Developing an International Design Workshop Methodology

– Based on a Design Workshop between a Japanese and a Turkish University –

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Abstract: This paper reports on the early stages of a long-term effort to develop an efficient methodology for managing an international design workshop, using English as the medium of communication. With the aim of fostering design students who are better able to compete in the global workforce, an international design workshop was established between a Japanese and a Turkish university. Subsequently, data was gathered based on the results of student questionnaires, personal interviews, and teacher observations. The results indicate that although it required careful planning and coordination, the workshop was beneficial for students in many ways. This report also discusses ideas for how future workshops of this kind might be improved.

Keywords: *International workshop, Education, Cooperative-learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to work effectively in a global environment has become essential for designers in the 21st century workplace. In order to produce graduates capable of thriving in this increasingly competitive field, design universities must develop the necessary communication skills, cultural sensitivity, flexibility, and a design perspective that takes into consideration a broad worldview. Unfortunately, in Japan, many students enter university lacking the practical English ability to develop these skills. In 2015, random English testing at 480 Japanese high schools revealed that a surprising number of students were unable to answer even the simplest questions on speaking and writing [1]. Japanese universities are therefore faced with the difficult challenge of developing the linguistic as well as the practical skills necessary for students to compete in the global arena. One way this can be accomplished is through participation in cooperative-learning based international workshops that simulate what will be required of students after they enter the workforce. Such workshops not only raise motivation and broaden cultural awareness; they also provide students with the opportunity to develop ideas and express them using English as the medium of communication.

However, the management of international workshops is no small task. Making contact with like-minded educational institutions and coordinating communication with them, developing dynamic workshop content that is engaging for the participants, maintaining student and instructor motivation, securing the participation of local industry, and

providing meaningful participant feedback are only a few examples of the steps necessary in the process.

It is the authors' strong desire, therefore, to assist and encourage more workshops of this kind and to contribute to the research in the field by reporting on a recently concluded international workshop conducted jointly between a Japanese and a Turkish design university.

2. RESEARCH AIMS

The ultimate goal of this research is to establish an efficient methodology for managing an international design workshop. Although the development of the methodology is still in the early stages, the research will focus on an analysis of an international design workshop that was successfully concluded in 2014 between Japanese design students from Shizuoka University of Art and Culture (SUAC) and Turkish design students from Izmir University of Economics (IUE). A detailed review of the workshop planning and operations will be reported on, followed by an evaluation of the workshop schedule and content, including positive aspects and issues that could be improved upon in future workshops.

3. RESEARCH CONTENT

The format and implementation of the international design workshop referred to in this paper were planned and carried out based on a student needs assessment by teachers, theories on the application of cooperative learning [2] and issues related to university design education in Japan, as pointed out in previous research [3].

The research data was based on results from questionnaires, personal interviews, and teacher observations. Overall, the results tended to validate the general workshop methodology, but they also offered insight into areas in which improvements could be made.

4. BACKGROUND

Although the ability to communicate effectively in English is essential for career development in the present day global design arena, incorporating English education into Japanese university design curricula has been challenging. Since most students only begin learning about design after they enter university, few have the skills necessary to communicate in an international setting using English as the medium of communication. This was the primary impetus for the establishment of the DESIGN ENGLISH program at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture in 2010, 2011 and 2012, which was intended to raise motivation by providing students with an English education that was directly related to the field of design [3]. Research has shown that students have greater incentive to study English if they are given a real and practical opportunity to use it [4]. Moreover, students are motivated to study English if they feel it is relevant to them [5].

Under the DESIGN ENGLISH program, design students developed products intended for a global market and were then grouped with high-level English students from the Department of International Culture to create an English presentation. The design students gave their final presentations in English in front of a diverse audience, including other students, teachers, and professional designers who offered feedback.

The design students who participated in the DESIGN ENGLISH program became more motivated to learn English for the following reasons: Collaboration with students from a different department was inspiring and created a desire to improve; working with a knowledgeable peer to prepare for presentations was confidence-building; and communication with foreign professional designers from the private sector helped them understand that English skills would be helpful to them in their future careers. Students did, however, complain about the tight schedule of the DESIGN ENGLISH program, as they were required to complete high-level product designs in a shorter amount of time than usual in order to allow them time to prepare for their English presentations. In fact, students were given extra time to work on their product development and presentations in other classes, but time constraints were an issue that may require further consideration in future research.

