# Language Classroom Risk-Taking Behavior in a Performed Culture-Based Program

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## Abstract

While several studies have investigated the role of risk-taking in language learning, the findings of these studies may not be generalizable to language learning where the performed culture approach (PCA) is used. This study describes the relationship between language learning and risk-taking in PCA, and the relationship between risk-taking and personal study habits, teaching style, daily grading, and classroom dynamics. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire.

This study finds that risk-taking behavior has a moderate positive relationship with student performance in PCA. While questionnaire items related to teaching style and classroom dynamics are not found to significantly correlate with students' risk-taking behavior, some items related to daily grading and personal study habits are found to have a moderate positive relationship with risk-taking behavior. Based on these findings, it is recommended that further research investigate the relationship between assessment and risk-taking in language learning.

As second language acquisition researchers have investigated the role of affective variables in language learning, risk-taking has frequently been identified as a variable linked with success (Beebe, 1983; Ely, 1986; Naiman, Frolich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975; Samimy & Pardin, 1994; Samimy & Tabuse, 1992). However, it is difficult to apply these findings to language classrooms that use the performed culture approach (PCA), an approach to the teaching of East Asian languages, for two reasons: (a) PCA's focus on the learning of a foreign culture could mean that greater risk is involved in

language learning than in a typical language classroom; (b) PCA creates a language learning experience for which the risks involved are different than those in language classrooms where other approaches are used.

## Literature Review

### The performed culture approach

PCA was developed because, according to Christensen and Warnick, the Western European and ESL pedagogies that are prevalent in North American foreign language education do not adequately address the "specific linguistic and cultural challenges for native English speakers in approaching foreign languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean from a holistic, culturally centered approach" (2006, p. 2). The kind of culture that PCA seeks to address is not the achievements of a particular culture (e.g., food, literature, music, etc.), but rather the conventions that members of the culture use to interact with each other (Jorden, 2003). PCA is concerned with imparting, through performance, the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in East Asian societies (Christensen & Warnick, 2006; Walker, 2010; Walker & Noda, 2010), a feat that anecdotal evidence suggests can be difficult even for those who achieve considerable linguistic ability in an East Asian language (Christensen & Warnick, 2006, pp. 1-16; Jorden, 2003; Shepherd, 2005, pp. 131-140)[i].

PCA seeks to provide learners with useful memories of target culture interactions. The process by which these memories lead to increased ability to participate successfully in a foreign culture is described in detail by Walker and Noda (2010). They consider the story, or a memory of a personal experience, to be the basic unit of analysis in this process. Learners come away from class with stories that are compiled with learners' other memories. The compilation process involves multiple levels. At lower levels are cases, or stories about doing something; and sagas, or stories about a set of people or a specific location. At higher levels of compilation themes begin to emerge. These compiled memories form the learner's second culture worldview. The second culture worldview shapes how learners perceive new linguistic and cultural information. It also informs learners' future performances.

In PCA, learners develop memories of personal experiences in the target culture primarily in ACT classes[ii]. ACT classes are conducted entirely in the target language. In ACT class, the teacher uses contexts to elicit performances from students. The teacher establishes the time and place of the performance, the roles of the participants, and the nature of the audience. The teacher then calls on students to perform. It is common for 2 or 3 students to perform at a time while the rest of the class observes, although some PCA instructors include pair and group activities (M. Noda, 2012, personal communication).

The rehearsal of dialogues that students have practiced outside of class is often a part of ACT class. These dialogues are always culturally authentic. Variations in context are used to elicit variations in dialogues. Such variations are also used to elicit performances that go beyond the material contained in the dialogues. In this way students spend the majority of class responding to contexts with performances that are improvised. The teacher guides students' performances by providing feedback to each performance. As part of this feedback the teacher occasionally models acceptable performances for students. At the end of class the teacher assigns each student a grade, referred to as a daily grade, which is a reflection of how a typical native speaker who is unused to interactions with foreigners would have reacted to the student's performance.[iii]

ACT classes are supported by FACT classes. In FACT classes students and teachers discuss topics such as grammar and culture in the students' base language. Students have the opportunity to ask questions about the language, and teachers can use the base language to explain complex concepts. Christensen and Warnick (2006) recommend 4 ACT classes for every 1 FACT class.

