Facilitating Autonomy to Enhance Motivation: Examining the Effects of a Guided-Autonomy Syllabus

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Abstract

Language learning research in Japan has categorized students' motivational orientations as multifaceted and leaning towards extrinsic orientations. Meanwhile, as self-determination theory correlates intrinsic motivation to academic success, we argue that enhancing intrinsic motivation is necessary to foster autonomous learners. Many studies categorize motivational orientations, but rarely, have any used interventions to measure changes in motivation. We used the guided-autonomy syllabus design as an intervention to enhance motivation through autonomy skills training. We also introduce our 'Can-Do Booster' journal based on our C.L.A.S.S. philosophy to guide students and teachers to promote learner autonomy skills. A shortened version of the Academic Motivation Scale was used to measure the change in academic motivation of first year university students during one semester of a required English course. The results suggest the guided-autonomy syllabus in Japanese university contexts enhances intrinsic motivation if importance is placed on student-teacher relatedness. Results of our Wilcoxon analysis are discussed from a self-determination theory perspective.

1 Introduction

Necessary for the development of language acquisition is the development of learner autonomy (Little, 2007). Scharle and Szabo (2000) invoke the saying "you can bring the horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink" (p.4) to emphasize the importance of learner autonomy in which the passive presence of the language learner will not result in meaningful learning. Nevertheless, it is important for teachers in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context to not just let students study by themselves, but to also guide them towards more effective autonomous learning.

At the heart of learner autonomy lays the concept of learner motivation. Scharle and Szabo (2000) put motivation, specifically the intrinsic (IM)-extrinsic (EM) motivation continuum of the self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), at the top of their list in developing learner autonomy. Additionally, researchers have felt that motivation is an important psychological concept for meaningful learning to occur (Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002; Corder, 1973; Fukuda 2008; Jones 2006; Skehan, 1989; Vallerand et al., 1992; Van Lier, 1996). Rost (2002), in his Fundamental

Principle of Causality, which states that motivation affects effort, effort affects results, and positive results lead to an increase in ability, asserts that enhanced motivation fuels ability as a learner. Thus, instruction that not only guides learner autonomy, but one that enhances motivation as well, is highly sought after.

A plethora of research in second language learner motivation in EFL contexts has been documented suggesting change (e.g. Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002). There have been pleas for more practical research with classroom interventions to enhance motivation (Hiromori, 2006; Stout, 2008). Oxford and Shearin (1994) and Brown (2001) among others have given practical suggestions which may be applied to Japanese university EFL contexts. Similarly, this paper introduces a guided-autonomy syllabus (GAS) and examines its effects on learner motivation.

The literature on guided-autonomy seemed to have its origin in computer technology and engineering (e.g. Murphy & Singh, 2008; Thalmann, Musse, & Kallmann, 2000). Also called semi-autonomous learning (cf. Brijs & Clijsters, 2008), most of the second language acquisition (SLA) literature in guided-autonomy is concerned with CALL (Raby, 2007), self-access centers (Raby, Baille, Bressoux, & Chapelle, 2006), or out-of-class project work (Breton, 1999). As far as we know, Brenton (1999) was the first to use the term 'guided-autonomy' directly. She concluded that her guided-autonomy course "[made] students feel less teacher-dependent and more responsible for their learning" (p. 125). The studies above all had the goal of increasing student autonomy in the learning process by enhancing motivation, while transferring learning responsibility and raising consciousness towards learning in the process of decreasing teacher dependency.

As Benson (2001) notes, "teachers and educational institutions should attempt to foster autonomy through practices that will allow learners to engage in modes of learning in which this capacity can be developed" (p. 109). GAS centers on these types of skills. Nevertheless, in the Japanese university context, constraints such as the fact that face-to-face contact time is viewed as essential and ill-equipped classroom surface as issues. GAS tries to increase student autonomy through explicit teaching of learner autonomy skills such as creating goals, creating and carrying out a learning plan, and reflecting while considering psychological barriers, such as perfectionism or fear of mistakes in the traditional weekly 90-minute and 'nothing but a blackboard and desks' classroom. Ryan (1997) attempted a similar syllabus with his Japanese engineering students to foster learner autonomy. He tried to raise consciousness towards learning and introduce effective learning techniques, while giving primers in language acquisition theory. He concluded that "the course prepares students both psychologically and practically for independence" (Ryan, 1997, p. 224).

As the literature review above suggests, a classroom that enhances motivation based on developing learner autonomy skills is essential. The purpose of our paper is to introduce the GAS, as well as demonstrate how the learning motivation of Japanese EFL students is affected after a course based on GAS.