One factor that may have affected the conclusions drawn from the research outcome of the DESIGN ENGLISH program [2] was changes to the program over each year of implementation. In year one, there were fewer design students (10) participating in the program than International Culture students (20), which meant they could be grouped on a 2:1 ratio. However, in the following year, the number of design students more than doubled (23), which meant that they were given less time with instructors and paired (1:1), rather than grouped, with students from the Department of International Culture. Differences in personality and group dynamics likely exerted a strong affect on the participants' attitudes toward the program.

Based on the researchers' experience in managing the DESIGN ENGLISH program, the following issues were identified as areas of concern. (①) The number of participants must be controlled to fit realistic program management and to establish a suitable balance between group members; (②) As securing professional designers who are available to participate in the program is not always possible, finding other ways of motivating students to actively participate is necessary; (③) The English discussion skills of the design students should be raised in order for them to be able to express their ideas and prepare for the English presentations; (④) The length of the program schedule needs to be carefully considered to allow students sufficient time to develop their products as well as prepare their English presentations.

5. HYPOTHESIS

One idea that was developed to help address some of the issues that came up in the DESIGN ENGLISH program was to offer students further opportunities to utilize their design skills in a setting similar to what they might expect upon entering the workforce. This was the motivation for the establishment of an international design workshop, one that would provide an environment where students could use their knowledge of design in an authentic environment that fostered multicultural awareness using English as the mode of communication. Adding to the 4 issues previously mentioned, 3 further issues were anticipated.

Previous issues

- ① Balancing participant number, specialty, and diversity
- ② Providing incentives to participate
- ③ Raising the level of English discussion skills
- ④ Setting a realistic schedule

Anticipated issues

- ① Setting a familiar yet challenging workshop theme
- ② Allotting adequate time for group members to get to know each other
- ③ Cultural differences among participants would likely be the cause of some differences of opinions

6. WORKSHOP OUTLINE

In 2014, an international design workshop between Japanese and Turkish design students was held at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, one that included the cooperation of local businesses. The workshop was held for 5 days from August 4th-8th. The theme of the workshop was based on developing an electric motor-assisted bicycle for the Turkish market. Students began researching the theme approximately three months before the workshop was held. At the beginning of the workshop, participating students were given lectures by representatives from local businesses, study tours of related facilities, and also allowed to test-ride sample bicycles that had already been developed for the Japanese market. Following their research study, participating students were put into 4 groups, each of which was tasked with developing the corporate identity of a product and presenting on it in English in front of professional designers.

6.1 Participants and Group Composition

14 Japanese students and 4 Turkish students participated in the workshop. The Japanese students consisted of 8 students majoring in Design (4 majoring in graphic design and 4 majoring in product design) and 4 students majoring in International Culture. 2 senior design students also attended as observers. In actuality, one of the observers ended up joining the workshop as a participant, due to an unexpected absence of one of the design students. The Turkish students consisted of 3 product design students and one graphic design student. (Fig. 1)

Figure 1: Group Composition

Figure 2: Theme-Related Facebook Group

Group dynamics were set based on the principles of cooperative learning outlined in the seminal research by Johnson and Johnson [2]. Special care was made to see that students communicated effectively within their group, were held accountable both individually and as team members, and were given opportunities to process and reflect on their performance.

Each group consisted of 4 members (1 management student, 1-2 graphic design students, and 1-2 product design students) including one Turkish student. The purpose of the group formation was to assign responsibilities based on each student's area of specialization. Students from the Department of International Culture, for example, did not possess knowledge of design, but had high-level English skills and had studied multicultural awareness, so they were expected to help facilitate communication within their group. In this way, each member contributed in idea sharing and group discussions, but was also required to individually produce tangible work product.

6.2 Workshop Theme

The theme of the workshop, "Proposing an Electric-Assisted Bicycle for Izmir" was chosen because bicycles were familiar to all participants and students were able to receive technical instruction and test-ride sample bicycles from cooperating companies in the local area. Although the workshop was held in Japan, centering the theme on developing a bicycle for the Turkish market helped strengthen the role of the Turkish students, whose numbers were far lower than the Japanese students.