**Risk-taking and foreign culture learning in PCA**

While a number of previous studies have reported on the relationship between risk-taking and language learning (Beebe, 1983; Ely, 1986; Naiman, Frolich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975; Samimy & Tabuse, 1992; Samimy & Pardin, 1994), it is difficult to apply these findings to language learning in PCA, in part because of PCA's focus on learning a foreign culture. Beebe, in discussing how language

learning involves risk, suggests that looking ridiculous, feeling frustrated, not being able to care for oneself, alienation, and loss of identity are all risks involved in trying to learn a foreign language (1983, p. 40). When the foreign language and culture to be learned are in sharp contrast—Jorden and Walton's (1987) "truly foreign" languages—these risks are compounded, particularly the risk of "alienation" and "loss of identity". As Turner has noted:

> Some of us are afraid of changing the language we speak, which is to say, of learning a foreign language….There is a sense that language is a scary thing, and that we were lucky to have gotten through learning it the first time. This fear leads to that prevalent style of trying to learn a foreign language without changing or disturbing anything that is already in place….
>
> At the deepest level, we feel that we will lose ourselves if we change our default concepts. (1991, p. 27)

If, as Turner suggests, there exists a fear of changing one's default concepts, then it stands to reason that the more foreign the culture (i.e. the farther one must depart from one's default concepts) the greater the risk of losing oneself. For one learning a truly foreign language in the classroom, if the language program requires learners to act in ways that challenge their default concepts, learners may perceive greater risk in learning the foreign language[iv].

In learning a foreign language in the classroom, the risk involved is not limited to learners losing themselves. Learners' may feel that their relationships with others could also suffer. In learning to communicate in a foreign culture one must learn not only a new way of speaking, but a new worldview (Shepherd, 2005; Walker & Noda, 2010). In a classroom setting learners are together with peers, the majority of whom can be expected to hold the base culture's worldview. Learners may feel that by developing a second culture's worldview and acting upon it they risk disassociation from their peers. The greater the difference between the first culture's worldview and the second culture's worldview, the greater the risk that may be perceived in adopting foreign culture behaviors.

Since learning a truly foreign language may involve more risk than learning a language with more cultural similarity, it is difficult to know how applicable previous research on risk-taking behavior is to

language learning in PCA. In studies where learners were primarily native speakers of one Indo-European language learning another Indo-Eurpoean language (i.e., Beebe, 1983; Ely, 1986), less risk may be involved then when a truly foreign language is learned. In studies where a truly foreign language was learned (i.e., Samimy & Pardin, 1994; Samimy & Tabuse, 1992), less risk may be involved if students did not perform actions that may have been challenging to their default concepts. In community language learning, the approach used in Samimy and Pardin's (1994) study of learners of Japanese, learners are unlikely to experience the language in a context other than that of one language learner speaking to another (Omaggio Hadley, 2003). It seems unlikely that such a classroom would provide much opportunity for learners to practice culturally important behaviors, such as acknowledging hierarchy, that Americans can be resistant towards engaging in (Walker & Noda, 2010, pp. 29-30), but which are essential for successful communication. The language program described by Samimy and Tabuse (1992) in their study of affective variables and Japanese language learners actually has many features in common with PCA, such as daily grading and ACT and FACT classes. Indeed, this program may have been a precursor to PCA, which became firmly established as an approach in the early 2000s. Despite these similarities, however, it is unclear if culture was taught and performed in this program to the extent that it is taught and performed in PCA. It is therefore difficult to apply the findings of previous studies on risk-taking to programs that use PCA.

