

PEER SUPPORT CHOICES OUTSIDE THE WRITING CLASS

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Theoretical Framework

- Language socialisation ([Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986](#))
- Individual networks of practice ([Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2015](#)) which synthesises community of practice ([Wenger, 1998](#)), network of practice ([Brown & Duguid, 2000](#)) and social network analysis ([Milroy, 1987](#))

Background and Participants

- 1st-year students in an intensive 2-year EAP program
- 6-7.5 hrs. instruction + ~12 hours out-of-class work weekly
- “Intermediate” and “Advanced” classes
- 5 focal participants in Spring; 3 continued to Fall and 2 new joined; 3 class teachers; 7 additional student participants

Student peer review in the program

Draft 1: self-review

Draft 2: peer review

Draft 3: instructor feedback

Final draft: grade and instructor feedback

Data collection and analysis

- 3-5 interviews per semester (focal participants) 2016-2017
- Social network maps
- Assignment drafts, worksheets, outlines, personal notes etc., Line app chats
- Inductive, cyclical analysis ([Duff, 2008](#)) for academic literacy practices
- [Original Study Research Questions \(link\)](#)

Peer Support Choices

Peer review discussions between friends

- Lengthy discussions with the assigned peer reviewer, collaborating on ideas and meaning
- Usually between same-gender classmates who were also friends



Seeking support from peers or senpai

- Knowledgeable individuals:
 - Former-EAP Advanced class *senpai*
 - The “good at grammar” classmate
 - Class teacher
- In response to specific difficulties:
 - Poor instructor evaluations/plagiarism
 - Insufficient or unclear peer feedback



HOWEVER...

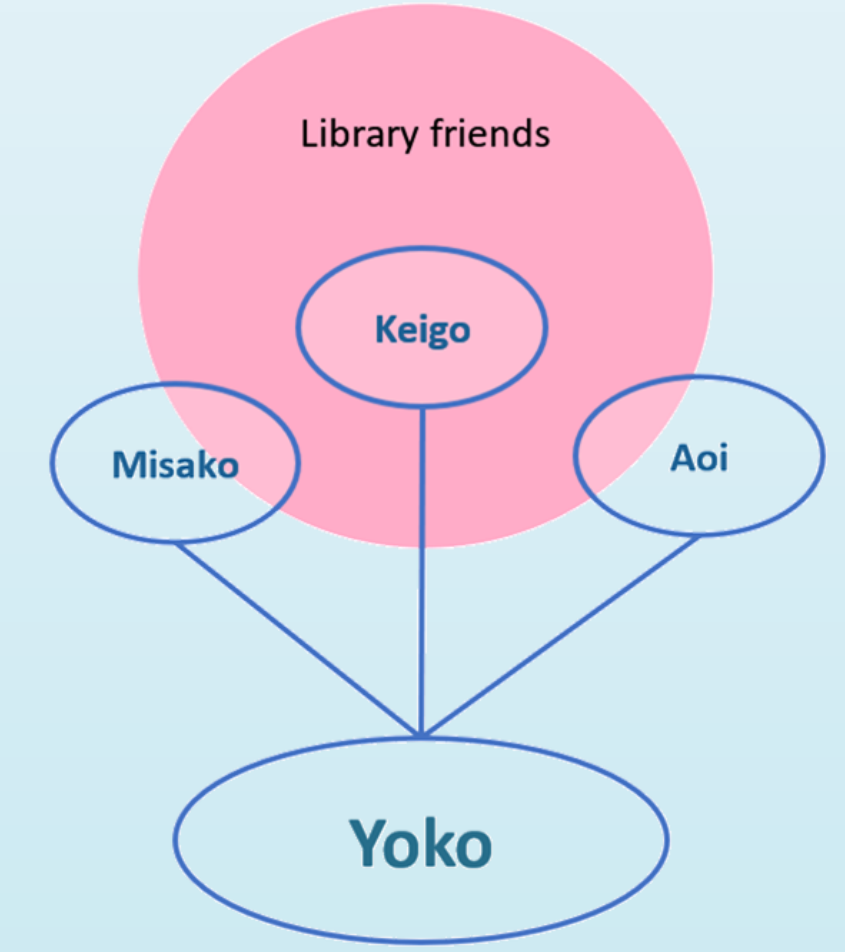
Most *senpai* not recognised
 Students in other classes or outside the program not valued
 ... as sources of support

“Just exchanging” the writing

- Annotating but little or no spoken interaction
- Often different-gender and/or socially-distant partners, or those perceived to be less invested in *or* knowledgeable about the class
- Advice about language usually but often feedback on ideas or meaning was not understood

Support from a peer group

- Participants formed study groups to work on assignments together
- Shared emotional support
- Formed naturally through shared commuting routes, living arrangements or academic attitude

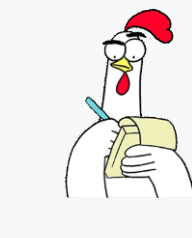


HOWEVER...

Some males viewed this as a female practice, describing looser social ties
 Some students resisted meeting classmates outside class for other reasons

Implications for teachers

These are my own takeaways from the research. I invite audience members to think about how these may apply to your teaching context.



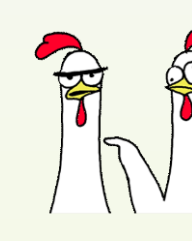
Feedback on writing from peers was usually valued and advice taken



Socially-close partners met to discuss peer review feedback



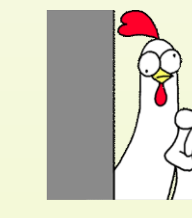
Socially-distant partners rarely met, even when advice was insufficient/unclear



When peer feedback was lacking, support from classmates, *senpai* or the class teacher was sometimes sought



Gender relations sometimes discouraged out-of-class interaction among male and female learners



Students needed a reason to seek support, and were selective in doing so

CONSIDERING PEER SUPPORT IN YOUR CONTEXT

1. Do you think your students meet outside class?
2. Do learners need to support each other outside class time?
3. If so, how do you encourage peer support?

Contact me

Thank you for reading! I'll be online to answer questions and expand on the content of this poster.

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