6.3 Workshop Preparation

Three months before the workshop, the Japanese students conducted research on the workshop theme and weekly English meetings were held for them to report their findings. Design teachers and English teachers oversaw the meetings. Part of the meeting time was devoted to learning

technical English vocabulary and expressions in preparation for the workshop. Several Skype sessions were also held between the Japanese and Turkish universities in order for the students to get to know each other. Following introductions over Skype, a dedicated group was established using Facebook for workshop participants to ask questions and share ideas, or post pictures about their local school, food, or culture. Some students even posted cartoons (Fig. 2). Having the students get acquainted with one another beforehand helped the students work together more smoothly once the workshop began.

All of the above preparations were expected to help address the issues that had come to the attention of instructors during the DESIGN ENGLISH program. The chance to communicate with like-minded students from overseas provided an alternate means of motivating students to study English (②). Conducting research on the theme and discussing it in English in groups was thought to help develop the design students' communication skills (②). Pre-meetings on Skype, weekly preparation meetings, and introducing the students using social media helped in reducing anxiety associated with getting to know new members and managing to work together through the course of the tight workshop schedule (③⑥).

6.4 Schedule

The schedule of the workshop is shown on Fig. 3 below.

On Day 1, students visited companies and were given lectures related to the workshop theme, specifically

May June July	PREPARATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • English Discussion about the research theme • SKYPE Session • Facebook
August	WORKSHOP
	Day 1 Visit to Companies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture from designers • Museum Visit • Test Ride
	Day 2 Developing Concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture from Technicians • Brainstorming Session • Concept Development & Idea Sharing
	Day 3 Sketching and Finalizing Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Personas • Developing Business Plans • Sketching
	Day 4 Product and Identity Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalizing designs • Designing panels
	Day 5 Group Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting panels to professionals designers from Companies

Figure 3: Workshop Schedule

concerning the history, design and manufacturing of electric- assisted bicycles. Students were also given the chance to conduct test-rides using sample electric-assisted bicycles to assist them in their research.

On the morning of Day 2, representatives from local industry came to the workshop venue to give lectures related to power assisted bicycles. Following this, the Turkish students gave a short presentation to the Japanese students on the conditions in Izmir, Turkey that might affect the design and development of products for the Turkish market. In the afternoon, students were required to develop a business plan, which was to be completed by the end of the day.

On the morning of Day 3, each group decided on their company identity and developed a brand image to reflect it. In the afternoon, the graphic design students developed CI graphics and the product design students worked individually on their product designs.

On day 4, each student finalized their individual design panels and prepared for the individual and group parts of their presentations.

On Day 5, each group made presentations in front of professional designers working in the local community.

6.5 Backup Support

Even with the help of international culture students in facilitating communication and managing the groups, using English during the workshop seemed to be the biggest hurdle for the Japanese design students. Throughout the workshop, English teachers were available for language support, and design teachers from Turkey and Japan were available for consultation. The senior student observer was also available to offer ideas and advice. At one point during the workshop, Turkish design teachers from Izmir University of Economics were contacted via Skype and given the opportunity to view student progress and give feedback.

7. RESULTS

Data confirming the efficacy of our attempts to address the issues outlined in the Hypothesis are based on the questionnaire results, personal interviews and teacher observations during the workshop.

7.1 Effectiveness of ①-⑦

① Size and diversity of participants

The size, organization and management of the groups seemed on the whole to be quite balanced. The number of instructors: three Japanese design instructors, one

Turkish design instructor, and two English teachers were sufficient for managing the groups during the workshop. Concerning the number of group members, the ratio of 1 Turkish student to 3 Japanese students worked well, although the ideal balance would have been an equal number of students from each country. As stated earlier, the groups were composed of students from different academic backgrounds, each of who was expected to contribute based on their area of specialty. At times when group discussions stalled, students were encouraged to focus on their individual work. In cases where there were two students in a group who had the same specialty, different graphics or products were designed for the same concept, so that every student had a chance to propose their own ideas. The Turkish students were not disadvantaged being in smaller number than the Japanese students, because developing a product for the Turkish market established them as experts within their groups and thus their opinions held greater weight. The only disadvantage concerning smaller numbers of Turkish students was that at times the group discussions reverted to Japanese, which was thought to be counter-productive. Overall, however, the numbers and diversity of students in each group seemed sufficient for the members to produce their own work while at the same time contributing to the development of their group concept.