## Risk-taking and PCA: Other potential factors

### Potential positive effects

In addition to PCA's practice of having students perform the target culture, many other procedures employed in PCA seem likely to affect students' risk-taking behavior. One way in which risk-taking behavior is encouraged in PCA is through the practice of inviting individual students to perform rather than asking for volunteers. In this way, passive students and enthusiastic students both receive equal opportunities to perform in class (Christensen & Noda, 2002, pp. 19-20; Christensen & Warnick, 2006, pp. 60-61). Furthermore, in PCA choosing not to perform is detrimental to one's grade[v]. Consequently,

more students speak in class than would be expected if only those willing to volunteer performed and such participation did not affect their grades. Since speaking in class involves a certain degree of risk (e.g., looking ridiculous, reproach from a teacher, etc. [Beebe, 1983]), PCA's practice of inviting students to perform seems to encourage risk-taking behavior.

Another way in which PCA may encourage risk-taking behavior in students is through students' personal study habits. In PCA, students are encouraged to prepare for class carefully and seriously. Daily grading encourages this behavior. This emphasis on good preparation may encourage risk-taking behavior in PCA. Bang lists "sufficient preparation for class" as a major facilitating factor and "insufficient preparation for class" as a minor debilitating factor in Korean EFL students' risk-taking behavior (1999, pp. 134, 156). Thus, by requiring students to prepare well, students may be more likely to take language risks in class.

Another characteristic of PCA relevant to risk-taking behavior is feedback. It is possible that the large amount of feedback students receive in PCA may have a positive effect on students' language ability in relation to risk-taking (Beebe, 1980, p. 180). With a large amount of feedback, it is likely that when a language risk leads to an error, students will be made aware of the error. Without that feedback it is possible that students will not recognize their errors and fossilization may occur. Thus, because of the large amount of teacher feedback typical of PCA, risk-taking may lead to greater gains in performance in PCA than in other programs. However, the way in which this feedback is administered, an element of a teacher's teaching style, may influence the extent to which this feedback positively affects a student's language ability.

**Potential negative effects**

While there are several aspects of PCA that may encourage risk-taking, there are also aspects of PCA that may discourage this behavior. One of these aspects is daily grading. While there are many benefits to a daily grading system (Choi & Samimy, 2002; Christensen & Warnick, 2006, pp. 66-69), it may have a negative impact on students' willingness to take language risks in class. Since students are graded each day on their performance, the possibility that an utterance could

lead to a bad grade is always present.  Beebe suggests that in a testing situation, to avoid taking risks is the best strategy for being successful on the test (1983, p. 60).  Since students are tested each day on their ability to perform, some students may adopt a strategy of not taking risks in an attempt to acquire a good performance score.

Feedback has been mentioned as an aspect of PCA which may increase the benefit students gain from taking language risks. However, this feedback may also discourage students from taking language risks.  "Reproach from a teacher" is one of the risks Beebe lists as those related to language learning in a classroom setting (1983, p. 40), and "instructor's error correction" is listed by Bang as an aspect of instructor's attitude and teaching style that can discourage students from taking risks (1999, p. 143).  It is possible that teachers who provide feedback in an unfriendly or critical manner may discourage students from taking risks, and due to the large amount of feedback typically provided to students in PCA, a teacher's teaching style may influence students' risk-taking behavior more in a PCA classroom than in other programs.

The student-oriented nature of PCA (Christensen & Noda, 2002, p. 19; Christensen & Warnick, 2006, p. 60) may also have a negative effect on students' risk-taking behavior.  When students perform, typically two or three students perform at a time and the rest of the class observes.  Students that feel uncomfortable speaking in front of the whole class may be disinclined to take risks in such a situation (Bang, 1999, p. 134).  However, it is also possible that students may become accustomed to this practice. Thus, classroom dynamics may also affect students' risk-taking behavior in PCA.

