich and descriptive narratives, the questions asked in the questionnaires and interviews were open-ended, short-paragraph answers. This ensured a complete response and helped to create codes and themes within the data.

Justification of differences. While completing the study, the researcher became aware of situations that slightly differed from the original proposal submitted. The differences occurred in the data collection. The differences did not cause any undo harm for the participants and confidentiality was still maintained to protect the participants. What follows in the next section is the differences from the original proposal.

Data collection. While completing the study, the researcher noticed important factors that should be studied, in addition to the information requested in the questions for the questionnaire and interview. These factors are gender, age, education level, years of teaching experience, and experience teaching abroad. To rectify this, a demographics supplement was distributed to the participants after receiving their questionnaires or completing their interviews. In addition, the number of questionnaires and interviews requested rose by five because there

might be a problem with obtaining saturation. The number of requested interviews rose from five to 10, and the questionnaires rose from 10 to 15. The final count for the interviews completed was 10, but the final count for the questionnaires was 11. Although the questionnaire’s count was 11, it did not affect saturation, because the reemerging themes showed consistently throughout the study. The raw data from the data sets are included in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

Raw Data Sets 1

Questionnaires							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4*	Q5**
Code	Gender	Age	Exper.	Abroad	Degree	U.S.?	Aware	Want	Cult/ Lang?	Fluency?	Inc/Dec?
HN001	M	50+	21+	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	dep. Fl.	Increase
HN002	F	30-49	21+	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	dep. Level
USM11	M	30-49	11 to 20	<1 to 3	MA	Yes	Yes	No	Maybe	No	dep. Mot.
USCA1	M	30-49	21+	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Sometimes No	No	dep. Mot.	
USCA2	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Sometimes Yes	Yes	dep. Mot.	
USC1	M	50+	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Decrease
USC2	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Sometimes Yes	dep. Fl.	dep. Mot.	
USC3	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	dep. Fl.	Increase
USC4	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	dep. Fl.	Dep. Level
USC5	M	50+	21+	4+	DR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Decrease
UST1	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Yes	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	dep. Fl.	dep. Mot.
Interviews											
LCJ1	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Japan	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	Increase
LCJ2	M	30-49	-10	< 1 to 3	MA	Japan	No	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	dep. Level
LCJ3	F	30-49	-10	< 1 to 3	MA	Japan	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	decrease
LCJ4	M	30-49	-10	4+	DR	Japan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Decrease
LCJ5	M	50+	21+	4+	MA	Japan	No	No	Maybe	Yes	Decrease
YC1	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Japan	No	No	Yes	dep. Fl.	Decrease
YC2	M	30-49	11 to 20	4+	DR	Japan	Yes	No	Maybe	dep. Fl.	dep. Mot.
YC3	F	30-49	11 to 20	4+	MA	Japan	No	No	Yes	dep. Fl.	dep. Mot.
YC4	M	30-49	-10	< 1 to 3	MA	Japan	No	Sometimes	Yes	dep. Fl.	dep. Mot.
YC5	M	30-49	-10	4+	DR	Japan	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	dep. Fl.	Increase
Younger 1-4 years			*dep. Fl.-Depends on Fluency								
Average 5-10 years			**dep. Mot.-Depends on Motivation								
Older 11+ years											

Table 3

Raw Data Sets 2

Questionnaires									
Q1	Q2		Q3		Q4		Q5		
Yes	11	Yes	6	Yes	8	Yes	3	Increase	2
No	0	No	1	No	1	No	2	Decrease	2
		Some.	4	Maybe	2	Dep. Fl.	5	Dep. Mot.	5
						Maybe	1	Dep. Level	2

(continued)

Experience	Quest.	Abroad	Quest.
less than 10	0	None	0
11–20	7	<1 to 3	1
21+	4	4+	10