② Incentives for Participating in the Workshop

Responses to Q.1 of the workshop survey (Fig. 4) indicate the student motivation for participating. Japanese design students most frequently chose “I wanted to learn the opinions of foreign students.” as the main reason for joining the workshop, and “I wanted to test my practical English skills in an authentic setting.” as the second reason. Conversely, Turkish students answered “I was interested in getting feedback from professional designers in the private sector.” as their main reason for participating in the workshop (Fig. 5). Many Turkish students also indicated anecdotally that the venue of the workshop being held in Hamamatsu, a city that houses the headquarters of several global Japanese companies, acted as a strong incentive for them to participate.

③ Developing English Discussion Skills

Japanese design students responded, “I couldn’t express myself well enough in English.” as the most common response to Q.6: Troubles during the workshop. In contrast, Turkish students responded, “The English of some of my group partners was too low and difficult to understand” (Fig. 8). This is not surprising, as Turkish students take a full year of English immersion classes

2014 Charinko Workshop Survey	
University: ()	Dept: ()
Area of Specialization O : Product	Graphic
Year of study ()	
Q.1 What was your motivation for participating in the workshop? Please mark the most appropriate reason below with a “1” and the second most appropriate reason with a “2”.	
☐ I wanted to learn about the opinions of foreign students ☐ I have been interested in partner's country. ☐ I was interested in getting feedback from professional designers in the private sector ☐ I wanted to test my practical English skills in an authentic setting. ☐ I thought I would become better able to speak English ☐ I was asked to join and didn't see any reason not to. ☐ Other ()	
Q.2 What pre-workshop activities were most valuable for you in preparation for the workshop? Please mark the most appropriate reason below with a “1” and the second most appropriate reason with a “2”.	
☐ The Skype sessions between IUE and SUAC ☐ The Wednesday evening (18:00-) Skype sessions and group discussions (only SUAC) ☐ The Charinko Facebook Group ☐ The instruction given to me by my design instructors. ☐ Nothing was especially helpful. ☐ Other ()	
Q.3 Of the events in the workshop, which of the following do you feel would be meaningful activities to continue in future workshops of a similar nature. Please mark with an “O” those activities that you feel were valuable for you.	
☐ Study tour and lectures from Suzuki and Yamaha ☐ Advice from SUAC teachers ☐ Advice from IUE teachers ☐ Comments from the professional Designers ☐ Group discussions ☐ Working alone on your individual panels ☐ The final presentation ☐ The cultural exchange outside of the workshop ☐ Other ()	
Q.4 Within the workshop, please indicate which of the following activities were of general interest to you not just in relation to design. Please mark with an “O” those activities that you feel were valuable for you.	
☐ Tour of Suzuki Historical Museum ☐ Lecture at Suzuki Historical Museum ☐ Tour of Yamaha Community Plaza ☐ Lecture at Yamaha Community Plaza ☐ Test-riding the electrically-assisted bicycles. ☐ The lecture at SUAC by Yamaha on Electrically assisted bicycles. ☐ The group discussions ☐ Advice from IUE design teachers ☐ Advice from SUAC design teachers ☐ Advice from the SUAC English teachers ☐ Other ()	
Q.5 Were you able to communicate in English with the other members of your group?	
1 Not at all 2 3 4 5 Very	
Q.6 Did you have any trouble during the workshop? Please mark with an “O” any of the following reasons that were relevant to you.	
☐ No particular problems ☐ I couldn't express myself well enough in English ☐ The English of some of my group partners was too low and difficult to understand ☐ I had difficulty with some of the cultural differences between me and my group partners ☐ Some personality differences among our group members made it difficult to interact ☐ Other ()	
Q.7 I am happy that I participated in the workshop.	
1 Not at all 2 3 4 5 Very	
Q.8 I would like to participate in other workshops of a similar nature in the future.	
1 Not at all 2 3 4 5 Very	
Personal Comments	

Figure 4: Questionnaire (Conducted in 2014. December. Respondents numbered the answers from 1-5, in the order they felt most applied to them. The results were assigned values according to the following scale: 1=5pt, 2=4pt, 3=3pt, 4=2pt, 5=1pt)

before they begin taking design classes that are taught completely in English. Although the results indicate a gap in the English level between the Japanese and Turkish students, some Japanese students indicated that they felt relieved that the Turkish students were also non-native English speakers, which made it easier for them to communicate with.