**Conceptual Framework**
Based on the literature reviewed above, the conceptual framework that appears in in Figure 1 was developed to guide the present study.

**Research questions**
This study was designed to investigate the following research questions, which are based on the conceptual framework that appears in figure 1:

1. What is the relationship between language classroom risk-taking behavior (LCRTB) and student performance (SP) in PCA?
2. What is the relationship between LCRTB and daily grading in PCA?
3. What is the relationship between LCRTB and teaching style in PCA?
4. What is the relationship between LCRTB and classroom dynamics in PCA?
5. What is the relationship between LCRTB and personal study habits in PCA?

**Methods**

These research questions were investigated through means of a questionnaire. All participants in the study were students enrolled in undergraduate Japanese language classes at a large mid-western university. Data were gathered during the 2006-07 academic year. The Japanese language classes in question were all taught in a classroom setting[vi] using PCA. Since first-, second-, and third-year classes were taught by several teachers, all participants had experienced the teaching styles of multiple teachers in PCA. All participants were of at least 18 years of age. The questionnaire was distributed in autumn and spring quarters. A total of 46 usable questionnaires were returned in autumn quarter, and 34 in spring quarter.

**Instruments**

The construct language classroom risk-taking behavior (LCRTB) was developed for this study to assess students' risk-taking behavior in PCA. In previous studies researchers have often operationalized risk-taking behavior in terms of voluntary participation (e.g., Bang, 1999; Ely, 1986). However, since asking for volunteers is not commonly practiced in PCA, LCRTB was given the following constitutive definition, which guided the present study: Behavior in which one acts despite the possibility of exposing weak points in one's language ability. This constitutive definition was felt to represent the idea of risk as it would pertain to a language classroom. It was also felt to encompass behaviors related to risk-taking identified in previous studies (e.g., Rubin, 1975; Naiman, et al., 1978; Beebe, 1983; Ely, 1986). For

example, being willing to appear foolish in order to communicate and get the message across, using the language when not required to do so, being willing to try out guesses, and being willing to make mistakes in order to learn and communicate (Rubin, 1975) are all behaviors in which one acts despite the possibility of exposing weak points in one's language ability.

Video recordings of Japanese language classes taught with PCA were reviewed in order to identify potential manifestations of LCRTB[vii]. Based on these observations, the following 7 behaviors were posited as manifestations of LCRTB in PCA: (a) (-)[viii] favoring linguistic elements which are more familiar over those that are less familiar; (b) using linguistic elements in ways that have not yet been tried by others; (c) using negotiation strategies (e.g., "please say that again", "what does ___ mean?", etc.); (d) (-) giving up on communication in Japanese (e.g., resorting to English, refusing to participate, "I don't understand [so call on someone else]"); (e) tolerance of possible incorrectness in using the language; (f) (-) hesitancy in using a certain linguistic element; and (g) (-) engaging in behavior which seeks confirmation that an utterance was correct (e.g., raising of shoulder/hands, raised eyebrows, rising intonation). LCRTB in PCA was then operationalized with 14 questionnaire items pertaining to the 7 behaviors (see Appendix A for individual questionnaire items). Items concerning participants' daily grades, classroom dynamics, teaching style, and study habits were also included on the questionnaire. Both negatively and positively worded items were used in order to minimize the effects of "self-flattery" and "approval motive" (Oller and Perkins, 1978). Each of these questionnaire items (with the exception of item #23[ix]) was followed by a 5-point Likert-style response scale: 5=agree strongly; 4=somewhat agree; 3=neutral; 2=somewhat disagree; 1=disagree strongly. Items pertaining to participants' demographic information also appeared on the questionnaire.

Item total correlations were performed with Pearson product-moment correlations for LCRTB questionnaire items (#1 through #14; see Appendix A) using data from the Autumn quarter questionnaire. Items #7 and #14, for which item-total correlations were found to be low, were removed from the final data analysis. Follow-

ing this adjustment, Cronbach's alpha was calculated at 0.85 for LCRTB in PCA.