Age	Quest.	Degree	Quest.
18–29	0	BA	0
30–49	8	MA	10
50+	3	DR	1

Interviews									
Q1	Q2			Q3		Q4		Q5	
Yes	5	Yes	2	Yes	7	Yes	4	Increase	2
No	5	No	4	No	0	No	0	Decrease	4
		Some.	4	Maybe	3	Dep. Fl.	5	Dep. Mot.	3
						Maybe	1	Dep. Level	1

Experience	Int.	Abroad	Int.
less than 10	5	None	0
11–20	4	<1 to 3	3
21+	1	4+	7

Age	Int.	Degree	Int.
18–29	0	BA	0
30–49	9	MA	7
50+	1	DR	3

Results

This section includes a review of the data collected, organized, and analyzed in relation to the research questions for this study. Thematic data analysis was used for this study to identify the themes based on coding and categorizing data. The data consisted of 14 codes. Each code led to enclosing the themes for the research questions. The themes were identified and based on where the data came from: The United States or another country. The codes for the themes were gathered through the set of questions given in the questionnaires and interviews.

The questions in the questionnaire and interview were the same. The reason for this was to ensure responses to questions would be equal in both formats. The questions given in both data sets with explanations as to how they relate to the research is included below:

1. When planning and/or teaching your class, are you aware if you include cultural themes, ideas, or concepts, which are related to your own native culture? How can you tell if you are aware?

This question is supposed to elicit a participant's awareness of culture in the language classroom. Understanding if they are aware or not will help in understanding their answer for the research questions.

2. Do you want to include cultural themes, ideas, or concepts, which are related to your own native culture? How have you included them or why haven't you included them.

This question's focus is on the participant's willingness to include culture in language education. Willingness helps to understand the participant's understanding of cultural impact on language education.

3. In your own experiences and beliefs, do you think culture and language are combined and important together? Why?

This question is to get a clear understanding of the participant's knowledge of culture and language. Language is a part of culture, so this question checks the participant's understanding of this point.

4. Is teaching and understanding culture important in gaining language fluency?

The question has several points of importance. First, it is to check if the participant understands the symbiotic relationship between language and culture. Next, it is to check the participant's idea of fluency. Fluency has many different meanings. It could be fluency based on the learner's true intentions for learning the language (i.e., for work or for more deeper interpersonal communication).

5. Do you think teaching culture with language studies will increase or decrease a student's ability in learning a language? Why?

The last question deals specifically with the research questions being investigated. It was important to get the responses to questions 1 to 4 in order to understand the participant's response to question 5. The codes and themes found are in Table 4.

Table 4

Themes Identified in the Study

American Educators in Japan and other foreign countries	American Educators in the United States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase—because gets in the way of class, so used as an aside - depends on level - decrease—because helps to understand cultural significance - decrease—because learning from more angles - decrease—because more enjoyable - decrease—based on pragmatics - depends on motivation - increases—because learning more than grammar and vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - depends on motivation - depends on level—difficult in the beginning, easier in the advanced stage - depends on motivation—how much the student is interested in the topic - increases—as content-specific, but also increases their ability to use L2 in a variety of contexts - depends on motivation—if students are interested, decrease - depends on motivation—it can decrease the difficulty if the student has the opportunity to sample that culture - decrease—contextual element can reduce difficulty levels - depends on motivation—culture elements...can motivate students. - increase—cause confusion and make learning the L2 more difficult - decrease—culture would likely lead to greater gains in understanding as idioms, expressions, and background content become part of their embedded knowledge - decrease—learning the culture can make the studies more enjoyable.

RQ 1: How do cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency? Several factors were noticed in the American educators in Japan respondents. The factors include getting in the way with language studies, depending on level, may help in understanding cultural significance, helps to learn the language in different angles, culture making language learning more enjoyable, cultural factors depends on student's understanding of pragmatics, cultural factors depending on student motivation, and culture is a topic in addition to grammar and vocabulary.

RQ 2: How do cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency? Several factors were noticed in the American educators in the United States respondents. The factors include dependent on motivation, depends on student levels, factors impacting if content-specific, student interest, contextual elements reducing difficulty levels, culture would likely lead to greater gains in understanding as idioms, expressions, background content become part of their embedded knowledge, and culture making language learning more enjoyable.