2   Motivation in Japanese EFL contexts

Students' motivation upon university entrance is often an unpleasant reality teachers must confront. Studies illustrate the prevalence of student apathy towards learning English upon university entrance (Burden, 2002), motivation peaking during high school (O'Donnell, 2003), or even an apathetic attitude upon entering high school (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2001). Possible reasons being cited are students with psychological barriers of anxiety from just being in an English classroom or fear of making mistakes (Jones, 2006; Takakubo, 2003. Jones notes secondary education as having a big influence on motivation due to the implementation of the university entrance exams. Other negative attributions from classroom experience have been found, such as lack of confidence, to be de-motivating factors (Burden, 2002; Irie, 2003; Takakubo, 2003).

Japanese students' motivational orientations in learning English are multi-faceted. Kimura et al.'s (2001) survey categorizes the motivational orientations of Japanese students into six factors, suggesting that Japanese maintain both external and internal orientations. This gives insight to the

many studies that have argued for one or the other; such as instrumental with little integrative motivation (Jones, 2006; McVeigh, 2004; Miyahara et al., 1997; Stout, 2008), mastery (Irie, 2003), performance (McGuire, 2000), as well as reading, entertainment, and personal orientations (Benson, 1991).

Most Japanese university students are coerced into required English classes (McCarty, 1995). Though students understand that English skills will give them an advantage when searching for jobs, they still only have vague ideas as to why they are required to learn English (Fukuda & Sakata, 2008). McVeigh (2004) asserts that the problem undermining negative results in foreign language education in higher education can be traced back to the motivation to learn, which is often to please someone, blaming the perfectionist attitude of Japanese, *inter alia*. McVeigh's view is one reason why teachers conclude that Japanese students are hard to motivate especially in large classes (e.g. Kimura et al., 2001).

3 Guided-Autonomy Syllabus

The traditionally taught classroom with information being passed down from the teacher who decides the goals for each class and the entire course is still the most influential fashion of learning in Japan. After years of this fashion of learning, many students are dependent on their teachers in their learning. As a result, it is hard for students to be effective autonomous learners from the outset. A course which provides students with effective autonomous learning skills is necessary.

Students cannot easily abandon their old routines of dependency. The facilitator must arrange for the students to take responsibility for their learning gradually by ensuring enriched opportunities of interesting and productive activities and resources. Additionally, teachers must create a relaxed and free-to-learn environment enabling the students to guess, discover, and learn with no fear of embarrassment and mistakes (Finch, 2000). Importantly, a teacher must have patience and share the learning experience with each student. In sum, the teacher must let learning take place in an autonomy-supportive environment. This autonomy-supportive environment enhances positive motivation and fosters learning that is more pleasurable and less anxious (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2003).

However, teachers might feel insecure, especially in the situation Jones (2006) illustrates with 50 students in a class feeling it impossible and impractical to promote autonomous learning, and any attempts would result in chaos. Furthermore, Little (1995) notes that many teachers advocate learner autonomy, but after attempts result in failure, shifting learning responsibility might seem too extreme. Instructors in Japan feel that learner autonomy is an ideal of western culture and it is not fitting for Japanese to take control of their learning, while some perceive that students would take advantage and do nothing (Little, 1995).

This negative attitude is due to the misinterpretation of autonomous learning. Researchers of autonomy often cite Holec (1981) in defining autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). However, GAS maintains Little's (2007) suggestion that autonomy is a "matter of learners doing things not on their own, but for themselves" (p. 14). GAS also follows research suggesting autonomy-supportive environments enhance positive motivation and foster more pleasurable and less anxious learning (Noels et al., 2003; Ryan & Weinstein, 2009).

3.1 C.L.A.S.S. philosophy of GAS

GAS has the purpose of introducing learner autonomy and ultimately enhancing motivation. At the core of the syllabus is the C.L.A.S.S. philosophy based on SDT and SLA principles (see Table 1). We incorporated the philosophy throughout the semester in each learning situation inside and outside of class. As the SDT (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009) maintains, we try not to undermine but enhance motivation through the concepts of Autonomy (Self-governance), Competence (Competence), and

Relatedness (Association), and as SLA research (cf. Finch, 2000; Fukuda, 2008) presents, students should have a secure environment (Security) and a goal to motivate study (Link).

Similarly, the five concepts in Clifford's (1999) learner-controlled courses gives further support for the GAS. These are: (a) identify knowledge and needs; (b) learning from peers; (c) developing a supportive climate; (d) defining content; and (e) reflection and self-assessment. Clifford's learner-controlled syllabus increases motivation, confidence, and appreciation of new ways of learning. Her five concepts mirror the C.L.A.S.S philosophy which induces: (a) 'C'onfidence – supporting needs and preferences while identifying prior knowledge; (b) a 'L'ink – a relevant goal that relates to the student; (c) 'A'ssociation – learning from each other and the teacher; (d) 'S'ecurity – a supportive environment of trust in which learners can learn through trial-and-error; and (e) 'S'elf-governance – an autonomy supportive environment in which students can interact, and work towards their goals while reflecting through self-assessment.