Student performance (SP) in PCA was operationalized as the average daily grade students had received at the end of the quarter in which the questionnaire was administered, excluding scores of 0. The rubric given below was used in assigning daily grades to students. This rubric was developed by faculty at Ohio State University. It is identical to the rubric that appears in Christensen and Warnick's description of PCA.

> 4.0    Solid preparation is evident and performance is fully coherent culturally; that is, students speak, write and respond in ways in which natives of Japanese culture expect people to speak, write, and respond. The performance presents no difficulty, discomfort, or misunderstanding for a native. Repair (restating, or correcting oneself) is self-managed. The performance reflects a sense of language as communication - an interpersonal exchange (not just parroting memorized material).
> 3.5    Good preparation with solid performance, such that there would be little to create difficulties, discomfort, or misunderstanding in interaction with a native speaker. However, some noticeable errors could hinder smooth interaction. Most repairs are self-managed.
> 3.0    Good preparation with good performance. A few aspects of the performance would create difficulties, discomfort, or misunderstanding in communication with a native speaker. Weakness or patterned error that would require occasional correction from another (instructor, classmate) is evident.
> 2.5    Some preparation is evident and performance enables communication, but there are also several clear sources of difficulty, discomfort, or misunderstanding in communicating with a native speaker. Repair is largely a matter of correcting problems, and comes mostly from others.
> 2.0    Minimal preparation. The performance presents definite obstacles to communication and would cause more than simple discomfort. Utterances would cause puzzlement that

the native would be at a loss to resolve.  Repair requires multiple, often repeated, corrections and guidance from another (mostly the teacher).

1.5    Barely any preparation. The performance would create considerable difficulties, discomfort, or misunderstanding in communicating with a native. Communication is achieved only with repeated correction and guidance from the teacher. The student is clearly not in control of the assigned material.

1.0    Attended class, but did not participate or failed to perform with any viable degree of competence.

0    Absent (2006, pp. 68-69)

**Data analysis**
Pearson product-moment correlations were performed between LCRTB and SP. Correlations were also performed between LCRTB and each questionnaire item related to daily grades, classroom dynamics, teaching style, and study habits.

**Findings and discussion**
The results of correlations performed between LCRTB and SP appear in Table 1. The results of correlations performed between LCRTB and questionnaire items related to daily grades, teaching style, classroom dynamics, and study habits also appear in Table 1.

Significant correlations between LCRTB and SP were found in both autumn quarter (r=0.339, p=0.033) and spring quarter (r=0.507, p=0.002). These findings suggest that there is a moderate positive relationship between LCRTB and SP, with LCRTB accounting for 25% of the variance in SP in spring quarter. Although risk-taking has been operationalized differently in other studies (e.g., Ely, 1986; Samimy & Tabuse, 1992), this study's finding that risk-taking is moderately correlated with successful language learning is consistent with the findings of other studies, suggesting that behaviors related to risk-taking in language learning are not limited to those related to voluntary participation. It is also noteworthy that the participants in the current study were learning not only a foreign language but also the behaviors of a foreign culture. Given that learning the behaviors of a foreign culture may involve more risk when the base culture and the target culture are in contrast than when they are similar, it is not

surprising that this study finds that risk-taking is correlated with language learning success. It may be beneficial to inform students that learning the behaviors of a markedly different culture will involve some risk, such as looking ridiculous and loss of identity (Beebe, 1983, p. 40), and that students unwilling to take the necessary risks may have difficulty being successful.

In interpreting the finding that LCRTB and SP are moderately correlated, it should be noted that correlation is not the same as causation (Aron & Aron, 2002, p. 270). While it seems likely that taking risks in using the target language leads to better language ability, it is also probable that having better language ability would lead one to take risks[x]. Thus, as Ely (1986) has noted, simply encouraging students to take risks as they learn the language may not produce better results.