Summary

The qualitative multicase study explored cultural factors impacting American educators in Japan and the United States. A purposeful sample method was used to obtain participants who met the requirements for this research. The study was composed of 21 total participants, and of the 21 participants, 10 were chosen for interview participants and 11 were chosen for questionnaire participants. Data collection methods included a questionnaire and interviews. An interview worksheet procedure was implemented to ensure the research questions were addressed. Thematic data analysis was used to code, categorize, and investigate themes in the

data. A coding manual was created to record codes for all the questions, and later used to address the research questions.

The first research question identified four main themes used in deciding how cultural factors impact American educators in Japan facilitating learners gaining L2 fluency. Based on the themes, cultural factors may increase or decrease the facilitation of L2 learners. Facilitation is also dependent on a learner's motivation or level. The second research question also identified four main themes used in deciding how cultural factors have an impact on American educators in the United States. The main themes were the same as the main themes in the Japan-centered educators.

Participants illustrated similarities in the main themes that were discovered. In order to find a distinction between the two data sets, a more detailed analysis is needed to clarify the differences. As the researcher realized this in the middle of their data collection, a demographics supplement was distributed to the participants. This may help in distinguishing possible differences in the data sets. Chapter 5 discusses the results of the study with the inclusion of the demographics data and provides a clearer explanation of cultural interference's impact on teachers teaching languages.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Cultural interference has been one of the many types of interference encountered by learners of a second or other language. There have been many studies by researchers on this kind of interference. The research had focused on the student, but few studies have focused on the educator teaching the students. Whether the educator is aware is important in reducing the interference that may occur when it comes to cultural factors.

As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, educator awareness of cultural factors interfering or facilitating language study has been limited. The amount of research (Choudhury, 2014; Goode et al., 2003; Saito et al., 2017) was rather limited in teacher perspective and awareness of cultural interference. Even within the research that has a focus on the teacher, some do not explicitly focus on the teacher perspective. This focus is the goal of the research conducted. More teacher-focused research on cultural interference is warranted. The current study of educators in the United States and Japan assists in pointing this focus in a narrow setting. This narrow setting is within the confines of a country where English is the native language, and other countries where English is not the native language. The study will address the concerns and add more knowledge into the cultural interference.

The information gained in this current study is focused specifically within American educators teaching within the United States and non-Western countries such as Japan. Although this is the case, it can be used in other conditions as well. The key point is English-speaking countries versus non-English-speaking countries. From this viewpoint, the current chapter provides a summary of the data, findings, and conclusions drawn from the results of this study.

In addition, practical and future implications are discussed, in addition to recommendations for future research and practice.

Summary of the Study

The study investigated how cultural interference can increase or decrease the learning of an L2. The researcher chose this study based on his own previous research on the topic of cultural interference. There are many types of interference, but cultural interference has not been frequently researched in the linguistic studies and research. In addition, very little has been researched on the aspect of educator's knowledge or understanding of this concept. The researcher wanted to gain more knowledge on culture and educator use of this knowledge in facilitating language learning. A multicase study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1: How do cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

RQ2: How do cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?

The multicase study was conducted at several locations having important details. The first general locations were in Japan and Thailand. In Japan, the primary location was at an American university located in Tokyo, Japan. The secondary location was at a Japanese public university in Yokohama, Japan. The third location was in a university in Thailand. The next general location was in the United States. The locations were spread out in the United States, with locations in Hawaii, California, and Michigan. In all general locations, the total number of participants was 21, and all participants completed the informed consent form, participated in the interview or questionnaire, and filled out a demographic supplement after the interview or questionnaire.