In answer to Q.2 “What pre-workshop activities were most valuable for you in preparation for the workshop?” most Japanese students answered “Wednesday Skype sessions and group discussions” (Fig. 6). These results emphasize the importance of the pre-workshop meetings to help develop English discussion skills and conduct background research to help enhance the meta-learning that took place during the workshop.

Figure 5: Q1. What was your motivation for participating in the workshop?

Figure 6: Q2. What pre-workshop activities were most valuable for you in preparation for the workshop?

Figure 7: Q3. Of the events in the workshop, which of the following do you feel would be meaningful activities to continue in future workshops of a similar nature.

Figure 8: Q6. Overall, did you have any trouble during the workshop?

④ Concerning the Tight Schedule

“The length of the workshop was too short.” was the most frequent response to Q.6 (Fig. 8) by all students. This result is not surprising, because short deadlines are a common complaint among design students regardless of nationality. However, as students are likely to face tight schedules and harsh deadlines when they enter the workforce, the short length of the workshop was likely helpful in familiarizing students with the realities of the industry. Moreover, lengthening the workshop would require the careful consideration of other factors, such as maintaining student focus, extra accommodation costs, and the financial and time burden of the representatives from cooperating companies. However, based on teacher observations during the workshop, more time for friendship activities may have helped the Japanese students get used to English communication and facilitated the active exchange of opinions during the group activities.

⑤ Appropriateness of the Workshop Theme

None of the respondents indicated any dissatisfaction with the workshop theme on the questionnaire or in the personal interviews after the workshop. Most of the participants seemed to feel that the theme was appropriate in that the product was something everyone was familiar with. Students also indicated that they were satisfied with the background lectures on electric-assisted bicycles, the opportunity to conduct test-rides, and the chance to consult with advisors concerning product details such as construction or usability. Also, it was anticipated that there being only 1 Turkish student per group might have left them feeling marginalized, but this turned out not to be the case, likely because the Turkish students were more accustomed to presenting in English and because the workshop theme was focused on the Turkish market.

⑥ Time for building friendship activities

None of the respondents indicated that they felt there was not enough time for participants to communicate with one another. However, most of the Japanese students mentioned in the free comments part of the questionnaire that they couldn't communicate in English as well as they had hoped, an indication that more pre-workshop English study and practice would have been helpful. In addition, as the Japanese students did seem to get used to speaking in English over the course of the workshop, lengthening the workshop duration or raising the number of international students in each group to encourage English as the primary mode of communication may also have been effective. However, the ability of the international students to participate during the design work stage must also be taken into consideration.

Both Japanese and Turkish students highly evaluated “The Charinko Facebook (SNS) Group” (Fig. 2). Students felt that it was helpful in allowing them to build friendships and exchange information before the workshop began. Using social media in this way was also thought to provide further incentives for Japanese students to improve in English (②).

⑦ There was a gap of opinions caused by cultural differences.

Some of the Japanese students answered that “Cultural or value differences between me and my group partners was difficult” to Q.6. (Fig. 8). However, it can be inferred from the free comments section of the questionnaire that students attributed difficulty in expressing themselves in English to cultural differences. It is noteworthy that despite the perception of cultural differences, all of the students commented that the experience was very positive, further evidence that conducting such a workshop was a valuable experience for students in many more ways than was originally anticipated.

7.2 Results of the Workshop

In response to Q.3. “Of the events in the workshop, which of the following do you feel would be meaningful activities to continue in future workshops of a similar nature,” Japanese students responded “Group discussions” most frequently, followed by “The final presentation” (Fig. 7).

These results offer evidence that the workshop was successful in developing design ideas and prompting discussion in English. In contrast, the Turkish students most frequently responded that “Comments from the professional designers” was the most meaningful aspect of the workshop for them, followed by the “Study tour and lectures from Suzuki and Yamaha,” and then “Group discussions” and “The cultural exchange outside of the workshop” (Fig. 7). This is consistent with the observations of teachers, who noted that the Turkish students displayed a high level of interest in Japanese companies. Interestingly, both groups of students highly evaluated the advice given by the design teachers from the partner university. A possible explanation for why the Japanese students rated the “The final presentation” as more meaningful than “Comments from the professional designers” is that the Japanese students had far less experience presenting in English than did their Turkish counterparts, thus the experience was thought to be more meaningful. Had Japanese design students more experience presenting their designs in English, it is likely they would have responded similarly to the Turkish students. Nonetheless,

this response reflects the reality that design universities in Japan do not offer sufficient opportunities for their students to develop the productive English skills that will be required of them after they enter the workforce.