The only item found to be significantly correlated with LCRTB in both autumn and spring quarters was item #22 "I usually feel prepared to perform when I come to class", for which a moderate positive relationship was found (autumn: r=0.307, p=0.038; spring: r=0.346, p=0.045). This finding is consistent with the findings of Bang (1999). It suggests that those students who consistently prepare well for class tend to engage in LCRTB. If language learning in a foreign culture involves greater risk, then preparing well may be even more important than when learning a language in a culture similar to learners' base culture. Thus, it seems that preparing well for class has both direct and indirect benefits in language learning. Furthermore, while simply encouraging students to take risks in language learning may not be effective, it is possible that encouraging more thorough preparation for class could help students improve their risk-taking behavior.

While item #22 was found to be significantly correlated with LCRTB in autumn and spring quarters, item #21 "I find myself less worried about making mistakes in class when I feel well prepared" was not (autumn: r=0.001, p=0.995; spring: r=0.298, p=0.092). It may be that preparing well does not necessarily mean that one is not worried about making mistakes in class. Consequently, it may be that students who engage in LCRTB in class do so regardless of whether or not they are worried about making mistakes.

Item #16 "when I perform in class, I don't worry about how my performance will affect my grade" was found to have a moderate positive relationship with LCRTB in autumn quarter (r=0.418, p=0.004), but in spring quarter the relationship was negligible (r=0.006, p=0.972). This difference between autumn and spring quarters suggests that students may eventually grow used to daily grading. Thus, it may be that worry about how one's performance affects one's grade is a significant factor in predicting students' LCRTB early in the academic year, but later in the year, when students have become more accustomed to being graded daily on their performance, it is less of a factor. This finding also suggests that daily grading may discourage LCRTB until students become accustomed to the practice. However, daily grading may also simultaneously encourage risk-taking behavior by encouraging students to thoroughly prepare for class. Further research regarding the relationship between daily grading and LCRTB is recommended.

Item #16 was significantly correlated with LCRTB in autumn quarter, while other similar items (e.g., item #17 "performing in front of a large group of students makes me more worried about making mistakes than performing in front of a smaller group" and item #19 "I worry more about making mistakes when speaking Japanese in front of some teachers than others") were not. It may be that students are generally more concerned about how their performance affects their grade than how it affects their standing with their peers or with the teacher.

A number of limitations should be considered in regard to these findings. First, some of the questionnaire items were worded negatively. While this negative wording was intended to minimize the effects of "self-flattery" and "approval motive" (Oller & Perkins, 1978), it may have created confusing items, and some variance in participant responses may be related to not understanding what the item said (Oller & Perkins, 1978).

Second, despite the negative wording of questions, subjects still may have been affected by "approval motive", "self-flattery", and "response set" (Oller & Perkins, 1978, pp. 86-88) as they responded to the questionnaire.

Third, students may not have been able to give precise responses to item #17 "performing in front of a large group of stu-

dents makes me more worried about making mistakes than performing in front of a smaller group", since classroom size stays fairly consistent throughout the quarter. Thus, students may not be fully aware of how class size affects their ability to perform.

Fourth, items related to teaching style (#19 and #20) were worded in terms of how teachers in the program are individually different from other teachers. However, such items fail to address how teachers in the program are collectively different from teachers in other programs. Thus, it remains unclear whether or not students' willingness to take risks would change in a program where the role of the teacher is defined differently than in PCA.

Lastly, data regarding those who did not complete the questionnaire were not collected. It is possible that students who did not complete the questionnaire possess significantly different characteristics than those who did. Thus, it is possible that the participants who completed the questionnaire are not representative of the general population of PCA students in this respect.