The interviews were conducted with participants answering five questions in a detailed format. The participants filled out and completed an informed consent form beforehand, then after giving consent, discussed and answered the five questions. The interviews provided 5 hours and 32 minutes of recorded information and yielded 83 transcribed pages. A double-sided questionnaire document was given to participants who were assigned questionnaires. The questionnaire addressed five open-ended questions asked during the participant interviews. For the questionnaires to be valid, the participants had to answer them in short-paragraph form. This was needed to ensure a rich set of data for dissemination and triangulate this information with the interview participants.

Data management for the questionnaire and interview data were maintained using the Microsoft Office suite of products. Compiling the data codes discovered in the data was completed using Microsoft Excel. Questionnaires were transcribed, word for word, using Microsoft Word. Interview recordings were kept in a microSD card, then downloaded onto a protected hard drive for storage. Interview transcriptions were completed using the Otter.ai Web site. All data were secured in the researcher's work computer or on a secure cloud site. Informed consent forms were stored at a different location to ensure anonymity. All participants' data were given a special code to ensure anonymity. Study credibility was assured through creation of a coding manual, expert panel reviewing of the questions for the questionnaire and interview. Confidence in dependability of the questions was assured through the use of triangulation of data, with the questions in the interview and questionnaire being the same.

Thematic data analysis was the method used for analysis of the data. In order to find similar references in the data, coding was developed and used in the data dissemination process. A coding manual was created to help find themes within the codes. The next section presents a

summary and conclusions based on the results of this study. Conclusions made by the researcher are intended to add more understanding of cultural interference, with an emphasis on teacher understanding that may help facilitate L2 learners.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

This section of Chapter 5 is about the findings of the research study and significant themes being evaluated. Please note this study is specific to the study population researched, and it represents the answers of educators in select institutions in the United States, Japan, and abroad.

American educators in Japan. The first research question that was presented was: How do cultural factors impact American educators in Japan to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency? Nine codes were identified: increase because it gets in the way of class, (cultural factors) used as an aside, depends on level, (cultural factors) decrease because they help to understand cultural significance, decrease because learning from more angles, decrease because more enjoyable, decrease based on pragmatics, depends on motivation, and increases because learning more than vocabulary and grammar. From the codes, themes that came out of the data were cultural factors increase or decrease facilitation of L2 learning, depends on motivation, depends on level, and used as an aside.

The demographics supplement was used to find any differences based on age, years of teaching experience, and years of teaching experience abroad. There were five participants who had less than 10 years' overall teaching experience, and there were varied responses. Of the five participants, two noted cultural factors decrease student difficulty in learning a language, two noted cultural factors may impact L2 learning by way of level or motivation, and one noted that cultural factors would increase student difficulty in learning a language. It is important to note

the participant who said it would increase difficulty has or is currently pursuing a doctorate degree, so this may be a significant point. Of the remaining five participants, four of them had 11 to 20 years' teaching experience, two of the participants suggested cultural factors may impact L2 learning by way of motivation, one participant stated it would increase difficulty in gaining L2 fluency, and one participant stated cultural factors would decrease the difficulty in gaining L2 fluency. There was one participant who had more than 20 years of overall teaching experience who commented cultural factors would decrease the difficulty in gaining L2 fluency.

Several conclusions can be made from the data presented. By analyzing the responses to question 4 in the interviews, the highest response is cultural factors decrease the student's difficulty in learning an L2. The second highest response is cultural factors may cause difficulty in learning an L2, but it is dependent on student motivation. When cross-referencing those who stated cultural factors would decrease the difficulty in learning an L2, two participants had less than 10 years' total teaching experience. This information is important because these two participants may not have enough experience to recognize the impact of cultural factors. Another issue is education level. Of the 10 participants who took part in the interviews, three of them have a doctorate degree or are at the end stages of their doctoral program. Two participants in the doctoral degree category stated cultural factors may increase or decrease difficulty in L2 learning, whereas one participant stated cultural factors may affect L2 learners, but it is dependent on the student's motivation. Looking more deeply at the total number of years teaching, one participant in this category said it would decrease the difficulty in learning an L2. What is interesting to note is this participant has less than 10 years' total teaching experience.