C	Confidence	Japanese students with a low sense of confidence (Da Silva & McInerney, 2005) need to understand and feel the possibility to learn with all negative attributions aside and use the language comfortably
L	Link	Reasons for study should be the here-and-now or the near future as opposed to after graduation or 'in the future', in other words a relevance of the language and using it: e.g. sense of purpose, (Da Silva & McInerney, 2005); giving a rationale (Jang, 2008)
A	Association	In respect to the Zone of Proximal Development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), security and association with classmates: for example, connection with teachers (Aspy & Roebuck, 1977), affiliation and social concern (Da Silva & McInerney, 2005); collaboration, (Rost, 2002), personal relationships (Dörnyei, 2001)
S	Security	Building a climate of trust and an environment in which students do not fear mistakes or feel anxiety (Finch, 2000)
S	Self-Governance	Guided-autonomy starting with courses focused on a transfer of responsibility, such as creating own study goals and introducing self-assessment (Finch, 2000; Fukuda, 2008)

Table 1: C.L.A.S.S. philosophy

Finally, Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) extensive review of learner de-motivation identified six de-motivating factors for language learners: (a) teachers (i.e. teaching style); (b) characteristics of classes (i.e. pace and focus of lesson content); (c) experiences of failure (i.e. disappointment of past attributes, relationship with teachers): (d) class environment (i.e. classmates' attitudes, insufficient school facilities); (e) class materials (i.e. suitable, interesting); and (f) lack of interest (i.e. practicality, necessity of English). The C.L.A.S.S. principles were conceived as a counter measure against these de-motivating factors (see Table 2).

De-motivators (Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009)	C.L.A.S.S Counter Measures
Teachers	*Association:* Trusting relationships with teacher and class-mates *Self-Governance:* autonomous learning making the teacher a facilitator
Class Characteristics	*Link:* Studying to achieve a clear goal in the near future making content meaningful *Self-Governance:* autonomous learning will let the student decide the pace of study
Past experiences of failure	*Competence:* activities should promote cooperation as opposed to competition *Association:* trusting relation to promote the feeling of competence
Class Environment	*Security:* a secure classroom environment *Association:* a trusting relationship with teachers and students
Class Materials	*Self-governance:* autonomously selected material *Competence:* promote a better feeling of doing any self-assigned material
Lack of Interest	*Link:* studying for one's own goal makes content interesting *Self-Governance:* autonomous learning which calls for own material selection raises interest in material chosen

Table 2: Counter measures against de-motivating factors

3.2 'Can-Do Booster' journal

A "theory of learner autonomy should tell us what it is necessary to do in order to develop autonomous language learners" (Little, 2007, p. 15). GAS is supplemented through our 'Can-Do Booster' journal[1]. With research showing journal writing to be effective towards enhancing student motivation (Duppenthaler, 2002), our worksheet was created to guide students throughout the semester and to help them feel more secure during the gradual journey towards becoming effective autonomous learners. The journal consisted of topics that focused on steps leading to more effective autonomous learning (see Table 3).

Entries	Content
No. 1. Current and Future Goals	Students try to remember long-term and short-term goals they have and/or make new ones in life and learning.
No. 2. Achieving in the past and Creating Goals No. 3. My Learning Styles No. 4. How I Stay Motivated	Students reflect on past experiences learning styles. Students also try to relate their goals to English, and re-reading this potentially helps sustain motivation.
No. 5. My Daily Plan	After recalling entries 1 to 4, students try to set a new study goal along with a study plan.
No. 6. The Learning Contract No. 7. Self-Assessments	After student-and-teacher counseling sessions, students create learning contracts which they can change anytime after assessment.
No. 8. When I'm Feeling Down	This is a reading section of the journal in that it reminds students what to do when their motivation is down trying to enhance it.
No. 9. My Happy & Positives!	Students can log in the small successes they have in their everyday life and studies.
No. 10. My Summer English Plan	Towards the end of the course, students create a plan to continue their studies autonomously with teacher guidance.