## Conclusion

This study finds that risk-taking behavior is associated with successful language learning in PCA, an approach to the teaching of East Asian languages. It finds that preparing well for class is associated with more risk-taking. However, it also finds that students who are concerned about their grades may engage in less risk-taking. It is recommended that further research explore the relationship between assessment and risk-taking, and in particular the relationship between assigning daily grades and risk-taking.

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## Appendix A

**(-) Favoring linguistic elements which are more familiar over those that are less familiar**
1. I try to say complicated sentences in class when I have the chance.
2. (-) When possible, I avoid using linguistic elements I have difficulty with while performing in class.

**Using linguistic elements in ways that have not yet been tried by others**
3. I try to incorporate previously learned words and structural patterns in new situations in class, even when the focus of the activity is on more recently learned items.
4. (-) When performing in class, I try to imitate what other students have said in a similar context.

**Using negotiation strategies ("please say that again", "what does ___ mean?", etc.)**
5. When I don't understand, I try to seek clarification in Japanese.
6. (-) When I don't understand what was said to me in Japanese, I try to respond without seeking for clarification in order to hide the fact that I don't understand.

**(-) Giving up on communication in Japanese (resorting to English, refusing to participate, "I don't understand [so call on someone else]")**
7. (-) I sometimes use English in class to seek clarification on something I don't understand.
8. (-) When I don't understand, I try to get the teacher to call on someone else.

**Tolerance of possible incorrectness in using the language**
9. I try to use linguistic elements which I find difficult in class, even when I may be using them incorrectly.
10. (-) As much as possible, I avoid using linguistic elements when I don't feel confident that I can use them correctly.
11. (-) I sometimes wonder what the teacher wants me to say.

**(-) Hesitancy in using a certain linguistic element**
12. I usually speak without hesitation, even when I am not sure if what I am going to say is correct.
13. (-) When performing in class I am hesitant about using structural patterns that I am not sure I can use correctly.

**(-) Engaging in behavior which seeks for confirmation that an utterance was correct (e.g., raising of shoulders/hands, raised eyebrows, rising intonation)**
14. (-) If I am unsure if what I am saying is correct, I try to get the teacher to confirm whether or not what I said was correct.

**Daily grades**
15. I would do anything (in terms of effort) to get an A in Japanese.[xi]
16. When I perform in class, I don't worry about how my performance will affect my grade.

**Classroom dynamics**
17. Performing in front of a large group of students makes me more worried about making mistakes than performing in front of a smaller group.
18. I usually study with a group.

**Teaching style**
19. I worry more about making mistakes when speaking Japanese in front of some teachers than others.
20. I avoid asking certain teachers for help.

**Study habits**
21. I find myself less worried about making mistakes in class when I feel well prepared.
22. I usually feel prepared to perform when I come to class.
23. I study an average of ___ before each ACT class.
    a. less than 15 minutes
    b. 15-30 minutes
    c. 30 minutes – 1 hour
    d. 1-2 hours

e. 2-3 hours
f. more than 3 hours

**Demographic information**
24. Age:_____
25. Gender: Male / Female
26. I am currently enrolled in the following Japanese language course (example: Japanese 102):_____
27. Expected grade in the Japanese language course I am currently taking:_____
28. I am a:
      a. Freshman
      b. Sophomore
      c. Junior
      d. Senior
      e. Graduate/Professional student
      f. Other
29. My current GPA is:
      a. 3.7-4.0
      b. 3.3-3.69
      c. 3.0-3.29
      d. 2.7-3.0
      e. 2.3-2.69
      f. 2.0-2.29
      g. Below 2.0
30. I am taking Japanese:
      a. To Fulfill a requirement for my major
      b. To Fulfill a GE requirement
      c. As a free elective choice
      d. Even though it does not help me progress toward graduation