Based on this information, the researcher can conclude teaching experience can be a deciding factor in whether educators can understand cultural factors have an impact on

facilitating learners gaining L2 fluency. Highest levels of education do not necessarily have significance in whether the educator understands the cultural factor's effects on student learning. In addition, teaching experience abroad can also be a strong indication on whether the idea of cultural factors is understood. It is usually assumed educators teaching abroad understand the concepts after teaching abroad for several years.

American educators in the United States. Regarding the second question—How do cultural factors impact American educators in the United States to facilitate learners gaining L2 fluency?—a questionnaire was created for this group. Upon analysis of the received questionnaires, 11 codes were established. There were several codes that were created from this data set. The first set of codes were dependent on motivation. It depends on motivation (in general); depends on motivation as to how much the student is interested in the topic; depends on motivation that will increase or decrease their facilitation of learning an L2; depends on motivation, as it can decrease the difficulty if the student has the opportunity to sample that culture; and depends on motivation in relation to cultural elements. There were some codes in relation to increasing student difficulty in learning an L2. These codes were: Cultural factors would increase difficulty because if the cultural factors are content-specific; it would also increase their understanding of their ability to use the L2 in a variety of contexts; and culture would cause confusion and make L2 learning more difficult. There were several codes for decreasing learning difficulty. The codes were: Decrease learning difficulty because learning culture could make the studies more enjoyable; and culture would likely lead to greater gains in the understanding of idioms, expressions, and background content that will become part of their embedded knowledge; and decrease difficulty because the contextual element could reduce difficulty levels. There was one participant who suggested cultural factors may affect the

facilitation of learning an L2 at certain levels because lower-level students would find it difficult in the beginning, yet advanced learners may find it helpful and easier for them to gain fluency since they are already at an advanced level. Of the 12 codes, five codes are associated with motivation, two codes are in relation to increasing difficulty in gaining fluency, three codes were noted in decreasing language learning difficulty, and one code is associating with level dependency.

Conclusions for this data set are as follows. A striking finding based on data analysis was coding associated with motivation. There were five codes in relation to motivation. The topic of motivation in learning, in general, is a rather wide topic to discuss and far beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is important to note. In the questions included in the questionnaire, another striking find was noticing the questionnaire respondents' answers to whether they are aware of cultural themes used in the classroom based on their own native or local culture. Every respondent answered yes. In the same question presented in the interviewers, it was split, 50-50, whether they are aware of cultural themes being used or planned in the classroom.

Inferring from the researcher's own experience in teaching in the United States, most educators teaching ESL or ESOL at the university level already have had several years of experience teaching abroad. These educators are more experienced in these matters. There was one questionnaire respondent who had one to four years' teaching abroad before teaching in the United States, and this respondent also noted the concerns regarding cultural factors facilitating language learning can be dependent on student motivation. So even with the limited experience teaching abroad, this respondent knew of the circumstances of motivation.

Another inference point is in relation to the participants who were interviewed. It is interesting to note three of the 10 interview participants have had less than one to three years of

experience teaching abroad. Of the three participants, two of them declared they were unaware of any cultural themes related to their own culture being used or taught in the classroom. The three participants may not have been acclimated to the presence of cultural factors in language teaching, and this has importance in their future experiences as educators. The following section discusses the significance of the results of this study and is separated into two sections: practical implications, and future implication.

Implications

The following section provides insights into how the results of this case study related to the practical and future applications of the research questions addressed in this research study. Practical implications discuss what was learned from this study and how the results may be used to assist educators teaching ESL, EFL, or ESOL in facilitating their language learners gaining L2 fluency. The section marked future implications provides the possibilities for future research on the topic of educator acknowledgement and understanding of cultural interference.

Practical implications. The results of this study clarify the importance of understanding cultural factors in facilitating the learning of an L2 by L2 learners. When noticing the years of experience teaching abroad in the American educators teaching ESL, EFL, or ESOL, this is an important factor in the understanding of cultural factors impacting L2 proficiency and fluency. Most of those educators have had four or more years of experience teaching abroad, and they acknowledge cultural factors most likely because of their overseas experience.