Two additional aims of the workshop were “to improve comprehensive communication skills and to understand international culture,” the results of which were observed in the final group presentations. Each group was able to overcome their linguistic and cultural differences to incorporate ideas from both countries and propose a suitable design for the Turkish market. As all students indicated that the “Discussion” was a very meaningful part of the workshop, it can be concluded that although communication among the groups was not always perfect, the workshop achieved one of its pre-stated goals of spurring discussion in English about design (Fig. 7).

In response to Q.7 “was it worth participating in the workshop,” 30% of Japanese students responded “Yes” and 70% responded “Very,” while 100% of the Turkish students responded “Very” to the same question (Fig. 9). Concerning Q.9. “I would like to participate in other workshops of a similar nature in the future,” 60% of Japanese students answered “Yes” and 40% answered “Very.” All Turkish students responded “Very” to the same question (Fig. 10).

Based on the above results, it is clear that the workshop was effective in stimulating discussion about design and in developing comprehensive English communication skills and cultural awareness.

Figure 9: Q.7. Was it worth to participating?

Figure 10: Q.9. I would like to participate in other workshops of a similar nature in the future.

7.3 An Excluded Respondent

In the end, 15 out of 18 participants responded to the questionnaire. One set of responses was excluded from the data because it was considered biased. One of the design students who attended the workshop as an observer was asked to participate as a full group member due to a sudden cancellation of one of the participants. This student had not taken part in many of the pre-workshop activities, nor was she in possession of the leadership or linguistic skills that the role she was placed in demanded. Her negative responses in the questionnaire were not included in the results due to her exceptional circumstances. In retrospect, more efforts should have been made by the instructors to find a more suitable replacement for the cancellation. However, the negative experience of this member does serve as strong evidence supporting the importance of pre-workshop training and preparation. Clearly, when placing students under stressful conditions with a high degree of uncertainty, care needs to be taken to choose suitable candidates, to offer sufficient guidance and preparation beforehand, to monitor students closely throughout the course of the activities, and to reflect with them on the experience afterward in order to help them place it accurately within the context of their education.

8. CONCLUSION

In establishing International Design Workshops

Based on questionnaire responses, personal interviews, and teacher observations, the primary incentive for participation in the workshop was the chance to hear the opinions of “Designers from global companies and participants from other countries.” Upon reflection, the friendships that were established and maintained through social media also served as a strong motivation to participate as well. The theme of the workshop was found to be suitable in that all participants had background knowledge, yet still found the study tours and lectures to be informative. In addition, the overall makeup of the groups, in terms of diversity and area of specialization, was balanced.

There were some issues concerning communication in English, mostly regarding the Japanese students. However, pre-workshop activities, pre-existing knowledge of design principles, and the friendship activities that were conducted were mitigating factors. This being said, had their English ability been higher, the Japanese students definitely could have focused more on contributing to the design aspect of the workshop.

In consideration of the planning and management of the international design workshop, the cooperation of designers from well-known companies had a dramatic effect on student motivation. However, this is also one of the most difficult elements to manage. Finding experienced designers who are familiar with the workshop theme and also willing to volunteer their time to participate was no easy task. Hence, it was the experience of the organizers that securing the cooperation of designers and companies should be completed first, so that a suitable theme can be chosen that matches their area of specialization. Following this, planning the workshop schedule must take into consideration students' academic commitments and the availability of the volunteer designers. The length of the schedule also needs to be carefully considered. Pre and post workshop communication activities are highly beneficial, especially if the workshop schedule is short.

Finally, careful consideration of group composition is an essential element of workshop planning. A balance of background knowledge, English ability, and leadership skills exerts a strong impact on the success of the group. In particular, students should be assigned individual as well as group responsibilities in order for them to maintain focus and present with confidence.

While it has been reported that using active-learning based workshops to develop the practical skills of students is an area that is under-researched [6], it has been the authors' experience that they require careful planning in order for them to be successful. Although this workshop theme focused on design, the application of the methodology could definitely be used in other areas of study.

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