Table 3: 'Can-Do Booster' journal

3.3 Program

GAS (see Appendix 1) began teacher-centered and was opposed to a sudden jump into learner-controlled classes. The aim of the first half of the semester (six classes; 90 minutes each) was to help students find their learning preferences and goals, on top of getting used to using English through various activities for fluency and accuracy. As Scharle and Szabo (2000) note, the first step in the process of developing learner responsibility is raising awareness. Therefore, for the first half of each class, time was allotted for discussions concerning meta-learning. We discussed (a) how first and second languages are acquired, (b) the differences of accuracy and fluency practice, and (c) what students felt they could and could not do. Then, we contemplated goals, needs, wants, learning preferences and psychological barriers – such as fear of making mistakes, perfectionism, and self-handicapping (Murphey, 1998) – and various learning theories, such as the SDT and Dweck and Molden's (2007) self-theory in which we discussed the fixedness and malleability of our personal qualities.

Then, the class did activities chosen by the instructor which worked well in the past or matched the topic of the journal entry. These activities focused on showing students different ways to use and study English. The first half culminated in the design of a learning plan based on their journal entries and discussion. Class time was allotted to writing in the journal in either English or Japanese. The students were told what they wrote had no effect on their grade and were invited to write openly and as much as they needed, and were always allowed to go back and make changes, if desired. Whatever writing students did not finish, they were invited to do as homework. Throughout the course, we tried to avoid what Andrade and Williams (2009) call "anxiety-provoking situations" which hinder performance.

In the seventh class, we organized previous learning material by making a plan which was detailed (students made a weekly schedule for in- and out-of-class studies) but flexible (students were allowed to change their plans at any time). Different types of learning resources from media and textbooks to human resources were also introduced. Some students had already finished their learning plans and gathered materials by the seventh class. Others needed more time and facilitation, not finishing their plan until the tenth class. We counseled students individually or in groups until students finished their learning plans and found learning resources related to their goals for study. It should be noted here that students chose whether to study individually or in groups with similar goals.

During the remainder of the semester, several students changed schedules, and many students constantly asked questions pertaining to meta-learning which gradually changed their thinking towards SLA. For instance, one student, who had a goal of raising her score in proficiency tests, went from simply memorizing vocabulary for 90 minutes to increasing her vocabulary by reading graded-readers and reviewing vocabulary by making her own sentences. This change, she mentioned in her journal, helped her sustain motivation and retain the vocabulary better compared to her past learning experiences. GAS complies with Clifford's (1999) suggestion that "student participation in setting curriculum … [is] … fundamental" (p. 115), and that "the process of the class needs to be democratic, with students involved in decision-making" (1999, p. 117).

Finally, starting from the eighth class, students were asked to fill-out a self-assessment questionnaire on class participation at the end of every class for reflection. Students could also write any feelings, comments, or questions for the teacher for feedback. In the final meeting, students were invited to reflect on their challenges, prepare a further goal, and design a new plan for further autonomous study in the summer. This was an important step for the class in that many other classes finish with a test, presentation, or report. However, with our goal of fostering the autonomous learner, it was essential to provide them guidance for one final opportunity to continue their studies after the course. If this is done in the last class, students can receive advice and are able to continue their studies effectively.

4   Study

4.1   Research questions

This study aims to investigate the potential of GAS to enhance motivation in the Japanese university EFL context. We address the following research question: How does a guided-autonomy syllabus in a Japanese EFL context affect learners' motivation towards studying English?

4.2   Participants

The participants were first-year students from a Japanese university majoring in engineering (Group 1 N=28; Group 2 N=30). The participants were all in their first semester of a required English course. We had a convenient sample due to the courses being based on student ID numbers and assigned to the instructors by the administration.

The two courses were taught by different instructors. However, the two instructors collaborated throughout the semester and met every week after class to discuss the class, students, and progress. The differences between the two classes were that the instructor for Group 1 had an office on the campus with office hours every afternoon and collected student journals frequently which resulted in a form of detailed written communication. The other instructor did not collect the journals, but did provide feedback during the class. Both instructors used the same syllabus for the course.

4.3   Measurement

A pre- and post-survey of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) adopted from Ratelle et al. (2007) was administered to the groups in the first and last meeting. We decided to use the AMS which had been used to measure change in motivation in the past (i.e. Kuin, 1999). Vallerand, Blais, Briere and Pelletier (1989) created and validated the Echelle de Motivation en Education, and named the English version the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). The AMS was validated by Vallerand and his colleagues as they demonstrated its validity in educational research on motivation (Vallerand et al., 1989). The AMS is based on the IM-EM continuum with the addition of Amotivation (AM), the feeling of incompetence in controlling situations (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Vallerand et al. (1992) and Ryan and Deci (2000) further categorize IM into feelings of wanting to know, accomplish, and experience pleasurable stimuli. EM is learning controlled by outside forces such as rewards and punishments. They add an introjected regulation (INR) to learn, which is when the learner begins to internalize his motivations, but still feels he should learn because of an outside force, and identified regulation (IDR) which entails the learner judging the learning experience as important. INR and IDR are still considered relatively external forms of motivation in which the reason to learn is not completely internal. For instance, a student who possesses an INR is motivated to learn English, but still feels he must, for example, to graduate or get credit. A student with and IDR is learning because, for example, he feels he must because everyone around him is doing so. Finally, Honda and Sakyu (2004) validated a Japanese version of the AMS among Japanese EFL learners.