For the American educators teaching abroad, it is the ones who have less than four years of experience teaching overseas who are an important factor. The years of experience factor into their understanding of cultural factors affecting L2 fluency and learning. Of those with less than four years' teaching experience abroad, they also have less than 10 years of total teaching

experience. This is also a factor in their awareness of cultural interference. Less experience would mean less understanding of the factors of culture in language learning. The next section lists the implications for how this study may influence future research into teacher acknowledgment of cultural interference.

Future implications. The current study contacted university educators in the United States, Japan, and other foreign countries. The study is limited to university educators in these realms only. Another point made by this study is years of teaching experience. A large majority of educators have 11 to 20 years' total teaching experience, with a few educators having less than 10 or more than 21 years. In addition, the study seems to be limited to those educators who are 30 years of age or older. A future study should try to get a more equal representation of age ranges, total teaching experience, and total years of experience teaching abroad. The results from a more balanced study might yield different results.

When the study was first established, the data sets were five interviews and 10 questionnaires. This number of data sets was too low, based on the researcher's later finds of saturation. Any future research should have a larger data set than the set established by this researcher. The larger data set could make the study more reliable.

Another consideration for future research is to conduct a study with a wider range of locations. Most participants taught or lived in Japan, and there may be differences in the data received if participants were teaching in other countries, rather than just Japan. The researcher had limited options because of contacts were more easily obtained in Japan, for interviews.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The following discussion provides the researcher's evaluation of the study's strengths and weaknesses. Attention is given to study's theory, research design, data analysis, and results.

Information in this discussion provides the reader with considerations deserving closer inspection.

Strengths. A strength of this study is the usage of thematic analysis that aligned the study's methodology, design, data collection methods, and data analysis. In order to use thematic analysis, the researcher needed to understand the meanings of their answers. Through thematic analysis, coding was developed to create themes and the themes helped to create the similarities and differences between the data sets. When the researcher used a qualitative multicase study to investigate whether American educators in Japan or the United States understand the impact of culture in the facilitation of L2 learning, it made the research valid. The validity came from triangulating the data from the questionnaires and interviews, in addition to American-based and foreign country-based educators. The use of thematic analysis, qualitative multicase study, and triangulation all contributed to strengths in this research study.

Weaknesses. The amount of data was considered to show saturation, but the variety of data might be a weakness. With only four of the 21 respondents having less than one to three years' overseas teaching experience, it might not show a true representation of the common expectations for participants with similar numbers of overseas experience. In addition, five of the 21 participants had less than 10 years' overall teaching experience, with the majority having 11 to 20 years of overall experience. From the conclusion of this research study, another alarming acknowledgment is the gender of the participants. Of the 21 participants in this study, only three of them were female. Understanding enough about Japanese culture, in academia there is usually a higher emphasis on male educators than female educators, so this could be the reason.

However, the researcher was slightly surprised to see the same conditions for the data sets

originating from the United States. The following section includes the recommendations for future research, as well as recommendations for future practice.

Recommendations

The following section stresses the recommendations for future research and practice. Recommendations for future research include suggested areas of study requiring further examination and are based on new research needs encountered in the current study. Recommendations for future practice provide suggestions that may assist L2 educators in the United States and abroad.

Recommendations for future research. A recommendation for future research is to replicate this research with sufficiently equal data sets. The researcher believes a more even number of participants in overall teaching experience and experiences teaching abroad might have given a different set of conclusions. Getting an equal number of male and female participants might validate the study more effectively. Obtaining an equal representation regarding age may assist in validity and reliability, but this option would be difficult because most university educators are 30 years old and older. Understanding the approximate age range of those who obtain a master's degree or higher, 25 to 30 years of age, is also a good basepoint, so this would also be a difficult data set to change. The years of overall teaching experience is one factor that should be represented more equally in future research. The data sets the researcher obtained showed a bell-shaped curve of those with less than 10 and more than 21 years of experience at the lower end, and those with 11 to 20 years of experience being at the peak end of the curve. An equal representation might have given more valid and reliable results. Another important factor is the number of years of experience teaching abroad. Again, the data sets the researcher obtained had a very large majority of participants with four or more years of

experience, with several having less than one to three years, and no participants with zero years of experience teaching abroad. It would have been interesting to see responses from those with no overseas experience, because the results might have been intriguing.