**Table 1**

*Summary of Correlational Analyses*

|  | LCRTB | |
|  | Autumn (n=46) | Spring (n=34) |
|---|---|---|
| SP | 0.339* | 0.507* |
| 15. I would do anything (in terms of effort) to get an A in Japanese. | -0.146 | 0.292 |
| 16. When I perform in class, I don't worry about how my performance will affect my grade. | 0.418* | 0.006 |
| 17. Performing in front of a large group of students makes me more worried about making mistakes than performing in front of a smaller group. | -0.287 | -0.040 |
| 18. I usually study with a group. | 0.081 | 0.081 |
| 19. I worry more about making mistakes when speaking Japanese in front of some teachers than others. | -0.278 | -0.133 |
| 20. I avoid asking certain teachers for help. | -0.182 | -0.127 |
| 21. I find myself less worried about making mistakes in class when I feel well prepared. | -0.001 | 0.298 |
| 22. I usually feel prepared to perform when I come to class | 0.307* | 0.346* |
| 23. Average amount of time spent studying before each ACT class.[xii] | -0.141 | -0.092 |

*p<0.05

Daily Grading

Teaching Style     → Risk taking behavior     → Language ability
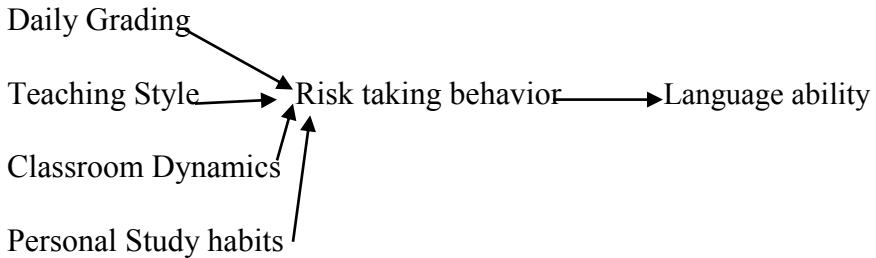
Classroom Dynamics

Personal Study habits

**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework of risk-taking behavior and antecedent factors in PCA

### Footnotes

[i] For further discussion of why PCA was developed and the theory behind the approach, see Walker (1989), Walker (2010), and Walker and Noda (2010).

[ii] For a more complete discussion of the design and procedures characteristic of PCA, see Christensen and Warnick (2006) and Christensen and Noda (2002).

[iii] PCA teaching demonstration videos of ACT classes in Chinese can be found on this website: https://chineseclassresources.osu.edu/CCC_unit_1_stage_9.

[iv] See Shepherd (2005, pp. 133-139) for a relevant discussion of how the acculturation of immigrants in America influences Americans' beliefs regarding the consequences of learning the behaviors of a foreign culture.

[v] According to the daily grading rubric given by Christensen and Warnick (2006, p. 66-69), students who attend class but do not participate receive 1 point out of 4 points possible.

[vi] The university in question offered Japanese instruction in both an individualized instruction setting and a classroom setting, both of which used PCA. Investigation into risk-taking behavior in PCA in an individualized instruction setting was beyond the scope of this study.

[vii] These video recordings were available as part of the curricular improvement effort. All students who appeared in the video recordings had given written consent to be videotaped for this purpose.

[viii] A minus sign (-) indicates an item associated with a lack of LCRTB.

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[ix] Item #23, which pertained to study habits, was not followed by a Likert-style response scale, and appeared in the demographic section of the questionnaire.

[x] Beebe (1983, p. 58) has made a similar argument regarding research on successful businessmen and risk-taking.

[xi] Item #15, which was taken as a measure of students' desire for a grade, was deliberately worded strongly in order to create some measurable variation in student responses.

[xii] In responding to item #23 students indicated the range of time in which the amount of time they spent studying fell. In order to perform correlations using responses to this multiple choice item, the middle value of the selected range, in minutes, was substituted for the selected range. The following substitutions were made: less than 15 minutes: 7.5 minutes; 15-30 minutes: 22.5 minutes; 30 minutes-1 hour: 45 minutes; 1-2 hours: 90 minutes. No participant marked "2-3 hours" or "more than 3 hours".