The AMS has five constructs containing four items each to measure the relatively autonomous IM and IDR and the relatively controlled EM and INR (Zhou, Ma, & Deci, 2009), and AM. The AMS consists of EM and IM which "is more applicable to foreign language learning settings where students have limited contact with the target language culture, such as countries like Japan or China" (Jones, 2006, p. 124). Honda (2005) also asserts that the IM/EM subscales are the best predictors for motivation for Japanese EFL learning. As Ratelle et al. (2007), we omitted the integrated regulations from the questionnaire due to its irrelevancy to subjects who are older adolescents and emerging adults.

All data were calculated with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS ver. 16.0J). To measure the internal consistency as an estimate of reliability among constructs on the pre-survey, the Cronbach Alpha was administered. Table 4 shows the alpha values of each construct. Construct reliability for intrinsic motivation and amotivation were maintained with over .60 reliability. A reliability level of .60 is considered lenient in studies. However, due to the low number of questions (N=20), as Nishino (2005) points out, we considered it acceptable for the present study. Thus, we discarded any inferential statistics of constructs with a reliability level of below .60. Unfortunately, our EM construct resulted in an alpha level of .24; therefore we will refrain from discussing any results beyond descriptive statistics.

Construct	N of items	N of responses	α level
EM	4	62	0.24
IM	4	62	0.91
IDR	4	62	0.77
INR	4	62	0.91
AM	4	62	0.64

Table 4: Cronbach Alpha Levels Pre-AMS

4.4   Analysis

The analysis of the pre- and post-survey of the AMS constructs would illustrate any existing changes in learner motivation. Studies have shown how Likert-scale questionnaires mistakenly analyzed as interval data are a common occurrence (Clason & Dormody, 1996; Kuzon, Urbanchek, & MaCabe, 1996), and that they should be analyzed as ordinal data because they have "rank order" and "intervals between values cannot be presumed equal" (Jamieson, 2004, p. 1212). Knapp (1990) notes "The wilcoxon tests for independent samples and for paired samples are never much less powerful than t, and when the population distribution is not normal they can be much more powerful" (p. 122). Thus, we administered the Wilcoxon's sign ranked test for our inferential statistical analysis. Finally, due to SPSS's inability to report an effect size, we will use the mean positive and negative rank differences to communicate the size of the effect (Horn, n.d.). In other words, we can see the number of positive changes. However, we manually calculated effect size by dividing the square root of the number of responses by the z-score of the Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

Through our data analysis, we tried to find any increase or decrease in academic motivation based on the constructs of the AMS. The descriptive statistics were followed by inferential statistics to find any significant changes in academic motivation. Also, we reported effect sizes to indicate how influential GAS was to each construct of the AMS.

4.5   Results

The results of our statistical analysis of each construct were calculated with SPSS for each group (see Tables 5 and 6). For Group 1, all constructs increased by an average of 0.33, except AM which decreased from the pre-survey (M = 2.10) to the post-survey (M = 1.99). The second group saw a similar increase in the EM, IDR, and INR constructs with an average of 0.16. However, the mean for the IM construct decreased by 0.09, and the mean of the AM construct increased by 0.14. To further evaluate these results, inferential analysis was conducted for all constructs excluding EM.

Measured Variable	Pre- or Posttest	N	Positive Mean Rank	Negative Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Z value	Effect Size r
IM	pre	112			3.25	0.99		
	post	112	33.85	34.27	3.47	0.89	2.12*	0.20
IDR	pre	112			3.88	0.90		
	post	112	28.46	26.77	4.17	0.79	3.39**	0.32
INR	pre	112			2.96	0.99		
	post	112	30.76	29.73	3.32	0.94	3.63***	0.34
EM	pre	112			3.34	1.16		
	post	112			3.79	0.99		
AM	pre	112			2.10	0.96		
	post	112	30.50	37.01	1.99	0.75	1.33	0.13