Recommendations for future practice. Results of this study illustrate the importance of teaching abroad as a factor in understanding how cultural factors impact the facilitation of learners gaining L2 fluency. Those with little to no overseas teaching experience don't acknowledge the importance of culture in language studies, and as a result, may impend cultural interference onto their students. The following suggestions relate to helping educators gain an understanding of cultural factors and to reduce cultural interference in their students:

- Gain overseas teaching experience. Gaining overseas experience helps the educator understand the pitfalls of not being aware of culture being intentionally or unintentionally taught.
- Gain linguistic cultural knowledge. Gaining linguistic cultural knowledge can help the educator understand what an L2 learner is going through, and that may help the educator gain a better understanding of cultural factors. While learning another language is helpful, learning another language in the country where the L2 is considered the native language of that country is indispensable for the educator.
- Gain L2 ability. This concept is helpful for educators because they will go through the same process L2 learners are going through when learning a language. In most universities with graduate programs in teaching ESL or teaching ESOL, one of the requirements for graduation is studying for at least a year of a foreign language. If a student's graduate program does not have this, the student should pursue this on his or her own.

Information learned in this study may be useful to future L2 educators, as well as current educators. Understanding cultural interference in language learning is an important first step in facilitating learners gaining L2 fluency. It is the first of many steps to assist really students who want to learn an L2 for their education, future job prospects, or future life in another country they may call their home.

In conclusion, the research initially started as a study on cultural interference and the educator's impact of cultural interference on their students. It later morphed into an educator's understanding of the impact of cultural interference on L2 learning. In the end, it focused on cultural interference on language learning and teacher acknowledgment and adaptation. Interference because of culture, L1, where the language is learned, classroom culture, learner background, and developmental and psychological factors will always be prevalent in language learning. The key is to lessen it and facilitate the learner in learning an L2. Therefore, the educator has a responsibility in this facilitation.

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APPENDIX A

Certificate of Completion



APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Letter Form

**A Case Study on Cultural Interference on Language Learning and Teacher
Acknowledgment and Adaptation**

Date:

Dear Educator,

I am inviting you to take part in a research study designed to investigate cultural interference on language learning and teacher acknowledgment and adaptation. *Your voluntary key roles in this study would be to fill out the questionnaire and mail the completed packet to the researcher, or complete a recorded interview with the researcher.*

One of the goals of this study is to explore the relationship between an educator's understanding of cultural interference and teaching practices or curriculum.

The procedures would be for American native-English professors or educators to receive the packets, & read and fill out the questionnaire; or be interviewed by the researcher and have it recorded via audio recorder. Then, for those completing questionnaires, mail the packet in the enclosed, pre-paid envelope to the researcher's mailing address.

The records of this study would be private information. Private information herein means information ascertained by the investigator and constitutes research involving human subjects. In any sort of report that might be published, no information would be included that would make it possible to identify a participant. Only the researcher will keep and safeguard the research records. It is important for you to know that I will not use real names when I write this project. The results are completely confidential.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Your decision whether to participate would not affect your current or future relationship with the researcher or with the university. In addition, participation in this study is voluntary and you will not receive monetary compensation.

If there are any questions, contact me by telephone at +81-80-4807-7140 or by e-mail at bacalaf@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Frederick Bacala

**A Case Study on Cultural Interference on Language Learning and Teacher
Acknowledgment and Adaptation**

Participant

[Participant Name]

[Participant Address]

Prospective Research Subject

Read this consent form carefully and ask as many questions as you like before you decide whether you want to participate in this research study. You are free to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research.

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to investigate teacher acknowledgment of cultural Interference in language learning.

Frederick Navarro Bacala, a doctoral student at William Howard Taft University is conducting this study. You were selected as a possible participant because of your work as a teacher or professor of English as a Second, Other, or Foreign Language (ESL, ESOL, or EFL).

Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate.

Background Information

This investigation seeks to gain a better understanding of an educator's perceptions on cultural interference and how it affects their teaching practices or curriculum accordingly.

Procedures

Participation entails these conditions. If you are being interviewed, you will fill out this form and once you approve, we will begin the interview, in which you will be recorded via a micro audio-recorder. The interview will last approximately 50 minutes. If you are given a questionnaire, you will fill out this form and the questionnaire, then seal them in a provided envelope. After sealing

the envelope, you will mail the packet to the researcher. In both the interviews and questionnaires, your personal information will be separated from your answers and a special code will be substituted for your private information to help with anonymity. The results of this study would be used to analyze and seek a better understanding of educator's perceptions on cultural interference and how it affects their teaching practices or curriculum, accordingly.

Confidentiality

The records of this study would be considered private information. Private information herein means information ascertained by the investigator and constitutes research involving human subjects. Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect would not be made public. In any sort of report that might be published, no information would be included that would make it possible to identify a participant. Only the candidate/researcher would keep and safeguard the research records.

Voluntary Nature of this Study

Your decision whether to participate would not affect your current or future relationship with the candidate-researcher or the associated University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice. You will also be provided with a copy of the concluded dissertation, if desired, so that you have an opportunity to examine the manner in which the data are being applied.

Compensation

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You would not receive monetary compensation-reward for your participation. The personal benefits of your participation are as

mentioned in the following section.

Benefits of Participating in this Study

The possible benefits to participating in this study are gaining more knowledge on the concept of cultural interference in language learning, which may help you in your field.

Risks of Participating in this Study

There is minimal risk to participating in this study, meaning that the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. If you experience some emotional discomfort after your participation, you are invited to contact the student-researcher at the telephone number or e-mail address listed in the following section to discuss your reactions.

Contacts and Questions

You may ask any questions you have by contacting the researcher by telephone at +81-80-4807-7140 or by e-mail at bacalaf@gmail.com.

Statement of Consent

I have read the information herein, I have asked questions and received answers, and I have received a copy of this form. I consent to participate in this study.

Participant/Subject

Date

Candidate/Researcher Statement

All information contained herein is accurate. I have provided the participant with a copy of this form.

Candidate/Researcher

Date

APPENDIX C

Culture and Language Questionnaire

Directions: Please read the following statements and write a short paragraph response to your answer.

1. When planning and/or teaching your class, are you aware if you include cultural themes, ideas or concepts, which are related your own native culture? How can you tell if you are aware?

2. Do you 'want' to include cultural themes, ideas, or concepts, which are related to your own native culture? How have you included them or why haven't you included them?

3. In your own experiences and beliefs, do you think culture and language are combined and important, together? Why?

4. Is teaching and understanding culture important in gaining language 'fluency'? Why?

5. Do you think teaching culture with language studies will increase or decrease a student's difficulty in learning a language? Why?

APPENDIX D

Demographics Supplement

A Case Study on Cultural Interference on Language Learning and Teacher Acknowledgment and Adaptation

Directions: Please circle the response which is related to your own conditions.

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your age range?
 - a. 18 – 29 years old
 - b. 30 – 49 years old
 - c. 50 + years old

3. What is your experience in teaching?
 - a. Less than 10 years experience
 - b. 11 – 20 years experience
 - c. 21+ years experience

4. How many years experience do you have teaching abroad?
 - a. No experience
 - b. <1 – 3 years experience
 - c. 4+ years experience

5. What is your current education level?
 - a. At least a Bachelor's degree
 - b. At least a Master's degree
 - c. A Doctorate degree or Post Graduate studies