$*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001$

Table 5: Descriptive statistics and Wilcoxon matched pair results for Group 1

Measured Variable	Pre- or Posttest	N	Positive Mean Rank	Negative Mean Rank	Mean	SD	Z value	Effect Size r
IM	pre	118			3.57	1.09		
	post	120	29.24	29.70	3.48	0.93	1.03	0.09
IDR	pre	119			3.50	0.95		
	post	120	34.74	31.10	3.58	0.95	0.77	0.01
INR	pre	119			3.06	1.02		
	post	120	30.96	29.64	3.26	0.87	2.27*	0.21
EM	pre	119			3.35	1.02		
	post	120			3.54	1.00		
AM	pre	120			1.71	0.79		
	post	120	27.96	26.73	1.85	0.86	1.92	0.18

$*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001$

Table 6: Descriptive statistics and Wilcoxon matched pair results of Group 2

The Wilcoxon matched pairs test was conducted to measure the significance of the change in each motivational construct. First, we measured the change in participants' IM. For Group 1, the mean increased from the pre-survey (M= 3.25, SD = 0.99) to the post-survey (M= 3.47, SD = 0.89), and the results of the Wilcoxon indicated a significant difference at the 0.05 level (p = 0.03). In Group 2, the mean decreased from the pre-survey (M = 3.57, SD = 1.09) to the post-survey (M = 3.48, SD = 0.93). However, the Wilcoxon revealed that this was not significant at the 0.05 level. (p = 0.30). There were 43 positive changes with a positive mean rank difference of 33.85 which

was slightly lower than the negative rank difference (34.27) in Group 2; the number of negative changes were 24. We will discuss the results further in the discussion section below.

For the IDR construct, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs showed that the difference between the pre-survey (M = 3.88; SD = 0.90) and post-survey (M = 4.17; SD = 0.79) was significant beyond the 0.01 level (p < 0.01) for Group 1. For Group 2, though there was an increase, the Wilcoxon revealed an insignificant difference between the pre-survey (M = 3.50; SD = 0.95) and the post-survey (M = 3.58; SD = 0.95) with a p-level of 0.44. Group 1 showed 40 positive changes with a mean rank difference of 28.46 compared to the 15 negative changes with a 26.77 mean rank difference. Group 2 also showed a higher positive change (34) with a mean rank difference of 34.74. There were 31 negative changes with a mean rank difference of 31.10.

The results for the INR construct for Group 1 showed an increase from the pre-survey (M = 2.96, SD = 0.99) to the post-survey (M = 3.32, SD = 0.94.) at a significance level of beyond 0.001. The results for the second group showed an increase as well from the pre-survey (M = 3.06, SD = 1.02) to the post-survey (M = 3.26, SD = 0.87). The test of significance was positive at the 0.05 level (p = 0.02). For Group 1, the positive mean rank difference was 30.76 with 45 changes, and 15 negatives changes of a mean rank difference of 29.73. For Group 2, there were 39 positive changes with a mean rank difference of 30.96, and there were 21 negative changes with a mean rank difference of 29.64.

The two groups differed in the AM construct. Results of the Wilcoxon showed AM decreasing for Group 1. Contrastingly, Group 2 showed a increase in AM. For Group 1, the means decreased from the pre-survey (M= 2.10, SD = 0.96) to the post-survey (M= 1.99, SD = 0.75) with the Wilcoxon analysis indicating the difference is insignificant at the 0.05 level (p = 0.18). In Group 2, the mean increased from the pre-survey (M = 1.71, SD = 0.79) to the post-survey (M = 1.85, SD = 0.86). For the Group 2, the Wilcoxon test resulted in an insignificant difference slightly below the 0.05 level (p = 0.054). The negative mean rank difference of Group 1 was 37.01 with 36 changes, where as for Group 2 there were 20 changes with a rank difference of 26.73. The positive mean rank difference for Group 1 was 30.50 with 31 changes, and 34 positive changes with a group rank difference of 27.96 with 34 changes for Group 2.

In sum, the results of the Wilcoxon showed a significant increase in the IM (p < 0.05), IDR (p < 0.01), and INR (p < 0.001) constructs for Group 1. In addition, the AM of the participants decreased; however, the results were insignificant at the 0.05 level. Group 2, on the other hand, had insignificant results for IM, for which the mean declined by 0.09, and IDR, for which the mean increased by 0.08. However, both the INR and AM means increased; with INR showing significance at the 0.05 level, and AM insignificant just below the 0.05 level. The difference between these two courses is examined below. The effect sizes for the constructs which had significant results were all over 0.20 suggesting that GAS did have a small effect on certain motivational constructs.

4.6 Discussion

Our results bear important implications for GAS. While Group 1 showed an increase in IM, IDR, and INR, Group 2 displayed a decrease in IM and an increase in AM. This result led us to examine if there were any differences between the two courses.

We found the major difference between the two groups to be the amount of teacher-student communication throughout the semester. The teacher in Group 1 collected the journal for every student that finished in the class and made comments encouraging the students, giving advice or providing more written communication. The teacher in Group 1 also had an office in the campus' self-access learning center which was open throughout the day. This provided students with more oral communication and facilitation when they came to pick up materials, to get assignments for missed classes, or just to have a conversation. Certainly, this warrants further investigation. Regardless, this led us to the speculation that the difference might be associated with the SDT prin-

ciple of relatedness. Relatedness "is deeply associated with a student feeling that the teacher genuinely likes, respects, and values him or her" (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009, p. 139). This is not to say that the teacher in Group 2 did not like, respect, or value his students, but the fact that there was more contact time between the teacher and students in Group 1 was evident.

As SDT asserts, intrinsic motivation is enhanced not only through autonomy and competence, but relatedness as well (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Studies such as that of Ryan, Stiller and Lynch (1994) found that good rapport with teachers is associated to academic motivation. Reeve (2006) and Reeve and Jang (2006) found that, with autonomy-supportive teachers, students feel more relatedness towards their teachers. All this is in line with Ryan and Powelson's (1991) view two decades ago that autonomy and relatedness are fundamental to motivation and education.

For both groups, for INR, which is "still within the person, but are relatively external to the self" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.236), there were significant increases. We speculate that English skills in Japan have been perceived as a necessary skill in the job market. Since the introduction of Ministry of Education's 'Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities', Japanese tend to feel that English skills are necessary for employment and the 'internationalization' of Japan (cf. Fukuda & Sakata, 2008). Since contact time with the English language in most social situations in Japan is low, students feel that employment is one of the main reasons for their feeling it is necessary to have English skills. Likewise, IDR, which involves "behaviors that are enacted because they are considered valuable or important", scores rose. This would be consistent with the assertion that English education in Japan has a strong instrumental function (Ryan, 2009).

SDT claims that INR and IDR, though presently external, are motivational regulations that are beginning to internalize towards intrinsic motivation (Hayamizu, 1997). Hayamizu (1997) holds the view that enhancing IM in educational settings entails increasing the relatively external motivations of INR and IDR. These forms of internalization, Hayamizu notes, are needed to "help the students proceed toward intrinsic motivation on the [IM/EM] continuum" (p. 108). Our results show an increase in IDR for Group 1 and INR for both groups. Deci, Eghrarl, Patrick and Leone (1994) conclude that internalization occurs with the three contextual factors of providing meaning, giving choice, and acknowledging feeling as being key to promoting internalization. GAS constantly promoted these three factors throughout the course which could confirm our results and effectiveness of the GAS.

Though in need of further investigation, with the addition of the relatedness construct, GAS has the potential to foster learner autonomy and enhance academic motivation, as the results for Group 1 suggest. As the importance of EFL rises in Japan, so does the push and necessity for courses that foster learner autonomy skills.

To enhance IM, it is key to enhance autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This needs to be applied, especially, in the students' last years of formal education at universities, through a class that helps them to become autonomous. Fostering intrinsic motivation in the first years of their university studies would allow students to actually learn autonomously in the final two years while still having support from teachers.

Again, after years of teacher-centered lessons, students do not need a sudden jump into autonomous learning, but a gradual shift in responsibility. This shift in their learning requires acquiring an understanding of SLA, becoming objective of themselves as language learners, and allowing a chance for setting goals through trial and error, as the GAS provides. Not only students but teachers are hindered by perfectionism in wanting students to reach course goals that teachers themselves have set. Providing appropriate scaffolding for students to take the next step is necessary. This can be done by providing opportunities to become effective autonomous learners by allowing them to choose their own goals and guiding them towards effective autonomous learning.

4.7 *Limitations and further investigation*

Though the study introduces a means of classroom intervention to enhance intrinsic motivation, a more longitudinal and qualitative study, with a control group, is needed to see how long motivation can be sustained. Furthermore, the measurement of each construct or a scale to measure the effects of all C.L.A.S.S. principles might prove more meaningful. As mentioned above, considering that many universities have the goal of autonomous learning, investigation of how long students continue after the course is necessary to provide wider support for GAS. Additionally, an investigation of which factors are involved in the shift of motivation and learner autonomy is needed as well. Finally, the study would benefit from a measurement of the perceived amount of autonomy-support required or how much influence student-teacher contact time has on learner motivation.

5   Conclusion

The present study provides insights into enhancing intrinsic motivation and decreasing amotivation, using GAS. GAS aimed at fostering the development of autonomous learners, which is the goal of many university curricula. This intervention began with an attempt to enhance motivation temporarily through classes which students perceived to be enjoyable, to classes which aimed to develop intrinsic motivation through increased learner control. Our research question on how GAS affects learners' motivation to study English was answered as follows; motivation increases as more learner autonomy skills are achieved through stronger student-teacher communication. In sum, more autonomy and relatedness contributed to an increase in intrinsic motivation.

GAS also provides opportunities for teachers to enhance students' motivation in the problematic 'large classes' (Kimura et al., 2001). We assert that the bigger the class the more critical it is to introduce more learner control. Our results suggest that enhancing motivation depends on teachers and their syllabi, and not only the students themselves. GAS allowed students not only to know what and why they were learning, but to be ready psychologically and practically to engage in learning for themselves which enhanced motivation, as Ryan (1997) concludes.

Our study adds to the literature, a much needed means of practical intervention to stimulate motivation over the course of a semester in the classroom while fostering learner autonomy skills. GAS is also practical in that it attempts to enhance motivation in the usual 90-minute weekly course common in Japanese tertiary institutions, without creating any financial burdens, such as the need for teachers to buy materials or equipment.

With recent buzzwords such as 'the lifelong learner', learner autonomy in language learning is also essential. However, as Clifford (1999) maintains, "universities interested in developing lifelong learners need to provide opportunities for staff to become familiar with the philosophy of learner-controlled learning, to learn the skills to facilitate this learning: and to recognize the need of the learners at each phase of the process" (p. 127).

We would like to see more universities implement Guided-Autonomy Syllabi to enhance intrinsic motivation and promote lifelong learning. If this is not implemented, the "lack of student motivation will remain a problem in language classrooms" (Jones, 2006, p. 130). If Jones' concern is not addressed, English will remain a subject that students tend to avoid, and they will fail to develop proficiency beyond the mastery of a few idiomatic phrases.

Notes
[1] The 'Can-Do Booster' journal can be viewed at http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v8n12011/fukuda_supp.pdf.

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Appendix 1: Guided-Autonomy Syllabus

Course Outline

Course Title:
Thematic English

Course Aim:
To enhance motivation and confidence in English while developing learner autonomy skills

Course Outline:
This class will be learner-centered, in which you are at the heart of instruction. Therefore, you must always be an active participant taking positive action in your learning. We will use alternative assessment, which is self and peer assessment, as well as formative assessment from the teacher during each class for grading. You will also be graded on two study plans. There will be many activities to practice and learn English without worrying about your English level. The focus of the practicing and learning will be on affective learning and individual needs that will help you continue your studies in the future. In other words, we want to increase our confidence, motivation, attitude, and learning skills while decreasing anxiety towards English. Hopefully, we can accomplish this through collaborative and reflective learning. Finally, we will use reflective evaluation to understand our needs and goals. The most important thing to remember is to have fun and to take challenges.

Course Goals:
There are three short-term goals. First, you should always practice to improve your English in class. Do not worry about your level or compare yourself with others. You should only compare yourself with your past. Second, you will acquire new skills, such as group-work and time-management skills. Third, we want to take control and be active participants in our learning.

You also have three long-term goals. The first is to change your attitude toward English. You will never acquire English if you constantly have negative attitudes towards learning it. Second, you will try to understand how to learn from your mistakes. Third, you will develop personally through life-long learning skills, by understanding how to be an effective autonomous learner. This will be done constantly in the class, and when working on study plans, reflect on our studies, and practice outside of class.

Course Plan:

Week 1.	a. Introducing the Course
	b. Lecture and Journal Writing: Thinking of Current and Future Goals
	c. Communication Activities
	Homework. Journal Writing
Week 2.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: Thinking of Achievements in the past
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Journal Writing
Week 3.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: Thinking of Learning Styles
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Journal Writing
Week 4.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: Thinking of How to Stay Motivated
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Journal Writing
Week 5.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: My Daily Plan
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Brainstorm learning plans
Week 6.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: My Learning Contract
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Prepare study materials
Week 7 to 9.	Start individual/group study plans
	HW. Self-assessment and preparation
Week 10.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: Self-Assessments & When I'm Feeling Down
	b. Create a new Study Plan and Group Presentations of old study plan
	HW. Prepare study materials
Week 11 to 13.	Continue individual/group study plans
	HW. Self-assessment and preparation
Week 14.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: My Happy & Positives!
	b. Communication Activities
	HW. Self-assessment
Week 15.	a. Lecture and Journal writing: My Summer English Plan
	b. Reflect on the Course
	HW. REST (Resume English Studies Today)

Course Textbook:
All prints will be made and handed out by the instructor.

Course Assessment:
1. Class Participation…………….………………………..30%
2. Course Study Plans / Assessments ……...…………..…40%
3. Future English plan….….………….…….….……..…….10%
4. Homework …………….…………………….….……….20%

Office Hours:
Students can come anytime for questions and comments. Just make an appointment by e-mail.